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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. **SO DB-26260**

CD NO. **PX-1115**

COUNTRY **Romania** *RADESCU, (General) Nicolae*

DATE DISTR. **26 June 1960**

SUBJECT **Letter of Augustin Poga, Representative of the National Peasant Party in the Romanian National Committee, to King Mihai**

NO. OF PAGES **6**

PLACE ACQUIRED **Italy, Rome**

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO. **19 May 1960**

MICROFILMED
FEB 25 1963

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. **SO DB-26068**

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SOURCE

The following letter, under date of 19 May 1960, has been sent to King Mihai by Augustin Poga of the National Peasant Party:

"Sir,

"On 12 May I received the following letter signed by General Radescu on the previous day:

"Mr. Member: Attached hereto I send a copy of the letter of *Constantin* ~~General~~ *Constantin* ~~Petre-Lazar~~. Because the proposal of *Constantin* ~~General~~ *Constantin* ~~Petre-Lazar~~ has not been accepted by ~~SOME MEMBERS~~ of the National Committee, the answer requested by His Majesty the King will be given individually.

"I have reproduced this text because I think it is as short as it is eloquent. Reflecting once more General Radescu's conception of the National Committee and of his role as president of this organ of leadership of the Romanian action abroad, he answers - without having the permission of the author - to the first question asked by Your Majesty through the letter of General Petre-Lazar, concerning reasons why the National Committee cannot work in a useful way.

"Your Majesty knows that General Radescu has suspended the sessions and that he has stopped the activity of the Committee over which he presides until he receives satisfaction in a personal conflict with one of the members of the Committee. It can be seen that not even the urgent wish of the Sovereign, or the evident urgency and importance of the replies requested by a High Order, have been able to bring General Radescu to renounce the presidential strike with which he punishes the common cause from personal motives.

"It should follow thus that in his conception his own will and anger come before the public interest, the National Committee being subordinated completely to the will of its president.

"Perfectly logically, this deduction appears exaggerated because of the grave conclusion that it reaches. Nobody, including the signer of these lines, contests the patriotism of General Radescu, to which a long and beautiful life stands witness.

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"But unhappily, the lack of political experience, the temperament, the formation and weaknesses of age, to which is added the bad influence of some 'friends', have produced in him - without wishing it or without his being aware of it - a confused moral complex, in which the lines dividing the national interest from his personal sensibility are lost, making him improper for leadership in a democratic spirit, of a political action as a team amid the hard and involved circumstances in which we find ourselves.

"This difficulty, which began to show itself in the course of long negotiations for the formation of the Committee, became evident soon after its creation and became aggravated with time, has brought the weakening of the authority and the paralysis of the activity of this organ which has today reached a dead end."

"Sire,

"The boldness with which General Radescu insistently demanded from the beginning, the formation of a Committee 'of his own' is known, in which if not all then a majority of the members would be nominated by him and devoted personally to him. Not succeeding, he accepted the presidency of the existing group, only to declare at once his dissatisfaction and to announce his determination to do everything possible to change the composition of the Committee.

Humania
 "Thus, from the first moment, around the ~~National Committee~~ there was created an atmosphere of instability and crisis, unfavorable to normal operation.

"It is a pity that the dissatisfaction of General Radescu was not appeased by these initial verbal manifestations. The modification of the Committee as he desires it has become the dominant idea of his entire activity, his major preoccupation. A passionate fighter, he has pursued the accomplishment of this objective with energy and perseverance really worthy of a better cause.

"The mobilization of the Rumanian emigration - an easy operation taking into consideration the state of moral depression, the excited state of moral depression, the excited state of mind and permanent pressure in which our wandering brothers live - was the first tactical step in the fight which the president began against his Committee. 'The men of the General' in various countries began to speak of the incapacity and incompetence of the team for the leadership of the Rumanian action, denouncing especially some of the members who, seized by personal ambition, or a partisan and negative, hamper all the noble initiatives of the president.

"The representatives of the political parties, especially the leaders of the National Peasant Party, were held responsible first of all for bringing about this deplorable state of affairs. Their principal error was that they kept stubbornly to the pretense of establishing Rumanian action abroad on the will of the nation at home, as expressed through the democratic political parties, whose leaders by thousands confront martyrdom on the altar of the Rumanian cause.

"Before this antiquated partisan conception - evidently erroneous - the moment the sluice for personal ambitions was opened, full of the memory of a too elastic political past the ideologues around General Radescu invented a new political theory, that of 'personalities', which would alone correspond

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to 'the laws of our exile'. By this definition, the political parties should be considered as a sort of misfortune which divides and aggravates the nation: 'who says party, says part', General Rădescu stated in one of his manifestos. These parties, being formally suppressed in the country by the Communist government, no longer have mandates and representatives abroad. Lately, because of the instability of public opinion specifically known, it is very doubtful that the parties to which the Rumanian nation gave its votes in the historic election of 1946, still enjoy today the same popularity. On top of that, without regard to the present uncontrollable situation, the future of these political organs being uncertain, it would be a mistake to build the action of liberation on them.

"The laws of exile' demand that this action be conducted by 'representative personalities', who, without regard to their past and to the repute they enjoy in the country, are qualified for this role because of their talent and intrinsic value - appreciated, certainly, by themselves or at least by General Rădescu - and through their connections with various influential circles abroad.

"It is useless to insist upon the value of this theory of 'the elite', which, although of Nazi inspiration, will certainly have the approval of traitors in Bucharest.

"The existence of political parties and their part in the life of democratic communities does not depend on definitions or on the wishes of our new theoreticians. On the other hand, the National Peasant Party receives and looks upon such verbal attacks with serenity. Not once but many times during its stormy past it has been 'suppressed', and 'dissolved', only after every such 'mortal blow' to appear more powerful than before, to witness the overthrow and disappearance of its suppressors.

"We are then not worried about the future of our Party. In this action of liberation we do not think in terms of party, but only of national interest. Put into application, the new theory would take from the National Committee the right and authority to speak in the name of the Nation and to represent the interests of the Rumanian State, reducing this organ to the rank of a committee, any single committee of refugees which is formed any place, according to needs and possibilities, representing the sufferings and the interests of its associated members. So, under the pretext of the doubtful 'efficiency' of some individuals, the right of action of the Rumanian people would be suppressed and the authorized voice of the Nation would be silenced.

"No matter how strange, the theory was spread not only among the Rumanian emigrants, but also in important foreign circles, and especially here in America.

"But through a logic even more strange, parallel with its launching two other tactical operations were begun. On one side, General Rădescu announced with much fuss, the creation of a new cultural and political group for Rumanian refugees named 'The Democratic Union of Free Rumanians', which, in order to be more democratic, before taking in members and before being organized had already a president and official newspapers. On the other hand, it encouraged the action of other groups with a political character different from that of the democratic parties, trying at the same time to break the solidarity of the members of these latter. The promise of places in the future, National Committee has played an important part in this action of dissolution.

"The atmosphere of distrust, confusion and discontent created around the Committee in the way shown above, does not constitute a favorable framework for normal operation. But it could have been dispersed and the authority of the Committee restored through an increased activity, ordered and systematic.

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"For this purpose, there was requested, on one side, the publication of clear political directives which would orient and harmonize the thoughts of the refugees amid the whirl of problems confronting us; on the other side, a concrete program of work, in which Rumanian energies should be engaged, energies which are wasted today in sterile criticism and internal quarrels.

"At the beginning of October 1949, in Paris, I showed General Rădescu the imperious duty to close the chapter of small misunderstandings and to start the rehabilitation of the National Committee, following the road shown above, the road of constructive and organized labor. We examined concretely all questions enumerated by him as 'in litigation', finding for each of them satisfactory solutions. In exchange, he promised to do everything possible to end the campaign to slander and discredit the National Committee and to strengthen its position and prestige.

"This completed I left for America, having high hopes and especially the firm decision to contribute, in a spirit of large comprehension, to the establishment of peace and harmony within the Committee, in the work of which I had not participated then directly. Unfortunately, in a short time these hopes proved to be simple illusions. From the very first sessions presided over by General Rădescu, following his return from Europe, a state of hostilities was declared within the forum which had the mission to pacify and harmonize Rumanian emigres abroad. A word uttered a little louder, an opinion different from that of the president supported by some of the members not in his group of friends was enough for the discussions to deepen into explanations, interpretations and personal recriminations, and to terminate suddenly without it being possible to make decisions concerning the problems of the day.

"Generally, the Committee was not divided on national questions or general interests. Discussions of such matters were calm and the decisions were made in good understanding. The underlying reasons for such scandal were usually minor questions, of internal administration or involving persons and facts within the ferment of the world of the Rumanian emigration.

"Many times during friendly sessions of the members of the Committee, without the participation of the president, solutions for various difficulties were tried out, attempts were made to find practical methods of work, dividing functions among the members and obtaining their agreement in advance, thus making the official sessions simple formalities for the approval of some resolutions agreed to beforehand, reducing discussions and therefore misunderstandings in the sessions.

"On my side, for this purpose, I made concessions, which have brought me, justly, reproaches from my colleagues, the leadership of the National Peasant Party.

"All in vain. The temperament of General Rădescu, the way he understands to direct the activity of the Committee, to lead the discussions in the sessions and to act outside the sessions have condemned our good intentions to failure.

"General Rădescu loses his temper easily. It happens that simple opinions contrary to his wishes are taken by him as personal affronts. He does not understand the normal and general method for deciding facts by a vote of the majority. He does not respect even unanimous decisions of the members of the Committee if they do not agree with his own.

"He considers himself the only one having the right to determine the order of the day and refuses purely and simply to discuss matters which do not suit him, even if such are requested by the Sovereign Himself. The correspondence, addressed to him as president he considers as personal, presenting it to the

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Committee or depositing it on the archives as he wishes. For this reason it could happen that important papers, as for example a memorandum from the Polish Government in London, were forgotten among his personal papers.

"On the other hand, General Rădescu thinks he has the right to make declarations, interventions, to recommend persons and the like, in the name of the Committee, but without the knowledge and approval of its members. Thanks to these procedures, it was possible for unqualified persons to be named to positions involving the national action and for some of his favorites to receive salaries and honors on which more refugees could live, refugees who are today starving to death though they deserve well of the Nation for their diligence and although their qualities would be an addition to the action abroad.

"To complete the exposition, I recall also a fact which seems of especial gravity. It no longer passes unnoticed, the moment General Rădescu wanted to let it be known through an official act, such as his letter reproduced at the beginning of these lines.

"It concerns the introduction of authorities and foreign factors into the resolution of our internal problems.

"I pass over the fact that I had only an incidental and incomplete knowledge of the 'Barnes proposal'. I had then no possibility to make a statement about it. Probably its formal communication was thought to be useless, because of the fact that it was not accepted by some of the members of the Committee, understanding by this, I think, General Rădescu himself, because as we know he at first rejected it. But I find this procedure in itself reprehensible and not compatible with the dignity which must be observed by the Committee.

"General Rădescu was made aware of the grave error that he had committed in his appeal of August 1948, in which he showed that the urgency for the creation of a National Committee emanated from the will of a Foreign Power, a will 'above which no one could pass'. I see with deep grief that, following the constitution of the Committee, this practice has continued in our executive. The authorities here who maintain contact with various National Committees have been kept informed not only of the decisions and the activity of the National Committee - as was normal - but were informed, and not always in an objective manner, of all details concerning the misunderstandings within our Committee, attempting to give to them the role of arbitrator and tutor which is unacceptable from the Rumanian point of view and foreign to their intentions.

"We appreciate too much the good will and help of the Powers on which depends, in the last analysis, the liberation of Rumania, to create for those Powers delicate situations. On the other side, the sentiments of national dignity and the interests of Rumanian action oblige us to maintain not only true independence - which we have - but oblige us to avoid carefully contrary appearances which could give propaganda material to adversaries who lurk about and watch us."

"Sire,

"In the above exposition, appears, I believe, the answer to the second question put by Your Majesty by means of the letter of General Petre-Lazăr dated 25 April.

"To be able to insure for the present committee, the possibility of laborious and useful work, before everything else the nature, mentality, conceptions and method of work of the President should be changed.

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"On the basis of experience up to the present, following the failure of all efforts to pacify the spirits and harmonize the activity of the Committee, I do not believe that this miracle can be accomplished. I think, on the contrary, that the different attempts at 'technical' arrangements have only worsened the situation, General Radescu interpreting them in the sense that no matter what happens, his foreign friends will never agree to his removal from the leadership.

"The replacement of General Radescu in the leadership of the National Committee becomes thus a necessity which cannot be avoided and cannot be delayed without real loss for Rumanian activity.

"But taking into consideration his past diligence, his prestige and venerable age, it would be desirable that this change, which has become unavoidable without guilt on his part, because of his age and because of his nature and 'friends', be made at the same time taking into consideration and treating with care his prestige and his sensibilities. I propose then that he be relieved of the obligations of leadership and kept as Honorary President of the National Committee without other functions.

"The action awaited from the Committee cannot be accomplished without a unified leadership. I do not believe then, that arrangements involving larger or smaller committees, which by their very nature weaken unity and spread authority, would achieve the purpose. I believe then that the nomination of a new active president to head the National Committee, is necessary in the person of a capable man who knows the political problems and democratic practices, is master of his ideas and his nerves, and would be the element of cohesion and harmony necessary for the action of liberation.

"If Your Majesty will make a decision in this sense, the National Peasant Party and the Council of Political Parties will fulfill their duty to make concrete proposals both for the person of the future president, and for the eventual enlargement or greater change that could become necessary on the occasion of a change in the president."

"Sire,

"I have written this report overcome by vivid bitterness, and only with a truly suffering heart have I put on paper the conclusion at which I have arrived.

"I was among those who thought that the arrival among us of General Radescu was a great good fortune for Rumanian activity. We thought that thus it would be possible to form a Committee in exile that would continue, symbolically, the last legal Government of the country, formed by the democratic political parties and presided over by him. The prestige and authority he enjoyed at home and abroad, naturally placed him in command, and his age indicated him to be the ideal harmonizer of various views in such a complex activity.

"We are obliged to see, however, that this last factor, old age, whose ravages nobody escapes, has become the main reason which requires the passage of General Radescu from activity to the position of honor which is due him."

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