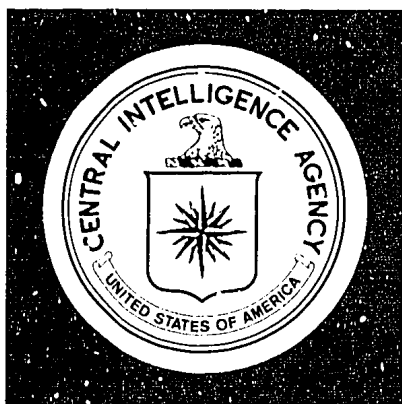


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Weekly Summary

Special Report

Romania: The Ceausescu Style

Secret

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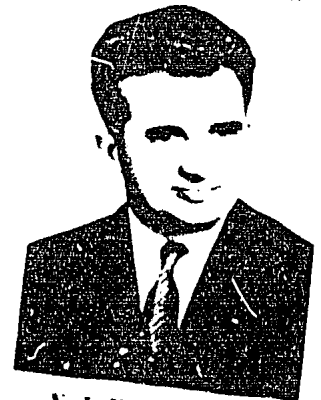
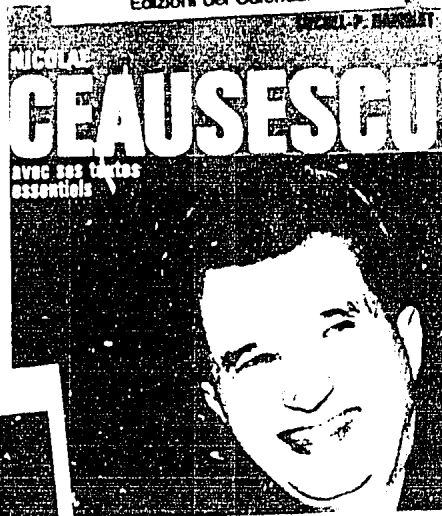
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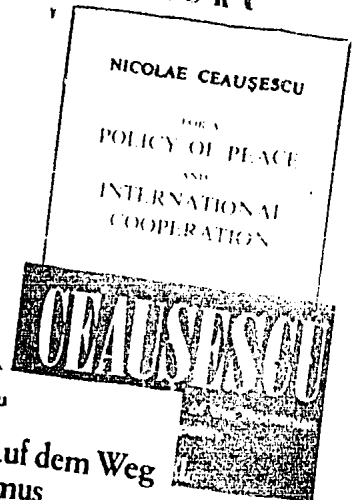
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Nicolae Ceaușescu

Rumänien auf dem Weg
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ROMANIA: THE CEAUSESCU STYLE

Summary

Since Romania decided in 1964 to pursue a basically independent foreign policy, it has moved quietly away from Moscow. Despite its continued membership in the Warsaw Pact, Romania:

- is receiving economic and political support from Peking;
- has developed close ties to West Germany, the EC, and much of Western Europe;
- was the first East European nation to be visited by an American president;
- has persistently sought closer ties with the nonaligned world.

Nicolae Ceausescu, president and party chief, has been primarily responsible for the political discipline, economic sacrifice, and nationalistic self-assertion that has been the hallmark of Romania in the early 1970s. The road toward independence has not been easy, however, and Bucharest still has a long way to travel. Romania's ties to the Soviets still constitute a major restraint on Ceausescu's maneuverability. Still, he is undoubtedly the most free-wheeling leader in the Warsaw Pact and a unique figure among the East Europeans.

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Foreign Policy

Ceausescu's foreign policy is a blend of defiance and conformity, but the over-all goal is to maintain—and even increase—the surprising degree of independence that has been won from Moscow. In foreign affairs, Ceausescu and Romania have gained international prominence out of proportion to the country's relatively small size and power base. Nevertheless, Romania remains a member of the Soviet military and economic system in Eastern Europe, and the leaders in Bucharest clearly recognize that these ties bind.

Ceausescu's skill lies in his ability to tailor his foreign policy initiatives to the levels of Soviet tolerance. Scrupulously careful not to push Moscow too far, he balances defiance in one area with cooperation in another. Ceausescu's trip to Peking in 1971 was a rare miscalculation but, in the face of Moscow's anger, he restored the balance with several concessions in the economic field. Similarly, following an independent stance in Vienna and Helsinki, Ceausescu earlier this year made a conciliatory gesture to Moscow by accepting a visit from Soviet Defense Minister Grechko. It was the first time a Soviet defense minister was allowed in Bucharest since the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Such concessions have not compromised the basic principles of Romania's independent course. Romania maintains relations with the full spectrum of the communist world—Moscow, Peking, Belgrade, and even Tirana—as well as with the leading West European parties. Under Ceausescu, the government has solidified its ties to Western Europe and has even attempted to identify with the nonaligned world. Romania is the only East European nation to maintain full diplomatic ties with both Israel and its principal antagonists in the Arab world.

Ceausescu and the Soviets

Bucharest has since 1958 refused to allow Warsaw Pact exercises on its territory. The Romanians defied Khrushchev's scheme for supranational economic integration. Ceausescu has repeatedly attempted to loosen his country's ties to



Nicolae Ceausescu

Born in 1918, Nicolae Ceausescu is today the youngest party leader in Eastern Europe. He is one of ten children born in a small village in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains about 90 miles northwest of Bucharest.

Ceausescu has almost model credentials for a Communist leader. Of humble peasant origin, he was forced to leave home at an early age to find work. Making his way to Bucharest, Ceausescu was soon swept up in the worker unrest of the depression era. At 15 he joined the Communist-sponsored national anti-fascist front. He was imprisoned by the pro-Nazi Romanian regime during World War II and tortured for his activities. After the Soviet occupation of Romania, Ceausescu resumed his work in the party, rising through the ranks to the number two slot behind Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej. When Dej died in 1965 Ceausescu succeeded to the party leadership. Ceausescu has combined hard work, talent, and no small measure of egotism to push himself and his country to the fore in the international arena.

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Ceausescu greeted by Brezhnev
in Moscow, August 1970

the Warsaw Pact, and was the only pact leader who openly criticized the Soviet-led occupation of Czechoslovakia.

More recently, Ceausescu has carried his defiance of Moscow into the multilateral negotiations on European security. Underlying his moves is a deep-seated, almost obsessive, fear that the talks on security and force reductions will result in a de facto division of Europe into two spheres of influence dominated by the super powers. Ceausescu apparently believes that this would leave Romania exposed to arbitrary pressure from the Kremlin without any hope of moderating leverage from the West.

Ceausescu laid down the guidelines for Romanian activism at the European security talks last November. He stressed that a tough line was necessary on procedural questions because the initial talks, then about to begin, would set precedents that would become binding. The Romanians have insisted that all nations participate in the talks as equal, independent states, irrespective of their membership in military alliances. Romania's strenuous efforts along these lines drew sharp criticism from Moscow and several of its East European allies. Undaunted, Ceausescu sent a strong delegation to the current security talks this fall. It is expected that the Romanians will present proposals that are out of step with the East Europeans and thus will likely draw more criticism from the Soviets.

The gap separating Moscow and Bucharest was reportedly widened during the Crimea summit in late July. Among other things, the two countries are at odds over the issue of frontiers. Moscow told the summit meeting that it favored the inviolability of existing frontiers. Bucharest favors a formula that would rule out the use of force to change them, but leave open the possibility of future adjustments by mutual consent. This approach is designed to avoid permanent foreclosure of Bucharest's claim to northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, which are now part of the USSR.

Disagreement over China also flared at Crimea. Several Romanian diplomats subsequently asserted that only Ceausescu's presence at the summit gathering prevented condemnation of Peking in the final communique. Ceausescu also sent effusive congratulations to Mao Tse-tung on his re-election as party chairman.

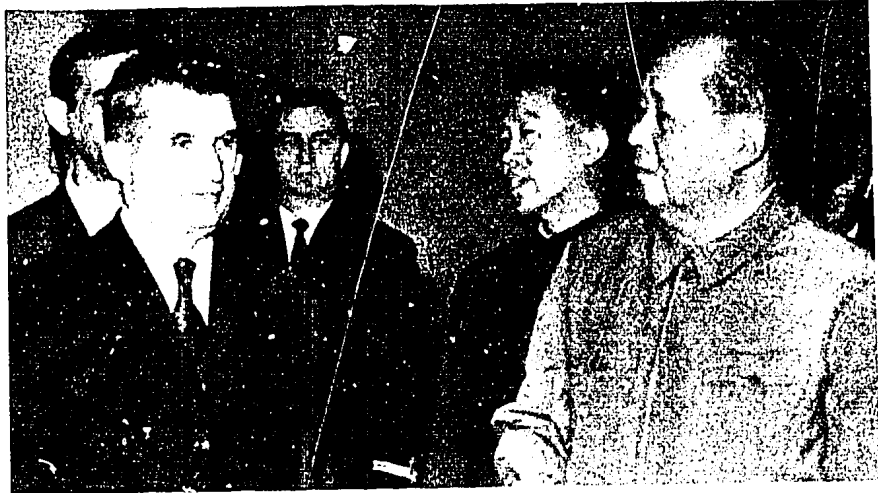
Bucharest's determination to resist Soviet pressure to join the anti-Chinese chorus was underscored in early September by the visit to Peking of Emil Bodnaras, a long-time Ceausescu adviser. Bodnaras undoubtedly used the occasion to discuss Moscow's anti-China campaign with his hosts, and he may also have raised the possibility that Moscow would convene an international communist conference with the aim of drumming China out of the world movement.

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Ceausescu and Chairman Mao



Ceausescu and Tito

Ceausescu has observed and learned from the policies of his neighbor, Yugoslav President Tito, although Ceausescu modifies the lessons to suit his own style. Romanian-Yugoslav cooperation predates 1968, but the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia pushed the two Balkan leaders closer together. Now, some five years after the Kremlin's move against the Czech spring, the sense of anxiety and urgency has waned. Ceausescu and Tito were in frequent contact until the recent Middle East war, when Yugoslavia's extravagant support of the Arabs ran up against Romania's ties to Israel.

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Both Ceausescu and Tito are committed to non-interference in the affairs of other states, united in their fear of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, and wedded to the principle that every Communist party and every nation is not only equal but master of its own house.

Ceausescu recognizes, however, that his freedom of maneuver is much more limited than Yugoslavia's. An 830-mile border with the Soviet Union is enough by itself to curb Bucharest's activities. Romania is still part of the Soviet defense and economic system in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, Ceausescu has learned from Tito the

merits of carrying his country's case into international forums, and he has developed a feeling for just how far he can go without provoking the Soviets into a strong reaction.

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Ceausescu has led his country into wide cooperation with the Yugoslavs. Bucharest and Belgrade are putting final touches on a plan for the joint production of a subsonic military aircraft. There are reports that an agreement has been reached for a joint venture in submarine construction.

[REDACTED] Romania's new defense law is another example of Ceausescu's willingness to borrow and adopt from the Yugoslavs. Adopted in December 1971, the law provides for the wartime mobilization of all adults—male and female and is based on a similar act in Yugoslavia.

Ceausescu has also borrowed from Tito in moving Romania closer to the third world. The Romanian leader has played host to a seemingly endless parade of third-world leaders. In the spring of 1972, Ceausescu visited eight African countries and a little over a year later he traveled to six Latin American nations, trips clearly intended to strengthen Bucharest's international

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Tito and Ceausescu

position as well as to promote trade. A more subtle objective is to involve Romania more deeply with nations that may share its sensitivity to real or imagined manipulation by big-power blocs. More recently, Romanian media gave a great deal of favorable publicity to the fourth nonaligned summit in Algiers in early September. The Romanian press bent over backward to draw parallels between Romanian policies and those of the nonaligned movement.

Looking Westward

Ceausescu has sought closer ties to the West, not only to demonstrate his independence from Moscow but also for the economic benefits he expects will accrue. He is eager to gain access to Western credits and technology, recognizing that reduced economic dependence on the Soviet Union is a major factor in consolidating Romania's hard-won independence in other fields. He

has encouraged Western investment and cooperative ventures in Romania, seeing in these a Western stake in his nation and a vote of confidence in its future.

Ceausescu has made a major effort to court Western Europe. In the first half of 1972 he visited Italy and West Germany. His four-day sojourn in the Federal Republic was the first by a Romanian chief of state to West Germany. During these and previous visits to Western Europe, Ceausescu asked his hosts to join him in signing a ten-point declaration of "solemn principles" governing relations between states. These principles stress the equality, independence, and territorial integrity of all states as a cornerstone for the future.

Romanian-US relations play an important part in Ceausescu's thinking. In the process of building better ties with Washington, Ceausescu has put special emphasis on improving trade and on industrial, scientific, and technological cooperation. He has also sought to improve relations by developing personal ties with presidents Johnson and Nixon. Early in 1973, Romania became the first Warsaw Pact country to buy US commercial aircraft, concluding a contract with Boeing for three 707s. More recently, Bucharest has expressed interest in a US project that would guarantee Romania much-needed coking coal over the next five years, the Soviet Union has heretofore been the main supplier.

These openings to the West have clearly annoyed the Soviets. There are reports that just prior to recent agreements by US, Italian, and West German firms for joint enterprises in Romania, Moscow was telling the other East Europeans that the Romanian policy had not paid off.

Ceausescu and the Middle East

Ceausescu's style is perhaps most apparent in his policy toward the Middle East, for Romania is the only Warsaw Pact state to maintain full diplomatic relations with both Israel and the major Arab nations. These ties to Israel are a bone of contention with Moscow and prevent the Kremlin from presenting a united Warsaw Pact front

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Romania's Ten Solemn Principles

1. The inalienable right of all people to decide their own fate.
2. The sacred right of every state to freedom, national independence and sovereignty.
3. The equality of all states regardless of size or political and economic system.
4. The right of every state to participate on an equal footing in the solving of international disputes.
5. Noninterference, under any form or pretext, in the internal or external affairs of other states.
6. Respect for the inviolability of state frontiers and for the territorial integrity of states.
7. The obligation of states to refrain, in their international relations, from military, political, or economic coercion.
8. The obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force under any circumstances.
9. The settlement of disputes among states by peaceful means.
10. The renunciation of the use of threat or force against another state under any pretext.

behind the Arab cause. On the other hand, Ceausescu's relations with Tel Aviv are a major policy difference between himself and Tito, who puts Belgrade firmly on the Arab side.

The latest Middle East war did not alter Ceausescu's determination to maintain this balance toward the antagonists. Romanian press coverage of the hostilities was even-handed, drawing on Israeli as well as Egyptian and Syrian press releases. The Soviet stand that Israel was to blame has been rejected, although in two recent speeches, Ceausescu did assert that Israel's continued occupation of Arab territories was an important factor in the resumption of fighting. He condemned the Israeli bombing of Damascus.

Not content to stand on the sidelines during the crisis, Ceausescu proposed a somewhat naive peace plan that called for an international peace conference of all interested parties and urged

small and medium-sized nations to join in strengthening the UN as a forum for maintaining peace. Undaunted when the Israelis, the Arabs, the US, and the Soviet Union all ignored the initiative, the Romanians invited Israeli and Arab representatives to meet in Bucharest. Tel Aviv responded by sending Foreign Minister Abba Eban, but no Arabs showed up; Eban himself admitted that he was sent as a gesture of appreciation for Romanian neutrality.

Over the long run, Ceausescu's initiative will serve to further isolate him from the Pact and aggravate Soviet-Romanian relations, but Ceausescu is prepared to absorb this sort of criticism from Romania's Pact partners as well as from the Arabs. His initial reaction to the current hostilities followed the pattern set in 1967: security has been tightened around sensitive locations

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Romanian diplomats have adopted a low profile, although they continue to emphasize the primacy of the UN.

If the war were to become protracted, the Romanians almost certainly would find their room for maneuver seriously reduced, and might go so far as to sacrifice their relations with Israel.

Over the short term, Ceausescu's neutralism in the Middle East has had mixed results. Israeli-Romanian relations may have prospered, but Bucharest has gained little influence over Tel Aviv's behavior. On the other hand, most Arab countries have broken diplomatic ties with Romania, and some even put an embargo on trade, a sanction clearly felt by the Romanians, who already had more than enough problems in finding markets.

Ceausescu at Home

Ceausescu's success abroad derives in large measure from his insistence on maintaining a rigid, orthodox communist system at home. His control of the country is almost complete. Most Romanians are cut off from almost all Western cultural and political contacts. Indeed, the average citizen finds it difficult to obtain an exit visa even to visit neighboring Yugoslavia. Ceausescu keeps a tight grip on the levers of power in order to forestall Soviet charges of deviation—an accusation that proved fatal in Dubcek's Czechoslovakia. He also keeps close tabs on his subordinates and makes sure they have little capacity to challenge his authority.

Since he came to power in 1965 after the death of Gheorghiu-Dej, Ceausescu has slowly but firmly rebuilt the party and state apparatus to his liking. He has done this by cleaning house and filling key jobs with men who owe their advancement to him personally. He has rotated people in and out of office in a constant search for individuals who are not only loyal but have expertise and experience. Willingness to shift subordinates arbitrarily has become a trademark of the Ceausescu style.

Ceausescu has pulled together a personal staff of advisers, who form a brain trust of political, economic, and administrative experts. Without parallel in the communist world, this "kitchen cabinet" is designed to provide a capable staff for formulating policy and solving problems. The appointment of Nicolea Ecobescu as counselor to the President earlier this year exemplifies this technique. One of Romania's leading experts on European security, Ecobescu now has direct and frequent contact with Ceausescu and will accompany him on his travels.

Ceausescu has also streamlined the party machinery. Power is wielded from three small executive bodies—the secretariat, the permanent presidium, and the executive committee—all dominated by Ceausescu personally. The three are even more closely knit due to overlapping memberships made up of Ceausescu appointees.

On the government side the story is the same. Ceausescu reigns supreme. The major components of government are the National Assembly, the Council of State, and the Council of Ministers. The Council of State has become most important since Ceausescu became its president in late 1967. The system of interlocking membership in the party bodies extends into the executive levels of the state as well.

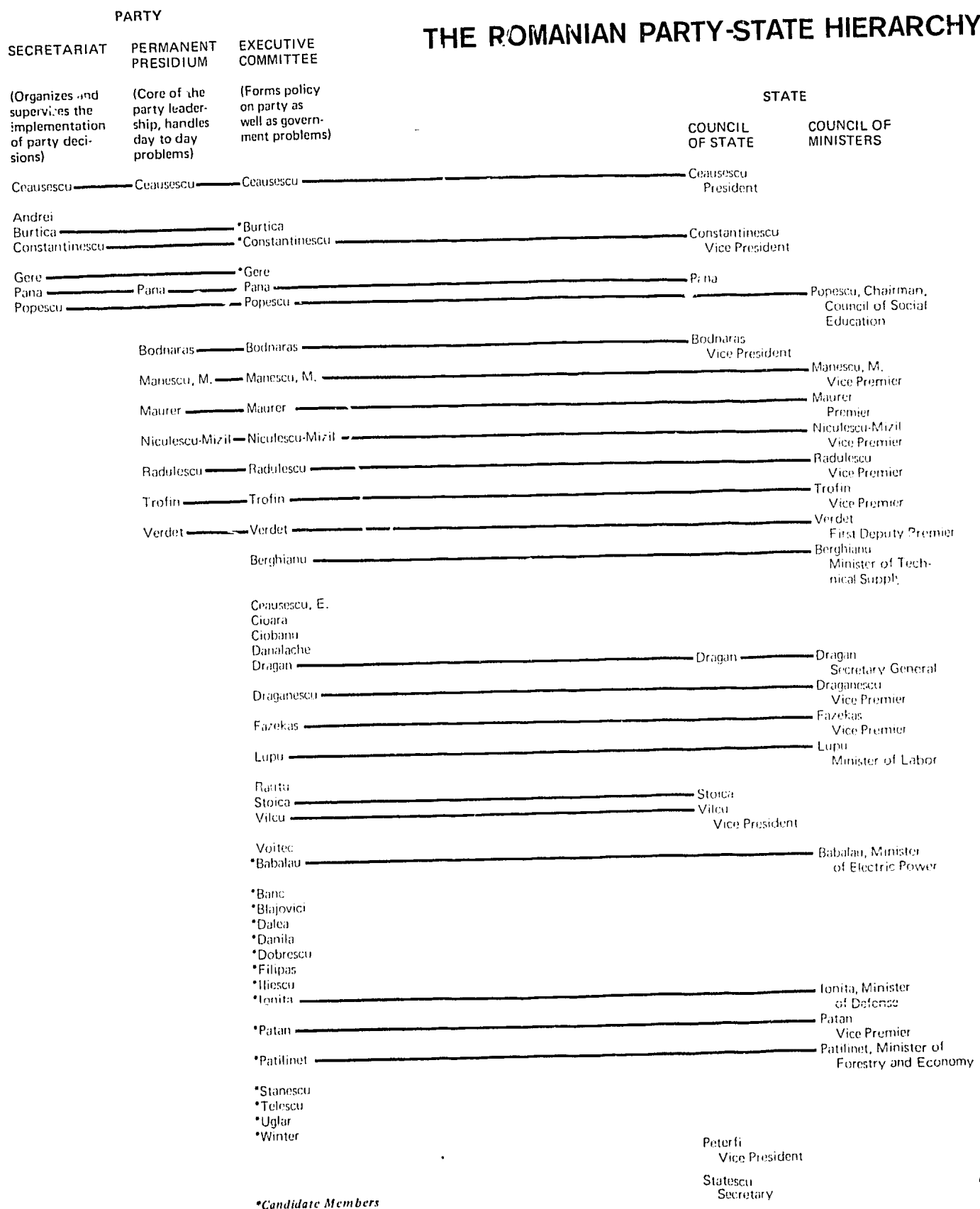
The power that has gravitated to Ceausescu, coupled with adulation heaped on him by the media, has raised eyebrows at home and abroad. He is either unable or unwilling to resist being put forward as a national hero, and his own actions have contributed to growing concern about the "cult of Ceausescu."

The "cult" was dramatized last January when Ceausescu's 55th birthday was the occasion for a week of fawning tribute. Several prominent leaders, including Premier Maurer and Deputy Premier Bodnarus, reportedly counseled Ceausescu against encouraging this sort of hero worship. To this point, their words have been to no avail. Ceausescu is vain, and shows no inclination to share the spotlight with anyone.

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Ceausescu and wife join folk dancers
in celebrating his 55th birthday

Despite the cult that surrounds him, Ceausescu does have a claim to genuine popular support. His open denunciations of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia electrified the Romanians, and for the first time in the postwar period pulled them together behind the regime in a common struggle against Moscow. Ceausescu thus achieved something that no other postwar Romanian communist leader had been able to do. Moreover, there is a general awareness of and pride in his ability to read the Soviets. The people admire his ability to probe pressure points, to test Moscow, Washington, and Peking—and thus to exploit the rivalry to further Romanian national interests.

The Economy

Under Ceausescu's guidance, Romania has achieved one of the highest rates of economic growth in the world. Gross National Product has grown at an average annual rate of nine percent since 1970. Rapid industrialization, however, has been achieved mainly by massive imports of Western machinery and equipment, mostly purchased on credit. As a result, Romania's hard-currency indebtedness—and the burden of servicing that debt—has become an immense headache. Romania is caught in a vicious circle—to repay the hard-currency debt, Ceausescu presses for greater economic self-sufficiency, but in order to sustain

rapid growth and increase efficiency, Romania needs greater access to Western technology and credits.

Although Ceausescu has long been fully in charge of economic, as well as political, affairs, he took steps last May which have resulted in his accepting to a degree uncommon in communist states personal responsibility for curing the nation's economic ills. He thus made himself more vulnerable to criticism in the event that the economy deteriorates.

Behind Ceausescu's economic policies is the recurrent question of decentralization versus centralization of economic management. Ceausescu seeks rapid industrialization, economic self-sufficiency, and closer trading links with the West as a means of underscoring his political independence of Moscow. He has chosen to stick with a centralized economy. Ceausescu has seen economic reform carried out elsewhere in East Europe, and some reports say he has concluded such experimentation is alien to his style. In this respect, his brand of communism is more orthodox than that of the Soviets. The inherent problems, weaknesses, and contradictions are obvious. Ceausescu urges greater efficiency, but is unwilling to take the necessary steps to achieve his goals by allowing greater individual responsibility.

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Even with his insistence on a rigid Soviet-styled system, Ceausescu has been able to strike a reasonably independent economic position between East and West. He has been able gradually to reduce the share of his country's trade with CEMA and the USSR. As a result, he has reduced Romanian vulnerability to economic sanctions designed to force him to conform to Moscow's policies. Mindful of Khrushchev's schemes of the early 1960s, Ceausescu also is particularly wary of being drawn into any supranational economic or political plans or bodies that would infringe on his nation's independence.

Under Ceausescu's leadership, Bucharest has also sought new ways to promote hard-currency exports. Romania was the first Warsaw Pact country to allow Western equity participation—up to 49 percent—in selected industries. In 1973, Control Data Corporation followed the lead of French and West German firms and took advantage of the opportunity, forming a joint company to produce computer equipment in Romania.

Despite success in some areas, the economy will be a major problem for Ceausescu. Interest on debt service payments already amounts to 40 percent of Romania's exports to the West. The Romanians are being asked to tighten already tight belts in the name of greater efficiency and higher production. While Ceausescu keeps a firm grip on the situation, he is not yet willing to decentralize and allow market forces to come into play in order to produce the results he seeks. But his hands may be tied. The successes he has been able to achieve in other fields rest to a great extent on his insistence on an orthodox communist economy. Ceausescu is aware that the

slightest hint that the party is losing control over economic matters could produce an adverse Soviet response.

Outlook

Ceausescu's relative youth, his powerful drive, and his single-minded pursuit of goals have enabled Romania to make significant strides in removing itself from Soviet domination. Although Ceausescu has not resisted having himself put forward as a national hero, he has not become drunk with power and he is not corrupt. He has dealt magnanimously with his political opponents.

His extensive foreign travels and his harping on greater economic efficiency have produced some criticism within the upper reaches of the hierarchy. The muttering is muted and does not constitute any serious threat to his rule. To the average Romanian, Ceausescu's accomplishments and achievements are well known, and they far outweigh his shortcomings. He has given the country international prestige and importance it had never before enjoyed.

Ceausescu has proved capable of guiding Romania in a multipolar world. He has traded on real and potential Soviet, Chinese, and American rivalries to expand his nation's independence. He also has seized upon the climate of detente to draw attention to his claim that Romania is an independent state. Ceausescu will doubtless continue to press his nation's independence from the Soviet Union whenever possible, but in doing this he will be careful to stay within the limits of Soviet tolerance.

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Ceausescu in Disneyland

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