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Intelligence Report

Office of Leadership Analysis

8 July 1994

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Romania's President Iliescu Riding Out Opposition Attacks

1. **President Ion Iliescu** presides over a loose and increasingly fragile parliamentary coalition composed of the former Communist Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR) and several small ultranationalist and communist parties. The reformist opposition parties, led by **Emil Constantinescu's** Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR), recently intensified their campaign against the government of **Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu**, straining his already weak mandate and forcing Iliescu and Vacaroiu to rely more heavily on the pro-government, ultra-nationalist parties, according to press reports.

- **CDR Chairman Constantinescu** and **Corneliu Coposu**, chairman of the National Peasant Party-Christian Democratic (PNT-CD)—the largest single constituent CDR member party, have launched several no-confidence motions against Vacaroiu, accusing him of tolerating corruption and failing to make progress on reform.
- Opposition leaders have also recently orchestrated an impeachment motion against Iliescu for allegedly interfering with the independence of the judicial system. The motion was defeated, but the effort to impeach the President reflects increasing opposition boldness.
- Vacaroiu's coalition partners are wavering in their commitment to his government as opposition attacks increase; the Democratic Agrarian Party of Romania (PDAR) supported the no-confidence motion against Vacaroiu, while the Socialist Workers' Party (PSM) abstained. Press sources indicate that Iliescu promised concessions to the extreme nationalist National Unity Party of Romania (PUNR) to retain its support. [redacted]

Intra-Party Conflicts

2. Strong interpersonal rivalries among party leaders dominate Romanian internal party politics and have undermined the ability of both government and opposition leaders to maintain stable coalitions. Internal strains have also weakened party discipline in voting on key political and economic reform issues, according to [redacted] press reports.

This memorandum was prepared by the Office of Leadership Analysis, Directorate of Intelligence. Questions and comments can be directed to [redacted]

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- Iliescu, along with **PDSR Executive Chairman Adrian Nastase** and **Honorary Chairman Oliviu Gherman**, favors a moderate but more rapid pace of economic reform, according to press [redacted]. His efforts to implement reforms have been stymied by prominent PDSR hardliners, including Senators **Ion Solcanu** and **Vasile Vacaru**, who reflect the PDSR rank and file's wariness about economic reforms; the hardliners are concerned that reforms would erode the wealth they gained through their control of state and party bureaucracies under former dictator **Nicolae Ceausescu**. To maintain his parliamentary majority, Iliescu has also scaled back his efforts in deference to his anti-reform nationalist and communist partners, according to press [redacted].
- Strong differences between the uncompromising, anticommunist **Coposu** and moderate **Civic Alliance Party** leader **Nicolae Manolescu** divide the CDR. [redacted] Manolescu is willing to work with other opposition forces and reformist leaders in the PDSR, while Coposu refuses to cooperate with the PDSR or with **Petre Roman's Democratic Party-National Salvation Front**, Romania's second-largest opposition party. [redacted]

Foreign Policy Consensus

3. In contrast to his domestic reform efforts, Iliescu has faced little opposition to his pro-West foreign policy. Top PDSR and opposition leaders alike see Romania as an island of stability in the Balkans and support increased contacts with the West—including participation in the Partnership for Peace program and eventual NATO membership—to enhance the country's security. [redacted] Although ultranationalist leaders openly criticize Iliescu's pro-West leaning, they lack influence over his foreign policy decisionmaking. [redacted]