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POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
(FOUO 4/80) 1 OF 1

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# East Europe Report

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

(FOUO 4/80)

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ROMANIA

REPORT ON ROBBERIES OF CHURCHES IN BACAU

Bucharest PENTRU PATRIE in Romanian No 1, Jan 80 pp 12, 13

[Article by Constantin Preda: 'The Night of the Crime']

[Text] 'It was the third night,' Lieutenant Costica Huiban told us. 'Like the night before we entered the church at eleven o'clock. We entered unobserved and locked the doors behind us. The sergeant and I sat in two arm-chairs placed on a carpet so as not to make noise when we moved. In the quiet of the night in the empty church every sound was amplified to an extraordinary degree. We waited. The walls, the altar and the carpet in the middle of the room were barely visible from the glimmer of light that peeped through the narrow windows. From time to time we heard footsteps on the gravel path that passed somewhere nearby. We then listened carefully trying to guess where they were coming from and headed. Each time we asked ourselves if this might be the one we waited for.'

What had happened? One morning it was discovered that the largest church in BACAU had been burglarized during the night. Once alerted, the investigation team from the Bacau City Police went immediately to the scene. The culprit had gained entry by knocking the grill away from a window. A pickaxe leaning against the icon of Saint Nicholas and a bottled gas tank wrench on the altar table were found inside the church. All the offering boxes had disappeared and along with them a public address system and a suitcase with priests robes that had been kept in the altar. These items were found 'abandoned' in the chapel. All the offering boxes were broken or forced open at the hinges, and next to them more than ten kilograms of one, three and five lei coins. Evidently the thief only took the bills. There were traces of the crime everywhere. They were gathered up with utmost care.

Based on an examination of the scene of the crime it was decided that the burglar was a minor or a very slender adult. Otherwise he could not have fit in the space between the window bars. A group of suspects was rounded up and their verification began. However, a surprise occurred when another church was burglarized a few days later. The modus operandi was the same. Fingerprints of the left hand were collected from the windowsill where the thief had entered. Three days later yet another burglary of the catholic church was committed following the same pattern. Meanwhile, the fingerprint studies

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performed by criminologist Major Dumitru Sandulescu established with certainty that only one culprit was involved. Did this individual actually intend to continue his series of church burglaries in Bacau? It became necessary to take additional steps beyond the investigations already underway. Senior Lieutenant George Gavrilescu proposed special security measures for the protection of church valuables to the office of the archpriest of Bacau. A study was made of the possibilities for burglary at other churches. Excluding those that had already been robbed and several other still under renovation four churches were left as possible targets. These had to be guarded. That very day two police officers began standing all night guard in the courtyard of each of these churches. Nothing unusual was noted during the first two nights. The third night passed just as quietly ... except that the bishopric church in Roman was burglarized. Would the thief return to Bacau? The following night the police began standing guard inside the churches. The conclusion was reached from the same study that the Church of Saint Gheorghe might be of most interest to the thief. It was located out of the way and had already been burglarized in 1977. And one of the church's windows was left open to make it even more attractive.

Nothing happened the first two nights. Lieutenant Costica Huiban explained what happened the third night, that night to which the first passage of this report refers. He and Sergeant Vasile Ilie were standing guard in the church with the open window.

'I was sure that the thief would be caught in the act,' the officer told us. 'I did not want another crime to be committed but the thief's next attempt was a way to bring him to us. It was also the fastest way. I was a bit resentful in a way that some people who had no idea of the efforts we were making, and there were many, were asking: 'But what are the police doing about this?'' I wanted to catch the criminal as soon as possible both because it was our duty to combat violators and violations of the law and also because the attitudes of some people were affected negatively by these criminal acts. Therefore, we spent hours on end on guard not moving, waiting. But the possibility for success existed. Other coworkers were doing the same thing in other churches while outside the investigations along other paths continued day and night.

It was past midnight. The fluorescence of my watch showed it to be nearly one o'clock when we heard the first noise. It was a different noise than the ones we had been hearing till then. After analyzing it we decided it was the noise made by climbing over a wall. Then for several seconds something like a knife scratched in the lock of a window. It was not the window we had left open. Because the person was probably not able to force it open he grew impatient and broke the glass. You can imagine our emotions at the time! With hands grasping our weapons and flashlights the sergeant and I waited for the thief to appear. For two or three minutes we listened as he tried to enter. Then there was silence. We did not know what happened. Did he succeed or give up? I recalled that a large icon with a framed picture sat directly in front of the window in question. I imagined that the thief was not able to enter because of that icon and gave up. But what if he had managed to somehow get

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past the picture? I slowly got on my feet and quietly walked nearer. I listened but heard nothing. Then I made out something like a lacket at one spot, thinking it was him. But what if I was wrong? I covered the front of my flashlight with my hand, turned it on and left a small beam of light fall on the object. It was a robe left by one of the church servants. Perhaps I should go into the church courtyard in an effort to catch the thief? If he heard the door opening he would have time to run and disappear. Then all our work would be fruitless. So we decided to continue waiting in hope that he would still enter through the open window. But what if he was not going to enter?

Sergeant Vasile Ilie came over near me. We each leaned against a column and waited. I don't believe more than a minute passed, although it seemed very long then, when we heard a noise at the open window. He had apparently taken the bait. We waited for him to enter. I was perspiring. We could not talk or even use hand signals. But when I sensed that the thief had reached the front altar both of our flashlights went on simultaneously. I challenged the thief. I will never forget the sight of those totally surprised eyes that shone unnaturally in the two beams of light, eyes that did not comprehend from where the voice had thundered that ordered him to stop. We tied him up. We had brought no handcuffs along, personally not believing that this church was the most vulnerable. I then remained alone with him while the sergeant went to bring a witness, a night watchman on duty nearby, and call the priest who lived in one of the neighboring apartment houses. There in the church in front of the priest and the night watchman he made his first statements concerning the church burglaries committed earlier in Bacau, the one in Roman and three other ones committed in Constanta. Afterwards at the police station his statements apparently included details. His fingerprints matched the ones found at the previous burglaries and became material evidence. The following reconstruction was made during the next few days.

The criminal's name was Manea Stoica. He was twenty two years old and was from the township of Silistea, Braila District. While still a minor he was sentenced to three months in prison for a theft committed in school. He completed eight years of general education and two years professional training to qualify as a chemical production operator. However, after his military service he did not wish to go to work. One day his father sent him to a neighbor to borrow some money. When the man gave him the amount requested he saw that there was no more. He also saw where it was kept. A short while later, seeing that the man had left home, he went to steal the rest. But the man returned and found him with the seven thousand lei in his hands. As a result a police file was made up on Manea. However, during the investigation he ran off. He was tried in absentia and sentenced to two years in prison. At the time of the church burglaries a warrant was out for his arrest.

I spoke with him after his arrest. He has parents and older and younger brothers and sisters. He did not care about the shame he had brought to them by his crimes nor about the fact that his parents, religious as they were -- his grandfather sold candles at the village church --, would condemn him in their own way when they learn that he had robbed churches.

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I had been told that Manea Stoica was uncaring and, indeed, during our talk his indifference to everything was most striking. However, I persisted because I could not conceive that such a young soul could have lost every bit of sensitivity. In the end the only thing that made him cry was the thought of his youngest brother who from birth had had a long struggle with sickness and whom he had taken care of all the while. He loved this brother and was loved and idolized by him. That was past. When it is learned what he has done this won't be the same. I do not think the village will be able to keep the little brother from eventually finding out that his big brother has become a thief. He, the little one, did not see those frightened eyes the policemen saw the night of the crime. But certainly for a long time whenever he thinks of the brother he modeled himself after he will not be able to hold his head high. I expressed these thoughts to Manea Stoica, telling him that besides all the other bad things he had done, he had also crippled a young soul, perhaps for life. He cried again. I would like to think that this was a sign of what will be after the crime has been paid for.

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ROMANIA

DISTRIBUTORS OF RELIGIOUS TRACTS APPREHENDED

Bucharest PENTRU PATRIE in Romanian No 1, Jan 80 p 18

[Article by Radu Vaida: 'Chain of Holy Dealings and Deceptions']

[Text] We shall give the names of the 'pious' sect members implicated in this criminal case from the very beginning. They are Gheorghe Stancu, Marin Chirita and Stefan Alexandru, all from Bucharest; Gheorghe Alexandru from Ploiesti; and his 'devoutness' Petru Turturica, the sect's preacher also from Bucharest. We shall also name the less 'pious' George Angelescu, a former medical assistant involved with the sect through his wife and mother-in-law and the not at all pious but very interested in the profits resulting from the 'piety' of those mentioned above Ilie Duna, Maria Catana and Ion Comsa. These more or less 'pious' succeeded in creating a 'holy' chain of dealings and deceptions secretly and almost without a noise, particularly since their chain 'rustled' instead of clanking. The case involved the clandestine reproduction and dissemination of certain mystical religious booklets, many of which came into the country illegally from abroad. They were harmful publications due to their backward contents which attempted to negate and curse the discoveries of science and civilization and purely and simply advocated mankind's reduction to the state of primitiveness. (Let us not confuse this wasted paper with the legitimate works of the various religions!) It is sufficient to quote just one sentence from one of these booklets entitled 'Radio and Television': 'The buttons of these devices are controlled by the devil.' Thus, this holy chain of the dealings and the deceptions of these more or less 'pious' individuals did not clank, but rustled... like money, like hundreds of thousands of hundred-lei bills which these 'pious' ones funneled with 'devout faith and sacrifice' into their own pockets in the name of the religion they preached. And, of course, they with cynicism and without self reproach speculated on the backward mentalities of certain people, particularly the elderly.

We shall address the core of the issue by quoting from a statement made by the less pious George Angelescu: 'Because my mother-in-law belonged to the religious sect and my wife also became involved with it I often went to their meetings. There I met Gheorghe Stancu who had been recommended to me by my mother-in-law. In the summer of 1978 he asked me if I knew anyone who could

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reproduce a religious book. Because I had been acquainted for some time with Ilie Duna, nicknamed Iliuta, who was a coworker of mine, I got in touch with him. He said he would check into the matter. A few days later he told me he had spoken with a certain individual and would put me into contact with him. Thus, one day in October 1978 I had a meeting with Ilie Duna in front of the Unirea department store where he introduced me to Mihai Ungureanu. Ungureanu explained that he was in a position to reproduce the book I had gotten from Gheorghe Stancu.

I received about 93,000 lei from Gheorghe Stancu for the first book. I paid both Ungureanu and Duna from this and was left with a profit of several thousand lei....' The poor fellow! Could the less pious George Angelescu have actually been less greedy? Hard to believe!

'I received 50,000 lei from Gheorghe Stancu for the third book.' In other words, less. One wonders why. George Angelescu himself confessed, 'We ceased with their affair because we were discovered by the police and investigated for these illegal activities.' Yes indeed, they were discovered through a long and difficult operation by a unit of the Bucharest Municipal Inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Their work was difficult and full of unknowns. The chain of holy dealings and deceptions proved to be a long one with over forty 'links,' all having names and all hungry for the rustle of thousands and hundreds of thousands of lei. 'I bought a Dacia automobile and a radio cassette player recorder with the money I got from these dealings,' declared one of them. The pious Gheorghe Stancu, one of the leaders of this illegal operation, a clever and greedy man who was constantly ready with holy words on his lips, calmly admitted, "To date I have received a total of 200,000 lei in various amounts on several occasions from (the previously named) Alexandru for the reproduced copies and was due to receive still 10,000 more.'

Alexandru, whose full name is Gheorghe Alexandru, from Ploiesti, had no way of knowing that his 'brother in the faith', Gheorghe Stancu, the one with holy words always on his lips, was cheating him and was keeping the lion's share that resulted both from the 'work' of George Angelescu, Ilie Duna and Mihai Ungureanu as well as from sales! We might mention that the most devout Gheorghe Stancu was reselling the reproduced and bound booklets at prices much higher than cost and made yet other business deals with the profits obtained. The holy chain lengthened continuously. For example, the most devout preacher Petre Taturica dealt with Stancu by 'sacrificing' to buy 'holy books' at a cost of about 70,000 lei and resold them at a price three to four times his cost for a fat profit. The same was also done by Gheorghe Alexandru, a fellow with a criminal past, who posed as the learned man in the affairs of the sect, delivering sermons and sharing with his brothers in the faith the rich wealth of knowledge he possessed as a man with ... a fourth grade education!

Quite a discrepancy existed between words and deeds! The former leader of the sect, who perched the accumulation of good deeds and wealth in heaven, acquired for himself the following earthly possessions: a luxurious villa,

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additional buildings and plenty of money. All done by speculating on the gullibility of his believers! And in order to deceive them to the fullest he had ten suits made from the same material so that people would say, 'See how like a hermit our preacher is! He only has one suit of clothes, the poor man!'

Thus you see the true face of our more or less pious sect members, the fabricators of this chain of dealings and deceptions. Some stole like highway robbers, others only pinching a little for themselves. Some preaching the lies and others using it like a weapon of self defense. Marin Chirita of Bucharest also one the the pious ones, went to a wedding and offered booklets of a mystico-religious nature for sale at prices as high as 300 lei per copy. When asked how he acquired them, he calmly answered that they were brought by 'unknown persons', or that they were 'thrown to him over a fence.' By whom? Perhaps by the holy ghost!

These same 'unknown persons' or perhaps who knows what 'holy ghost' also filled the trunk of Stefan Alexandru's private car with hundreds of copies of the same cheap literature. However, he forgot to mention that with the help of these same 'unknown persons' he had acquired a house in Bucharest and another in the countryside. But as is commonly known, a lie never gets too far. And Stefan Alexandru was caught with not just one but several. He was even turned in by his indignant mother-in-law who claimed to have lent him a large sum of money and also by an acquaintance in whose name he had wanted to register several objects of value. Of course, these 'ownerless' goods finally became state property!

'Birds of a feather flock together,' and the thief will join with the liar. Although the sect preached the commandment 'thou shalt not steal,' some of the members encouraged others to steal, not from their own pockets, God forbid!, but from public property. For example, they identified as weak in faith Ilie Duna, an undisciplined fellow who had often been reprimanded at work, and Maria Catana, both of whom were operators of the copying machine of an institute. They alone caused a loss of over 27,000 lei to public property. Where were the controls that were supposed to be performed by those who were responsible for the use of the copying machine? The answer to this question reminds us in part of the fact that sometimes those who were supposed to control the use of these machines allowed themselves to be bribed. This happened to Ion Comsa, an employee of a central research and planning institute who received a 15,000 lei bribe so he might close his eyes while his subordinates were engaged in 'evil' dealings. Of course, the necessary earthly steps were taken and the sword of law was used to cut the links at this end of the chain, links that go by the names of theft, embezzlement and bribery.

A 'holy' chain of dealings and deceptions, of greed, trickery and gross violations of the law involving the unauthorized reproduction and dissemination of certain anachronistic booklets which bring troubles to the human conscience on the one hand and illicit profits through the exploitation of the gullibility of certain people on the other. Here was a chain that rustled with the sould of hundreds and thousands of hundred-lei bills. It has been torn and smashed.

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How many days and nights, how much work, vigilance and effort to uncover the truth, and how much devotion was required of the officers from the Bucharest Municipal Inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs who investigated this very complicated case, a case that was so well hidden under the religiousness of those involved. They worked tirelessly, with a spirit of justice and with complete responsibility and competence. They constantly took into consideration the letter and spirit of the law that establishes, among other things, that the publications of religious groups be organized, directed and carried out in accordance with their own regulations as approved by law. Furthermore, the law states that 'the printing, registering or dissemination without legal authorization of printed matter or records on tape or film intended for use as a means of public information constitutes a violation of the law and is punishable....'

We are convinced that the more or less 'pious' individuals of this holy chain of dealings and deceptions were aware that they were violating the law. But greed and the desire to acquire possessions.... And if they continue to insist in their booklets that the buttons of radios and TV sets are controlled by satan why did they not refrain from putting their hands on unearned money, money that was actually evil. As an old saying goes: 'Money is the eye of the devil....'

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YUGOSLAVIA

WESTERN COMMENT ON VLADIMIR DEDIJER'S NEW BOOK

Hamburg STERN in German No 17, 17 Apr 80 pp 278-279

[Article by Georg Karp: "The Battle for Belgrade--A New Book Reveals Hitherto Unknown Details About Tito and His Disagreements With the Kremlin"]

[Text] When Yugoslav historian and author Vladimir Dedijer, 66, member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, writes a book, the Soviets cannot expect anything pleasant.

That was already the case in 1953, 5 years after the rupture with Moscow, when Dedijer, at the time still a member of the Yugoslav Communist Party's Central Committee, indicted the Kremlin leadership's sinister role before and after 1945 in an authorized biography of his friend and former comrade-in-arms Tito.

The same thing occurred in 1969, when Dedijer once again squared accounts with the USSR concerning the events of 1948 in his book "Stalin's Lost Battle." At that time Yugoslavia had been kicked out of the Soviet bloc because it wished to find its own nationalist route toward socialism.

The same thing is likely to happen again this year upon publication in the United States of Dedijer's latest three-volume work about Tito and Yugoslavia's last 40 years.

The writer and historian ("Sarajevo 1914") reveals hitherto unknown details of Yugoslav-Soviet relations during World War II and provides evidence on why and how Stalin had collaborated with the Serbian rightwing, ultranationalist Chetniks.

As early as the 1930's the Kremlin had established contact with members of the "Serbian Culture Club" in Belgrade, who saw in Stalin "the best defender of orthodox Serbs against the Catholic Croats and Slovenes." Later on, when Hitler's troops had occupied Yugoslavia, the Soviet generalissimo urged the red partisans and the royalist Chetniks to conduct joint operations against the Germans and the Italians. As Vladimir Dedijer, a partisan himself and Tito's diarist at the time, told STERN: "Stalin asked us to renounce our revolution and to help put a new royal dictatorship into power."

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Tito refused. Thereupon the Chetniks, who at the time still enjoyed the support of their British allies, started attacking partisan units. According to Dedijer, Stalin was constantly informed of Chetnik operations until the end of the war. Stalin's own man served as the Chetnik leader's closest political adviser: Belgrade attorney and author Dragisa Vasic. He had since 1934 been a member of Section 4 of the Soviet secret service.

Looking for new evidence about the 1948 conflict, Dedijer was in luck: "Two hitherto undiscovered messages prove that in 1942 Stalin was seeking to split our party."

In a letter to Tito, Stalin expressed his opposition to the formation of a partisan government on liberated territory. In another letter to Edvard Kardelj he requested that the latter prevent Tito's election as chairman, because "the West might otherwise conclude that we communists want to conquer Yugoslavia." Following the secret division of the Balkans into Eastern and Western zones of influence Tito realized the nature of Stalin's designs on Yugoslavia. Says Dedijer to STERN: "Tito was the first to recover from the ideological binge, long before Djilas or Kardelj."

The Communist International (Komintern) had already designated Tito a Trotskyite in 1937 "because he considered the nationalist problem to be Yugoslavia's key problem" and thereby was in opposition to the Komintern line. The Croat leader had barely been appointed general secretary of the Yugoslav communist party when he was placed on Stalin's hit list. Like his predecessor, he was scheduled for elimination after a secret trial. Stalin requested a dossier about Tito, containing damaging and compromising depositions by Yugoslav Stalinists. When he finally received the dossier, many accusations had been removed from it: Tito had gotten hold of the material in time and had sanitized it. In this way Tito escaped prosecution while more than 800 Yugoslav communists were murdered on Stalin's orders. As Dedijer told STERN: "Stalin killed more revolutionaries than did the police forces of all the reactionary regimes put together."

Exactly 25 years ago Vladimir Dedijer himself came into conflict with Tito and the party. He was the only Central Committee member to have come out in defense of Milovan Djilas, a critic of the system and former fair-haired boy of the party. Dedijer was expelled from the party and lost his job as professor of recent history at Belgrade University.

Tito himself considered Djilas' attacks upon the party's monopolistic authority and the subsequent surveillance by his friend and minister of the interior, Alexander Rankovic, to be a "severe disappointment." Says Vladimir Dedijer: "Tito was open and honest with everyone around him. He had thought that the same was true of others--but Djilas and Rankovic were after his scalp. Their lust for power did them in."

In the meantime, Josip Broz Tito has forgiven his biographer and buddy. They met for the first time in many years in November 1978 to discuss and authorize

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the new book. Says Dedijer: "Personally I feel very close to Tito. The same bomb which killed my wife Olga in 1943 had wounded him. Neither of us can forget that."

When they said goodbye, Tito said to him with his typical solemnity: "Write, Vlado, write--but always the truth. Because all of us are much to subjective, since we are all the authors and actors of our own drama."

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