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Aftershocks:

Nicolae Ceaușescu and the Romanian Communist Regime's Responses to the 1977 Earthquake

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Abstract

In March 1977 an exceptionally strong earthquake struck Romania ruled by the communist president and dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu and his regime. The policies and actions implemented and undertaken in the days, weeks, and year that followed were forms of aftershocks. The Ceaușescu regime modeled the 1977 earthquake recovery on previous disaster relief efforts, but escalated them to a scale not seen before. The earthquake served as an accelerant for some of the regime's severe and extreme 1980s policies and efforts. The regime learned from those earthquake disaster response efforts what it could ask of itself and its citizenry. The repressive 1980s policies, such as austerity, were built on incremental steps, many of which the regime took in the wake of the 1977 earthquake. This dissertation examines the Ceaușescu regime's policies specifically implemented in the name of earthquake recovery that appropriated assets and extracted labor from, imposed restrictions on, and limited resources for the Romanian population.

The earthquake killed more than 1,500 people, injured 11,000, and displaced more than 120,000; its damage was estimated at two billion dollars. Those losses challenged the regime at a scale it had not previously experienced. I examine the regime's efforts from the moments after the earthquake struck. Its actions went beyond typical post-disaster efforts to assist survivors, recover victims, and clean-up debris. First, alongside first-responders, the regime deployed its secret police, the Securitate, in asset recovery and foreign assistance solicitation operations. Second, the regime capitalized on Romanians' benevolence and expanded initiatives that extracted significant labor and cash from workers and citizens. Third, because Nicolae Ceaușescu perceived

the earthquake's aftermath as panic- and chaos-producing, he ordered incremental actions that culminated in the end to all seismic structural integrity assessments and cosmetic repairs to thousands of residential buildings damaged by the earthquake. Essentially, he chose to protect the public's safety. That policy's legacy is felt today, as thousands of buildings in Romania's capital have been condemned as likely to collapse at the next significant earthquake. Finally, the 1977 earthquake occurred at the half-way point in Ceaușescu's tenure and served as a catalyst for the repressive policies of the 1980s, in particular the destruction of a large neighborhood and surrounds to construct the new massive administrative center in Bucharest, the Civic Center Project (*Centrul Civic*), and its centerpiece, the House of the People (*Casa Poporului*), the world's second largest administrative building.

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I am truly grateful for the support and love from Daniel, Elliot, Theodore, Miriam and Paul. All errors here within are mine.

Karin Steinbrueck, May 4, 2017

Dedication

This work is dedicated
to the
1977 earthquake victims, survivors, and victims' families and friends
and
to my mum, Waltraud "Trudy" Steinbrueck.

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Introduction



Figure 1. President Nicolae Ceaușescu (in sunglasses and hat) and his wife Elena Ceaușescu (in plaid coat) with regime leaders, walked along Calea Victoriei, 63-69 Bucharest, passing the damaged c.1937, nine-story apartment building where Café Nestor once stood, the day following the earthquake, March 5, 1977.¹ First-responders rescued four people from its basement, trapped for forty-five hours.²

The March 4, 1977 earthquake, the strongest to shake Romania in the twentieth century, killed 1,572 people, injured another 11,000, and displaced more than 120,000 from their homes.³

The damage was centralized in Romania's capital Bucharest, where more than two dozen

¹ *Fototeca online a comunismului românesc*, code 27/1977, accessed March 18, 2016, <http://fototeca.iicr.ro/picdetails.php?picid=41666X5X14>.

² Emil-Sever Georgescu and Antonios Pomonis, "A Review of Socio-Economic Consequences, Losses and Casualties of the 1977 Vrancea, Romanian Earthquake," *Construcții* No. 2, (2011): 37.

³ The earthquake struck at 9:22 p.m. on March 4, 1977, and registered 7.4 on the Richter Scale.

buildings partially or fully collapsed. Half of the estimated losses were to residential housing. To address those President Nicolae Ceaușescu (1918-1989) and Romanian government officials deployed a range of workers. The typical first-responders engaged in both typical and atypical tasks, such as asset protection and recovery. The regime deployed atypical workers, too, from its secret police, the Securitate. From the moments after the earthquake struck, Securitate officers and troops, sometimes in disguise, worked alongside typical first-responders in a range of expected disaster recovery efforts such as guarding damaged areas. More unusually, they also solicited clandestine foreign assistance. At the same time, the regime began other unusual efforts in the name of the 1977 earthquake victims. It attempted to direct, control, and solicit foreign assistance. It rolled-out efforts that extracted cash and labor from Romanian workers. Ultimately, it ended assessments and significant repairs to many of the residential buildings damaged by the earthquake. I examine the regime's efforts from the moments after the earthquake struck, during a ten-day state of emergency, and for more than a year, well into 1978. Those combined efforts, I argue, taught Ceaușescu and officials under him the degree to which they could impose repressive and extractive policies on Romanians, further expand the use and role of the Securitate, and get away with doing little to secure public safety. While historically such repressive Ceaușescu-era policies have been understood as phenomena of the 1980s, I also argue that the ideological and conceptual premises behind them were tried and tested during the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts. Those metaphorical aftershocks move the ideological and practical underpinnings of the 1980s Ceaușescu-era oppression back into the late 1970s. This work also demonstrates that such policy developments were incremental and built on efforts the

regime took well before the 1977 earthquake and established within a legal framework. Lastly, the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts served as catalysts for the repressive policies that followed in the 1980s.

The 1977 earthquake marked almost exactly the half-way point in Nicolae Ceaușescu's authoritarian, dictatorial control of communist Romania. By that time he described himself as the patriarch of the nation and his tenure as the "golden era." From 1965 to 1989, he led one of the most repressive, insular, and nationalist post World War II European communist regimes. But, he did not begin his tenure as a pure despot; he arrived there incrementally. He made reforms for a foreign audience, while continuing to introduce repressive policies at home. Most pin the Ceaușescu regime's most repressive policies to the second half of Ceaușescu's regime, which started after the 1977 earthquake and ended December 1989. During that time day-to-day life in Romania included secret police saturation highest among the communist bloc; austerity measures that severely limited people's access to necessities such as food, electricity and fuel; and activities to support Ceaușescu's paranoid cult of personality such as daylong all-country holiday celebrations.

Since his ascent to power in 1965, Ceaușescu held the top spot in his regime, but he did not work alone. There were those who willingly carried out state and party mandates as well as those who unwillingly did so at all levels. By the earthquake, Ceaușescu's wife, Elena (1916-1989), had risen to occupy the number two position behind him. At their sides was the Prime Minister Manea Mănescu.⁴ Top government officials at ministry or leadership posts were all

⁴ See the meeting minutes at ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 18/1977, 2. Mănescu (1916-2009) was Prime Minister from Mar.1975 - Mar.1979, CCRCP member from Jun. 1960-Nov.1979 and Dec.1982 – Dec.1989, and PEX

members of the Romanian Communist Party. Many of those who orchestrated the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts were members of the Central Committee (CCRCP) and its Political Executive Committee (PEX). The majority of members joined the CCRCP when Ceaușescu rose to power.

Two regime leaders played key roles in the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts: Bucharest Mayor Ion Dincă (1928-2007) and Interior Minister Theodor Coman (1928-1996). Dincă had only been in office for nine months when the earthquake occurred; Coman had only been Interior Minister for two years.⁵ Dincă managed the Bucharest-level efforts, in particular the teams that assessed the earthquake damaged buildings' structural safety, while Coman commanded the first responders, including firefighters, police, and Securitate troops. Throughout the earthquake recovery efforts, Ceaușescu met with members of the Political Executive Committee. The morning after the earthquake, Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu, Mănescu, Dincă, and Coman, discussed the earthquake recovery efforts with the National Defense, Domestic Commerce, Labor, Forestry and Construction Materials Ministers.⁶ Other attendees in that March 5, 1977

member from Nov.1974 – Nov.1979 and Nov.1984-Dec. 1989. See CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945-1989 dicționar*, coordinator Florica Dobre (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), 138-139, accessed February 26, 2017, <http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/2004%20-%20Membrii%20CC.pdf>.

⁵ Ion Dincă (1928-2007) served as Bucharest mayor from Jun. 1976-Feb. 1979 and was a CCRCP member Apr. 1972-Jun. 1973 and Nov. 1976-Dec. 1977, and PEX member Nov. 1976-Dec. 1989. Teodor Coman served as Interior Minister from Mar. 1975-Sep.1978 when he was removed as part of the Ministry's purges following Pacea's defection. Coman was transferred out of Bucharest and was first Party Secretary and President of the Executive Committee of the People's Council for Valcea County. He was a Communist Youth member from 1947, a Romanian Communist Party member since 1953, and member of the Central Committee of the RCP from Aug. 1969-Dec.1989. His first profession was as an auto mechanic. CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 169.

⁶ They were: National Defense Minister Ion Coman (1928-present; National Defense Minister from June 1976-March 1980 and CCRCP member Jul. 1965-Dec. 1989), Domestic Commerce Minister János Fazekás (1926-2004; CCRCP/RMP member Apr. 1954-Nov. 1984, PEX member Nov. 1974-May 1982, Domestic Commerce Minister Mar. 1974-Mar. 1980, Government Vice Prime Minister, Mar. 1975-May 1982, Government Executive Office member, Mar. 1975- Mar. 1980), Labor Minister Gheorghe Pană (1927-present; Labor Minister Jan. 1977-Feb. 1979, CCRCP member Aug. 1969-Dec. 1989, PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989, President of the Romanian Trade Union Council Mar. 1975-Jan. 1979), and Forestry and Construction Materials Minister Vasile Patilineț (1923-1986; CCRCP/RMP member Dec. 1955-Jun. 1980, PEX supplementary member Nov. 1974-Nov. 1979,

meeting included First Vice President of the Ministry Council Ilie Verdeț (1925-2001) and seven government vice prime ministers.⁷ The PEX invited the head of the state-run media, president of the State Committee on Nuclear Energy, head of the CCRCP External Relations Section, and the RCP Red Cross liaison.⁸ Ceaușescu invited long-time serving CCRCP members, too.⁹ Communist Romania had few dissidents.

Construction and engineering experts and Romanian workers played important roles in the 1977 earthquake recovery. The experts assessed damaged buildings' safety, made recommendations, and supervised and made repairs. Their earthquake recovery efforts highlight the professional integrity and pride among professionals and civil servants. The regime exploited Romanian workers' and citizens' benevolence in the wake of the earthquake; industrial workers bore the brunt of mandated policies that took their labor and donations in the name of 1977

Forestry and Construction Materials Minister Jan. 1972-Dec. 1977). ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 18/1977, 2 and CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 168, 256, 447, and 452.

⁷ Verdeț (1925-2001), in addition to serving as First Vice President of the Ministry Council from August 1965 to March 1978, was a CCRCP/RMP member from Jun. 1960-Jul. 1986 and PEX member Nov. 1974-Jun. 1986. Vice Prime Ministers included: Gheorghe Cioară (1924-1993; Vice Prime Minister from Jun. 1976-Feb. 1979; PEX member Nov. 1974-Nov. 1979), Emil Drăgănescu (1919-2003; Vice Prime Minister from Mar. 1975-Mar. 1978, CCRCP member Jul. 1965-Nov. 1984 and PEX member Nov. 1974-Nov. 1979), Ion Ionița (1924-1987; Vice Prime Minister Jun. 1976-May 1982, CCRCP member Jul. 1965-Nov. 1984, PEX supplementary member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1982, and Defense Council member Apr. 1974- Mar. 1979), Paul Niculescu (1923-2008; Vice Prime Minister Mar. 1975-Mar. 1981, CCRCP/RMP member Dec. 1955-Dec. 1989, PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989 and President of the Council to Coordinate Consumer Goods Production Jun. 1976-Mar. 1978), Gheorghe Oprea (1927-1998; Vice Minister Mar. 1975-Mar. 1978 and Apr. 1978-Dec. 1989, CCRCP member Jul. 1972-Dec. 1989, PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989), Gheorghe Rădulescu (1914-1991; Vice Prime Minister Mar. 1975-Mar. 1979, CCRCP/RMP member Jun. 1960-Dec. 1989, PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989), and Ion Stănescu (1929-2010; Vice Prime Minister Jan. 1977-Mar. 1978, CCRCP member Jul. 1965-Nov. 1979 and Dec. 1982-Dec. 1989). See CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 153, 229, 335, 432, 442, 504, and 545.

⁸ They were, respectively: Dumitru Popescu (1928-present; President of the National Council of Romanian RadioTV Mar.-Sep. 1971 and Nov. 1976-Aug. 1978, CCRCP member Jul. 1965-Dec. 1989 and PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989), Ioan Ursu (1928-2007; President of the State Committee on Nuclear Energy Dec. 1969-Nov. 1976 and CCRCP member Aug. 1969-Dec. 1989), Ștefan Andrei (1931-2014; head of the CCRCP External Relations Section from March 9, 1977, CCRCP member Jul. 1972-Dec. 1989, supplementary member PEX Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989) and Mihai Gere (1919-1997; CCRCP liaison to the Red Cross Society from Apr. 1974, CCRCP member Jul. 1965-Dec. 1989, supplementary PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989). See CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 480, 600, 71, and 288.

⁹ They were Ștefan Voitec (1900-1984; CCRCP/RMP member Feb. 1948-Dec. 1984, PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1984), Aurel Duma (1919-1993; CCRCP member Aug. 1969-Dec. 1989, head of the CCRCP Chancellery Jan. 1972-Mar. 1978), and Nicolae Giosan (1921-1990; CCRCP/RMP member Jun. 1960-Dec. 1989, supplementary PEX member Nov. 1974-Dec. 1989). See CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 626, 240, and 299.

earthquake victims. All were ultimately accountable to Nicolae Ceaușescu, who as president in name and dictator in function, was accountable to no one. While he was ultimately responsible for much of the policies and actions, it was those within the regime who drafted, supervised, or carried them out.

Dissertation Themes

Several themes wind their way through this work, each was a part of the metaphorical aftershocks that followed the 1977 earthquake and set the tone for the 1980s. The 1977 earthquake's destruction required significant human and capital resources to alleviate. Of the estimated two billion dollars in damage, half were to the housing sector and 90% were localized in Bucharest, a direct result of the partial or full collapse of more than two dozen high-rise apartment buildings. The earthquake damaged industrial buildings, too, slowing the economy, but not crippling it because the regime made their repair and restoration a priority. According to government reports, most factories and other industrial facilities were back on-line within a week. After attending to survivors and burying the victims, the regime's immediate recovery needs were to clear away the rubble from the collapsed buildings, assess the damage, and begin repairs to hundreds of buildings still standing, organize asset recovery, coordinate and solicit foreign assistance, and encourage citizen contributions to the disaster relief efforts.

The first theme in this dissertation is the regime's unusual responses to the earthquake's damage, in particular its use of atypical disaster relief workers. Specifically, the regime deployed its Securitate as first responders to retrieve and protect state and citizen assets and coordinate and solicit foreign assistance. The regime's unusual pervasive use of and reliance on the Securitate for the 1977 earthquake relief efforts points to an expansion of the organization's role well before the 1980s.

The second theme is that the regime spread the effects of the earthquake when it demanded benevolence and sacrifice from millions of Romanians. Rather than take only what was volunteered, the regime encouraged citizens' donations to the point of unstated mandate. While Bucharest experienced practically all the damage, for more than a year, under established labor laws, the regime encouraged workers across the country to clock-in for work on Sundays and stay at least one longer weekday shift. The regime exploited Romanians' close family ties when it allowed families and friends to house most of those displaced by the earthquake's damage. Its insistence that most citizens make their own repairs revealed its willingness to demand contributions from people. Its limited intervention and eventual cessation of assessments and repairs to the hundreds of damaged residential buildings exemplified the limited value it placed on citizens' public safety.

The third theme is Ceaușescu's irrational insistence to quell "panic" and "chaos" he alone saw as a result of the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts. While there was real debris to clear away and buildings to repair, his insistence to stem this fictional chaotic state actually created real disruption. By 1977 Ceaușescu's repression was not new, but his paranoia about "panic" and

“chaos” was. His goal of fewer building evacuations, and his ultimate demand to end to all seismic structural assessments and to carry out hastened repairs to the damaged buildings, were precisely to stem that “chaos.” Of course, in Bucharest, debris, mess, and uncertainty existed after such a strong earthquake. For days, weeks, and months as the clean-up work progressed, Ceaușescu continued to characterize what he saw as “panic” and “chaos.” To rein this in, the regime deployed its Securitate overtly and covertly. Ultimately, Ceaușescu’s orders to end the “panic” and “chaos” created confusion among experts and residents about how best to move forward toward public safety through assessments and repairs. One challenge in this work was making sense of the lack of clarity and logic in the regime’s policy and decision making.

This dissertation’s fourth theme is the ruling couple’s mistrust, disdain, and disregard for scientific specialists and experts. While the country’s leaders disregarded people with real expertise, the Ceaușescus considered themselves to be the ultimate scientific authorities. Nicolae Ceaușescu, who left school when he was eleven years old and trained as a shoemaker’s apprentice, considered himself the Engineer who crafted Romania’s version of socialism, stewarded its modernism, and built its industrial state. Ceaușescu’s disdain for experts was also linked to his vision of himself as patriarch of the state and nation, the ultimate authority on any topic. This was especially true for technical questions, for tasks in which he had no scientific or other training to support his assertion.

Building on Ceaușescu’s role as head of that patriarchal state is the final fifth theme: Ceaușescu’s and the regime’s expectations and requirements for fealty. During the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts, regime leaders saw first-responders’ allegiance to state, party, and

ideology as imperative to their performance. They formulated their assessment of responders' successes and failures within the framework of party and state allegiance and ideological alignment. Romanian Communist Party membership was one sign of alignment with the regime's ideology: demonstrated allegiance, however, was equally important. An Interior Ministry official provided an apt metaphor for the need to align oneself at any given moment: he described the party as a blanket; in order to stay covered, protected and warm, one must contort oneself to fit under it. A month after the earthquake he told the national firefighter chief:

You are a person with liabilities to the party and to the state, which are like a thick blanket, and, like with a thick blanket, we must twist ourselves this way and that way to warm all sides...¹⁰

The blanket metaphor demonstrated the expectation for and recognition by regime members that they should be aware of their own response to the party's needs and priorities. It also suggested that the party and state would protect those that contorted to leaders' whims, a necessity for survival in the Romanian political climate. The regime considered any misalignment with the party and state, i.e., to be not covered by the blanket, as unacceptable.

¹⁰ The speaker Nicolae Doicaru used the word *plapumă*, which is a fabric blanket with a thick insert. The word could also translate as quilt, however the image of a patchwork blanket is not correct. *Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității* (CNSAS), D.11.487, v. 4, 33 reverse.

Background

Romania's Population and Seismicity

At the time of the 1977 earthquake, Romania, southeastern Europe's physically largest country, had a population of about twenty million people, the overwhelming majority ethnic Romanian and Orthodox Christian.¹¹ Its population was not always so homogenous. World War I gains increased Romania's physical territory. With those gains, its population became more diverse and ethnic minorities represented more than one quarter of the population.¹² Following World War II, Romania lost almost all of those annexed territories and the people who lived on them. Due primarily to the post-WWII baby boom, and not necessarily because of Ceaușescu's 1967 ban on abortion and contraception, Romania's population grew during the communist era from 16 to 20.8 million people.¹³

In 1977, as today, the largest minority groups in Romania are ethnic Hungarians and Roma, who together represent almost 10% of the population, 1.4 million and half a million, respectively.¹⁴ Throughout the Ceaușescu era and during the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts, the regime was suspicious of all such "outsider" groups and expended great effort to keep tabs on them. The Ceaușescu regime concentrated its concerns most on non-Romanian ethnicities, non-Orthodox religions, foreigners, Romanians who had contact with foreigners, as well as former

¹¹ The Orthodox Church in Romania has its own Patriarch separate from the Greek or Russian Orthodox Churches.

¹² For more on interwar Romania, see Irina Livizeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹³ For more on Ceaușescu's abortion ban, see Gail Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceausescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

¹⁴ Other much smaller ethnic groups include followed by Ukrainian, Transylvanian Saxons and Swabians (or Germans) and an even smaller number of ethnic Lipovans, Turks, Crimean Tatars, Serbs, Slovaks, and fewer than ten thousands each of Bulgarians, Krasovani, Greeks, Jews, Czechs, Poles, Italians, Chinese, and Armenians.

members of Romania's WWII-era fascist regime and those who had allegedly collaborated with them. The regime even considered orphans and other "unattached" people as potentially dangerous. The Romanian communist regimes before and under Ceaușescu charged the Securitate to be attentive to any possible hostile intentions that might emerge from people in those "outsider" categories and paid particular attention to those with the largest populations numbers, i.e., Hungarians and Roma. The latter the Ceaușescu regime considered a unified group, and characterized as a "parasitic criminal element" along with panhandlers, vagabonds, and prostitutes.¹⁵

The 1977 earthquake struck without warning, but it was not unexpected. The territory of today's Romania is one of the most seismically active regions in Europe and has experienced more than a dozen significantly strong earthquakes in its recorded history, with events from the sixth through the twentieth centuries.¹⁶ Romania sits at the meeting place of three tectonic plates and experiences "intermediate depth" or "deep" earthquakes.¹⁷ Named for the Romanian county where most of these originate, Vrancea "deep" quakes are much less common than "surface" quakes experienced throughout the rest of Europe and the world. When strong, above 7.0 on the Richter Scale, these "deep quakes" produce a horizontal shaking that amplifies, in particular, vibrations experienced by tall buildings. By the time of the 1977 earthquake, Romanian seismologists were well aware of the risk. To prepare, new building construction accounted for

¹⁵ Securitate documents used the term *țigani*, or "gypsy," for Roma, see CNSAS, D.3534, v. 4, 244 accessed October 23, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/acte_normative/3634_004%20fila%20242-248.pdf.

¹⁶ For a comprehensive list see accessed January 31, 2017, <http://earthquaketrack.com/p/romania/biggest>.

¹⁷ National Institute for Research - Development for Ground Physics (INFP), accessed August 18, 2016, http://www.infp.ro/despre-cutremure/#ch_6; and Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu, eds., *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake* (Switzerland, Springer International Publishing, 2016).

the danger. A month before the earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime opened a Seismic Risk Center in Bucharest.¹⁸ Romania's ruling regimes did not, however, repair damage from the 1940 earthquake, a failure that significantly contributed to the devastating damage in 1977.¹⁹

Given Romania's seismic vulnerability, the question is not if another strong earthquake will occur, but when. The numbers of dead and injured in the case of an earthquake are dependent on several factors, including the earthquake's timing and the seismic stability of buildings in vulnerable areas. Preparedness, too, is a major factor that contributes to the death toll. First-responders need training and necessary equipment. Buildings should be built, or assessed and retrofitted, for seismic stability. In Romania, on average, there is a twenty-six second lag-time between notification of an earthquake to when the vibrations may reach buildings.



Figure 2. Romania is southeastern Europe's largest country. It now borders Moldova, Ukraine, Hungary, Serbia, and Bulgaria and shares a Black Sea maritime border with Turkey. Today, it has a population of 20 million people with almost 2 million residents in its capital Bucharest. The map also marks the epicenter of the Vrancea earthquakes, located 130 miles northeast of the capital.²⁰

¹⁸ In February 1977, the regime opened *Centrul de Fizica Pamantului (si Seismologie) București*.

¹⁹ I trace Romanian engineering seismic regulations and the 1940 earthquake damage in Chapter Four.

²⁰ W. Wirth, Friedermann Wenzel, Vladimir Sokolov, and Klaus-Peter Bonjer, "A Uniform Approach to Seismic Site Effect Analysis in Bucharest, Romania" in *Soil Dynamics and Earthquake Engineering* 23(8): 737-758,

Why Bucharest?

The regime concentrated its 1977 earthquake recovery efforts in the country's capital, Bucharest, where 90% of the deaths and damage occurred. More than two dozen buildings clustered in the city's center partially or fully collapsed immediately following the earthquake. The Ceaușescu regime had structured its party and state offices in a top-down manner, centralized in the capital. In 1977 Bucharest was a vibrant city, with a population of almost two million people. It comprised residential neighborhoods, the country's main and most prestigious university, schools, an international airport, shops, theaters, an opera house and museums. The city's administrative structure divided it into eight "sectors" cut like wedges, radiating out from its center. Because of this pizza-slice like division, the earthquake's damage, while concentrated in the city center, was shared among seven of the city's eight sectors and its recovery efforts fell to those sectors' authorities.²¹ This physical distribution of the damage across seven different administrative units contributed to bureaucratic tangling and duplication of efforts.

The 1977 earthquake affected other areas, too. Ten percent of the damage and 151 deaths occurred in nine counties outside the capital.²² Damage was especially significant in three cities: Zimnicea, Craiova, and Iași. The small industrial city Zimnicea, situated in the south along the Danube River, experienced significant damage. The regime started a rebuilding project there as one component of the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts, although some buildings did not collapse

(December 2003), figure 1, accessed January 31, 2017, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/245130929_fig1_Fig-1-Topographic-map-of-Romania-with-its-capital-Bucharest-and-the-epicenters-of-the.

²¹ About half, or thirteen of the twenty-three, residential high rises that partially or fully collapsed were located in sectors 1 and 2. My thanks to engineer Antonios Pomonis, who pointed out this administrative characteristic, e-mail message to the author, May 17, 2016.

²² In 1977 the country was administratively divided into 39 counties, including Bucharest. In its early years, the Ceaușescu regime re-organized the administrative territory from the post-war Soviet-imposed *raion* structure back to counties similar to those of the inter-war era.

immediately following the earthquake, but instead were down down afterwards. Recent research suggests the losses in Iași were actually greater than the regime recorded at the time.²³ Across Romania, many animal stables collapsed contributing to the loss of 3,352 heads of livestock.²⁴ The 1977 earthquake recovery experiences of these smaller communities would provide yet another layer of understanding to the Ceaușescu regime of the late 1970s and its earthquake recovery efforts, but are not the focus of this dissertation because they were peripheral to the regime's interests and efforts.

The Romanian Communist Party's Rise to Power

In December 1989, in the most violent of the 1989 revolutions, Romanians overthrew the communist regime that had ruled for the previous forty-two years. In 1944 the Romanian communists, with Soviet help, ousted the fascist Romanian Iron Guard and reinstalled the Romanian monarch. King Michael served as a figurehead until 1947 when the Soviets and Romanian communists forced him to abdicate. By the end of WWII, the Romanian Communist Party had barely one thousand members, due in large part to the WWII-era ruling Romanian fascist government's persecutions, arrests, and imprisonments of its members, including Nicolae Ceaușescu.²⁵ Starting in August 1944, Soviet troops occupied Romania and Soviet officials trained and guided Romania's nascent communist party. They helped the Romanian communists

²³ Emil-Sever Georgescu and Antonios Pomonis, "The Romanian Earthquake of March 4, 1977, Revisited: New Insights into its Territorial, Economic and Social Impacts and Their Bearing on the Preparedness for the Future," paper presented at The 14th World Conference on Earthquake Engineering, Beijing, China, October 12-17, 2008. accessed November 20, 2015 http://www.iitk.ac.in/nicee/wcee/article/14_10-0013.PDF.

²⁴ CNSAS, D.011737, v. 105, 120.

²⁵ Some RCP members fled to the USSR. The Antonescu regime imprisoned many of those who did not. For more on the rise of Romania's Iron Guard party and see Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015.

form the government, guided its post-war economy's industrialization and land collectivization, and shaped its secret police. When the Soviets trained government officials and functionaries they introduced procedures and named departments that mimicked those of their own secret police, the KGB.²⁶ While the Soviets were instrumental in developing Romania's communist party and government, two long-term leaders subsequently steered the country, each with his own brand of terror: Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1901-1965) ruled from 1948 to his death in 1965, when Nicolae Ceaușescu took over until his flee from Bucharest, trial, and execution in 1989.²⁷

In the post-war era, initially with significant Soviet help, Romania's economy moved from one that was overwhelmingly agricultural to one almost equally divided between agriculture and industry. During the first half of the twentieth century, most Romanians worked in agriculture, tilling small tracts of land in the plains, shepherding sheep and goats in the mountains, lumbering timber in the forests, and fishing in the Danube Delta and Black Sea. During the first decade after WWII, with Soviet assistance, the Romanian communists collectivized agricultural land, built factories, moved people to the cities, and constructed hundreds of thousands of apartments for the new industrial workers.²⁸ Romania's industrialization drive in the late 1940s and 1950s looked remarkably similar to the Soviet one in the 1920s. Throughout the 1950s and

²⁶ Vladimir Tismăneanu, Dorin Dobrinu, and Cristian Vasile, eds, *Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din Română. Raport Final*. București, (Bucharest, 2006), 175; Katherine Verdery, *Secretes and Truths: Ethnography in the Archive of Romania's Secret Police*, (Budapest: Central University Press, 2014), and Cristina Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics: Literature, Film and the Secret Police in Soviet Times* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 32 and 36.

²⁷ The extension "Dej" onto Gheorghe Gheorghiu's name was added to differentiate him from another communist with the same name, and marked him as the Gheorghe Gheorghiu from the town of Dej. For more on Ceaușescu's relationship with Gheorghiu-Dej, see Vladimir Tismăneanu, "The Tragicomedy of Romanian Communism," Research Report to National Council for Soviet and East European Studies, Foreign Policy Research Institute, September 1989, 40-41, accessed March 6, 2017, <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/1989-903-04-2-Tismăneanu.pdf>.

²⁸ For more on land collectivization, see Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare: Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003) and for industrialization, see Trond Gilberg, *Modernization in Romania Since World War II*, (London and New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975).

1960s, Romanians built new factories and staffed them with peasant labor. While the degree to which WWII campaigns destroyed housing varied across Europe, most of the countries in the region experienced a severe urban housing shortage as they stepped up industrialization and people migrated to the cities. The Romanian communist government moved people to the cities to support its industrialization and agricultural collectivization objectives. These economic priorities stressed Romania's housing infrastructure, an important factor for the Ceaușescu regime's 1977 earthquake recovery efforts.

Important to the understanding of the Ceaușescu era was the role of his predecessor, Gheorgiu-Dej. Dej, too, showed a liberal face outside Romania, but instituted terror and repression at home. Ceaușescu is often given credit for Romania's fictional economic and ideological separation from the Soviet bloc, but it was his predecessor Gheorghiu-Dej who inserted the first wedge between Romania and the Soviet Union. Two years following Soviet Nikita Krushchev's 1956 "secret speech" that criticized Stalin's terror methods and policies, in 1958 Gheorghiu-Dej oversaw the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania. Furthermore, he focused on internal economic policies, reverted the slavized spelling of the country's name back to its Latin form, released some prominent historians from prison, and broke from the Soviet bloc when voting on some inconsequential issues at the United Nations.²⁹ Finally, in April 1964, a year before he died, Gheorghiu-Dej rejected the Soviet proposal of a division of labor inside

²⁹ Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World: The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Postcommunism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 298.

Comecom, the Soviet led economic council, that would have left Romania with primarily agricultural responsibilities.³⁰

During his leadership in the 1950s, however, Gheorghiu-Dej's tenure was one of targeted terror. He imprisoned many intellectuals, including priests, clergy, writers, and political opposition members in Romania's own gulag archipelago, comprised of almost three dozen secret and not-so-secret prisons and detention centers with dozens of other slave labor camps at industrialization projects.³¹ Starting in 1949 the Gheorghiu-Dej regime sent prisoners to work on the massive Danube-Black Sea canal, where by the early 1950s as many as 60,000 forced laborers prisoners worked, thousands to their deaths.³² Under Gheorghiu-Dej's tenure the regime imprisoned as many as 600,000 people and was responsible for an estimated half a million unnatural deaths.³³ The most notorious prison, Pitești, was best known for its psychological torture technique, coined the "Pitești experiment," in which officials encouraged a class of prisoner guards to torture their fellow prisoners to escape the inverse role.³⁴

Terror and the Securitate

Gheorghiu-Dej regime's use of terror is important to understand one way that Ceaușescu gained credibility and consolidated his own power. Within months of being named head of party

³⁰ Translated as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

³¹ See the map of "The Romanian and Moldovan Detention System, March 6, 1945-December 22, 1989," accessed February 25, 2017, https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorialul_Sighet.

³² Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, (New York: Penguin, 2005), 192.

³³ Cristina Petrescu, "Afterlife of the Securitate: On Moral Correctness in Postcommunist Romania," in *Remembering Communism: Private and Public Recollections of Lived Experience in Southeast Europe*, eds., Maria Todorova, Augusta Dimou and Stefan Troebst, (Central European University Press: Budapest, 2014), 406.

³⁴ For more on Pitești and communist Romania's prison network see Vladimir Tismăneanu, et.al., *Comisia Prezidențială* and Ion Ioanid's three-volume, *Inchisoarea noastră cea de toate zilele*, (Bucharest: Editura Humanitas, 2013).

and state in 1965, Ceaușescu established himself in opposition to illegal imprisonments and slave labor use when he claimed the Securitate acted on its own without government approval under Gheorgiu-Dej. Without blaming his mentor, Ceaușescu explained that the Securitate were solely responsible for the crimes committed during Gheorghiu-Dej's tenure. Ceaușescu argued the Securitate acted on its own when it extracted evidence through torture for show trials whose verdicts led to imprisonment and execution of innocent victims.³⁵ The most notable case was when Ceaușescu publicly rehabilitated Lucrețiu Pătreșcănu, a communist leader and activist, who was executed after a 1954 show trial. A series of reforms to the Securitate followed, culminating in a significant restructuring, and brought, in Ceaușescu's vision, the Securitate back under the party and state control. These reforms presented an image that his regime would reign in the Securitate and curb its previous terror practices. A practical result was that the Securitate no longer needed actually to engage in terror because universal knowledge of its ability to do so was a powerful repressive measure in and of itself. The severity of the Securitate's ability to use fear ebbed and flowed throughout the Ceaușescu era, yet remained prominent if not primary.

As part of the reforms, Ceaușescu fired almost a third of the Securitate's officers and hired ethnic minorities in equivalent proportions to their representation in the population. The reformed Securitate recruited applicants with higher education, paid better salaries, and published a professional journal for officers.³⁶ The government supported the publication of popular pulp

³⁵ Petrescu, "The Afterlife of the Securitate," 390. For documents that supported Ceaușescu's case, see the CNSAS collection "Ancheta P.C.R din 1968 privind abuzurile Securității," accessed February 3, 2017, http://www.cnsas.ro/ancheta_1968.html.

³⁶ From 1968 through 1989, the journal *Securitate* published 87 issues, most of which are available at http://www.cnsas.ro/periodicul_securitatea.html accessed February 3, 2017. "Petrescu, "The Afterlife of the Securitate," 392, n. 18.

fiction spy novels with sympathetic Securitate officer protagonists.³⁷ The reforms were meant to consolidate Ceaușescu's power and present a new, reformed image of the Securitate to the public. It also served to bring the organization under Ceaușescu's control. As Dennis Deletant explains, "Ceaușescu was clever enough to realize that his own position of personal dominance was ultimately dependent on the loyalty of the Securitate. He therefore paid officers well, giving them higher salaries than those received by their colleagues of the same rank in the armed forces."³⁸ In addition to higher pay, the regime gave Securitate officers access to special shops, which sold goods unavailable to most, and to special facilities, such as exclusive restaurants, bars, spas, etc. By 1989, a mid-level Securitate officer earned about \$400 a month, double the average Romanian worker's salary, and 13% more than the equivalent ranking army officer.³⁹ These reforms, however, did not make the Securitate less repressive nor curb the abuses committed by its forces.

³⁷ Petrescu, "The Afterlife of the Securitate," 391.

³⁸ Dennis Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965-89* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 335.

³⁹ A Lieutenant Colonel earned about 7,800 Romanian Lei, see Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 335 and IRB-Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada: Rank hierarchy in the Romanian army and the Securitate [ROM13169], February 12, 1993, accessed February 15, 2017, http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/192442/310838_de.html.

Ceaușescu's Janus-Face: Iron Curtain Wedge and Neo-Stalinist, Dynastic Dictator

Ceaușescu's Rise to Power

Early in his tenure, Nicolae Ceaușescu established a Janus-face, when he concurrently implemented repressive policies at home and promoted reforms for an audience abroad. One of the most repressive leaders of the communist bloc, notorious for his cult of personality, paternalistic state, and lavish lifestyle, Ceaușescu did not begin his rule as a despot. Together with hundreds of other communists, the Romanian fascist regime imprisoned Ceaușescu from 1940 to 1944 for his communist party activities and membership. In 1943 he served prison time at Târgu Jiu alongside his Gheorghiu-Dej, who educated Ceaușescu and others who would rise within the RCP ranks. Thus, before Ceaușescu rise to power in 1965, he had already established his commitment to communism, something Gheorghiu-Dej recognized. Vladimir Tismăneanu commented, “For Gheorghiu-Dej, Nicolae Ceaușescu was the perfect embodiment of the Stalinist apparatchik. He appeared to Gheorghiu-Dej as a modest, dedicated, self-effacing, hard-working and profoundly loyal lieutenant.”⁴⁰ From 1965, when Ceaușescu became head of state and party at forty-six years old, until his execution in 1989, he built his own power base, placed his family and loyal followers in powerful positions, enforced a cult of personality, exploited non-socialist countries' appreciation, and used fear to stem Romanian opposition. He targeted those efforts to shape Romania's government, economy, and culture into one that reflected his own socialist vision with a particular ethnic Romanian nationalist form.

⁴⁰ Tismăneanu, “The Tragicomedy of Romanian Communism,” 42.

The Non-Socialist View of Ceaușescu as a Potential Wedge in the Communist Bloc

The Soviet Union developed and supported Romanian communists, but then separated themselves rhetorically from the USSR. Gheorghiu-Dej started with incremental efforts to separate Romania from the Soviet Union and push its form. Ceaușescu took that up fiercely. From the very beginning of his rule, Ceaușescu and his regime were repressive at home.

Yet, following 1968, Ceaușescu presented a liberal face to the world when he publicly criticized the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. As a result Romania began a foreign policy orientation to the West, exemplified primarily through more liberal foreign policies, international trade, and cooperation. This ideology touted separation from the Soviet — and Russian — sphere of influence, erased inconvenient historical precedents, exploited “Romanian” nationalist sentiment, and supported projects with the aim to demonstrate Romanian independence and superiority.⁴¹ Practically, it stepped up natural resource exports in exchange for material and technological expertise and started new joint ventures with companies outside the communist bloc, a break from exclusive joint economic ventures solidified in the 1950s.⁴² In August 1969 US President Richard Nixon visited Romania and Ceaușescu reciprocated with a visit to the US in 1973. Romania joined several important economic organizations, including the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (1971), the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (1972), and the European Common Market (1973). The United States granted it most-favored

⁴¹ Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003), 217.

⁴² Trond Gilberg, *Nationalism and Communism in Romania: the Rise and Fall of Ceaușescu's Personal Dictatorship* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 121.

nation status in 1975.⁴³ These non-socialist organizations and states extended credit to Romania and saw the country as a trusty recipient. These credit extensions contributed to the economic strains the regime faced in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1970s world-wide oil crisis devastated its economy when in 1973, the Soviet Union charged Romania (and other communist bloc countries) unsubsidized, or Western prices, for its oil.

Liberalism, however, was for non-socialist countries only. While Ceaușescu presented himself to the West as a friendly wedge in the communist bloc, he turned Romania inward. Through the late 1960s and early 1970s Ceaușescu allowed Romanians some freedoms, but clamped down on others. During the first half of his tenure, Romanians lived with an active, although reformed and professionalized, Securitate; repressive restrictions on domestic and foreign travel; a brutal policy that criminalized seeking out, having, or providing an abortion or using contraception, which included monthly invasive physical body checks of menstruating women; state-run media that entertained (poorly) rather than informed; a crackdown on cultural and intellectual freedom; and stepped up mandatory activities to support Ceaușescu's cult of personality.

Ceaușescu's Neo-Stalinist Turn

Most scholars date Ceaușescu's neo-Stalinist turn and stepped-up promotion of his personality cult to a state visit he made to China and North Korea in June 1971.⁴⁴ A month

⁴³ Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 105.

⁴⁴ On the same trip Ceaușescu also visited Vietnam and outer Mongolia. See *The New York Times*, June 13, 1971, 4. For more on how the visit inspired Bucharest's reconstruction, see Danta, "Ceaușescu's Bucharest," *Geographic Review*, Vol. 83, No. 2. (April 1993): 174; Jill Massino, "From Black Caviar to Blackouts: Gender, Consumption,

following his visit Ceaușescu gave a speech, known as the “July Thesis,” that ushered in “his own version of a Maoist Cultural Revolution.”⁴⁵ He outlined seventeen specific mandates that gave more power to the Romanian Communist Party, intensified political-ideological education in schools, and instructed the state-run media and other cultural producers to promote that ideology, including with a resurrected list of banned books and authors. Ceaușescu’s push to construct the Civic Center Project and its House of the People was inspired by these 1971 Asian visits when Chinese and North Korean leaders in particular feted him with elaborate parades and spectacles.⁴⁶ Following the 1971 July Thesis, Ceaușescu reasserted his vision for Romanian communism, one that again stressed industrialization, promoted the “thesis of social and ethnic homogenization” of the nation, aimed to maximize domestic resource use, promoted himself as the prime symbol for party and national unity, stressed “neutrality within the world communist movement,” and reestablished “cordial relations” with communist parties in some non-socialist countries.⁴⁷

After visiting Asia in 1971, Ceaușescu demanded that Romanians step up parades and spectacles. Important to the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts, Ceaușescu pinned clean-up deadlines to May Day (May 1) and Romania’s Union Day (August 23) for such festivities. The more important holiday was “August 23,” which by the 1980s, historian Maria Bucur explains,

and Lifestyle in Ceaușescu’s Romania,” in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, eds. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuberger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 206.

⁴⁵ He gave the speech on July 6, 1971, see Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World: The Politics of Borderlands from Pre to Postcommunism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 300.

⁴⁶ See images from Ceaușescu’s visit in the film *The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceaușescu*, accessed February 19, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qd3H9X-Yl2k>.

⁴⁷ Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 197.

“in particular became a closely monitored nation-wide affair.”⁴⁸ Ceaușescu watched the capital’s celebration from his official viewing balcony and those from across the country at home on television.⁴⁹ By 1977, the August 23 celebration was more important to the Ceaușescu regime than May 1 and exemplified Ceaușescu’s preference for the Romanian national over the socialist international.

Ceaușescu used Romanian nationalism to promote his own brand of socialism. He saw ethnic, religious, and regional differences as subordinate to that national interest.⁵⁰ Communist ideology fueled his goals. He was committed to “communist idealism” and was obsessed with security and the modernization of Romania’s physical spaces, expressed most assertively in the state’s control of the economy and Ceaușescu’s personal interest in the “built environment of socialism.”⁵¹ He trusted industrialization and modernization as the means to achieve communism and sought to transform spaces — urban, rural, industrial, residential, communist party, and governmental — to reflect that socialist ideal. Yet, for Ceaușescu, this ideal was national, not international, Romanian, not universal. He considered the individual’s interest and freedom, too subordinate to the group’s. He was primarily concerned — sometimes to the level of psychotic obsession—with forging the socialist man into a Romanian nationalist form.

⁴⁸ Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth-Century Romania* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 181.

⁴⁹ Ceaușescu loved watching TV-- he especially loved the American television program “Kojak.” He watched programs on VHS tape in a movie theatre in his home, *Palatul Primaverii* (the “Spring Palace”) recently opened to the public, accessed September 24, 2016, <http://palatulprimaverii.ro>. For a 6:11 minute *TVRomânia* film clip of the August 23, 1983 festivities, with excerpts of youth pioneer performances, the parade, and Elena and Nicolae Ceaușescu, September 28, 2016, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbE8xWc7DPE>.

⁵⁰ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 305.

⁵¹ David Turnock, “The Planning of Rural Settlement in Romania,” *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 157, No. 3 (Nov., 1991): 252.

Dynastic Socialism: The Ceaușescu Ruling Couple

By the 1977 earthquake, Ceaușescu had consolidated his power and established autocratic authoritarian rule, one characterized as dynastic socialist because of his family's powerful roles in the Romanian Communist Party and government. By 1977 his wife Elena Ceaușescu (1916-1989) was a full member of the Political Executive Committee and considered second in command. She rose to that powerful position following their visit to North Korea and China and after Ceaușescu introduced the July Thesis.⁵² As one of the foremost scholars of the twentieth-century Romanian Communist Party and regime, Vladimir Tismăneanu explains, "Elena's takeover of the second-in-command position within the party cannot be dissociated from the politics of permanent aggression waged against the party apparatus by her husband. The more power she had managed to acquire, the more insatiable has been her taste for extravagant luxury, and her appetite for self-assertion and domination."⁵³ Tismăneanu attributes her rise to her husband's paranoia about and lack of confidence in the apparatchiks around him. Tismăneanu wrote during their tenure: "Initially described as a mere shadow of her husband, the Romanian first lady now plays a significant role within the Romanian decision-making process...[s]he has managed to build a parallel cult of personality to her husband's, and professional party minstrels compete to compose paeans to the mother of the nation."⁵⁴ She promoted her own image as matriarch, leader, scientist, and academic. She left school at fourteen years old, worked in a textile factory, but, once in power wrote a thesis on polymer chemistry, for which the University of Bucharest granted her a PhD. She used her position to extract this degree, along with many

⁵² CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 138-139.

⁵³ Tismăneanu, "The Tragicomedy of Romanian Communism," 52.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

honorary degrees, and publish papers written by ghost writers.⁵⁵ Elena Ceaușescu's quick ascent to the number two position in the regime and influence has yet to be fully researched. In the 1980s did Ceaușescu's son Nicu, a notorious playboy, also took a powerful position when his father included him on the Political Executive Committee and named him Minister of Youth and a county leader. In dynastic fashion, Ceaușescu had clear plans to pass his rule onto his son Nicu. The Ceaușescus also had a daughter Zoe, who for the most part stayed out of party politics and state governance.

By the time of the earthquake, Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu presented themselves as the “father” and “mother” of the nation who attempted to build on Romania's cultural trait of extremely close family ties.⁵⁶ The regime exploited that responsibility to family when it encouraged the majority of those displaced from damaged buildings to find shelter on their own. Romanians felt a responsibility to one another and helped in ways the regime did not. The head of the Romanian desk at Radio Free Europe, Noel Bernard, remembered the role of such family ties in the aftermath of the earthquake. He described how the radio station initially received calls from those in the Romanian diaspora “...from all over the place, from five continents, and practically all countries in Europe with messages for relatives, ‘please let us know how you are.’ It was at that stage that I realized something I had not been aware of before: how close and how deep family ties are in Romania. You know I lived in England for many years and in England you hear on the BBC an announcement everyday, ‘would so and so, who has not been heard of in thirty years, get in touch with his father who is dying,’ ah, this sort of thing is unthinkable in

⁵⁵ The Illinois Academy of Sciences did not offer the Ceaușescus honorary membership in 1978, as is often cited. Robyn L. Meyers, Illinois State Academy of Science, personal correspondence, September 20, 2016.

⁵⁶ For more about the role of the family and network in communist Romania, See Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*.

Romania; there are extraordinarily close and deep family ties in Romania and this catastrophe had made those rise to the surface and all other considerations were swept aside.”⁵⁷

Before the 1977 Earthquake: Territorial Planning, Natural Disaster Response, and the Securitate’s Reorganization

Housing and “Systemizatization:” Ceaușescu’s Territorial Restructuring Policy

In 1972, five years before the earthquake, Ceaușescu reintroduced a key policy to his modernization plan, systemizatization (*sistemizatizare*), defined as “any kind of physical or territorial planning, and the actions resulting from this planning.”⁵⁸ This territorial restructuring moved rural residents to urban areas, located factories in towns near populated areas, and transformed village clusters, or communes, into what Ceaușescu called “agro-towns.”⁵⁹ It aimed to raise rural living standards and increase population density to that of urban areas by consolidating villages, building multi-unit housing, improving transportation networks, and setting-up social services.⁶⁰ Romania’s systemizatization differed from “new town” plans of

⁵⁷ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Director RFE Romanian Service, interviewed by Sig Mickelson, tape 5, June 25, 1981, Mickelson (Sig) Papers, 1950-2000, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁵⁸ Sampson, “Urbanization—Planned and Unplanned,” 513.

⁵⁹ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 301. See also Sampson, “Urbanization—Planned and Unplanned,” 513 and Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Report of the National Conference of the Romanian Communist Party*, July 19-21, 1972 (Bucharest: Meridiane Publishing House 1972), 58.

⁶⁰ Ceaușescu, *Report of the National Conference (1972)*, 58-59.

other communist bloc countries, for example the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia, in that it aimed to transform rural areas and not necessarily build new urban ones.⁶¹

Systemization was directly linked to the regime's industrialization plans and, while it required increased population centers and new industrial sites, the task of housing its workers challenged the Ceaușescu regime.⁶² The rapid increase in population densities in urban areas, from systemization in Romania and the post-WWII baby boom across the communist bloc, made housing shortages a "struggle of the 1960s."⁶³ New factories required that workers move near to them, but many in Romania continued to commute from their rural homes. Deletant states that the systemization plans were "entirely directed by the [communist] party" and that professionals (architects and engineers) as well as the people affected were completely left out of its development with the grim exceptions of evacuation or assisting in or demolishing their own homes.⁶⁴ The Romanian communist regime modeled new housing starts on the Soviet and British models of clustered apartment "blobs" or housing estates. Ceaușescu increased the annual number of new apartment construction significantly from that of his predecessor. In the 1950s, the Gheorghiu-Dej regime constructed 14,000 new apartments annually, and in the 1960s more than tripled the pace to 45,000. These paled in comparison to the 1970s under Ceaușescu, who oversaw the construction of as many as 100,000 new apartments annually.⁶⁵ Under Ceaușescu, marriage would get you on a list for an apartment, which might allow you leave dormitory

⁶¹ For more on communist "new towns" see Stephen Kotkin's *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), Katherine Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia: Nowa Huta, Stalinism, and Polish Society, 1949-56*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), and Kimberly Zarecor, *Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity: Housing in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1960*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011).

⁶² Hamilton, "Urbanization in the Socialist Eastern Europe," 187.

⁶³ Hamilton, "Urbanization in the Socialist Eastern Europe," 187-88.

⁶⁴ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 308.

⁶⁵ Daniel Chirot, "Social Change in Communist Romania," *Social Forces* vol. 57, no. 2 Special Issue, (December 1978), 474.

housing or receive a Bucharest residency permit, as most people needed state approval for where they lived.⁶⁶ More likely than not, however, young couples shared an apartment with one (or both!) of their families. In addition to telling you where you could live, the regime also prescribed how much space one could have. The state approved 86 square feet per person, or a 345 square foot apartment for four people. At the time of the earthquake, the regime expanded its systemization efforts to cities, including the capital. Before 1977, Bucharest already had in place a new systemization plan, which included new apartment construction, the expansion of the number of administrative districts from six to eight, the buildings of larger thoroughfares and boulevards, the construction of the city's subway system, and the incorporation of surrounding villages into the city.

The Securitate's Roles in Disaster Relief and Foreign Assistance Procurement

In its response to the 1977 earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime built on its efforts following severe flooding in 1970. At that time the regime evacuated more than a quarter of a million people and almost half a million animals. The flooding waters affected more than 1,600 rural communities in all but two of Romania's thirty-nine counties, destroyed an estimated 13,000 homes, and damaged 11% of Romania's agricultural land. In response to the 1970 flood, the Ceaușescu regime deployed its Securitate to solicit directly or encourage foreign cash donations, exhorted workers to donate work days in the name of victim relief, and opened special bank accounts to deposit foreign and domestic donations. The Ceaușescu regime's 1977 earthquake recovery efforts replicated those 1970 flood recovery efforts, including the deployment of the

⁶⁶ Massino, "Something Old, Something New," 41.

Securitate as first responders, clandestine Securitate solicitation of foreign assistance, and the establishment of a special account for victim assistance.⁶⁷

The Securitate's use of and need for foreign cash was important in both the 1970 and 1977 natural disaster relief efforts. Throughout their tenures, the communist governments under Gheorghiu-Dej and Ceaușescu prohibited citizens from holding or using foreign currencies, yet the state actively used them foreign currency in foreign trade, tourism, and to support its Securitate efforts. Romanian scholar Florian Banu describes this as the regimes' "hunger for hard currency" with the Securitate having the primary roll in satiating it.⁶⁸ In both the 1970 and 1977 disaster recovery efforts, the regime looked to foreign sources of cash and gold and charged its Securitate securing them.⁶⁹ The Securitate's incentive went beyond duty as the regime marked 20% of all foreign hard currency it procured to supplement the secret police budget. After the 1977 earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime's interest in finding foreign currency in the collapsed building rubble and soliciting money and credit from abroad were directly linked to its seemingly insatiable need for cash.

The Securitate's 20% take of foreign "income" was not a new idea in response to natural disasters, but rather an established practice. Started in the mid-1950s under the Gheorghiu-Dej regime, and throughout Ceaușescu's, the Securitate 20% of foreign hard currencies (cash or gold)

⁶⁷ Discussed in Chapter Two.

⁶⁸ Florian Banu, *Acțiunea 'Recuperarea': Securitatea și emigrarea germanilor din România: (1962-1989)*, (București: Editură Enciclopedică, 2001) and Banu's February 4, 2013 interview with Radio Romania, accessed April 7, 2016, http://www.rrt.ro/en_gb/currency_exchange_operations_of_the_securitate-1342.

⁶⁹ The Securitate's *Direcției de Informații Externe*, (Foreign Intelligence Directorate) or DIE, was charged with earning hard currency. See Florian Banu, "Capitaliștii Avant le Lettre: Securitate și Operațiunile Valutare Special din Anii '80," in *Caietele CNSAS*, Anul IV, nr. 1-2 (7-8) (2011), 110 accessed October 18, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/caiete/Caiete_CNSAS_nr_7-8_2011.pdf.

it obtained, earned, or acquired through its business or other transactions.⁷⁰ In 1965, when Ceaușescu assumed power, the account for foreign currency held close to 6.9 million US dollars; no record of its deposits exists for his tenure.⁷¹

Both regimes earned hard-currency in several ways. An interwar policy resurrected during the communist era, one early effort to bring hard currencies to these accounts was the policy that granted visas to Jewish and ethnic German Romanians, thus “allowing” their immigration to Israel and West Germany in exchange for hard currency paid by their governments.⁷² The regime also ran businesses. Beginning in the 1970s through the end of the regime in 1989, it was involved in several Romanian-foreign commercial enterprises. In these joint ventures the communist regime either took “a confidential commission” in exchange for granting foreign firms the right to do business with Romania, shared earnings, or laundered money through transitional accounts.⁷³ For example, in the 1980s the furniture maker IKEA agreed to pay these “commissions” on top of the regular price the Swedish company paid for furniture produced in Romania.⁷⁴ It appeared that these business dealings, while clandestine in their kick-backs and commissions to the regime, did not involve illicit trade. One officer who worked with

⁷⁰ The regimes earmarked 80% for deposit in the Romanian State Bank and the remaining 20% “had to be deposited into a special Interior Ministry account, also at the Romanian State Bank, to be used for operational needs of the Securitate.” See Banu, “Capitaliștii Avant le Lettre,” 110.

⁷¹ I arrive at the GNP figure using the World Bank’s 1970 GPC figure of \$550 for 20.3 million residents. See the World Bank, “Report and Recommendation of the President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to the Executive Directors on a Proposed Loan to the Investment Bank With the Guarantee of the Socialist Republic of Romania for a Post Earthquake Construction Assistance Project,” Report No. P-2240-RO, (May 17, 1978): 8 and 35.

⁷² See also Radu Ionid, *The Ransom of the Jews: The Story of the Extraordinary Secret Bargain Between Romania and Israel*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005); Radu Ionid (Ed.). *Securitatea și Vânzarea Evreilor: Istoria acordurilor secrete dintre România și Israel*, (București: Polirom, 2015); and Florian Banu, “Capitaliștii Avant le Lettre.”

⁷³ Banu, “Capitaliștii Avant le Lettre,” 111, 121, and 127.

⁷⁴ Matie Rosca, “IKEA funds went to Romanian secret police in communist era,” *The Guardian*, July 4, 2014, accessed October 18, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/04/ikea-funds-romania-secret-police-communist-era>.

the Special Hard Currency Missions Department (OVS) claimed that the regime forbade the Securitate from illegal acts, such as prostitution or narcotics trafficking, to procure currency and gold.⁷⁵

While the regime allowed itself to use and deal in foreign currency, it prohibited most Romanians citizens from doing so. Throughout the communist era, the Romanian government controlled the flow of hard currency into the country. Control of foreign currency was one lever to exercise its power over black market and other illicit activities, most of which used foreign cash and gold. The black market in communist Romania, however, also used barter of desirable commodities with foreign cigarettes, and the US brand “Kents,” the most valued.⁷⁶ Because of this, the regime controlled cigarette imports that made their way into the speciality shops for regime elites.

The regime’s hand in the black market mattered during both the 1970 and 1977 disaster recovery efforts. Following the 1970s flood, in-kind goods from disaster relief made their way onto the black market. As a result, the Ceaușescu regime was deeply concerned that the 1977 earthquake in-kind foreign assistance would end up on the black market. To stem such movement, the regime took quick control of its receipt, storage and distribution, and made a pointed request for cash, credit and certain forms of technical equipment. Additionally, following

⁷⁵ The Securitate’s DIE supervised the departments that handled these accounts, first named *Compartimentul de Operațiunile Valutare Special* (the Special Foreign Currency Operations Department), or OVS. It was then reorganized and named the *Acțiuni Valutare Speciale* (Special Foreign Currency Shares), or AVS, which kept the foreign currency accounts for deposits, payments and transfers. The AVS was first named the “Unit” then changed to “District for the Special Foreign Currency Operations. See Banu, “Capitaliștii Avant le Lettre,” 113.

⁷⁶ For more on the import and re-export of Kent cigarettes, see Jonathan Lynn, Reuters, “Cigarettes Good as Gold in Romania,” published in *The Montreal Gazette*, December 1, 1984, accessed October 19, 2016, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1946&dat=19841201&id=G6lkAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=sqUFAAAAIBAJ&pg=1023,502429>; and Roger Thurow, “In Romania, Smoking a Kent Cigarette is Like Burning Money: The U.S.-Made Brand Reigns as Prime Barter Medium; Sure Sign of a Big Shot,” *The Wall Street Journal*, January 3, 1986, and Banu, “Capitaliștii Avant le Lettre.”

the 1977 earthquake, the Securitate charged its officers and agents abroad in an operation to procure certain forms of foreign assistance and in-kind assistance, codenamed “Solidarity.”⁷⁷

That operation had precedent, too. Following the 1970 flood the regime charged the Securitate to tap its foreign networks for cash and other assistance. The Council for State Security set up a competition among local and Bucharest units to see who among their employees and informants could collect the most foreign aid from individuals in the name of the 1970 flood victims.

Officers in the propaganda and foreign espionage unit sent letters to foreigners they knew — friends, family, media, businesses, government officials, and others abroad—with descriptions of the flood’s destruction from personal accounts and newspaper clips, and requested cash assistance, but welcomed equipment, too.⁷⁸ Secret police officers in the military counterintelligence also solicited smaller, yet still substantial, foreign cash donations in the name of the flood victims.⁷⁹ It is not known which unit “won” the secret police’s 1970 letter-writing competition, but this policy was used again following the 1977 earthquake. In 1970 and 1977 the secret police also went undercover as first-responders. In 1970, some officers dressed up as Red Cross and other assistance workers and approached ethnic minority Romanian citizens, in particular ethnic Hungarians and Germans, and asked them to seek cash donations from their personal contacts abroad.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Discussed in Chapter Two.

⁷⁸ One success was a Swiss journalist’s visit and 500,000 Swiss franc donation, in response to such a letter. See Budeancă, “Inundațiile din 1970.”

⁷⁹ For example, the Securitate officer or informant “Virgil” secured the donations of 3,850 British pounds and 6,500 US dollars; others made in-kind donations such as machinery parts and water pumps. See Budeancă, “Inundațiile din 1970.”

⁸⁰ This action, too, had some success: a German donated 50,000 deutsch marks and a US Lutheran church donated \$50,000 at the request of ethnic Romanian Germans. Budeancă, “Inundațiile din 1970.”

The Reorganization of the Securitate under the Interior Ministry

While the secret police had significant roles in both disaster relief efforts, the Securitate was much more involved in the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts. By 1977 its organizational structure changed. Between the 1970 flood and the 1977 earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime reorganized both the Securitate and the Interior Ministry, responsible for all first-responders with the exception of the army. Legislation in 1972 merged the Securitate's precursor, the Council for State Security, with the Ministry of Internal Affairs to form the Interior Ministry.⁸¹ Legislation in 1973 reorganized the Interior Ministry as the umbrella organization for the Securitate, firefighters, police, and penitentiary workers in county- and Bucharest-level departments. Each department had its own training and educational institutions, hospitals, cultural and art institutions, cinemas, publications and printing houses, a special center for "psychophysiological" research, laboratories, and mechanics and shops for equipment repair.⁸²

During the 1977 earthquake response efforts, the reorganized Interior Ministry supervised all Securitate, firefighter, and police troops. The ministry had an overall mission of "protecting the state security, socialist, and personal properties, and the rights and interests of people, preventing and discovering infractions, assuring public order, and controlling international borders...undertaken with the collaboration of the Securitate and [police] units and their subordinates all with the aim to ensure the peaceful work of socialist construction of the

⁸¹ The Securitate's precursor was the Council for State Security, in existence since 1948. Ceaușescu signed Decree 153/1972 on April 19, 1972. CNSAS, fond documentar, Dosar 123, vol. 9, 67-77 accessed February 2, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/istoria_sec/documente_securitate/xorganizare_interna/1972%20Decret.pdf.

⁸² 1974 legislation approved and financed the Office of Documentary Information. See CNSAS, Structure of the Interior Ministry, 1948-1978, Section VI, B., 19-20, accessed February 7, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/cadrela_securitatii/Ministerul%20de%20Interne%20-1948-1978.pdf.

Romanian people.”⁸³ Interior Minister Teodor Coman was a member of the Political Executive Committee of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and led his own Ministry-level executive bureau comprised of deputies and department heads. Practically all leaders and officers in the Interior Ministry were Romanian Communist Party members, including the firefighters, police, and Securitate.⁸⁴ Almost all Interior Ministry workers were military conscripts; the few civilian workers were mostly female secretarial staff. Party membership was not mandated, but expected.

The 1972 Securitate reorganization restored some level of legitimization and perceived trust in the department, which explained, in part, its massive deployment in the wake of the 1977 earthquake. Throughout the communist era in Romania, the severity with which the Securitate applied its methods changed, while its primary function remained the same: “to collect valuable information directly from the source, about citizens’ attitudes about the regime in order to prevent and repress any actions not in line with the official ideology.”⁸⁵ Following Ceaușescu’s reforms, many of the Securitate’s primary actions were domestic. They ranged from the technical aspects of secret policing, such as installing and operating equipment for information

⁸³ CNSAS, fond documentar, Dosar 123, vol. 9, 67-77, accessed February 2, 2016.

http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/istoria_sec/documente_securitate/xorganizare_interna/1972%20Decret.pdf.

⁸⁴ ANR, CCRCP, Political Administration 03/1977, 136 reverse. In 1949 the RCP eliminated the civilian police force. The Romanian Gendarme was disbanded in 1949 and reinstated in 1990. The army had its own police force. The state police’s five directorates— Economic, Judicial, Transportation, Peace and Order; and Population Evidence. It was responsible for the prevention and discovery of crimes against state property; prevention and prosecution of crimes against individuals and the state; transportation; security in towns and cities; organization of preventative arrests; transportation of detainees and convicts; and issuing identification documents and residential permits (people had to get permission to move their residence). Its four services — Arms, Ammunitions and Toxic Substances; Transportation; Criminal Records and Evidence; and Rural— were responsible for the regulation of arms, ammunition, and toxic substances; crime prevention and detection in transportation hubs (airports, train stations, ports); air traffic control; maintenance and storage of criminal records and; the police duties in the rural areas. See CNSAS, “Ministerul de Interne, 1948-1978”: Section VI, B.,16, accessed February 7, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/cadrede_securitatii/Ministerul%20de%20Interne%20-1948-1978.pdf.

⁸⁵ Tismăneanu, et.al., *Raport Final*, 382.

gathering (i.e., bugging apartments, offices, telephones, etc., in Unit “T”); protecting party leadership (Directorate V); counterespionage (Directorate III); and following people (Special Surveillance Unit “F”).⁸⁶ Over the course of the Ceaușescu regime, the Securitate morphed from its early objective to “destroy the class enemy and prevent infractions against state security” to later “defending national values.”⁸⁷ Following the reforms of the early 1970s, Ceaușescu started a “new mission for the Securitate: ‘war of the entire people.’”⁸⁸

By the end of the communist era in 1989, the Romanian Securitate’s use of willing and unwilling informants was key to its success using fear for compliance. Even after the 1970s Securitate professionalization, Romanians feared being arrested and thrown into prison, “...despite the fact that the regime had already changed its methods to control from randomly applied repression to extensively disseminated fear.”⁸⁹ The regime encouraged fear of the Securitate by having its officers work relatively out in the open, saturating life with willing and unwilling informants. During the Ceaușescu regime, the Securitate was not only a “secret” police force: its actions and presence were not necessarily hidden from the population around them, but rather lauded precisely to encourage compliance.⁹⁰ While the East German secret police, the *Stasi*, had more officers per capita, the Romanian Securitate had more informants. By 1989, there was one *Securisti* — secret police officer or informant — for every thirty citizens.⁹¹ One could

⁸⁶ For the structure of the Securitate see Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 105; Verdery, “Romania’s Securitate Archive and its Fictions: An Introduction” An NCEEER Working Paper, June 24, 2013, 11, accessed February 7, 2016, https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/2013_826-01g_Verdery.pdf; and CNSAS, “Ministerul de Interne,” Section VI, B., 19.

⁸⁷ Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 17.

⁸⁸ *Idem*.

⁸⁹ Petrescu, “Afterlife of the Securitate,” 398.

⁹⁰ Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*.

⁹¹ By 1989 the Securitate employed 39,000 officers for a population of 23 million. This is in stark contrast to the 93,000 DDR officers for an East German population of 19 million. Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 207.

expect a Securitate presence at work or school, at church or among one's neighbors. The Securitate and its informants especially paid attention to "outsider" groups and those who had possible or real contact with foreigners (scholars, business people, researchers, etc). As anthropologist Katherine Verdery argues, the Securitate was not "a monolith with a single overriding intention – the opinion of most Romanian citizens—but as a multicentric organization fragmented among many parts."⁹² The Ceaușescu-era Securitate terror differed from that under Gheroghiu-Dej: strong evidence supports that Securitate officers or informants orchestrated assassinations like that of Gheorghe Ursu, used radiation to kill *Radio Free Europe* (RFE) staff, supported the terrorist Carlos the Jackal's 1981 bombing of the RFE Munich office, and cracked down on the 1987 worker protests in Brasov and the December 1989 protests across Romania.⁹³

Dissident Paul Goma and Defector Mihai Pacepa

If the 1977 earthquake recovery tasks were not enough, the Ceaușescu regime also dealt with two significant concerns, which took it away from both the immediate and longterm earthquake recovery tasks. Those important "distractions" included the Romanian writer Paul Goma's criticism of the regime's human rights record and General Ion Mihai Pacepa's 1978 defection, the highest ranking Romanian Securitate officer to flee to the West.

⁹² Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 50.

⁹³ Elis Neagoe-Pleșa and Liviu Pleșa, *Securitatea: Structure / Cadre, Obiective și Metode Volume II (1967-1989): Documentele inedite din arhivele secrete ale comunismului*, (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedica, 2006), XXVII. Ursu's case is discussed in Chapter Five.

During the spring of 1977, at the same time as the earthquake recovery efforts, the regime was preoccupied with the writer Paul Goma and his activities that highlighted the regime's human rights abuses. Goma wrote to Ceaușescu asking him to join him as a signatory in support of Charter 77, the organized criticism of human rights abuses penned by Czechoslovak intellectuals in January 1977. Goma argued that if Ceaușescu signed the Romanian nation would too. In a letter to Ceaușescu, Goma lamented that most Romanians would probably not sign because they were afraid of the Securitate, writing: "It appears in Romania that only two people are not afraid of the Securitate: you and me."⁹⁴ Ceaușescu did not sign. Only six other Romanians, including Goma's wife, signed the Charter, news which Radio Free Europe's Romanian desk broadcast via shortwave that February.⁹⁵ Three weeks after the earthquake, on April 1, 1977, the Ceaușescu regime placed Goma under house arrest, allegedly for violating the law that outlawed criticism of the Romanian state in foreign media.⁹⁶ The state stripped him of his membership in the Romanian Writer's Union. During Goma's confinement in his apartment for eight months until his exile to Paris, a famous boxer broke in several times and beat him.

Following the "Goma affair" the regime dealt with another significant disruption. More than a year after the earthquake, in July 1978, the regime was shaken by the defection of Ioan

⁹⁴ In addition to overestimating the ethnic Hungarian population, Goma completely overlooked the ethnicities that made up the remaining 4% of the population, including German, Roma, Ukrainian, Serb, Jewish, Tatar, Turk, Russian, Slovak, Lipovan, Bulgarian, Czech, Croat, Greek, Polish, Saxon, Swabian, Armenian, Macedonian, Szekler, Ruthenian, Slovene, and Aromanian. Text quoted in Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 238.

⁹⁵ Goma sent the letter to Pavel Kohout and Radio Free Europe's Romanian Desk broadcast it in February 1977. See Paul Goma, *Culoarea curcubeului '77: (cutremurul oamenilor) Cod "Barbosul": (din dosarele Securitatii, 1957-1977)*, (Iasi: Polirom, 2005), 46-47. His remembrances of his letter in support of Charter 77 and the other seven signatories, accessed September 28, 2016, <http://www.paulgoma.com/culoarea-curcubeului-77-barbosul-marturie-1977-dosar-de-securitate-2004-cutremurul-oamenilor-1977-cod-barbosul/>. Ana Maria Navodaru, Goma's wife, was among his letter's eight signatories. See Goma's own remembrance in his biography accessed September 28, 2016, <http://www.paulgoma.com/paul-goma-biografie-si-bibliografie-1909-2007/>.

⁹⁶ For more about the legal underpinnings of the Goma case, see Iuliu Crăcană, "Aspecte Legislative ale Reprimării Dizidenței Români. Cazul Goma," in *Caietele CNSAS*, nr. 2 (2008), 339-347, accessed September 23, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/caiete/Caiete_CNSAS_nr_2_2008.pdf.

Mihai Pacepa. At the time Pacepa was the communist bloc's highest-ranking secret police defector. With help from the US Central Intelligence Agency, Pacepa defected while on a trip in West Germany.⁹⁷ In response, Ceaușescu fired, demoted, and removed or transferred scores of regime officials and restructured the Securitate again, fearing many may have been involved with or helped Pacepa.⁹⁸ His defection occupied the regime for months, if not years, and created a firestorm of mistrust and suspicion within it.

After the Earthquake: Policies Linked to the Recovery Efforts

While the Ceaușescu regime's earthquake recovery efforts were sidelined by other events such as the Goma affair and Pacepa's defection, other policy changes were clearly linked to the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts. These ranged from small to large. One small policy change that year was a registry of all international calls made from Romania, likely in response to Romanians' use of Radio Free Europe to exchange information in the immediate hours and days following the earthquake.⁹⁹ A more significant link occurred two months after the earthquake. In May 1977, the regime made significant changes to its first-responder protocols, amending its asset protection plan, increasing communication channels, and prescribing tasks for firefighters

⁹⁷ Pacepa wrote a raunchy account of his time in the regime, see Ion Mihai Pacepa, *Red Horizons: The True Story of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescus' Crimes, Lifestyle, and Corruption*, (Washington DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1990).

⁹⁸ Elis Neagoe-Pleșa and Liviu Pleșa. *Securitatea*, XV.

⁹⁹ Germina Nagat, "Ceaușescu's War against Our Ears," in *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, eds. A. Ross Johnson and R. Eugene Parta (Budapest & New York: Central European University Press, 2010), 236. Radio Free Europe's role after the earthquake is discussed in Chapter One.

and police similar to those of the Securitate.¹⁰⁰ The stated objective was to defend state assets (described as “national wealth”), “perfect activities” that would prevent potential damage to the national economy, and protect and secure industrial assets (factories, power plants, etc.). Specifically, the new guidelines gave first-responders the power to “discover and liquidate acts of diversion or sabotage that might undermine the national economy” and defend “socialist property” against fires, explosions or damage by offenders or other people who attack public property. The amended first-responder protocols expanded permitted roles and activities in particular of the Securitate and its network working in the capacity as first-responders. It charged counterintelligence officers and their informants to “intervene directly to prevent the production of an event when danger is imminent” and also enabled the Securitate to mobilize informants for data collection.¹⁰¹

Two policies directly linked to the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts were amended disaster response legislation and Ceaușescu’s introduction of the grand Civic Center Project and its centerpiece, the House of the People. A year following the 1977 earthquake, the Romanian government issued the 1978 Civic Defense Law that mandated participation from all citizens and expanded the Securitate’s role in future natural and man-made disaster recovery efforts.¹⁰² The 1978 Civil Defense Law legislated specific tasks for “state ministries, other central agencies and local bodies” and obligated “citizens, state bodies, public organizations, and socialist units,” in the wake of natural or man-made disasters to assist in the protection of the population and the

¹⁰⁰ CNSAS 3635, Dosar nr. 2, vol. 2, p.105 reverse and Interior Ministry document nr. 00170072, May 27, 1977, CNSAS, 3634, Dosar 6, vol. 6, 319-322, accessed January 29, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/acte_normative/3634_006%20fila%20319-322.pdf.

¹⁰¹ CNSAS, 3634, Dosar 6, vol. 6, 319-320.

¹⁰² “Ziua Pompierilor din Romania: File de istorie,” 32, accessed January 17, 2017, <http://www.cultura.mai.gov.ro/editura-mai/ziua-pompieri.pdf>.

state's property.¹⁰³ In addition to chairmen of the Communist Party Committees and executives of the Peoples Councils, the 1978 Civil Defense Law named government ministers and city, town, and village department chiefs as defense unit commanders.¹⁰⁴ The 1978 Civil Defense Law specifically bound all citizens —regardless of sex or ethnicity — to the state's future civil defense measures. It stipulated: “all citizens, men and women, irrespective of their nationality, have the obligation to prepare and know the rules and measures of civil defense; to participate, if necessary, in all actions aimed at ensuring the normal operation of economic and social activity and the protection of citizens and property to ensure the normal course of economic, political, and social life.¹⁰⁵” The 1978 Civil Defense Law required citizens to acquire undefined knowledge and skills to prepare for potential civil defense actions, follow measures prescribed by the regime leadership whether in peacetime or war, engage in recovery efforts, participate in all necessary aspects of shelter, arrange for housing construction on state or personal property, and procure a gas mask and anti-chemical kit at their own expense.¹⁰⁶ To enlist and obligate all citizens in possible future civil defense measures was a remarkable new step for the regime and points to its recognition of its own capability to respond in such a crisis and its ability to enlist citizens in state efforts.

With one exception the regime changed its policies with little protest. The largest citizen protest against the Ceaușescu regime before the events of 1989 had a direct link to one 1977

¹⁰³ The text of Law 2/1978 for *Civil Defense in the Socialist Republic of Romania* was published in Monitorul Oficial nr. 24, March 27, 1978: Introductory justification, accessed January 17, 2017, <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/462>.

¹⁰⁴ Chapter 4, Article 29-36 outlined the responsibilities for each Ministry (Defense, Interior, Health, Transportation and Telecommunications, Electricity, and Agriculture and Food Industry), accessed January 27, 2016, <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/462>.

¹⁰⁵ Eligible were working men and women aged 20-60 and 20-55 respectively. See Articles 2 and 10, accessed January 27, 2016, <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/462>.

¹⁰⁶ Article 14, accessed January 27, 2016, <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/462>.

earthquake recovery effort, the forced unpaid overtime and additional Sunday work in the name of earthquake victims.¹⁰⁷ For days in early August 1977, almost ten thousand coal miners in Transylvania's Jiu Valley went on strike to protest that post-earthquake policy and month-old law, which reduced their pensions and disability benefits.¹⁰⁸ In reaction to the disruption caused by the strike, Ceaușescu traveled to the Jiu Valley from Bucharest to address the miners. On a platform erected for him outside, he spoke for hours to thousands of miners gathered. Towards the end of the speech, the miners began to boo and heckle. Ceaușescu got flustered and, most likely because of their numbers and his small security detail, he conceded to some of their demands, including weekends off, the maintenance of the six-hour workday, and a promise to build more factories nearby to expand employment options for others, mostly for women, in the region.

Many of the earthquake recovery efforts from March 1977 into 1978 also informed regime policies introduced in the 1980s. The mandated extra labor and “suggested” donations served as a proving ground for how much the regime could ask of its citizens.¹⁰⁹ In the 1980s, the Ceaușescu regime imposed a severe austerity policy and rationed daily necessities, such as food, gasoline, and fuel. The regime rationalized these sacrifices as necessary to pay off foreign debt accumulated over the 1970s, funds used to fuel its shift to heavy industry from consumer-goods production.¹¹⁰ This austerity policy, however, was not only an economic, but an ideological tool of the regime. The focus on Romanian resources reflected the Ceaușescu regime's attempts to

¹⁰⁷ This is discussed in Chapter Three.

¹⁰⁸ See Law 3/1977, passed June 30, 1977, “privind pensiile de asigurari sociale de stat si asistenta sociala,” accessed on February 3, 2017, http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=1356

¹⁰⁹ Discussed in Chapter Three.

¹¹⁰ Steven D. Roper, *Romania: The Unfinished Revolution*, (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 2000), 52-55.

forge its ideology into a Romanian national socialist form, separate and unique from international socialist efforts.

One last important, concurrent effort linked to the 1977 earthquake was the regime's plans to build the Civic Center Project and the House of the People, a new political-administrative center with a grand assembly building in Bucharest.¹¹¹ Within just weeks of the earthquake, Ceaușescu announced his vision and a concrete plan for its construction. The earthquake destruction inspired Ceaușescu to resurrect an inter-war era plan for such a civic center. Its new centerpiece was a gigantic assembly building, the House of the People. In 1981 the regime laid its corner stone; and the 1980s saw massive evacuations, building relocations and demolitions to make space for its construction.

Sources

File creation was the first great socialist industry.¹¹² This dissertation uses sources created and archived by the Romanian Securitate and its umbrella organization, the Interior Ministry. The Securitate's file creation, in particular, was akin to feathering a nest for no particular bird. Officers and informants gathered, gave, and made-up information for those files. For the most part the Securitate tracked individuals, and Securitate officers recorded information they discovered themselves or received from willing and unwilling informants. The Securitate's

¹¹¹ This is further discussed in the Epilogue.

¹¹² Stated by Bela Zilber, quoted in Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 63.

documentation of citizen complaints and criticisms did indeed record people's actual concerns.

In the case of the Securitate's 1977 earthquake documentation, there is a veracity to the files precisely because of the enormity of the event and its aftermath.

Securitate officers and informants duplicated tasks as well as accompanying reports, documentation and files. Different people often gathered and constructed the same information without others knowing. Officers and staff replicated, rewrote, and retyped. They typed-up handwritten notes then retyped them again. They transcribed clandestinely recorded telephone conversations. They photocopied those transcripts. Then, periodically, they purged a selection, or sometimes all, of these documents. The extant Securitate files are not, however, trimly edited documents. They too, contain redundancy. Much of the duplicated, redundant, and superfluous work was preventative; the redundancy both protected and restricted officers and others inside the organization from information. The duplication, redundancy and redaction were hallmarks of the post-Stalinist communist bloc's security forces and agencies. Most importantly, files were never intended to be read outside the Securitate, with the exception of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu and other regime members of the Political Executive Committee.¹¹³ Lastly, file creation was a male enterprise: women could not do much of the work of a male Securitate officer, such as sitting in a restaurant alone or drinking with informants without raising suspicion. Women were relegated to serve as typists and secretaries in the Securitate, a role yet to be researched extensively.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 70.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 129.

During the events of 1989, officials, police or others destroyed some of the documents in the Romanian Communist Party, government, and Securitate archives, but many were saved and even recovered from pits where they were buried.¹¹⁵ Access to what was recovered is relatively open to accredited researchers and most finding aids are available online. I used an array of original documents to inform this work on the Ceaușescu regime's earthquake recovery efforts. The Securitate treated this effort the way it did individuals: it was a target, or object, to follow. I used many documents from the Interior Ministry's selected, organized, bound volumes, titled "The 1977 Earthquake," held by Romania's National Council for the Study of the Former Securitate (*Consiliul National pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității*), or CNSAS.¹¹⁶ I searched all CNSAS documents available related to the 1977 earthquake, Bucharest and first responder efforts, legislation, and orders that concerned Interior Ministry activities available in an ongoing CNSAS project.¹¹⁷ The bound volumes included documents from several Interior Ministry departments, including those of the national- and Bucharest-level Securitate and firefighters. I also read other Interior Ministry collected documents outside of those bound volumes held at CNSAS including meeting minutes of the Interior Ministry's Leadership Council's Executive Department.¹¹⁸ Two of the CNSAS held "1977 Earthquake" volumes include daily (sometimes twice daily) "victim, injured, hospitalized, and orphan tables" and Interior Ministry first-responder orders, and a third volume of "notes and informative bulletins of Securitate activities

¹¹⁵ Lavinia Stan, "Inside the Securitate Archives," (Washington DC: The Wilson Center, Cold War International History Project, March 4, 2005), accessed February 4, 2017, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/inside-the-securitate-archives>.

¹¹⁶ Since 2006, CNSAS makes available extant and catalogued files of the former Securitate to accredited researchers access, with the exception of personal files of living individuals, accessed February 3, 2017, <http://www.cnsas.ro/>. The two "1977 Earthquake" volumes are CNSAS, D.11737, v. 104 and 105.

¹¹⁷ CNSAS has an ongoing project to continue uploading to the internet "normative acts" or regulations, accessed March 6, 2017, http://www.cnsas.ro/acte_normative.html.

¹¹⁸ CNSAS, D.11487, v. 2, v. 4, and v. 11.

within the earthquake mission.”¹¹⁹ Lastly, I believe my work is the first to use a file of the Special Hard Currency Mission (OVS), with its telegram register of communication between the Securitate home office and its network abroad for the clandestine “Solidarity” operation, which encouraged certain forms of foreign assistance.¹²⁰

The majority of the Interior Ministry documents, including many from the Securitate, were internal notes, orders, and documentation tables related to the earthquake recovery mission’s activities. The 1977 earthquake was a contained event with tangible physical results that the Interior Ministry workforce responded to within a disciplined framework and usual procedures and protocols. During the ten-day state of emergency, officers updated daily, sometimes twice daily, tables of the dead, injured, hospitalized, and housed individuals. They attempted to account for each and every resident of the collapsed buildings, listing those that died, found housing, and those they could not account for, or “missing.”¹²¹ In the case of the 1977 earthquake, much of the Interior Ministry workforce, including the Securitate, worked as bureaucrats and functionaries, documenting what they thought was important. Through these primary source documents, I have sought to include Romanian citizens’ and workers’ experiences, voices, and concerns.

Other important documents I employed are the Presidential Decrees, in draft and final forms, that Nicolae Ceaușescu signed. I read many documents archived by the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (CCRCP), held by the Romanian National

¹¹⁹ The first two at CNSAS, D.14800, volumes 1 and 2 and the third at CNSAS, D. 13339, v. 37.

¹²⁰ CNSAS, OVS, 31.160, v.1.

¹²¹ This work’s Appendix publishes that compiled victim list for the first time.

Archives (ANR).¹²² In particular I have utilized documents of the CCRCPC Chancellery, Economics, and Propaganda and Agitation Sections. Many of these consist of stenographer recorded meeting minutes of the Political Executive Committee, which included Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu, government ministers, Bucharest city leaders, and others with the highest responsibilities in the regime. Stenographers and other support staff took notes during meetings, typed them up, annexed supporting reports, bound, and archived them. In general, the minutes read like a conversation with exclamations and interruptions, are peppered with emotion, read true to conversational tone, and illuminate the ways in which Ceaușescu interacted with ministers and others in the regime.

Media, both Romanian state-run and foreign, are important sources for this work. Characterized today as “fake news,” media that served an ideological mission was first and foremost in Romanian state-run newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. The Ceaușescu regime was not unique among the communist bloc in its expertise and use of self-serving state-run media propaganda outlets. In 1977, it controlled all domestic media, including national and local daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, two television stations, and three radio stations, the journalists who worked for them, and the physical infrastructure where they were produced. State-run media ran practical information, too, such as TV viewing guides, weather reports, and classified advertisements, but more importantly it mobilized all “news” and information in order to serve the regime’s objectives and promote its ideology. During the Ceaușescu regime

¹²² *Arhivele Naționale ale României* holdings of communist-era documents can be accessed in the “Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu” reading room. Many finding aids are available online, accessed February 4, 2017, [http://www.arhivelenationale.ro/images/custom/file/sala%20de%20studiu/lista%20alfabetica%20decembrie%20%202016%20sala%202\(1\).pdf](http://www.arhivelenationale.ro/images/custom/file/sala%20de%20studiu/lista%20alfabetica%20decembrie%20%202016%20sala%202(1).pdf).

Romanians tried to fill the information vacuum and illegally listened to foreign radio stations on shortwave bands. I have used available extant records from Radio Free Europe's (RFE) Romania desk in this work.¹²³ Unfortunately, the archival holdings do not include tapes of the RFE broadcasts in the hours and days following the 1977 earthquake. Those tapes survived at least through the 1980s after the bombing of the Munich-based offices, but their archival depository does not include them. This work is the first to identify and document the text from two pseudonymously signed letters RFE broadcast in 1979 and 1984, which were penned by the civil engineer and unlikely dissident, Gheorghe Ursu.¹²⁴

The archival sources, of course, are incomplete. Beyond those destroyed regime actors and others during the December 1989 revolutionary events, Nicolae Ceaușescu held many unofficial meetings, some before his 8:40 workday start and just a few minutes long.¹²⁵ Lastly, the Civic Center Project and House of the People were important aftershocks of the 1977 earthquake, but the current Romanian government considers all documents related to them as a state secret and restricts their circulation for research, an important factor why this dissertation could not investigate them in depth.

¹²³ Held by the Hoover Institution Archives, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Romanian Broadcasting Department, at Stanford University, finding aids accessed February 4, 2017, <http://www.hoover.org/library-archives>.

¹²⁴ The 1979 letter's text was used for the radio program *Povestea Vorbei* (Storytelling); its transcript archived at *Povestea Vorbei* nr. 195, *Aniversarea cutremurului* (Earthquake Anniversary) by Virgil Ierunca, Sunday March 4, 1979, Romanian Broadcasting Department, box 3811, folder 2, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Romania Broadcast Department, 1960-1995, Hoover Institution Archives; and the Securitate's transcription of the 1984 letter broadcast is archived at CNSAS, D.21, v.55, 110-113 and 120.

¹²⁵ ANR, Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (CCRCP), Chancellery Section(1980-1989), Vol. VIII, Inventory Number 3354, 123/1988.

Chapters Outline

This dissertation proceeds temporally from the moments after the earthquake through 1978. As one might expect, the regime and its officials worked to recover the dead, assist the injured, and coordinate foreign and domestic assistance. And, it did so relatively quickly. Within days, for most the rhythm of daily life in communist Romania returned to much of what it had been before the 1977 earthquake: shops and schools reopened, industry started up again, almost all returned to work, movie theaters reopened, and on the radio programming returned from “funeral to symphony music.”¹²⁶ Chapter One tells the story of the first moments and days following the earthquake and discussed two unusual responses: the regime’s use of Securitate troops as first-responders and Radio Free Europe’s unprecedented earthquake coverage. Chapter Two examines the regime’s values as expressed through its efforts to recover and protect state and citizen assets, and control and solicit foreign assistance. Chapter Three also discusses the regime’s concerns about assets and examine the ways in which it looked to Romanian citizens as sources of recovery assistance when it mandated millions of workers “donate” labor and cash in the name of the earthquake victims. Assets the regime secured and acquired in the name of the earthquake victims were not actually used for much of the actual earthquake recovery. How the state walked away from a large portion of that recovery is discussed in Chapters Four and Five. In both I outline the incremental process by which the regime chose ultimately to do nothing to protect the public in many of the earthquake damaged buildings, specifically when it limited and eventually completely stopped seismic assessments and hastened repairs in time to celebrate

¹²⁶ ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 27/1977, 40.

important national holidays on May 1 and August 23. In the Epilogue, I discuss two events directly linked to the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts. Today in Bucharest, there are hundreds of high-rise residential buildings condemned to collapse in the next significant earthquake, their state of disrepair a direct result of the 1977 regime decisions to ultimately do little to repair them. Second, the 1977 earthquake inspired Ceaușescu to begin destroying an entire Bucharest neighborhood for the construction of the Civic Center Project and the House of the People. Lastly, an Appendix provides the first-ever published, and most complete list, of the known dead and serves as a memorial to them and the survivors.

Chapter One

Immediate and Unusual Earthquake Responses: The First Moments, the Securitate, and Radio Free Europe

It was a nightmare that I would not want to live again or have anyone else live ever. -- Memory of a doctor at Bucharest's Emergency Hospital, March 3, 2012¹

The full moon lit the clear night sky and temperatures were above average for late winter on Friday March 4, 1977. People across the country were out on the town, at work, or at home. Without warning “dogs began to howl mournfully and chickens began to cackle” just moments before a 7.4 Richter Scale measured earthquake began to shake. The second strongest Romania experienced in the twentieth century, the earthquake started at 9:22 p.m. and lasted for 55 seconds.² The Ceaușescu regime's immediate and long-term responses included both typical and atypical disaster relief efforts. State officials helped survivors, recovered victims and managed assistance.³ The government also dispatched Securitate troops to work as first-responders. Radio Free Europe (*Radio Europa Liberă*) filled an information vacuum with its unprecedented

¹ “FOCUS: Mărturii din 4 martie 1977: Erau mormane de moloz și oameni care scormoneau să scoată oameni” *ZF*, March 3, 2012, accessed March 1, 2016, <http://www.zf.ro/zf-24/focus-marturii-din-4-martie-1977-erau-mormane-de-moloz-si-oameni-care-scormoneau-sa-scoata-oameni-9366440>.

² Witness testimony collected at Forumul CUTREMUR.NET, thread, “Cutremurul din 1977 - marturie. Cum au reactionat autoritatile,” post 17, 2, accessed January 17, 2017, <http://cutremurnetforum.sd4.eu/showthread.php?tid=427&page=2> and Emil-Sever Georgescu and Antonios Pomonis, “Building Damage vs. Territorial Casualty Patterns during the Vrancea (Romania) Earthquakes of 1940 and 1977,” Paper presented at the 15th World Conference on Earthquake Engineering (WCEE), (Lisbon, 2012), 1, accessed August 2, 2016, http://www.iitk.ac.in/nicee/wcee/article/WCEE2012_2123.pdf.

³ Almost nine minutes of contemporary Romanian TV-1 footage is available. It includes footage during the night of the earthquake, and first-responders digging in the rubble, graphic images of the victims, and Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu touring the city, accessed January 30, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSN3mudRzVU>.

live-on air coverage in the hours and days following the earthquake. This chapter traces the narrative moments, hours, and days that immediately followed the earthquake and sets the context for the Ceaușescu regime's response into 1978.

Moments Before and Immediately after the March 4, 1977 Earthquake

The 1977 earthquake was a nightmare for many, but particularly so for those in the capital city, Bucharest, where the overwhelming majority of the destruction occurred. Many Romanians at home watched state-run TV, which ran the Bulgarian film, *Sweet and Sour*; after the earthquake people told the joke, “God got mad and slammed his fist on the table and said, ‘A Bulgarian film again?!’ And, so came the earthquake.”⁴ Due to its population density, number of high-rise, seismically unsafe buildings, and proximity to the earthquake's epicenter, in Bucharest suffered 90% of the 1,572 people who died and 90% of the industrial and residential damage.⁵ Outside the capital, 151 people perished in the earthquake. Its damage also affected the industrial town Zimnicea on the Bulgarian border, the small city Craiova 140 miles west of Bucharest, and Iași near Romania's eastern border along the Prut River northeast of Bucharest.

In the capital that March night, people sat in restaurants and cafes, enjoying the city's nightlife. As one survivor recalled, “There was a nightlife in Bucharest, the city was lit up; there

⁴ Irina Margareta Nistor quoted in “March 4, 1977 - The 55 Seconds Some Never Forget,” Agerpres (Romanian National News Agency), March 4, 2014, accessed January 7, February 2017, <http://www.agerpres.ro/english/2014/03/04/march-4-1977-the-55-seconds-some-never-forget-14-35-43>.

⁵ The regime reported that 90% of the deaths and damage and 71% of the injuries were in Bucharest.

were night advertisements...restaurants, bars open until the early morning...people [were] in the street.”⁶ For the small Jewish community, that Friday started the week’s Shabbat, or day of rest. Many children slept when their homes began to shake. A junior United States Embassy officer, Frederick Becker, remembered “I had a four-year-old and a baby of less than one year. The first thing I screamed to my wife was, ‘Oh, shit, it’s an earthquake and it’s a big one. You get the baby and I’ll get Michele (our older child).’ I pulled Michele out of her bed just as a huge chandelier fell down right where she had been lying.”⁷

Some older children were awake when the earthquake shook. Robin Bacsfalvi, then a nine-year old Canadian ex-pat, remembered the shaking “for what felt like a really long time, but I’ve read it was only a minute.” That night she was playing dress-up with her British friend Ella, who was there for a sleepover. Robin’s dad was at a business dinner, her sister at an American friend’s house, and her mother was in the kitchen when they heard a loud rumbling sound outside. The three went to the window, expecting to see a truck convoy as the sound’s source. Instead, they felt their apartment, located on the top floor of the eight-story building, begin to sway and shake. After the movement stopped Robin’s mother rushed back into the kitchen, caught the fridge as it was about to fall over, and pushed it back in place. Then, the lights and natural gas went out. Robin remembered: “My mom smoked at the time and she grabbed her pack of cigarette, which turned out to be empty.” She directed the girls to walk down the stairs and told them to press their backs to the wall. Robin explained, “We used to play with the

⁶ Massino, “From Black Caviar to Blackouts,” 236.

⁷ Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, “Interview with Frederick A. Becker, Rotation Officer Bucharest (1975-1977),” *Romania Country Reader*, 186, accessed February 29, 2016, <http://www.adst.org/Readers/Romania.pdf>.

railing because it would vibrate when you banged on it. As we walked down with our backs against the wall the railings were still vibrating so profoundly you would have hurt yourself if you touched them.”⁸ When they got to the bottom of the stairs and out into the street Robin remembered she was still holding the hairbrush she used when playing dress-up with her friend just minutes before. Outside their apartment building they connected with other expats in the neighborhood and, as many as could, piled into the family’s car. Robin recalled, “I remember throngs of people in the street. They were trying to open the door to get in our car. People were just frightened. They didn’t know what to do.” As her mother drove though Bucharest to the US Embassy, a meeting point to reconnect with their and Ella’s family, Robin saw “...a building that was like a giant dollhouse where I could see the wallpaper on each level on each floor.”⁹

In addition to the one dollhouse-like building Robin saw, nine others in Bucharest had their exterior walls fall away. More devastating, however, was the immediate collapse of twenty-nine buildings, all but six of which were residential high-rises. In total, in Bucharest more than three dozen high-rise buildings partially or completely collapsed.¹⁰ Rodica Kessler, a “frightened Bucharest telephone operator,” reported to Western news agencies that she saw “several...ten-story and twelve-story buildings, housing hundreds of people, leveled in the capital. I saw legs. I saw heads. I saw very many parts of bodies behind the buildings.”¹¹ A fourth year medical student recalled, “When the earthquake happened I was riding the trolley bus. I saw some trees moving, but I didn't realize it was that bad...When I got home I found my television set fallen

⁸ Phone interview with the author, March 3, 2016.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See Dan Vartanian’s photographs of a few of the buildings with exterior collapsed walls from the 1977 earthquake, accessed January 30, 2017, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/danvartanian/albums/72157594569589984>.

¹¹ “Hundreds Reported Killed By Earthquake in Rumania,” *The New York Times*, March 5, 1977, 1.

over in my bed and...I still didn't believe it was that bad and I rushed to catch a cab...I asked to be taken to the [Floreasca] Emergency Hospital. The cab driver told me we can't go through the city centre because the Scala building had collapsed. I thought he was fabricating stories. He chose to go on the Ștefan cel Mare [Street] and when we reached...a collapsed building I saw shocking scenes. The screams inside were the first to unsettle me. Some [victims] were using flashlights to signal, there were people alive there.”¹²

The high-rise buildings that collapsed completely had both residential and commercial space. Most had shops, cafes, and restaurants filled with evening customers on the ground floors and residents in apartments above. The six non-residential buildings that completely collapsed included a hotel, three office buildings, the government's “computing” center, and the University's Chemistry Department.¹³ If immediate full collapse was not horrifying enough, fires broke out in the rubble of about half of them from natural gas explosions; some of these fires burned for days.¹⁴ Almost all who died in Bucharest perished in one of the collapsed residential buildings.¹⁵

Almost all of the damaged and collapsed buildings were clustered in the capital's city center. Many were built before 1940, a factor that contributed to the damage, which is discussed in depth in Chapter Four. Within hours of the earthquake, the United States Ambassador to Bucharest at the time, Henry Barnes, updated the State Department in Washington DC, writing in a telegram that “downtown Bucharest appears heavily damaged with a number of collapsed

¹² Recollection of Dr. Monica Pop, “March 4, 1977.”

¹³ See Emil-Sever Georgescu, “Earthquake Engineering Development Before and After the March 7, 1977, Vrancea, Romania Earthquake,”: 4; and for the Interior Ministry accounting, CNSAS D.011737, v. 105, 168.

¹⁴ CNSAS, D.12639 v. 15, 390 reverse.

¹⁵ In Bucharest, 1,110 people died from building collapse or resulting fires. Georgescu and Pomonis, e-mail message to the author, April 9, 2016.

buildings and wide-spread structural damage. Have no estimate of casualties, but believe will be fairly heavy.”¹⁶

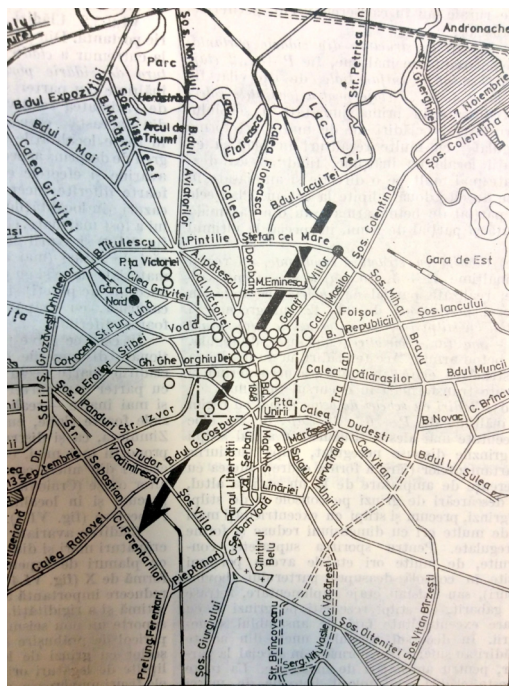


Figure 3. A 1982 regime produced map of the partially or fully collapsed buildings in Bucharest’s city center. Open white circles represent buildings built before 1940 and black circles represent those built after 1940.¹⁷

First-Responders’ First Responses

In Bucharest, first-responders concentrated their efforts in the capital’s center.¹⁸ A US Embassy Marine guard exclaimed, “you can hear sirens running around. The people are all in the

¹⁶ March 4, 1977, telegram to the US Secretary of State from the US Embassy in Bucharest, WikiLeaks, Public Library of US Diplomacy, accessed April 23, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR01464_c.html.

¹⁷ Stefan Balan, Valeriu Cristescu and Ion Cornea, *Cutremurul de pământ din Romania de la 4 martie 1977* (Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România: București, 1982), 231.

streets and the rescue teams are trying to do what they can in the darkness with all the lights out...everyone is living in fear of a new tremor any moment and the buildings are empty.”¹⁹

First-responders included all workers under the Interior Ministry umbrella: firefighters, police, and Securitate. As reported by the Ministry, they “initiated the first measures to save victims and transport them to hospital and to remove people trapped under the damaged buildings.”²⁰

Most Interior Ministry workers responded immediately, reporting to their posts before receiving an official call to do so.²¹ Of those, national and Bucharest firefighters went to fight the thirty-one simultaneous fires in the capital and twenty fires outside of it.²² The firefighters’ command post worked those first hours without light, telephone or radio.²³ The earthquake’s destruction broke some city water lines and, in some extreme cases, firefighters used sewer water.²⁴ A few on-the-ground firefighters used two-way radios to communicate, but most had no way to reach their unit or commander. Civilians, too, had difficulty communicating with first-responders as the earthquake cut city telephone service. They walked, ran, or in very few cases, drove to fire

¹⁸ One of the best collections of earthquake destruction relief effort images, including outside Bucharest, were collected in the tourist company White Mountain Property in a 5’ video composite. See “Bucharest 1977: the last major earthquake,” accessed January 31, 2017,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLJVGfzZCAmAp9OnBaQcb4LyDRga7KpHiW&v=3rdsgzF9PLg>

¹⁹ Quoted in many foreign newspapers, including *The New York Times*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, March, 5, 1977.

²⁰ CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 229.

²¹ The Interior Ministry reported that 96% of its staff worked that evening. See July 8, 1977, CNSAS, Fond 3635, Dosar nr. 2, vol, 2, 122-122 reverse, accessed January 27, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/acte_normative/3635_002%20fila%20114-129.pdf.

²² In Prahova and Dolj counties, see CNSAS, D.12639 v. 15, 390.

²³ *Idem*.

²⁴ Adevarul news, “Fostul șef al pompierilor: După cutremur, multe clădiri au luat foc, apa curentă s-a oprit, așa că am stins incendiile cu dejecții!” *Adevarul*, March 4, 2011, accessed April 19, 2017, http://adevarul.ro/news/bucuresti/fostul-sef-pompierilor-dupa-cutremur-multe-cladiri-luat-foc-apa-curenta-s-a-oprit-asa-stins-incendiile-dejecii-1_50bdee777c42d5a663d05f11/index.html

and police stations to report where there were fires and people trapped, hurt, or in urgent need of assistance.²⁵



Figure 4. Regime officer removing a child from the rubble of an unidentified collapsed building in Bucharest.²⁶

The collapsed buildings, fires, and chaos disrupted transportation especially in Bucharest's center, hampering first-responders' ability to get to the collapsed building sites to search for victims and transport the injured for medical care. Officials closed roads and rerouted transportation around the collapsed buildings. Because transportation was affected and Romania had few rescue vehicles, many people carried victims in their arms to hospital. An apartment building about four blocks from one collapsed and, as an ER doctor there remembered, "in about

²⁵ CNSAS, D.12639 v. 15, 390.

²⁶ Image posted at the blog *Only Romania*, "1977 Vrancea earthquake," accessed January 16, 2017, <http://only-romania.com/2012/03/1977-vrancea-earthquake/>.

five minutes, the [intersection on the hospital's south west corner] was completely blocked. It was an inferno! The healthy carried the wounded in their arms. It was a wave of arms covered in human bodies."²⁷ A medical student who rushed to help recalled, "When I reached the Emergency Hospital, about 20 minutes after the earthquake, bodies were already being deposited in front of the hospital by soldiers."²⁸

The Romanian health system, Bucharest hospitals and clinics in particular, were overwhelmed by the number of dead and injured; more than two thousand people were hospitalized and more than 11,000 sought medical treatment.²⁹ The director of Bucharest's Urgent Care Hospital remembered, "There were three difficult problems: I had no place for the dead because they exceeded the morgue's capacity, emergency patients operated on had to be transported more quickly than normally would be the case and, third was the relationship with patients' families...Within minutes 100 to 200 victims arrived...."³⁰ The city's thirty-five hospitals, three field hospitals set up by firefighters and Securitate, and a Health Ministry triage center set up temporarily in the city's soccer stadium received the injured and dead.³¹ Health services did not have the capacity—beds, equipment, morgues, doctors—to respond adequately to the number of victims and their families. One medical student recalled "we had nothing to

²⁷ FOCUS: *Mărturii din 4 martie 1977.*"

²⁸ Monica Pop, "March 4, 1977."

²⁹ The Ceaușescu regime recorded 2,383 people hospitalized and 11,317 sought medical treatment. See March 18, 1977, CNSAS, D.011737, v. 105, 141.

³⁰ "FOCUS: Heroes of March 4, 1977."

³¹ CNSAS, Fond 3635, Dosar nr. 2, v.2, 125 reverse, accessed January 17, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/acte_normative/3635_002%20fila%20114-129.pdf; CNSAS D 11.487, v. 10, 38-39; and Earthquake Engineering Institute, "Earthquake in Romania, March 4, 1977: A preliminary Report," newsletter, David J. Leeds, editor, Vol. II, nr. 3B, (May 1977), 5, accessed March 1, 2016, https://www.eeri.org/lfe/pdf/Romania_Vrancea_PrelimReport_May77.pdf.

drink; washing your hands was not even a possibility.³² They ran out of equipment: saline, glucose, gloves. The evening of the earthquake, officials evacuated nine of the city's hospitals for fear they might collapse. Able patients evacuated themselves to hospital courtyards, joining the waiting victims and their families. The ER doctor recalled, how "the wounded were screaming and crying and were left in front of the hospital. The yard was also filled with hospital patients who had come outside with blankets on their heads" afraid the hospital, too, would collapse. A medical student recalled "our supervisors told us to deal with the situation, do what you can...we stitched up wounds with no anesthetic and we didn't hear one groan. [The patients] were extremely courageous. The death of a young woman upset me a lot, she was brought nearly severed in two and she told me to not take care of her because she would soon be gone anyway. And, so it was, terrible."³³ Staff triaged and helped patients in hospital hallways, outside on the grass, wherever they could. The medical student recalled her supervisor's instructions: "He told us, 'go out of the hospital and get patients from there...and check for a pulse. If they have a very good pulse, leave them alone. If they have a really weak pulse, leave them there because they will die, there's nothing we can do. If they have an intermediate pulse, we'll do it. We'll see if we can save them from there.'"³⁴

Romulus Rusan, a well-known Romanian writer and co-founder of the Memorial of the Victims of Communism and the Resistance (*Memorialului Victimelor Comunismului și al Rezistenței*), was among the victims with a strong pulse who waited for medical treatment. His apartment building partially collapsed. A felled bookcase and part of a collapsed wall trapped

³² Monica Pop "March 4, 1977."

³³ Idem.

³⁴ Idem.

him for three hours.³⁵ He recalled: “After an hour I heard someone call, ‘is there anyone here?’ I waited for the neighbors to say something first because I heard them, but when they did not say anything, I called out. I saw light through the rubble, there was a full moon that night, but it was someone with a lantern.” The stranger with the lantern turned out to be a police officer, who pulled him out from under the bookcase and wall. Rusan walked himself to the hospital where he waited for treatment for his injured hand. When a doctor finally attended to him he first asked Rusan if he smoked. He did not. The doctor asked again. He repeated that he did not. Then the doctor pointed to Rusan’s foot, which was shoed with an empty carton of Kent cigarettes, whose contents were some of the most valuable black market bartering currency. Rusan had taken the carton from a corpse near his damaged apartment building, which caught the doctor’s attention most likely hoping for a barter.³⁶ Rusan’s story was not unusual for those fortunate enough to survive the quake and their own injuries. Luck found him pinned under a bookcase, but not crushed. A first-responder heard his cries and was able to dig him out. He recovered fully from his injuries, even though they were never fully attended to that night.

During the first hours after the earthquake, while medics helped the injured, firefighters extinguished blazes at most of the easily accessible fires and at some of the most valued assets to the Romanian economy, including oil extraction sites and refineries, power plants, electricity transfer stations, medical clinics, research and education institutions, and a large bread factory.³⁷

³⁵ Rusan died in December 2016. For more information about the Memorial and the Civic Academy Foundation, accessed March 3, 2017, <http://www.memorialsighet.ro/>.

³⁶ Personal interview with the author, Bucharest, Romania, June 19, 2014.

³⁷ The specific places mentioned were: the Center for Thermoelectricity “Vest;” the transform stations in Fundei, Cimpulun Muscel, and Slatina; the Atomic Physics Institute; the Polytechnic Institute; the University Chemistry Department; the petrochemical compound Brazi in Pitești; the Teleajen oil refinery; Vega in Ploiesti; and Pitesi,

Firefighters still fought fires in Bucharest and fourteen counties outside the capital for at least two days straight.³⁸ The work of fighting and preventing fires in damaged facilities lingered. For more than a week, firefighters still worked at some of the important locations to the economy vulnerable to potential fires from the damage they sustained during the earthquake, including chemical plants in the three different cities, three different petrochemical plants in one city, and the shipping port in Constanza on the Black Sea.³⁹ In the days and weeks that followed, the firefighters' mission went beyond putting out fires. They saved people and transported victims. They aimed firetruck headlights for nighttime search and rescue as they helped dig through the rubble for victims and valuables. They sprayed that same rubble with chlorine to prevent victim remains from creating a health hazard. They brought water to factories, bakeries, and energy plants to keep production up and running. But they did not work alone. They worked arm-in-arm with the other Interior Ministry first-responders, the police, and the Securitate.

The Securitate Worked Undercover Alongside Firefighters and Police

From the first moments after the earthquake struck, Securitate troops worked alongside firefighters and police. The Ceaușescu regime gained disaster relief experience following severe flooding in the spring of 1970, but the concentration of the 1977 earthquake's destruction in

clinics "Fundeni" and "Colentina" in Bucharest; and the bread factory "23 August." See CNSAS, D.11.487 v. 4, 119 reverse.

³⁸ March 6, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639 v. 15, 370.

³⁹ March 8, 1977, *Ibid.*, 385.

Bucharest was unprecedented. The regime needed and tried to mobilize all the human resources that could be mustered for search and rescue, victim assistance, economic asset protection, clean-up, and other recovery efforts.⁴⁰ The regime turned to its secret police, the Securitate, to do so. The first day after the earthquake, all across Romania the Interior Ministry deployed more than twice as many Securitate officers and troops as firefighters.⁴¹ In Bucharest, the disparity was even greater. During the ten days following the earthquake, Interior Ministry commanders supervised two to four times more Securitate troops as firefighters.⁴²



Figure 5. First-responders working at the completely collapsed Continental building, March 7, 1977. Workers found a six and a half year old girl 72 hours after the earthquake and a 19 year-old man in the basement 251 hours, or ten and a half days, later. The regime reported that of the registered residents 48% (76) had died, 23% (36) were missing, and 29% (45) survived.⁴³

⁴⁰ CNSAS D 11.487, v. 10, 39.

⁴¹ See CNSAS, D.11.487 v. 4, 120 reverse and CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 227.

⁴² The daily average was six to nine thousand Securitate troops compared with only one to two thousand firefighters, see CNSAS D 14.800 vol. 1, 4-5.

⁴³ For the image see AgerPress, Historical Archive, Photo ID# 7547292, Ion Dumitru, Photographer; Mihaela Tufega, Editor. Location: Bucharest, Romania. Made on March 7, 1977, accessed March 18, 2016,

It would have been difficult to identify the Securitate troops working alongside first-responders because many disguised themselves. As the Securitate reported in its own professional journal, “during the first days after the earthquake, Securitate officers worked directly (under plausible cover as workers, intellectuals, or simply as police) to execute the Securitate’s mission presented by the new situation and specific problems of calming panic and fighting rumors, etc.”⁴⁴ While under the guise of first-responders, its priority was population and information control. Working in non-stop shifts, some not taking a break for the first three days, Securitate officers and troops maintained public order and safety. They guarded the collapsed building sites, factories, museums, archives, and shops in the capital and across Romania.⁴⁵ They “prevented” hostile activities. At government buildings they secured arms, munitions, and explosives and archives with “state” or other “secret documents.”⁴⁶ They identified and counted the dead and injured and tracked missing residents. They influenced journalists, diplomats, and other foreigners to steer their perception of the regime’s earthquake response efforts. Together, these actions served to accomplish one of Ceaușescu’s primary objectives: stem any existing or potential “panic” and “chaos”.

Securitate troops, alongside other first-responders, dug out and transported survivors and victims. They secured temporary housing for the displaced. They helped pick through the rubble for valuables, and inventoried, transported, and stored them. As they helped the first-

<http://foto.agerpres.ro/index.php?i=7547292>. Data are from CNSAS, D.11.737, vol. 105, 175 reverse; and Emil-Sever Georgescu and Antonios Pomonis, “A Review of Socio-Economic Consequences, Losses and Casualties of the 1977 Vrancea, Romanian Earthquake,” *Construcții* No. 2, (2011), 37, Table 5.

⁴⁴ Colonel Ion Vlaicu, “In orele grele și lungi ale durerii, cadrele aparatului de securitate s-au aflat in prima linie a eroicului front al increderii și reconstrucției!” in *Securitatea*, v. 5, no. 1 (37), (1977), 89-94 and 90, available at CNSAS, D.3334/9, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/periodicul_securitatea/Securitatea%201977-1-37.pdf.

⁴⁵ CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 229.

⁴⁶ Vlaicu, “In orele grele,” 89-94 and 90.

response recovery efforts, their concurrent operations were to gather information from people lingering around the damaged and collapsed building sites and deter others from doing so. In and outside the capital, the Securitate detained people whom they perceived were potential “enemies of the state” from traveling to the collapsed building sites and other areas in the capital. Specifically, they identified and deterred people with criminal records from traveling to Bucharest. During the ten-day state of emergency following the earthquake the Securitate prohibited “a large number of people with criminal records” from traveling to damaged areas in the capital and across Romania as they considered them “predisposed to commit crimes.” They reported that “measures were taken to ban their flight,” and essentially detained people only because they had a criminal record.⁴⁷

Responses During the State of Emergency

The general perception was that those first days following the earthquake Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu were available and working hard to relieve the damage and suffering from the earthquake. When the earthquake struck they were on a state-visit to Nigeria. Some Romanians lamented that the ruling couple did not experience the earthquake. Dr. Irina Nistor recalled, “Ceaușescu didn't even feel the quake, the leader being away at that time in one of his endless

⁴⁷ CNSAS D.11.487, v. 10, 37.

trips that were forbidden to the common citizen.”⁴⁸ The Ceaușescu flew back to Bucharest, arriving early the next morning and immediately toured the damage.⁴⁹ Interior Minister Teodor Coman reported that Nicolae Ceaușescu “...was permanently in action...two-three hours per day he visited all the important buildings in the capital and two hours a day he was in meetings with the Executive Council which informed and stabilized our duties....”⁵⁰ The US Ambassador, Henry G. Barnes Jr., reported on the Romanian response in a telegram to Washington DC: “the response in cleaning up most seriously affected regions and controlling movement appears reasonably prompt and effective.”⁵¹ He added that the regime “has quickly asserted control. Clean-up operations were started early this morning to remove wreckage of collapsed apartments near embassy. In center of city these efforts have been hampered by throngs of passer-by, but large number of police and soldiers are on scene.”⁵²

Immediately on his return to Bucharest, Ceaușescu signed presidential decree that enacted a state of emergency for five days across Romania and ten in Bucharest.⁵³ Its primary focus was to restore production at industrial sites. Under the state of emergency the government mobilized the Interior Ministry forces “with all the necessary help from the material and human resources at their disposal” as well as “all activists of the party and the state and of public and mass

⁴⁸ Irina Margareta Nistor quoted in “March 4, 1977 - The 55 Seconds Some Never Forget,” Agerpres (Romanian National News Agency), March 4, 2014, accessed February 7, 2017, <http://www.agerpres.ro/english/2014/03/04/march-4-1977-the-55-seconds-some-never-forget-14-35-43>.

⁴⁹ See film footage of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu’s initial tour of Bucharest’s damage, accessed on March 3, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xeF1WwGe2c0> and AP color footage of the aftermath, accessed March 3, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZrIWYHtlc>.

⁵⁰ CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 176 reverse.

⁵¹ March 5, 1977, telegram to the US Secretary of State from the US Embassy in Bucharest, Public Library of US Diplomacy, accessed March 3, 2017, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR01491_c.html

⁵² Idem.

⁵³ Decree 58/1977 began the state of emergency on March 5, 1977. ANR, *Colectia Consiliul de Stat al P.S.R. Decrete Prezidentiale* (Presidential Decrees), file 73/1977, 1-2. Decree 59/1977 ended the national state of emergency and Decree 60/1977 the one for Bucharest and the Telecommunications and Radio-TV Department, see ANR, Presidential Decrees, 74/1977 and 75/1977 respectively.

organizations” for the recovery efforts, in particular for helping “the population and the economic and social units affected by the earthquake.”⁵⁴ Activists meant communist party members. Social units meant public institutions such as schools, hospitals, libraries, and state-owned industry including factories, food processing plants, collective farms, energy plants, etc. Transportation had an important economic function and was considered an economic “unit.” The state of emergency decree emphasized with equal measure efforts to assist citizens and those to protect the regime’s economic assets. Yet, the order in which the decree listed different ministries and agencies and their tasks emphasized the economy. It outlined the restoration of telecommunications, transportation, and energy networks before the mobilization of health and sanitary workers or the provision of necessary water and food. Article 9 required all “socialist units to take immediate measures to save goods for the quick reestablishment of activities and the normal functioning of the means of production.” The state of emergency did not mention evacuations, temporary shelters, residential damage assessments and repairs, or long-term housing provisions.

During the ten-day state of emergency the Interior Ministry prioritized the first-responders’ deployment to locations vital to the state-run economy damaged or at risk of further damage from collapse or fire as Ceaușescu insisted that economic activity be restored to full capacity.⁵⁵ He demanded that industrial, agricultural, and other economic assets that were not damaged “to work intensely, in long shifts to supplement” the potential economic losses

⁵⁴ ANR, Presidential Decrees, 58/1977, articles 2 and 3; and ANR, Presidential Decrees, 73/1977, 1.

⁵⁵ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 18/1977, 13 reverse.

resulting from earthquake damage (discussed in detail in Chapter Three).⁵⁶ These included power stations, transportation hubs, telecommunications centers, research, and educational institutions, chemical- and petrol-industry sites, hospitals and clinics, food production and processing factories, water reclamation facilities, other factories, and public utilities such as electricity, natural gas, and water.⁵⁷ The Interior Ministry issued daily, sometimes twice daily, updates on the functionality of key economic locations. Firefighters and Securitate troops helped demolish buildings at industrial locations severely affected and repaired those at risk of collapsing.⁵⁸ Where and when they responded was determined, in part, by the economic importance of the building at risk. Each local firefighter command had a “zone of responsibility” with locations ordered by importance.⁵⁹ In the Securitate files locations and buildings have code names (like people in the secret police files). During the first two days following the earthquake “a group of firefighters from Prahova county took measures to intensify the work of preventing fires at the industrial object nr. 1.⁶⁰” The “object number one” is not specifically named, but it was most likely a building of one of the major industries — oil extraction, oil refining or automobile parts manufacture — of Pitești, the largest city in the county with significant petrochemical sites.⁶¹

Romanian civilians helped first-responders in the earthquake recovery efforts in ways the regime permitted. It discouraged citizen participation in the immediate recovery efforts and placed those firmly in the hands of the Interior Ministry forces. Bucharesters did try to help as

⁵⁶ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 18/1977, 13 reverse.

⁵⁷ CNSAS, D.11.487 v. 4, 119 reverse and CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 228-229.

⁵⁸ CNSAS, D.11.487 v. 4, 120.

⁵⁹ CNSAS, D.12.639 v. 15, 374 reverse.

⁶⁰ March 7, 1977, daily report from firefighter commander Briceag, CNSAS, D.12.639 v. 15, 372.

⁶¹ The petrochemical extraction and refining plants were back online a week following the earthquake. See CNSAS, D.12.639 v. 15, 381.

best they could. Women brought food and hot tea to the workers digging through the rubble. Men helped Interior Ministry workers remove bricks and rubble and search for victims. Many people stood in the streets and watched. Food and potable water was ample and the government kept stores open for longer hours, but prohibited alcohol sales for the two days following the earthquake.⁶² While firefighters worked without light, water, or telephone within a day, the regime quickly restored electricity, cold water, and phone service within the first day following the quake, it rationed cold and cut hot water.⁶³ The government intentionally cut natural gas service to prevent new fires, which left residents without hot water or the ability to cook food for four days.⁶⁴ The regime controlled state media to the level of ordering what kind of music to play on the radio. Ceaușescu ordered the first day following the earthquake, “I discussed with the comrades, happy music is not allowed now.”⁶⁵ As for daily life, US Ambassador Barnes reported the morning after the earthquake that many stores were open and noted “lines of shoppers, clearly longer than usual, but we have seen no evidence of stampede and only a couple instances of hoarding. Radio has issued continuous stream of announcements of diversion to Bucharest from surrounding cities of food supplies. Lines of cars at [petrol] service stations are extremely long.” He continued that the people in Bucharest “have recovered quickly and [are] thus far exercising admirable control... We have been impressed with discipline and restraint exhibited by most Bucharest residents. After confusion and traffic jams of last evening,

⁶² ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 25.

⁶³ The regime limited residents’ water use to six hours a day in two-hour blocks allowed each morning, afternoon, and evening. March 7, 1977, telegram to the US Secretary of State from the US Embassy in Bucharest, Public Library of US Diplomacy, accessed April 23, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR01588_c.html.

⁶⁴ As reported by Mayor Ion Dincă in the March 7, 1977, meeting of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 12 reverse.

⁶⁵ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery, 27/1977, 40.

surprising tranquility has returned to city. Lines in front of stores are orderly. Flocks of sightseers who have descended upon center of city appear more curious than distraught.⁶⁶

Within days after the earthquake, foreign experts came, too. A Swiss team arrived with search and rescue dogs. The Interior Ministry organized the receipt, transport, storage, and distribution of foreign assistance.⁶⁷ Donations included powdered milk, baby food, medicine, and medical equipment. The customs office received aid via plane, train, bus, van, and automobile from Western and Eastern Europe, Turkey, Greece, China, and the Soviet Union. Italy sent cookies and candy, Bulgaria sent canned fish and five different countries, the French company Renault, and two French citizens each donated ambulances.⁶⁸ A week following the earthquake a group of US seismologist arrived to gauge the possibility of aftershocks.⁶⁹ The USSR sent its sympathies, two shipments containing medicine and blood serum, and an entire factory — equipment and materials — to produce apartment buildings using prefabricated concrete slabs.⁷⁰

During the first few days after the earthquake, the Political Executive Committee met once or twice daily to discuss recovery efforts across Romania, and in Bucharest in particular. At the first recorded meeting after the earthquake, Ceaușescu expressed his concern for Romanians' safety and outlined the regime's response priorities.⁷¹ He rambled when expressing his initial concerns about the recovery efforts and the victims: "But working with housing and

⁶⁶ March 5, 1977, telegram to the US Secretary of State from the US Embassy in Bucharest, Public Library of US Diplomacy, accessed March 3, 2017, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR01491_c.html.

⁶⁷ CNSAS, file 3635, Dosar nr. 2, vol, 2, 126, accessed January 27, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/acte_normative/3635_002%20fila%20114-129.pdf.

⁶⁸ Norway, Belgium, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland each sent ambulances. See recorded receipts, March 7-13, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 310-310 reverse and 320-322.

⁶⁹ See their report Glen V. Berg, Bruce A. Bolt, Mete A Sozen, and Christopher Rojahn, *Earthquake in Romania, March 4, 1977: An engineering report* (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 1980).

⁷⁰ The Soviet in-kind donation was the largest recorded, valued at \$22 million.

⁷¹ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 18/1977, 2.

with these funerals, that is very many people. Therefore we must give them assistance; we will take all measures to provide assistance.”⁷² More than 1,300 people died in Bucharest and families stood in long lines at the city morgue to identify their loved ones.⁷³ Dealing with the dead was an overwhelming task, Dr. Pop of the Urgent Care Hospital recalled:

After a time, they started bringing bodies to the IML [the Forensic Medicine Institute] and it was a terrible sight. There were parts of human bodies laid out on sheets of plastic and people waiting at the gate, relatives that would come to identify them. You can imagine how it was for a person that was not prepared, it was a shock to us and we lived in the medical world...you can imagine what it meant to go to a place to see dead bodies, body parts strewn there, to try and recognize a family member, a loved one...⁷⁴

The regime permitted families to choose where to bury their relatives. For those who died in the capital, Bucharest’s city council covered most of the burial costs for the identified and all the costs for the unidentified.⁷⁵ In the city’s cemetery unidentified were buried in separate graves, numbered and indexed to where they found the remains. They also buried unidentified body parts, which were estimated to be from an additional fifty-two dead.⁷⁶

Romanians noted Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu’s first walking tour of the capital after the earthquake and were impressed with their concern for the victims, injured, the city and its destruction. In fact, during the first days in the meetings of the Political Executive Committee, Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu expressed great concern for the earthquake’s victims. During the

⁷² ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 17.

⁷³ Telex RFE/RL #46 to Walter Info Reymen - Wash from Lyon Info Scott Hemsing, March 11, 1977, see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany, Hoover Institute Archives.

⁷⁴ Pop “March 4, 1977.”

⁷⁵ Most victims were buried in Bucharest’s Domnesti Cemetery. Under communism, families buried their dead in traditional, Eastern Orthodox ways. Romania had one crematorium at the time, which saw no increased activity in 1977. See Marius Rotar, *History of Modern Cremation in Romania* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2013). The total burial cost to the regime was 1,490,828 Lei (\$74,500), see April 8, 1977, Political Executive Committee meeting, ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 48/1977, 97 reverse.

⁷⁶ ANR, CCRCP, Political Administrative Section, 1921-1977, Inventory Number 3059, 12/1977, 51 reverse.

first meeting after their tour of the capital, where he saw first-hand the destruction and recovery work. Ceaușescu criticized the Interior Ministry's efforts: "we must think about those who suffered damage, those who lost their furniture, clothing. We must give them assistance, but first we must see. We will house them, but also give them some help." Elena then interrupted and reminded all: "First we must remove people from under the rubble."⁷⁷ Nicolae asked about whether there was enough food for the city's population.⁷⁸

That day after the earthquake both Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu concluded that the Interior Ministry's response was disorganized and had skewed priorities. They claimed the workers lacked courage and initiative. Nicolae accused the Interior Ministry workers of prioritizing recovering valuables over saving lives. That first day after his tour, he ordered the Political Executive Committee members: "in the first place, there must be actions to save people."⁷⁹ He had visited a temporary shelter the night before and asked why it was empty. When told it still had not been prepared to receive the displaced, Ceaușescu chastised his ministers and their ability to arrange housing for victims:

People are standing in the street with their children. We decide what to do and to get it done and until then we have resolved nothing. We are not in a state that in one day we will resolve this problem! I said that if you don't have anywhere to house people to put them in hotels. I told you there is a need to use the hotels, and people are in the street. This is not allowable!⁸⁰

People lived on the streets those first nights. In Bucharest in particular, hundreds of people slept in parks and open areas for a few days because they feared their homes might

⁷⁷ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 17.

⁷⁸ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 18/1977, 13 reverse.

⁷⁹ March 6, 1977, a.m. meeting minutes, ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 12.

⁸⁰ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 13.

collapse in an aftershock. The earthquake's damage displaced more than 120,000 people, about 35,000 families.⁸¹ During the ten-day state of emergency, the Interior Ministry provided housing, clothing, and food for 3,500 evacuees and temporary housing in more than two dozen different locations in Bucharest.⁸² Officials evacuated some families to temporary housing in an exhibition hall, university dormitories, schools, hotels, and unoccupied apartments.⁸³ The regime resettled many victims discharged from hospital or from dormitories or other temporary shelter sites. It placed some of the homeless in new apartments and published photo-ops in the state-run newspapers. Very few people were left homeless. The regime resettled many of the survivors of the collapsed buildings, but the overwhelming majority of the displaced found temporary shelter with relatives and friends.⁸⁴

By the late 1970s housing in Romania was already scarce from the urban planning policy, systemization, which moved people from rural areas to urban ones or urbanized rural areas. The capital city in particular was densely settled and new housing was scarce. Almost half of the capital's homes housed married couples with children and an additional quarter had married couples with kids as well as other relatives sharing an apartment.⁸⁵ The earthquake only exacerbated those already existing housing shortages. Starting on the second day after the

⁸¹ The World Bank used the regime's data for their 1978 report of the earthquake damage and losses. See the World Bank, "Report and Recommendation of the President": 12 and the March 17, 1977, report at ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 3.

⁸² The documents mentioned 31 locations, see CNSAS, Fond 3635, Dosar nr. 2, vol. 2, 126, accessed January 27, 2016, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/acte_normative/3635_002%20fila%20114-129.pdf.

⁸³ *New York Times*, March 7, 1977. The *LA Times* reported that the government sent people to Black Sea resorts for free ten-day stays, but I found no evidence that happened. See *LA Times*, March 10, 1977. The government sheltered people at nine different Bucharest hotels with capacity for 1,101 at the *Marna, Dunarea, Palas, Central, Universal, Tranzit, Venetia, Dimbovita, and Rahova II* Hotels, see CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 52.

⁸⁴ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery, 35/1977, 92 and 80 reverse.

⁸⁵ Minnesota Population Center. *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, International: Version 6.4* [Romania 1977, Census taken January 5, 1977, by the Romanian National Institute of Statistics]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2015, August 30, 2016, <https://international.ipums.org/international/>.

earthquake, the government discussed how to resettle the earthquake victims. Ceaușescu told the members of the Political Executive Committee, “people must be evacuated; if we give them apartments, then give them quickly; a person must also have furniture.”⁸⁶ Elena Ceaușescu noted that evacuees did not have anywhere to take their furniture, to which her husband stated, “In the first place if they want to take furniture they will take it; if not, they won’t.”⁸⁷ She explained that they planned to give victims “furniture, kitchen items, six knives for each. It was assigned to each family — unfortunately we only have a few families — there are many people who are the only one left [in their family].”⁸⁸ She described other assistance that the regime provided victims: “They have been given furniture for their home: a table...all that is needed for the kitchen, all that is necessary from the ground up, refrigerator, radio, television, underwear, three changes of bed sheets, two changes of clothing for men, for women a bathrobe, a dress, etc. That has been established.”⁸⁹

The government prioritized resettlement of victims from the collapsed buildings over those evacuated from the damaged buildings. By mid-March, one third of the survivors of collapsed buildings had received cash to resettle; 20% received new, furnished apartments or studios; and half used ration tickets to buy new clothing. The regime proposed allowing the displaced and homeless to purchase one or two bedroom apartments. Nowhere did the regime indicate the amount, if any, of monetary assistance provided to victims, nor was there any

⁸⁶ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery, 20/1977, 6 reverse.

⁸⁷ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery, 20/1977, 7.

⁸⁸ March 6, 1977, ANR, CCRCP, Political Administration 9/1977, 4.

⁸⁹ *Idem*.

follow-up to whether on the execution of the proposal.⁹⁰ Four months after the earthquake, Bucharest officials reported that 151 families remained in dormitories as they waited for their apartment building's reinforcement work to be completed.⁹¹ In contrast, the government did not give cash for resettlement or free clothing to people evacuated from damaged buildings. Half of these evacuees went to live with relatives. The regime gave another third housing and placed a small number in shelters.⁹²

Ceaușescu was concerned about how the first-responders searched for and helped survivors. On the second day after the earthquake, during the Executive Committee meeting, he commented on the bravery of the first-responders. He criticized Interior Minister Coman for not demanding that his workforce enter partially collapsed buildings to search for victims. He complained that the day before he had seen workers at sites of the damaged building standing around doing nothing and learned that they were afraid to dig into the rubble for fear the building might collapse completely. He observed that the workers "are afraid that the building will fall on their head. It's the same at the other café [in a partially collapsed building]...I went in with them and asked them where [they should] make a hole [to enter from the side]. I found an engineer and he said that it is for the Minister [to determine] and that he does not have the courage to enter.

⁹⁰ The one-bedroom units for consideration were to be a 549 square feet and the two bedroom units 592 square feet. The highest price for the one-bedroom units, based on a 1976 law, was 83,900 Romanian Lei and for two bedroom units 90,100 Romanian Lei, see March 16, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 93 reverse.

⁹¹ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 78/1977, 3 reverse.

⁹² A March 18, 1977, report cited 1,207 surviving residents of the collapsed buildings. The regime could not find 233 people. Those first two weeks officials gave free clothing to 556, cash for resettlement to 383, new apartments or studios to 219, and placed eight people in a dormitory. Sixteen residents of the collapsed buildings went to live with relatives. The regime officially evacuated 606 people from the partially collapsed buildings, of which it gave housing to 181, placed 33 in shelters, and 309 went to live with relatives; and 83 were still hospitalized on March 18th. See CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 137-137 reverse.

All stand and watch.”⁹³ Ceaușescu further complained about the lack of bravery among the Interior Ministry workforce: “There exists a mentality that can not be allowed. Yesterday a way should have been found to enter [the rubble under the partially collapsed building]Some [workers] were afraid to enter and for [the building] to crash in on them. For us to speak of a spirit of sacrifice!”⁹⁴ Ceaușescu’s expectation that all should sacrifice themselves for the regime’s mission — in this case victim recovery — was to be repeated throughout most of the earthquake recovery efforts.

After a full day of recovery efforts, on March 6, Ceaușescu blamed both Interior Minister Coman and Bucharest Mayor Ion Dincă for what he considered to be the disorganized victim recovery work the first day after the earthquake.⁹⁵ Coman defended himself and his workers, stating they were trying to remove victims and had worked all night under difficult conditions, including having to light worksites with truck headlights because they did not have adequate equipment. He reported that the night before they saved a three-year old child and said, “we are working with bulldozers and when we see a body we made a circle around it and start removing the rubble by hand, taking the bricks one by one, and therefore it takes a long time.”⁹⁶ Ceaușescu responded to Coman: “What am I to say? Not to use bulldozers? Over there where there was a café, a restaurant, a large crowd, one must go down from the building next door, even under the rubble. Solutions must be found and not to wait until all the debris has been taken away. The problem is that others have not found a solution to enter through [the rubble]. Not all [solutions]

⁹³ CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 9.

⁹⁴ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 10.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 11 reverse.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 10.

are being tapped.”⁹⁷ Ceaușescu told Interior Minister Coman that there should have been a workforce commander at each of the collapsed building sites to manage the work and the workers. Instead of describing the first-responders in charge, Coman reported that he had successfully deployed political operatives, meaning RCP members, Securitate troops, informants, or others. He reported to Ceaușescu that by 3:00 the day after the earthquake, “it was stabilized everywhere in the city that there is a party activist.” Ceaușescu exploded at this statement: “Activists are something else. You are military and executives. What sort of exceptional state is this? The activist is set to mobilize politically, not to give solutions. Whoever is afraid he might be killed must be taken away. I have said since yesterday to be a commander, to be a boss.”⁹⁸ Ceaușescu was frustrated with, as he perceived it, Coman’s inability to mobilize his workforce, encourage them to be courageous, and recover victims.⁹⁹

In a reverse from the initial impression, three days following the earthquake, the Interior Ministry determined that the recovery work was going well. Yet at that time Ceaușescu still believed that more victims could still be saved. He said: “concerning the work to be done, it must be understood that under the rubble they still find people and some are still alive.”¹⁰⁰ First responders did retrieve people from under the rubble days after the earthquake and the state-run newspapers ran page-long features. Ioana Milanovici survived, along with her husband, for almost two days inside a pocket of air and space under the rubble of their apartment building.¹⁰¹ Fifty-eight year old teacher Elena Enache reportedly survived almost eight days, trapped without

⁹⁷ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 10.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹⁹ The regime’s use of Securitate troops as first-responders is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

¹⁰⁰ ANR CCRCP, Chancellery 23/1977, 16.

¹⁰¹ They survived 42 hours, see *Flacara*, Anul XXVI, nr. 10 (135) (10 martie 1977), 14

food or water.¹⁰² And, nineteen year old Sorin Crainic survived eleven days trapped under the rubble, a story which some believe was falsified.¹⁰³ The grim reality, however, was that these stories were the exception; the majority of victims died immediately under the crush of the rubble. Ceaușescu's initial responses following the earthquake were not all heartfelt and benevolent. Few would willingly describe Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu as compassionate leaders and alongside the instances of expressed compassion for the earthquake victims emerged the paternalistic dictator and his cruel wife. Nicolae Ceaușescu said just moments after asking for increased search and rescue efforts that "[i]f some [victims] remain without clothing, that is fine."¹⁰⁴

Radio Free Europe's Unprecedented Coverage Filled an Information Vacuum

That first night after the earthquake, Radio Free Europe (RFE) began unprecedented reporting. First, RFE went on-air with non-stop informative programming, and second, broadcast live telephone calls from Romanians outside and inside the country. Each group took considerable risks to contact the station, as the regime considered listening to the foreign radio station, and talking about its programing, acts of treason. In the initial hours and days following the earthquake, the Romanian government and its state-run media failed to provide the public

¹⁰² She was pulled out after 187 hours, see *Los Angeles Times* (1923-Current File); March 14, 1977; 04583035; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times (1881-1987): B22A.

¹⁰³ The story of Sorin Crainic's heroic 251 hours under the rubble of the Continental buildings may or may not be true, accessed March 18, 2016, http://adevarul.ro/news/bucuresti/poveSti-bucureSti-sorin-crainic-supravietuitorul-cutremurului-77-plans-elena-Ceaușescu-1_50bde91b7c42d5a663cfc8e1/index.html

¹⁰⁴ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 20/1977, 17.

with adequate information. During the first hour and a half after the earthquake struck, state-run radio was either cut by earthquake damage or intentionally by the regime. People filled that void by tuning into foreign radio stations such as the Voice of America (VOA), the British Broadcasting Company (BBC), Deutsche Welle (DW), Radio France International (RFI), and Radio Free Europe (RFE) via shortwave. Not until the third day after the earthquake did the state-run national newspaper *Scinteia* publish any earthquake news. Initially, people took to the phones and called each other to get and give information. One witness recalled, “I remember making a lot of phone calls to ask everybody if they were alright. And among the last of them, as I was certain that nothing could've happened, I reached a desperate mother, her son had died while visiting someone in the Dunărea building. I froze in horror.”¹⁰⁵

When Romanians tuned into foreign shortwave, they preferred the US State Department run, Munich-based Radio Free Europe, part of the Radio Liberty (RL) network. At first a Central Intelligence (CIA) Project, RFE/RL began broadcasting to the communist bloc in Europe and the Soviet Union via shortwave in the 1950s in five different languages broadcasting. Emigrés and others with Romanian fluency staffed the RFE Romanian Desk. The US State Department Press Attaché at the time, E. Ashley Wills, recalled, “Because my Romanian was pretty good I would do a weekly report back to VOA headquarters in Romanian about what was going on at the U.S. Embassy... people don't even know what shortwave radios are today, but back then it was a significant way to transmit information.”¹⁰⁶ By the 1970s, presumably, the US State

¹⁰⁵ Nistor, “March 4, 1977.”

¹⁰⁶ Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Interview with E. Ashley Wills, Press Attache, United States Information Service (USIS), (1973-1977) in *Romania Country Reader*, 127, accessed January 30, 2017, <http://www.adst.org/Readers/Romania.pdf>.

Department ran the indigenous language desks without CIA oversight. Young Romanians gravitated to Radio Free Europe's Romanian language program because it featured more news, music, culture, and sports programs and human interest stories.¹⁰⁷ Specifically, a quarter of the program was reserved for pop and rock music, aimed to attract young listeners.¹⁰⁸ During the Ceaușescu regime, Radio Free Europe and similar foreign radio shortwave programs, were Romanians only sources of non-regime produced national and world news. At the time of the earthquake almost half of Romanians listened to RFE daily.¹⁰⁹ The regime did not publicly recognize RFE, but Romanians considered it Bucharest's fourth station. US based RFE staff claimed, "Bucharest Four is the non-existent radio station that tops the ratings throughout Romania."¹¹⁰ The Romanian RFE desk director, Noel Bernard implemented many of those changes after 1966. In particular, he encouraged Western journalistic approaches. Before Bernard's changes, he recalled, "we never called anybody, any leader of Romania 'Mr.,' we called him Ceaușescu or Gheorghiu-Dej, whereas Western people or others we called them 'Mr.,' so I said that's got to stop and they are 'Mr.' as well."¹¹¹

Minutes after the earthquake, RFE's Romanian Broadcasting Desk lost contact with Bucharest. Staffers contacted the US National Earthquake Information Center in Denver Colorado and confirmed the earthquake's strength and broadcast the news of it an hour and a half

¹⁰⁷ Nestor Ratesh, "Radio Free Europe's Impact in Romania During the Cold War," in *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, A Collection of Studies and Documents*, ed., A. Ross Johnson and R. Eugene Parta and forward by Timothy Garton Ash. (Budapest and New York: Central European Press, 2010), 206 and audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁰⁸ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁰⁹ Nestor Ratesh, "Radio Free Europe's Impact," 207.

¹¹⁰ Telex DC#26, March 10, 1977, "to Mahoney Info Scott Hemsing Bernard From Kingsley Info Mickelson Brainerd," see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹¹¹ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Director RFE Romanian Service, interviewed by Sig Mickelson, tape 5, June 25, 1981, Mickelson (Sig) Papers, 1950-2000, Hoover Institution Archives.

before Romanian state-run radio.¹¹² Bernard recalled that in those first hours after the earthquake, “the Romanian Broadcast Department immediately dropped regular programming and shifted into non-stop quake programming. We did not go off the air at midnight, as usual, but continued non-stop, with great demands upon our staffers, until Sunday night at midnight.”¹¹³ They read Bucharest’s own public service announcements about traffic, utility service, and transportation. Bernard recalled that they relayed “where you could find a pharmacy, where you could find this, that, and the other. So, we took those immediately as they came and broadcast them back. Whatever advice we had at that time we broadcast back and we kept it up all night with these announcements and with music and filling in with whatever wire service stuff we had on the subject until the early hours of the morning.”¹¹⁴ When no information was available they “...played classical music between news announcements, broadcast [state-run] Radio Bucharest communiques, used reaction from correspondents in Paris, Rome, Washington, and New York, gave Western press play, provided a history of earthquakes and scientific commentary, and reported on Romanian [Political] Executive Committee Meetings and other development in Bucharest relating to the earthquake and measures to cope with the disaster.”¹¹⁵

Radio Free Europe’s unprecedented reporting in the aftermath of the earthquake went beyond extended programming and included live broadcasts of direct telephone calls from

¹¹² Telex RFE/RL 58, March 11 1977, “to Mickelson info Kingsley Brainerd, from Bernard Info Scott, Hemsing, Mahoney,” see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹¹³ Undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, RFE/RL Corporate, Box 329, folder 15, ‘Romania Earthquake’, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹¹⁴ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹¹⁵ Undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, Hoover Institute Archives.

Romanians abroad and at home.¹¹⁶ When an expert called the station, instead of relaying the information he gave, Bernard asked him to go directly on air. He remembered that “an engineer, a Romanian construction engineer, called me from Berlin, and was giving me advice about what we should say on the air about repairs, and I said, ‘look, I’m not an engineer and I don’t have time to write it down why don’t you say it?’ [He refused, saying] ‘no, I can’t, I have relatives in Romania, I’m traveling there...’¹¹⁷ The engineer did not go on air then for fear of retribution. The Ceaușescu regime considered listening to or talking about programs from foreign radio stations like RFE an act of treason. How was the engineer to know the ways in which the regime might retaliate against him or his relatives and friends in Romania if he went on air? Like those abroad, those inside Romania who called or listened to the station took great risks.¹¹⁸

The day after his first call and refusal to go on air, the Berlin-based Romanian engineer called the station back. Bernard later explained, “that same afternoon we had two engineers and two architects, Romanians who were working in Munich, who came to a roundtable to discuss the whole thing and during that roundtable this man from Berlin called again and he said, ‘Look, I now want to say my peace,’ and he got on the air and said some very reasonable and constructive things. And that broke the ice, in other words, although we have a very large [Romanian] audience in Germany, these people generally don’t get in touch with us because they want to go back to visit their friends and relatives, they want to go back to Romania, and they feel that if

¹¹⁶ Director Bernard stated in a 1981 interview that “we had it on tape here, all the tapes are here the whole thing...” yet it is not known where those tapes are. They are not catalogued with the rest of the RFE Archive at the Hoover Institution. Bernard’s testimony is evidence that they were not destroyed in the February 1981 bombing of the Munich RFE office by the terrorist Carlos the Jackal, who had links to the Ceaușescu regime. Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹¹⁷ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹¹⁸ CNSAS, *Structură Securității 1948-1978 (The Securitate Structure 1948-1978)*, XXV, accessed November 6, 2015, <http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/publicatii/Securitatea%20vol%202.pdf>.

they get in touch with us that might hurt their prospects there. Ah, so I invited others to call with advice, with messages, whatever. And the calls started flowing in from Romanians in Germany and other places.”¹¹⁹ The RFE Romanian Broadcasting Desk announcers gave out the studio’s direct phone extension (513) for callers to reach them direct.¹²⁰

Similar to the engineer in Berlin, the first telephone calls broadcast on-air came from Romanians living abroad. As RFE described in a press release about the coverage: “The plain black telephone in studio 13 at English Garden in Munich was ringing all weekend. ‘Melbourne here... Tehran calling... This is Helsinki.’ From around the world, Romanians were calling Radio Free Europe’s Munich programming headquarters to ask if their relatives were safe after last week’s massive earthquake. RFE, the US-financed shortwave broadcaster to Eastern Europe, scrapped regular programming on its Romanian service to beam calls live into Romania around the clock.”¹²¹

In the days after the earthquake Romanians abroad called RFE in Munich and asked for knowledge about their loved ones. Inside Romania, listeners relayed those requests. Callers asked about specific addresses or gave out phone numbers to contact. Romanians then traveled by car, moped, bicycle, and foot to those addresses to gather information and phoned the station back with updates.¹²² The idea to include phone numbers in the live on-air calls came from Romanian callers after a group who organized driving to Bucharest addresses announced live on

¹¹⁹ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹²⁰ Undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹²¹ People called the studio direct as the station gave out the phone number, Munich 210-2513. See Telexes: RFE/RL #23 March 9, 1977, “To Bodin Info Kingsley Brainerd From Edwards,” and Telex DC 22, March 10, 1977, “to Mahoney Info Scott Hemsing Edwards Bernard from Kingsley Info Mickelson Brainerd Walter,” see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹²² Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

air they had trouble traveling in the city because streets were closed.¹²³ An information telephone tree grew. In one case, a group of “friends organized a listening group, taking down phone numbers of people in Romania as broadcast by their relatives in the West, and each of them put through approximately 60 [domestic] calls informing those people about the broadcast and asking them to get in touch with their relatives abroad.”¹²⁴ As a result, some people received hundreds of calls. During the first twenty four hours after the earthquake the calls were exclusively from diaspora Romanians, relatives asking for news. In the days that followed, Romanians reported back with information on their situation.¹²⁵

Romanians inside Romania began to call RFE, too. Through the fifth day after the earthquake, calls about and for information increased as more people learned about the station’s programming. Bernard recalled, “immediately the next 24 hours it was almost exclusively calls [from Romania] answering people in the West, people who said, ‘I’m well,’ and thanking us for what we were doing.”¹²⁶ In the week and a half after the earthquake, telephone switchboard operators connected about 600 calls to the station’s live broadcast, as many as 100 in one day, saying as they patched in direct to the studio: “Hello Radio Free Europe, I have another call for you.”¹²⁷ Operators often stayed on the line, and some spoke up during the live broadcast to clarify what the caller said. For many Romanians, calling was both a personal risk and financial hardship as a call from Romania to Germany cost three US dollars a minute.¹²⁸

¹²³ Telex DC#26, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹²⁴ Undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹²⁵ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹²⁶ *Idem.*

¹²⁷ *Idem.*

¹²⁸ The amount was 60 Romanian Lei, undated draft letter from Sig Michelson to US Senators and Congressman, RFE/RL Corporate, Box 329, folder 15, ‘Romania Earthquake’, 4, Hoover Institute Archives.

Clearly, the regime allowed switchboard operators to patch many of those calls through, suggesting officials, too, saw the value in allowing the live on-air information. There were examples, however, when someone cut or interrupted calls to RFE. Bernard remembered, “we got a call from someone who claimed he was in Andorra who immediately began saying, ‘this criminal Ceaușescu, since he came to power, we have floods, we have an earthquake, we have so on and so.’ Well, he managed to say this before I could stop him and my answer was ‘thank you very much, but I don’t think you can blame Mr. Ceaușescu for floods and earthquakes.’ That was it. There was another one who called from Romania and began, ‘Ceaușescu is the Idi Amin,’ she meant of Romania, she was cut off at the other end before I was able to cut her off.”¹²⁹

In 1963, before Ceaușescu came to power, the Romanian government stopped jamming RFE’s Romanian language broadcasts to Romania, essentially allowing those with shortwave radios to tune in.¹³⁰ People listened together. Romanians had one of the lowest radio ownership of the communist bloc, but one of the highest number of listeners per capita. RFE presenters read letters from Romanians in the program “Listeners’ Mail.” It was one of the Romanian Broadcasting Desk’s most popular and while the Securitate censored mail going out from and coming into Romania, many letters made it to RFE via the post or “trusted travelers.”¹³¹ The secret police sent fake letters, too, in hope they would be read and discredit the station. The “Listeners’ Mail” program provided some of the inspiration for the live on-air broadcasting following the earthquake.

¹²⁹ Audio tape with Noel Bernard, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹³⁰ Nestor Ratesh, “Radio Free Europe’s Impact,” 210.

¹³¹ *Idem*.

In 1977, at first, the regime took little notice, allowed calls to go through, and did not jam the airwaves. In his own assessment, the Washington DC Director of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty at the time, Sig Mickelson, best known as the CBS news director who put Walter Cronkite in the anchor chair, assessed the RFE Romanian Broadcasting Desk's earthquake coverage: "RFE/RL thus provided not only a public service to the victims of the quake and their relatives and friends, but also acted as a surrogate press in providing citizens in all the Eastern listening areas with speedy, accurate reports that often were not available in domestic media."¹³² Mickelson and others in DC ultimately recognized the public service value of the direct calls. While Bernard took credit for the idea, clearly his boss, RFE Munich office director Albert E. Hemsing, allowed him to do so. Hemsing was best known for his drive through Checkpoint Charlie in a car with diplomatic plates in 1961, two years after East Germany built the Berlin Wall, in a test to prove that Soviet, and not East German, guards controlled the zone.¹³³ Hemsing was RFE's first non-CIA State Department officer to run the station's Munich office and oversaw all five of the indigenous language desks.¹³⁴

In 1980, three years after the earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime increased its surveillance of RFE beyond monitoring and listening to the program. It opened the special unit named RE for *Radio Europă*, the Romanian name for RFE, and code-named its operation "The Ether" (*Eterul*). The operation recorded the names of those who sent letters, special reports, and other

¹³² Undated draft letter from Sig Mickelson to US Senators and Congressman, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹³³ Robert Amerson and Albert E Hemsing, *Interview with Albert E. Hemsing*. 1989. Manuscript/Mixed Material, 26. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, Accessed January 6, 2017, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mfdipbib000503/>.

¹³⁴ Hemsing resigned from the United States Information Agency (USIA) to do so and was at the post for more than a year before the 1977 earthquake, Amerson and Hemsing, *Interview with Albert E. Hemsing*.

correspondence to RFE whether the station broadcast them or not, and surveilled anyone who had any contact with or was related to RFE Munich staff.¹³⁵

In 1983, more than five years after the earthquake, in an effort to know who wrote what, the regime outlawed citizens from owning any kind of duplicating equipment with the exception of one typewriter and permitted police to collect a typed sample from those who did. Specifically, the duplication control decree mandated that the Interior Ministry workforce, i.e., the Securitate, “keep track and execute control over the production and use of record keeping and duplicating equipment and typewriters” and allowed only “socialist units,” i.e., government departments and agencies, to have copy machines, typewriters, and other duplicating or printing devices.¹³⁶ The 1983 duplication control decree restricted individuals to “only one typewriter for personal use” and required people “at the request of the police, to submit documents related to owning typewriters, who will carry out and control over how they are used and stored.”¹³⁷

The 1983 duplication control decree, or typewriter ban, clearly epitomized the regime’s paranoia about its citizenry’s ability to communicate freely. But, in 1977, there was no such restriction on typewriters or other publication equipment, yet the fear of retribution for contacting RFE was real. One ex-pat Romanian’s thank you to the station highlighted the risks Romanians and the stations took; he said: “Long live the traitors at Radio Free Europe for the splendid service they are providing the Romanian nation.”¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Securitate Directorate I listened to and monitored the station. See Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 338 and Germinia Nagat, “Ceaușescu’s War against Our Ears,” 233.

¹³⁶ Decree 98/1983, Articles 1 and 2, accessed January 29, 2017, http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=1293.

¹³⁷ Decree 98/1983, Article 3, accessed January 29, 2017, http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=1293.

¹³⁸ Undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, Hoover Institute Archives.

Two days after the earthquake RFE ended its non-stop around-the-clock programming, but continued with the phone-in live programming for another ten.¹³⁹ As the days passed, fewer people called to give or ask for information and more went on-air to thank the station. One caller said on air: “I am Tanase G. Ioan from Găești, 80 Independenței Street in the county of Dâmbovița, phone 10-73-7. I have a personal message for Noel Bernard. For three or four days I have been trying to talk to him. I want to express my thanks, gratitude, respect, and consideration.”¹⁴⁰ Romanians were grateful for the information RFE provided, but also their role in sharing it. There was a need for objective and timely news and Romanians were able to provide some of it only because RFE opened its airwaves for them to do so.

US-side RFE directors ended the live call-in programming because they were concerned that Romanians might use it to criticize the Ceaușescu regime. Over time, fewer callers requested or gave information and more called with criticism of the regime or to denounce it. As RFE staff communicated to the DC home office, “more and more oddball cases may be cropping up.”¹⁴¹ Washington DC directors were concerned about the change in tone of the live calls and wrote to the Munich staff: “In view of changing nature of calls received by Romanian [Broadcasting Department] during its periods of public service message broadcasting...believe serious consideration should be given to reducing or eliminating this service earlier than is suggested....The worst and most critical period of the earthquake emergency is already past, and

¹³⁹ On March 16, 1977, the RFE Romanian Desk resumed its normal daily program hours, 5:00-9:00 a.m. and 4:00-12:00 p.m. See Telex, March 15, 1977, from Noel Bernard to Liviu Floda, Liviu Floda Collection, Box 5, Hoover Institution Archives and undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹⁴⁰ Telex RFE/RL #25, March 11, 1977, “To Mickelson Info Kingsley Brainerd, From Mahoney Info Scott Hemsing Bernard,” RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romania Broadcasting Department Miscellany 1977-1979, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹⁴¹ Telex RFE/RL #25, Hoover Institute Archives.

RFE is not meant to substitute for the use of international telephone and cable communications facilities.”¹⁴² The stateside RFE directors considered keeping a weekly call-in show, but were concerned it might be to denounce the government. They wrote, “There is the danger that such a program would be utilized by people with all kinds of real or imagined minor grievances or for abusive attacks on Romanian leaders.”¹⁴³ In 1977, RFE closed Romanians’ relatively free and rare opportunity access to communication with those outside Romania. RFE Director Sig Mickelson personally thanked Noel Bernard and all at the Romanian Broadcasting Desk for their coverage in the aftermath of the 1977 earthquake: “You have our profound admiration for the quite extraordinary job you have been doing in your broadcasting following the tragic earthquake in Romania. The information and humanitarian service you are performing for your Romanian listeners is of inestimable value as attested by the reactions of those listeners themselves. Your endeavor has added a new and important dimension to the endeavors and scope of RFE/RL programming.”¹⁴⁴ RFE’s earthquake coverage was an exceptional example of the station’s ability to penetrate the impermeable border the regime sought to maintain. The 1977 earthquake coverage was the first time the network went to a live, on-air format, something the Romanian Broadcasting desk returned to during the events of December 1989 that led to the overthrow of the Ceaușescu regime.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Telex DC #16, March 15 1977, “from Walter Info Mickelson to Hensing Info Scott,” see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹⁴³ Telex DC #16, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹⁴⁴ Telex DC 14, March 10, 1977, “To Scott info Hensing from Mickelson to pass to Noel Bernard and members of the Romanian BD,” see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

¹⁴⁵ The Hoover Institution Archives holds many audio tapes of those live broadcasts in their RFE/RL Broadcasting Department collection, accessed January 28, 2017, <http://digitalcollections.hoover.org/browse/items/1545746>.

Chapter Two

The Value of Control: Recovered Assets, Foreign Assistance, and the Black Market

I saw many that were standing around and numbering some curtain rings, making an inventory. Was that the most urgent thing to be done? -- Elena Ceaușescu to the Political Executive Committee, March 6, 1977.¹

You will identify new possibilities for assistance, use the influential relationships you have for this goal, and report these immediately to the home office.
-- Securitate home office to its network abroad, March 6, 1977.²

We can't do a lot with \$5,000 or \$25,000. If [foreigners] want to help us they can give us credit without interest of fifty million dollars. But with \$25,000 we won't get rich. Of course we will not refuse if they want to contribute. -- Nicolae Ceaușescu to the Political Executive Committee, March 9, 1977.³

Immediately after the earthquake Interior Ministry workers began concurrent efforts to help survivors and recover victims as well as retrieve assets, guide foreign assistance, and control the black market. The government dispatched firefighters, police, army, and Securitate troops to sites in Bucharest where more than two dozen mostly mixed-use, residential-commercial, buildings partially or fully collapsed. Some Securitate troops stood guard at the collapsed building sites, severely restricting citizens' and former residents' access, while others searched for survivors and victims. At the same time, they also dug out anything of any potential value, inventoried and warehoused what they found, and returned some of what people claimed. Police

¹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 11 reverse.

² CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 8.

³ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 59 reverse.

caught civilian looters as well as those among the recovery workers, but sentenced them very differently. The regime communicated its preference for cash and other fungible forms of foreign assistance over in-kind goods, in part, to control their movement to the black market. To influence the types of foreign assistance sent, the regime assigned the Securitate abroad a clandestine operation, codenamed “Solidarity” (*Solidaritatea*).

These asset recovery and solicitation efforts in the wake of the 1977 earthquake exposed what the Ceaușescu regime valued in 1977. The government policies and the Interior Ministry workers’ actions for asset recovery, solicitation, and control exemplified the Ceaușescu regime’s insatiable desire for hard currency often at the expense of citizens’ rights to their own assets. In this chapter I discuss how the regime negotiated and organized foreign assistance; deterred its movement to the black market; recovered assets from the rubble of the buildings that collapsed in Bucharest; punished civilian and state workers caught looting to a drastically different extent; and solicited cash, loans, and certain forms of in-kind assistance through the Securitate’s clandestine operation. All of these efforts, I argue, demonstrate the value those within the Ceaușescu regime placed on the control of assets and “valuables.”

Clampdown on the Foreign Assistance “Carnival”

The official amount of foreign assistance Romania received paled in comparison to the losses it sustained following the earthquake. The regime reported receiving 35 million US dollars

and estimated the earthquake damage at two billion US dollars, half of which were in the housing sector.⁴ The reported \$35 million in direct aid represented barely 2% of the estimated losses and did not include the low and no interest loans Romania received, such as the 130.3 million dollar credit from the International Monetary Fund.

The bulk of the foreign in-kind and technical assistance came in the form of medicines, food, bottled water, medical equipment, materials, technical equipment, and experts for specific projects such as schools, a hospital, search and rescue, and seismic assessment.⁵ UNICEF donated \$25,000 worth of food, medicine, and other assistance; the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee helped Bucharest's Jewish residents and sent relief workers; and Great Britain donated 100 breeding sows and ten boars.⁶ While the majority of in-kind assistance came from non-socialist governments and international non-governmental organizations, the Soviet Union sent the largest in-kind donation: the materials to assemble an entire factory that manufactured pre-fabricated housing materials valued at 10 million Soviet rubles, or \$13 million.⁷ In April, during a telephone conversation between Ceaușescu and the Soviet Ambassador to Romania, Vasili Ivanovich Drezdenko, the USSR offered heavy machinery (cranes, excavators, dump trucks, graters, and lathes for metal working).⁸ China, Yugoslavia, West Germany, the

⁴ In September 1977 the US estimated its cash and in-kind assistance to Romania at about 29 million dollars. The US aid was authorized by the 95th Congress in House Resolution 5717, signed on April 18, 1977. See United State Congress, "Foreign assistance and related agencies appropriations for 1978: hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, Ninety-fifth Congress, first session: Foreign Assistance and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1978, Romanian Earthquake relief, September 8, 1977, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977: 47 and 66 accessed November 25, 2016, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015066905616;view=1up;seq=47>

⁵ ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 48/1977, 100 reverse.

⁶ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 37.

⁷ ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 48/1977, 98 reverse; US Congress, "Foreign assistance and related agencies appropriations for 1978": 43.

⁸ April 6, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 48/1977, 31.

United States, Japan, Turkey and Greece, along with the USSR, sent seismic engineers or other specialists.⁹ The UN provided rescue workers.¹⁰ The Swiss sent rescue teams with dogs trained to smell out buried survivors. Unsolicited support came, too, from the Romanian diaspora and others with ties to Romania, the regime reported: “a number of foreign citizens, many of them originally Romanian, offered money, medicine and clothing, and expressed their solidarity with the Romanian people.”¹¹

Within days of the 1977 earthquake, Ceaușescu clamped down on the thefts of foreign assistance within the regime’s ranks, an effort to stop its movement to the black market. He addressed the Political Executive Committee members: “I have been informed that at home there is much disorganization...the airport [where almost all of the foreign assistance arrived] is like a carnival when the aid arrives and everyone wants to take it. One minister said that all that arrives is his, another says that it belongs to him. It is completely disorganized.”¹² Ceaușescu saw that some government ministers made claims on assistance and stole some for personal use. He explained that at the airport there were “unauthorized people, that through personal relationships, try to influence foreign representatives to name them as recipients of the aid.”¹³ Some of the foreign assistance for the earthquake victims stolen before the quick procedural changes ended up on the black market. During the weeks that followed, medicine, first aid products, food, and other items intended for victims ended up for sale, yet not necessarily in state-run enterprises as had occurred following the 1970 flood.

⁹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 31 and 99.

¹⁰ The World Bank, “Report and Recommendation of the President”: 15.

¹¹ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 100.

¹² He used the Romanian *bâlci* to describe the chaos, see ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 28/1977, 11-11 reverse.

¹³ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 6 reverse.

By the end of the first week it was clear to Ceaușescu and others in the government that many officials were mishandling the in-kind foreign aid receipts. Days after its arrival, much of it sat unused; technical and material supplies, medicine and medical equipment, and food stored in three Bucharest temporary warehouses had not been distributed as officials were waiting for approval to do so.¹⁴ Evidence pointed to workers and managers stealing medicines, food, tents, and clothing for their own use or to sell on the black market.¹⁵ To get control of the process Ceaușescu ordered new foreign assistance receipt and distribution procedures.¹⁶

Four days after the earthquake the government suspended all its foreign aid requests until it could, as it informed the US Ambassador, “work out its priority needs” and said that the “suspension was necessary because large amounts of aid and foreign experts were arriving in Bucharest without coordination.”¹⁷ Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee that no “permanent competence had been secured, especially at the [Bucharest] Otopeni Airport for properly receiving foreign delegations [of aid].”¹⁸ He ordered, “I have thought that we will organize a national committee for coordinating the provisioning of the victims’ assistance, gathering and coordinating the domestic assistance, and coordinating the use of foreign aid in a unified way. From all that arrives from abroad none of us will release anything nor take anything.”¹⁹ Ceaușescu’s first directive was to establish a permanent customs warehouse at

¹⁴ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 6 reverse.

¹⁵ March 10, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 28/1977.

¹⁶ OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 7 reverse.

¹⁷ Telex RFE/RL #31 March 9, 1977, “To Walter Kingsley Bodin From Edwards” RFE/RL Corporate Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁸ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 6.

¹⁹ March 10, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 28/1977, 11-11 reverse.

Bucharest's international airport to create one secure point for receipt and distribution.²⁰ At this new customs point the General Customs Office of the Foreign Trade and International Economic Cooperation Ministry taxed and registered all goods. The Foreign Affairs Ministry received the foreigners: technical assistance providers, seismic experts and journalists. The Interior Ministry's police and Securitate troops provided security at the airport for planes, goods, and individuals. A trio of Ministries — the Material and Technical Supply, Home Management of Controlled Assets, Health and Domestic Commerce — received and managed the in-kind foreign assistance at the temporary Bucharest warehouses and the National Defense Ministry provided security during their transport.²¹ The Prime Minister, Manea Mănescu, approved foreign aid distribution.²²

Elena Ceaușescu Named Head of the National Assistance Committee

The day after Ceaușescu changed the on-the-ground procedures for in-kind foreign assistance he formed the twenty-nine member National Assistance Committee and named his wife, Elena, as its head.²³ This was not her first government position nor a very important one, but it signaled her increasing importance in the top leadership of the regime. In 1974 she was included in the Political Executive Committee; only two months before the earthquake Ceaușescu named her a permanent member of the Political Executive Committee, his innermost circle.²⁴ Like him, she was impulsive, often to the point of anger in meetings, undereducated for her position

²⁰ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 7.

²¹ Idem., and ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 28/1977, 11 reverse.

²² CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 7 reverse.

²³ For the meeting minutes see ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 9/1977, 2-4 reverse.

²⁴ CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945-1989 dicționar*, 138-139.

(she left school when she was fourteen years old), and power hungry. The National Assistance Committee she nominally headed oversaw the receipt, organization and storage of the in-kind foreign assistance.²⁵ It also tracked domestic and foreign cash donations.²⁶

The Romanian National Assistance Committee filed its final report only a month after the earthquake, hardly time to make a full assessment of the assistance received from abroad, especially as the Securitate's own clandestine operation lasted for more than a year and a half.²⁷ For another month, through May 1977, Interior Ministry workers continued to sift through the rubble from the collapsed buildings for valuables and goods; and for another sixteen months, through August 1978, the Securitate kept open its "Solidarity" operation to solicit foreign assistance.²⁸

The April 1977 National Assistance Committee report was the source for the Romanian official data released about foreign assistance receipts. The data in the World Bank's 1978 report about the 1977 earthquake, drafted to support a proposed low-interest loan to Romania, used data that mirrored that in the April National Assistance Committee report.²⁹ Both noted that individuals and organizations from sixty-one countries and governments from fifty-one countries donated more than \$35 million in cash and in-kind assistance to Romania.³⁰ The similarity in the two reports' findings exemplified how the Ceaușescu regime controlled information that flowed

²⁵ For the meeting minutes see ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 9/1977, 2-4 reverse.

²⁶ Domestic assistance is discussed in Chapter Three.

²⁷ The Committee filed its report on April 8, 1977. An earlier report was submitted with an incomplete list of the dead on March 14, 1977, see ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 12/1977, 2-43 reverse. It was amended on March 31, 1977, to include the dead identified between March 14-21, 1977, see ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 12/1977, 44-53 reverse. A compilation of those lists is included in the Appendix.

²⁸ It closed the operation in August, 1978, a full seventeen months from its start. See ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 2/1977, 49-49 reverse and ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 96-100 reverse.

²⁹ The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation of the President": 49.

³⁰ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 50.

to its citizens and to outside governments and non-governmental organizations, in particular those in the non-socialist sphere.

The Ceaușescu regime not only valued how much it received in foreign assistance, but who gave it. It paid special attention to help from fellow socialist nations. The National Assistance Committee specified in its report whether a “socialist” or “non-socialist” country gave foreign assistance. By 1977, Romania had significant economic relationships outside the communist bloc and used different exchange rates for socialist and non-socialists countries. Trade and tourism with socialist countries used the “non-commercial rate” and those with non-socialist used the “prime exchange rate.”³¹ The National Assistance Committee reported that socialist countries gave cash assistance totaling “3 million lei...and other countries, UN international and other agencies gave 3.9 million US dollars.” The Committee reported in-kind assistance in different currencies, too: “socialist governments gave in the value of around 164 million lei and other countries around twenty-six million US dollars.”³² One might have expected it might have converted either the Romanian Lei or US dollar currencies to ease comparison. The National Assistance Committee did not, giving the impression that socialists countries gave more. The in-kind foreign assistance from socialist and non-socialist countries, reported like apples and oranges, helped present the notion that fellow socialists gave more to Romania than non-socialists. They did not. Using this convoluted reporting technique of mixed currencies, the National Assistance Committee report writers stressed the value of the socialist support over that from non-socialist governments and individuals.

³¹ In 1977 the socialist exchange rate was 20 Lei to \$1 and the non-socialist rate was 12 Lei to \$1. See ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 100.

³² ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 99 reverse-100.

Foreign Assistance Preferences

The Ceaușescu regime took cash and in-kind assistance from socialist and non-socialist countries alike, but stated its preference for cash. In the days and weeks after the earthquake the Romanian government made specific in-kind foreign assistance requests. Ministries prepared lists of the medicine, medical equipment, machinery, parts, and equipment desired and sent them to foreign embassies via its public diplomatic and clandestine secret police networks.

During the first few weeks after the earthquake, Ceaușescu himself vacillated between denying a need for foreign assistance and making specific requests. The second day after the earthquake he declared that Romania would not make specific requests. He told members of the Political Executive Committee: “We will receive those people from [West] Germany and Switzerland who want to arrive with dogs and put them to work. Therefore we will proceed in this way...we do not approach anyone to ask them for something. Not even the socialist countries. If they don’t feel like it, they don’t feel like it.”³³ But, Ceaușescu was also clear about what he wanted from foreigners when, practically in the same breath, he said, “we are interested in beds, medicine, and in the first place food and equipment, and materials for repair. I am not referring to all but only to the developed countries that say they want to help us...We will call the US Embassy today and tell them that we are asking for help.”³⁴ By the next week, however, his preference for what types of foreign aid Romania preferred would change.

³³ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 16.

³⁴ *Idem.*

The Securitate's Clandestine "Solidarity" Operation

Ceaușescu accepted small in-kind donations, but limited them and set his sights on more substantial cash assistance from abroad. He publicly asked for and privately ordered the solicitation of cash and no-interest or condition free loans. Almost a full week after the earthquake, during his only press conference he made a specific appeal in front of two hundred foreign journalists for "foreign credits on favorable terms," i.e., low, interest-free, or non-conditional loans.³⁵ Ceaușescu told the foreign press his vision for earthquake recovery: "Not only is the five-year plan certainly not going to be affected, but living standards will increase even more. This is our challenge."³⁶ Yet, as observed by US diplomats, he was "avoiding answering a question on the need to divert economic resources from heavy industry toward consumer goods to meet the needs of those who lost their possessions."³⁷

By that time Ceaușescu knew exactly what he wanted from abroad. Four days before the press conference he outlined his preference for cash and preferable loans when he ordered the Securitate to begin the "Solidarity" operation using its network abroad to clandestinely encourage and solicit the same.³⁸ At the start of the operation, the Securitate home office in Bucharest instructed its network abroad that "there is an absolute interest in the realm of obtaining loans

³⁵ The press conference took place on March 10, 1977. See the *Los Angeles Times*, March, 11, 1977, A30A; *The New York Times*, March 12, 1977, 4; and "Situation Report: Romania, 11 March 1977," March 11, 1977. [Electronic resource] HU OSA 300-8-47-199-8; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Publications Department: Situation Reports; Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest, 3, accessed October 27, 2016, <http://hdl.handle.net/10891/osa:184fe781-1c71-4ec2-81c9-8279b9aebbb2>.

³⁶ 1238/77 CN082 see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

³⁷ March 15, 1977 RFE/RL # 52 telex from "Lyon Info Scott, Hemsing" to Walter Info Reyman - Wash" see RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany, Hoover Institute Archives.

³⁸ For the extant archive of the mission, which includes documentation of destruction of some of its documents, see CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 1-87.

without interest or without terms in which we are called to act [in a certain way] or to evade certain action.”³⁹ The regime ordered the Securitate network abroad to solicit interest-free loans, loans without strings attached, and other direct cash assistance from foreign governments, non-governmental agencies, and individuals.

The “Solidarity” operation went beyond loans to all forms of direct foreign cash and specific technical in-kind assistance from governments, businesses, and individuals with ties to Romania.⁴⁰ For seventeen months, from March 1977 through August 1978, the operation engaged clandestine Securitate officers, agents and their networks in as many as thirty cities in Europe, North America, South America, Asia, and the Middle East. The operation instructed those working with the Securitate outside Romania to use their established networks specifically by engaging “the full potential of the operative-informative network, which will be mobilized to conduct major influencing actions...” for “determining networks within governments, international organizations, financial groups, political parties, important firms, banks, people of political, economic and financial life, and elsewhere to take concrete actions to orient their thinking about the necessity of machinery, industrial equipment, and other equipment they can send to the homeland.”⁴¹

Just two days after the earthquake, the Securitate home office communicated the “Solidarity” operation’s directives to its network abroad via telegram: “According to the supreme commander’s indications, the ‘University’ has the mission to initiate influential actions for obtaining assistance in the form of foreign currency, medicine, medical instruments, and

³⁹ The home officer codenamed “the Storm” sent instructions via telex. CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 20.

⁴⁰ The mission’s four goals were outlined in a March 9, 1977, telegram. Ibid., 18-20.

⁴¹ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 24.

equipment for factories and industry affected by the earthquake.”⁴² Note here the regime had no intention to solicit assistance for residents or residential housing repair. Ceaușescu placed the operation fully in the hands of the “University” (*Universitate*), codename for the Securitate network outside Romania.⁴³ In that code, the “lecturer” (*lectoratul*) headed each foreign city mission and, in turn supervised “researchers” (*cercetatorii*), code name for the informants and agents within their networks. During the 1980s the Securitate’s Foreign Intelligence Directorate (*Direcției de Informații Externe*), or DIE, used such “higher education” codes for its offices and officers abroad, yet my findings peg the Securitate’s use of the higher education code names earlier, to the late 1970s, and confirm Securitate officer or informant presence in at least thirty cities: Washington D.C., New York, London, Ottawa, Rome, Paris, Cologne, Vienna, Bern, Geneva, Athens, Stockholm, The Hague, Copenhagen, Tokyo, Brasilia, Madrid, Lisbon, Tel-Aviv, Sidney, Tehran, Amman, Kuwait City, Brussels, Tripoli, Mexico City, Ankara, Istanbul, Helsinki, and Milan.⁴⁴

The Securitate home office specifically told operatives abroad what they could and could not do within the “Solidarity” operation. They had to stay within their established networks and not “take actions to influence organisms besides companies and important people.”⁴⁵ They were to be covert and not “advertise” their actions to solicit or receive aid.⁴⁶ They were to be realistic

⁴² Telegram “official number” 4365/V, drafted on March 6, 1977, at 9:00 p.m. and transmitted twice that night at 9:45 and 11:00 p.m., to at least twenty-six cities abroad, see CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 26 and 30. For confirmation of its receipt, see CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 61.

⁴³ Elis Neagoie-Pleșa, Senior Advisor, CNSAS, e-mail message to the author, October 19, 2016. Ceaușescu’s four indications were outlined in a March 9 1977, telegram. See CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 18-20.

⁴⁴ See CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 18-20.

⁴⁵ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 20.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

in their requests and “...not ask for everything under the sun.”⁴⁷ They were to guide cash donations for deposit directly into the account opened for foreign donations, the “1000 Account,” and not take the cash themselves to deposit into the Securitate’s account, as was usual procedure. And, they were reminded “do not (repeat do not) undertake actions to collect or spend [cash], nor should networks do the same.”⁴⁸ At the start of the “Solidarity” operation, the Securitate’s DIE opened the “1000 Account” at the Romanian Bank for Foreign Trade (*Băncii Române de Comerț Exterior*), or BCRE, specifically for the foreign currency donations given in the name of the earthquake victims.⁴⁹ This was public knowledge inside and outside Romania. Radio Free Europe broadcast direct “one lady listener who identified herself as a Romanian citizen resident abroad” who “announced that money for earthquake relief could also be sent to the Romanian Foreign Trade Bank in Bucharest.”⁵⁰ Apparently a week into the operation some operatives took cash directly, prompting the home office to instruct once again: “We remind you of the instructions...concerning steering the donations in foreign cash, which will require our ‘researchers’ not to take the cash, but to guide the donors to deposit the amounts in the “1000 Account.”⁵¹

While the Securitate abroad solicited certain forms of in-kind foreign assistance in the name of the earthquake victims, in actuality the regime intended it to support its own efforts and not necessarily earthquake victims. In addition to cash, the regime wanted in-kind donations of

⁴⁷ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 19.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 8 and 20.

⁴⁹ Why the account was named “1000” is unclear. The DIE may have opened it before March 6, 1977, however this is the earliest documentation I have found. For the copy and original of telegram 4365/V sent on March 6, 1977, at 9:00 p.m., see CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 3 and 8 respectively.

⁵⁰ Undated memo from Noel Bernard to Sig Mickelson, Hoover Institute Archives.

⁵¹ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 24.

telecommunications and construction equipment.⁵² The Securitate home office instructed its network abroad: “If government representatives, international organizations or their representatives, important businesses...offer to give assistance, it is to be shown that Romania is interested in help in the form of industrial materials and equipment and telecommunications equipment....⁵³” At the same time, the regime discouraged the “Solidarity” operatives from accepting immediate relief supplies and certain food assistance. The home office reminded officers abroad not to receive assistance “in the form of beds, shoes, bedding, tents, powdered milk, etc.”⁵⁴ Apparently some in the “Solidarity” network received such non-desirable items leading the home office to clarify yet again “do not receive insignificant products (beds, tents... and in general things such as powdered milk, powdered egg, mashed potatoes or similar).⁵⁵

The Securitate home office informed its network that any in-kind construction equipment assistance would be targeted for a large-scale building project, noting, “Strictly for informing you, there will be a decision to form a military construction unit (around 6,000 workers) in the homeland that will work to repair the buildings damaged by the earthquake and build several thousand new apartments. In this goal Comrade Principal Supervisor told us, the staff of the “Solidarity” operation, that we are to work to obtain as many units of the equipment necessary for organizing this large construction group, specifically: (tall) construction cranes, bulldozers, excavators, concrete preparation plants, cement trucks, cement materials....⁵⁶” The regime wanted equipment for a construction project that Ceaușescu, their “Comrade Principal

⁵² CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 180.

⁵³ Ibid., 19.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 3 and 8.

⁵⁵ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 18.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 28.

Supervisor,” would soon launch. This was not surprising as half the earthquake damage was in the housing sector, however, its mention of a “military unit” created for construction was. It is not clear whether the regime used such a group to construct citizen housing. It is also unclear whether this was a veiled reference to the the Civic Center Project and its House of the People, which Ceaușescu announced just weeks after the earthquake and the “Solidarity” operation.

In addition to construction equipment, the Securitate also encouraged its clandestine foreign network to solicit donations of telecommunications equipment not produced or readily available in Romania and admitted they were intended for the Securitate’s exclusive use.⁵⁷ The home office communicated to its network abroad that cash or favorable loans, if secured, would “support only (repeat only) our line.”⁵⁸ Three extant lists asked for technically specific portable transmission and reception equipment. The regime wanted a portable generating system, walkie-talkies, portable radios, maintenance and repair meters, transmitters and receivers, car phones, radio transmitter antennae, rechargeable batteries, battery chargers, wireless equipment toolkits, and telephone cables.⁵⁹ In the 1970s Romania did not produce such wireless and radio telecommunications devices. The Interior Ministry’s Command for Operative and Transmissions Equipment, i.e., the department that handled the Securitate’s listening and the regime’s communications equipment, drafted such lists circulated to the Securitate’s “University” network abroad and stressed that they were to communicate immediately the possibilities of the “lecturers” to “realize these requests.”⁶⁰ The Securitate home office stated these items were

⁵⁷ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 16.

⁵⁸ March 9, 1977, Ibid., 19-20.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 16, 22-22 reverse and 180-180 reverse.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 16.

specifically for its use and not for earthquake victims: “because these materials are also necessary for the University, you are to make every effort to obtain these specialities using the aid offered from the special firms offering aid to the victims.”⁶¹ In addition to procuring telecommunications equipment for its own use, the normal procedure for the Securitate was to take 20% of all cash they received for its use. Starting in February 1966, and building on efforts of his predecessor Gheorghe Gheorgiu-Dej, Ceaușescu allocated 20% of all foreign currency “earned” to the Securitate. The regime held these funds in a separate account, received in direct cash and through wire transfers. The government earmarked it for operational expenses such as paying foreign agents or procuring Western equipment such as listening devices and cameras.⁶²

The telecommunications equipment, if procured, was for the Securitate and not for other Interior Ministry first-responders. The fire department, in particular the central office in Bucharest, lamented not having had adequate telecommunications equipment to assist in the 1977 earthquake search and rescue and other recovery tasks, and made specific requests for such types of equipment.⁶³ The chiefs of the national and Bucharest fire departments complained that they were not able to communicate effectively with their on-the-ground troops because telephones lines were cut and they did not have mobile telecommunications equipment. Two months following the earthquake the chiefs of the national and Bucharest firefighter departments reported to their boss, the Interior Minister, that they still did not have such equipment. In response, Interior Minister Coman told them such equipment must be reserved for leaders. He explained,

⁶¹ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, vol. 1, 22-22 reverse.

⁶² Steliu Lambru, “Currency Exchange Operations of the Securitate,” Radio Romania International, February 2, 2013, accessed March 3, 2017, http://www.rri.ro/en_gb/currency_exchange_operations_of_the_securitate-1342.

⁶³ April 28, 1977, meeting, CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 175 reverse.

“But comrades, we must act well and be sure to create the conditions and put the equipment — radio connections, radio stations that address the population, electricity generators — at the disposition of the party leaders, both for the party leaders and for our ministry.”⁶⁴

The Securitate home office sent instructions for the “Solidarity” operation via telegram to its network across the globe.⁶⁵ They archived a receipt and transmission record that referenced the telegrams’ full content and burned the originals. The “references” did not necessarily confirm aid receipt, rather they revealed potential forms of aid foreign governments, organizations, and individuals offered to Romania. For example, many of the telegrams sent from Geneva referred to potential assistance from the United Nations. Others from across the globe referred to actual, potential or fabricated offers of technical assistance, in-kind donations, lines of credit, checks, cash transfers, and import-export schemes. They represented the conversations between the Securitate’s foreign network and its home office in Bucharest. The “lecturer” in Vienna, wrote a telegram about “assistance in the forms of paper napkins and 30,0000 [Austrian] shillings.”⁶⁶ The Madrid ‘lecturer’ wrote about a possible coffee import/export deal.⁶⁷ In August 1978, the Securitate destroyed the original telegrams at the end of the seventeen-month operation, part of the agency’s normal procedures.⁶⁸ These conversations served as “proof” from those abroad to the home office of their persistence — whether real or fabricated — to fulfill the of “Solidarity” operation.

⁶⁴ CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 180 reverse.

⁶⁵ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 31-59.

⁶⁶ March 9, 1977, Ibid., 37 and 55 respectively.

⁶⁷ March 9, 1977, Ibid., 37 and 55 respectively.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 31- 59 for telegrams received; 60-67 for those sent; and 68-86 for registers of burned telegrams. For more on the Securitate’s procedures around document storage and destruction, see Lavinia Stan, “Inside the Securitate Archives,” Washington DC: The Wilson Center, Cold War International History Project, March 4, 2005, accessed November 3, 2016, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/inside-the-securitate-archives>.

The “Solidarity” telegram receipt register also listed countries which the Romanian government worked for foreign assistance. For example, the “Solidarity” telegram receipt register included references to the possibility of \$36,000 in donations in “checks” and “transfers” from Tokyo.⁶⁹ Japanese support was not surprising considering the country’s own seismic vulnerability and history. The registered telegrams from Iran referenced small cash donations.⁷⁰ Those from Kuwait referred to “assistance in the form of cash or oil” and “one to two oil tankers with oil for credit.”⁷¹ While it is unclear whether the cash from Japan and Iran or the credits from Kuwait ever materialized, these references represented robust Romanian collaboration during the late 1970s with Asia and the Middle East, a potential topic for further research.

The extant evidence about the “Solidarity” operation suggested that the Securitate’s network abroad did not collect significant amounts of foreign assistance. It appears that the Political Executive Committee did not discuss, nor did its secretaries and stenographers record, the operation or its activities. The regime’s foreign assistance reports did not specifically detail large donation amounts, but rather generally mentioned feel-good ones, for example, from a Canadian “immigrant Greek worker” who wrote to Ceaușescu, “with this letter I send you one hundred [Canadian] dollars which I collected among my friends when we learned [about] the terrible earthquake in your country. We want this money to be used for medical relief of the earthquake victims.”⁷² A New York journalist “sent one hundred [US] dollars along with a photo of himself interviewing the Romanian gymnast Nadia Comăneci.”⁷³

⁶⁹ Items 41, 92, 138, 139, 281, 551, see CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 34, 36, 38, 45 and 57 respectively.

⁷⁰ Item 96, *Ibid.*, 36.

⁷¹ Item 78, *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷² ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 161/1977, 46-47.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 37.

No extant account ledger for the “Solidarity” operation has been found. It appears that neither the Political Executive Committee nor the National Assistance Committee recorded the donations received through the “Solidarity” operation. A donation from the Manufacturers Hanover Trust, based in New York and with a branch in Bucharest, may have been encouraged through the operation. The US based bank manager of its foreign branches in communist countries said that the Romanian Ambassador to the United States, Nicolae M. Nicolae, “asked that our bank be involved” and mentioned the bank made similar efforts following the 1970 severe flood in Romania.⁷⁴ He said, “The donations are coming quite nicely. I would say that as of today we received something more than sixty thousand dollars. We made the first transfer [about ten days ago]...and the contributions are in the forms of all different amounts of checks, for example ten dollars from a student to those of several thousand dollars or more.”⁷⁵

The \$60,000 transferred by Manufacturers Hanover Trust was more than the only deposit mentioned in the “Solidarity” documents. Archived with the “Solidarity” operation telegram transmission and receipt ledger, is an undated letter concerning one deposit of foreign assistance from the “Solidarity” operation. Interior Minister Coman asked the President of the Romanian Bank for Foreign Trade, V. Voleseniuc, “to deposit into the “1000 Account” a \$50,000 check from the Seventh Day Adventists, Inc., a \$5,000 check from the National Machine Tool Builders Association, a \$1,000 check from the B’Nai B’Rith, a \$500 check from a doctor who worked at University Hospital in New York City, \$1,000 in 100 dollar banknotes from the St.

⁷⁴ Radio Free Europe prepared an interview with the bank’s representative for broadcast on March 25, 1977; the cover sheet indicated the program was not scheduled and it is not known whether it was broadcast to Romania. See Liviu Floda Collection, Box 6, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁷⁵ Liviu Floda Collection, Box 6, Hoover Institution Archives.

Elena Church in Cleveland, Ohio, and a \$1,000 check from a private couple in Libya.⁷⁶ This deposit request letter made no mention that Manufacturers Hanover Trust may have handled any of these transfers.

Controlling Valuables: Citizens' Assets and Foreign Assistance

Cash, Silverware, and Bank Books: Citizens' Assets Found, Returned, and Appropriated

While Ceaușescu stated that he wanted cash, and other regime leaders organized the foreign aid receipts and the Securitate began its operation to solicit additional foreign assistance, Romanian first responders — firefighters, police, and Securitate troops — worked at the damaged and collapsed buildings in Bucharest. At the same time they searched for people they also collected anything of value. Survivors and victims' heirs claimed almost half of the valuables and the rest the regime discarded or appropriated. The regime's choices about what to return or keep demonstrated its views of the state's right to ownership versus that of citizens. The regime appropriated much of the assets found in the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts.

Two weeks after closing the search for survivors and victims, Interior Minister Coman reported that the work to retrieve assets from the rubble would continue: "The decision was taken to continue the operation to recuperate the various valuables from the deposit sites of the demolished buildings damaged by the earthquake. In this goal, the Interior Ministry agents must

⁷⁶ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v. 1, 30.

give their all in assuring the security of these respective locations and for the recovery of all the valuables.”⁷⁷

During the first few days of earthquake recovery, Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu’s primary concern was victim search and rescue, not necessarily asset recovery. The couple, and Elena, in particular, initially disapproved of the asset recovery initiative. A day and a half after the earthquake, during a Sunday morning meeting with the Political Executive Committee, Elena Ceaușescu criticized the Interior Ministry’s work to recover assets from the rubble and lauded those undertaken by their non-socialist predecessors in the aftermath of the 1940 earthquake in Romania. She explained:

During the bourgeoisie time the first work that was done was to get to the [victims]. We are speaking now of humanism. The first work must be to save people and not for removing clothing and searching for identity documents. About the people you have not thought at all.⁷⁸

The 1940 fascist government that orchestrated the earthquake recovery efforts was led by Marshal Ion Antonescu, who took power only two weeks before Romania allied with the Axis Powers and allowed Nazi troops on its territory. For Elena Ceaușescu, the number two communist, to praise the work done by fascists was shocking. She also complained about workers counting and documenting any and all materials retrieved from the rubble, “Each is guarding himself; they stay and count rags and shirts.”⁷⁹ Those first few days both Nicolae and Elena stressed that the priority should be to save lives. She said, “The first work must be to save

⁷⁷ March 19, 1977, CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 2, 4.

⁷⁸ March 6, 1977, a.m. Political Executive Meeting minutes, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 11 reverse.

⁷⁹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 10.

people and not for removing clothing and searching for identity documents.”⁸⁰ It was Elena who questioned the priority given to the recovery of household stuff from the rubble, both valuable and not so valuable, “I saw many that were standing around and numbering some curtain rings, making an inventory. Was that the most urgent to be done?”⁸¹ She criticized Interior Minister Coman, who supervised the workers recovering assets: “All the time [the workers] say that no one is giving them anything, no one is helping them. All are commanders, yet no one knows what they should do. [The workers] search for people’s documents to identify them, but with the people they are not concerned.”⁸² Elena Ceaușescu’s comments lauding the Romanian fascist regime’s post-1940 recovery and her own regime’s efforts demonstrated her untouchable, powerful place within the regime had already solidified by 1977.

The Ceaușescu couple’s initial criticism of asset recovery did not deter it. While Elena complained, Nicolae Ceaușescu eventually approved asset recovery because it continued even after the victim search and rescue closed. Five days after the earthquake, Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee, “Of course comrades, we must recover all the materials, all that is useful and able to be recovered from this material. In general, comrades, at all the demolished sites, everything is to be removed, move it somewhere, store it, and go and sort out all that is useful.”⁸³ After digging through the collapsed buildings’ rubble for survivors and victims, Interior Ministry workers cleared it away from the city center. Starting the first day after the earthquake, they moved it to the *Glina* dump, in the city’s southwest corner now within Popești-Leordeni

⁸⁰ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 11 reverse.

⁸¹ *Idem*.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 10 reverse.

⁸³ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 51 reverse.

village's border.⁸⁴ To this day the dumpsite for the earthquake damage rubble is inaccessible to the public, fenced in, and guarded by the army.⁸⁵ For the two months following the earthquake and after the survivor and victim search ended, the Interior Ministry workers moved to the dumpsite and continued to sift through the rubble deposited there.

Interior Ministry workers, specifically the Securitate and police, guarded the valuables and provided almost all of the workers who searched for them at all the collapsed building sites and rubble dumpsite. They retrieved gold coins, clothing, jewelry, and oriental rugs. They found and sorted fur coats, men's and women's suits, dresses, haberdashery, wrist watches, necklaces, earrings, rings, wedding bands, gold and silver flatware, silver service ware, books, stamp collections, natural gas tanks (for cooking), refrigerators, and tools. They retrieved small electronics, including cameras, movie cameras, one movie projector, radios, radio-cassette tape players and recorders, and telephones. They found religious icons, paintings, small sculptures, and porcelain vases. They also dug out more than 100 vehicles parked on the streets and surrounds. They recorded finding only two guns: a Browning pistol and a hunting rifle with ammunition.⁸⁶

The Interior Ministry obsessively tracked and inventoried cash and objects found and turned in, and daily – sometimes twice daily – recorded the number and amount recovered. Ultimately, however, the Ceaușescu regime did not keep peoples' household objects and possessions. The government sent the 64,000 unclaimed household items, more than half of

⁸⁴ A map of the dumpsite location, accessed March 3, 2017, <http://wikimapia.org/422139/ro/Groapa-de-gunoi-Ochiul-Boului-Glina>.

⁸⁵ For images of the site under guard, see the Susanele Web Series, Season 1, "SH01E01: The Earthquake," a video report about the inaccessible dumpsite, accessed April 5, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEUuK8Kyax4>.

⁸⁶ Data is from the inventory of items recovered between March 4-22, 1977, see CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 189. For reports mentioning other items found see CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 352-352 reverse, 358 and 362.

what it found to orphanages, nursing homes, earthquake victims, or “those in special situations,” and the electronics to schools “for educational purposes.”⁸⁷ Ceaușescu, in particular, did not consider those objects important enough to include in the economic losses of the country. “One broke a plate, another a beautiful vase. We can not start counting every broken shard. No where in the world do they start counting who had five broken drinking glasses, who else lost ten. Another had a vase broken...we can not start including these in our calculations [of the economic losses]. We will be ridiculed. Come on, let’s be serious.”⁸⁸ Yet, the efforts to find items continued. The Interior Ministry workforce expended much effort to dig-out, inventory, store, guard, and return or discard more than 100,000 household items recovered from the rubble.⁸⁹ In addition to such items, the regime also took efforts to move museum objects and archival documents. Following the earthquake it moved many museum holdings and relocated archives because of fear of further damage from aftershocks.

Unlike the household items, the regime took care to recover usable construction and technical items and state-owned equipment. The state-run media claimed that “the recuperation of valuables, brick by brick, all that could help us with the reconstruction work, is underway...not one small street was missed so that we do not lose anything of patrimonial or cultural-artistic value: book and art collections, rare collections, scientific documents....”⁹⁰

Interior Ministry workers collected state-owned items and recyclable construction items, picked

⁸⁷ ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 2/1977, 49.

⁸⁸ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 42.

⁸⁹ The regime did appropriate some of the items found in the rubble of the collapsed residential apartment buildings considered valuable to the “national-cultural patrimony,” such as 1,200 books of “historic interest,” 114 different art and decorative objects, 51 Christian Orthodox icons, 32 stamp collections, 27 paintings, 25 statues, and other religious items and “old” documents. See CNSAS D0011737, v. 105, 189 reverse.

⁹⁰ *Informația Bucureștiului: Ziar al Comitetului Municipal București al P.C.R și al Consiliului Popular al Municipiului București*, Anul XXIV, Nr. 7307, March 12, 1977:3.

out and sorted bricks, and retrieved valuable technical equipment. More than 1,500 workers collected almost one hundred tons of scrap metals (steel, lead, cast-iron, aluminum, and copper).⁹¹ In Bucharest, one police regiment removed two “electronic computers” and some accompanying equipment from the Transportation and Telecommunications Ministry building valued at over four million Romanian Lei.⁹² Not all finds were so grand, but the Interior Ministry recorded all. For example, workers recovered five hundred hangers and thirteen cartons of buttons from a clothing factory.⁹³ The range of items recovered and recorded — from boxes of buttons to computers valued at almost a quarter million US dollars — exemplify the care the regime took to recover and protect its assets.

The Interior Ministry workers also found cash, people’s bank savings and bond deposit books, and recovered more than 7,100 items made from gold and silver, including coins, jewelry, and sterling flatware and service pieces. The total value of all the monetary assets found in the rubble of the damaged collapsed buildings was the equivalent of just over \$800,000 with the largest amount recorded in citizens’ savings deposits and bonds.⁹⁴

Workers found cash in the wallets and pockets of the dead and wounded.⁹⁵ They found it under the rubble.⁹⁶ They found it hidden inside teapots and vases.⁹⁷ Yet cash represented a tiny proportion of the fungible assets found. Not surprisingly, most of the found cash was Romanian

⁹¹ CNSAS, D.11.737 v. 105, 180.

⁹² Equivalent of about \$200,000, see CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 288.

⁹³ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 15, 356 reverse.

⁹⁴ See CNSAS, D.0011737, v. 105, 189 and ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 237. A March 22, 1977, report and the May 13, 1977, report submitted to the Central Committee reported the gold weighed a total of 19.42 kg. and silver items and extraordinary 1055.91 kg., valued in 1977 at \$101,265 and \$172,458 respectively, calculated using the 1977 average price of an ounce of \$147.84 for gold and \$4.63 of silver. Cash valued the equivalent of \$76,000 and bank assets \$459,000.

⁹⁵ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 235 reverse.

⁹⁶ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 15, 356 reverse.

⁹⁷ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 235 reverse.

Lei as it was illegal for most Romanians to hold foreign currency.⁹⁸ The small amount of foreign hard currency found, the equivalent of \$11,000, was in US dollars, West German deutsch marks, French francs, Yugoslavian dinars, and Hungarian forints.⁹⁹ The Interior Ministry workers highlighted the few large cash finds in their internal documents. For example they double underlined in red pencil a report of 500,000 Romanian lei (more than \$25,000) found. That was an anomaly. Interior Ministry workers turned in and recorded – presumably – all the money they found regardless of the amount. For example, police cadets reported finding 200 Romanian Lei in cash, the equivalent of ten US dollars, and ten savings bonds of 100 Romanian Lei, the equivalent of five US dollars.

More than half of the monetary assets recovered from the collapsed buildings were not in the form of cash, but in savings bankbooks and bonds held by the state-owned bank, The Savings and Loans House (*Casa de Economii și Consemnațiuni*), or CEC.¹⁰⁰ More than half of the value of the items the regime found, about \$460,000, was in savings and bond assets and more than half had identifying information.¹⁰¹

The government only returned about half of the identifiable bank savings books, resulting in the regime absorbing close to the equivalent of \$221,000 from Romanian citizens' savings

⁹⁸ The Interior Ministry reported finding 1,295,231 Romanian Lei, see CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105 189.

⁹⁹ It reported finding the equivalent of around \$11,000 using the World Bank's conversion rate for traded goods for the period July 1973-February 1978, which was fixed at 20 Romanian Lei per 1 US dollar. See The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation of the President": 4 and Georgescu and Pomonis, "The Romanian Earthquake of March 4, 1977."

¹⁰⁰ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 352-352 reverse and 358 reverse.

¹⁰¹ It found assets totaling 9,183,244 Romanian Lei, see CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 189. The Interior Ministry reported that workers found 1,225 identifiable savings books owned by 559 people (*librete nominal*); 62 unidentifiable savings books (*librete la purtător*) and 5,496 savings bonds (*obligațiuni*), which included bond numbers, but no owner information. My thanks to Dr. Emil-Sever Georgescu for clarification on the bank books. See ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 237.

accounts.¹⁰² This points to the larger reality of the regime's disregard for citizen's rights to personal property and suggests the onus was on the owners or their heirs to claim them. The regime also deposited what remained of the Romanian currency after returning "...the amounts found on corpses, in the objects owned by the deceased or wounded, or with identification documents..."¹⁰³ It deposited the cash into the special accounts opened for earthquake relief, the "1977 Account" for domestic and the "1000 Account" for foreign cash and assistance.¹⁰⁴ Like the unclaimed foreign cash, the regime kept all the gold coins, a small proportion of the unclaimed gold objects, and a large percentage of the silver objects.¹⁰⁵ Many of the gold items were identifiable, such as wedding rings and other jewelry found on the dead. The large percentage of silver items were not returned suggests that much of the silver flat and service ware was unidentifiable per the regime's protocol.

In total, Interior Ministry workers found, recovered, and inventoried more than 100,000 household objects in the rubble at the sites of the partially and fully collapsed buildings.¹⁰⁶ The 1977 value of Romanians' lost and damaged possessions was estimated at 95 million US dollars.¹⁰⁷ The regime inventoried the truckloads of household items found and transferred them to ten temporary deposit sites across Bucharest.¹⁰⁸ While the regime clamped down on different ministries handling in-kind foreign assistance received, it distributed the job to handle the items

¹⁰² As of May 13, 1977, people had claimed 1,571 savings books valued at over \$280,000, see CNSAS, D.0011737, v. 105, 75 and ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 2/1977, 49.

¹⁰³ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 235 reverse-236.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 236.

¹⁰⁵ The regime appropriated 1,745 gold and 3,617 silver objects with their transfer to the National Bank, see CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 114 reverse and 189 reverse.

¹⁰⁶ For the 114,844 items found see the March 31, 1977, report at ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 237 and those returned see the May 13, 1977, report at ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 2/1977, 49.

¹⁰⁷ The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation of the President": 12.

¹⁰⁸ Ten deposit sites were listed at ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 235 and eleven listed at CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 114 reverse.

found in the rubble among lower-level leaders. The Interior Ministry initially stored the unclaimed savings and bonds bankbooks, foreign currency, and gold and silver items at its offices before it sent them to the police or the National Bank.¹⁰⁹ Securitate officers and troops inventoried the items and guarded their storage sites. Nine days following the earthquake, Interior Minister Coman established a Bucharest-level commission comprised of “the chief prosecutor, tribune chairman, chief clerk, financial administrator, and representative militia [police] bodies” to deal with the valuables recovered from the collapsed buildings. The city commission also had eight subordinate ones for each of the city’s eight sectors.¹¹⁰ Those local commissions were charged with “all the time taking measures for continually disinfecting, sorting, inventorying, and guarding the valuables recovered.”¹¹¹ They set up warehouses wherever they found space: in schools (a kindergarten, an elementary and two high schools), a communal bathhouse, a department store, a grocery store, and an actual warehouse.¹¹²

The government officially announced the claims procedure well after the earthquake struck. A month after the earthquake Interior Minister Coman, Justice Minister Stătescu and Prosecutor General Bobocea proposed publishing a newspaper notification to explain the claims procedure. People could claim their own or their deceased family members’ items at the ten warehouse sites, the National Bank, the CEC bank branches or the police. The officials set a three-month period for claims, from April through June 1977.¹¹³ In reality, however, people claimed many items during the initial days following the earthquake. To claim a savings bond one

¹⁰⁹ CNSAS, D.0011737, v. 105, 74 reverse and 189 reverse.

¹¹⁰ For the report dated March 17, 1977, see CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 114 reverse.

¹¹¹ *Idem*.

¹¹² CNSAS, D.0011737, v. 105, 43, 52, 74 reverse and 161.

¹¹³ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 236.

had to present proof of the bond number or purchase.¹¹⁴ Exactly a month after the earthquake, Elena Ceaușescu remarked during a Political Executive Committee meeting that only holders of CEC bank assets could claim them, to which her husband countered that parents and siblings also had inheritance rights.¹¹⁵ At that time the regime only had 125 requests for such inheritance claims.¹¹⁶ The regime required proof of ownership and many items were not returned because people did not have sufficient documentation.¹¹⁷ Victims' relatives, too, claimed items when identifying a dead relative. The regime noted that only three out of ten claimants actually left with something, usually "sentimental family items, books or objects found on the dead."¹¹⁸ Claims were difficult for several reasons. The destruction in the city center rerouted busses and halted trams, making transportation difficult. The distribution of the found items across temporary warehouses, bank and police branches across the city made knowing where items were almost impossible and traveling to many or all warehouse sites necessary.

Control of Assets' Movement onto the Black Market

During the earthquake recovery the Ceaușescu government was not interested in receiving in-kind foreign assistance (with the exception of telecommunications or construction equipment) or saving objects that could not be used or sold. It preferred cash in the form of direct assistance and no-interest or condition-free loans. At its start, the Securitate discouraged its operatives working on the "Solidarity" operation abroad from accepting food donations. Yet along official

¹¹⁴ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 235 reverse.

¹¹⁵ April 4, Ibid., 36 reverse.

¹¹⁶ Idem.

¹¹⁷ ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 2/1977, 36 reverse.

¹¹⁸ Most families refused to take any recovered clothing. Ibid., 36 reverse.

channels, Romania accepted all such items sent. The regime praised the distribution of “oranges, chocolate, and powdered milk to the wounded in Bucharest and perishable food items (citrus fruits, baked goods, cheese, juice, etc.) to internal commercial networks for collective consumption (daycare centers, kindergartens, dormitories, public cafeterias, and hospitals).”¹¹⁹ But, privately, the regime clamped down on the receipt of in-kind assistance to stem its flow to the black market.

In 1977 the Ceaușescu regime limited in-kind foreign assistance to control its movement onto the black market based on the experience following the flood of the 1970s. As might be expected in the wake of natural disasters, following the flood, some sold the in-kind foreign assistance received on the black market. In 1977, the Ceaușescu regime was not concerned about individuals making sales, rather it did not want larger quantities of in-kind foreign assistance sold in the state-owned stores as happened in 1970. Mid-level managers, and others with the ability to do so, sold items intended for the flood victims in state-owned stores and enterprises. In testimony to the US Congress about whether to provide Romania with additional foreign assistance following the 1977 earthquake, several letters from Romanian immigrants to the US sent to then New York Congressman Ed Koch explained that following the 1970 flood, “emergency help given to them consisted only in used clothes collected from other Romanians, while goods received from outside...were sold in the village’s state stores.”¹²⁰ Following the 1970 flood, emergency tents received from the United States “were seen installed on the beaches

¹¹⁹ ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 48/1977, 101.

¹²⁰ US Congress, “Foreign assistance and related agencies appropriations for 1978”: 64.

and rented to the people during the summer.”¹²¹ And the “fish received from China, powdered milk and cocoa from Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, canned meat products, coffee, as well as materials and clothes received from other Western countries [intended] to be distributed to needy people, had been sold in state stores.”¹²² Years after the flood, a state-owned supermarket in Bucharest sold boxes of raisins marked “Gift from the Greek Government to the Romanian People.”¹²³ Rather than distribute the items gratis to the flood victims, mid-level managers and others with the power to do so, used state-run enterprises to sell the goods. Following the 1977 earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime’s insistence on cash over in-kind assistance suggested it wanted to curb similar uncontrolled black market activities.

In 1970, while mid-level managers and others took advantage of their position to sell in-kind foreign assistance through state-run enterprises, the regime also appropriated some of the foreign cash donations sent to churches. In 1977 a representative of a German Protestant church warned about giving cash to Romania in light of the regime’s history of cash misappropriation: “From previous experience with the Rumanian government we have learned to be extremely cautious with monetary donations. We well remember how gifts of money and supplies were handled after the disastrous floods in Rumania [sic]. These gifts simply did not arrive at the destinations for which they had been intended.”¹²⁴ Several Romanian churches reported never receiving cash they expected from abroad. All foreign cash intended for religious organizations had to be funneled through and approved by the government’s ministry for religious institutions,

¹²¹ US Congress, “Foreign assistance and related agencies appropriations for 1978”: 63.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 64

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

the Ministry of Cults. In September 1977 testimony presented to the US Congress reported two examples of the regime appropriating funds sent from abroad for flood victims via Protestant pastors in Romania: “I happen to know from reliable sources, for example, that the Dutch Reformed Church sent money to [a Transylvanian bishop]. But, as the State had not been previously consulted, the funds were summarily confiscated.”¹²⁵

Learning from the 1970 flood experience, the Ceaușescu regime took quick control of the receipt and distribution of in-kind foreign assistance, yet allowed Bucharest city leaders to direct and share the claims and distribution process for the household items found in the damaged and collapsed buildings’ rubble. Those buildings were clustered in only two of the capital’s eight administrative “sectors.” The Interior Ministry workers, however, opened temporary warehouses and claim centers across the city in each of the city’s sectors. The sectors where the most earthquake damage occurred each hosted two sites as did one other sector, while the remaining each held one.¹²⁶ This essentially distributed the power over the claim and return process to each of the eight city council presidents, who administered the “inventory, storage, and security” of the valuables warehoused in his own jurisdiction.¹²⁷ This distribution of the recovered items across the city was a response to the overwhelming task of storing more than 100,000 items, but also a way to distribute power to return or appropriate them.

¹²⁵ US Congress, “Foreign assistance and related agencies appropriations for 1978”: 65.

¹²⁶ CNSAS, D.0011737, v. 105, 75.

¹²⁷ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 43/1977, 235.

Unequal Punishments: The Regime's Treatment of Looters

At the same time that the Interior Ministry deployed its workforce to sift through the rubble for valuables, it prevented citizens from doing the same. Looting is not uncommon in the wake of any natural disaster and in 1977 the Securitate took measures to prevent it. Officers and cadets kept people away from the collapsed building and rubble dump sites, both to protect people from injury and items from theft. It is not unusual for a government to restrict people's access to disaster sites; what stood out was the Ceaușescu regime's different punishments for Interior Ministry workers and citizens who tried to steal from them.

In addition to guarding the work and warehouse sites, the Securitate took other proactive measures to deter looting: it prohibited people with criminal records from traveling to and around the capital. During the ten-day state of emergency, the Securitate prohibited "a large number of people with criminal records" from traveling to damaged areas in the capital and towns in Romania as it considered them "predisposed to commit crimes."¹²⁸ Those "measures were taken to ban their flight."¹²⁹

While not an indication that this crime prevention strategy worked, in Bucharest police and Securitate caught very few civilians looting. During the ten-day state of emergency they arrested forty-four civilians for looting. They caught them stealing while inside the evacuated buildings and picking through the rubble of the collapsed buildings and at the rubble dumpsites. Interior Ministry workers apprehended a woman trying keys on different apartments doors in

¹²⁸ CNSAS D 11.487, v. 10, 37.

¹²⁹ *Idem.*

evacuated buildings. Someone else tried to steal binoculars, another a bicycle, and a truck driver tried to steal books recovered from a ruined apartment building.¹³⁰ Police caught two unidentified men transporting a stove in a taxi. They detained a twenty-year old man riding an East German *Simson* moped after he could not produce its registration documents.¹³¹ The police found a man who had filled his car with rubble “in which it could clearly be seen ten, fifty, and hundred Romanian Lei banknotes flying around.”¹³²

Citizens reported looters, too. An elderly retired engineer reported that a group of “particular” individuals removed seven buckets of jewelry and other valuables from the rubble of a damaged building.¹³³ Two neighbors caught a looter stealing from an apartment next door.¹³⁴ The engineer pensioner and the neighbors’ may have made their reports because they wanted the looter caught and prosecuted, or they may have been regular Securitate informants. The Securitate’s reliance on Romanian citizens and regime workers for watching and reporting on the actions of neighbors, colleagues, friends and even their own family was a hallmark of the Ceaușescu era. By the 1980s, it was estimated that the Securitate had one agent or informer for at least every thirty citizens.¹³⁵

While citizens had restricted access to the damaged and collapsed buildings’ rubble, regime workers had full and somewhat free access.¹³⁶ Not surprisingly, workers used that opportunity to steal. Like civilians, they tried to steal small items, slipped them in their pockets or hid them

¹³⁰ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 354.

¹³¹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 15, 355.

¹³² The amount totaled 810 Romanian Lei. *Ibid.*, 356 reverse.

¹³³ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 15, 167.

¹³⁴ *Idem.*

¹³⁵ Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 208.

¹³⁶ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 298-298 reverse, 303, 304 reverse and 305 reverse.

to retrieve later. The police caught them trying to steal cash, jewelry, cigarette lighters, wristwatches, pocket watches with chains, all sorts of pens (metal, plastic, and fountain), gold and silver flatware (tablespoons were numerous), tubes of toothpaste, electric razors, a thermometer, and foreign cigarettes.¹³⁷ Workers also tried to steal small appliances: a hair dryer, a Czechoslovak *Tesla* cassette recorder, and a calculator.¹³⁸ One person was caught trying to steal the diploma of the wife of the famous Romanian actor Toma Caragiu, who died in the earthquake.¹³⁹ They caught troops stealing large items like portable heaters and even cars. Three military cadets found a Romanian Dacia 1300 car in a pile of rubble, moved it in front of their barracks, stripped it for parts, and dumped its chassis in a nearby pit.¹⁴⁰ Their project was obvious to all in the barrack and a fellow cadet reported them to their unit's supervisor.¹⁴¹

Like those who turned-in their fellow students stripping the car, Interior Ministry underlings, peers, and superiors reported looting among their ranks. How many of their supervisors looked away or demanded their own cut is impossible to know, but examples of such power abuses existed. In one recorded case, three days after the earthquake, two first-year police cadets observed their platoon's major on horseback patrol reach down and take the equivalent of about \$350 from a worker who found the cash in the rubble.¹⁴² In another case, a police cadet, working with a sergeant of a different unit registering found items, "observed that the sergeant did not register a ring which was brought in together with a watch. The student reported this to a lieutenant of the Securitate troops, whom he did not know. That Securitate officer told him not

¹³⁷ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 298-298 reverse and 305 reverse.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 305 reverse.

¹³⁹ *Idem.*

¹⁴⁰ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 304 reverse.

¹⁴¹ *Idem.*

¹⁴² The report alleged he took 7,000 Romanian Lei. *Ibid.*, 354.

to discuss the alleged theft with anyone as he would deal with it himself. The cadet then reported it to his own commander.”¹⁴³ This story was especially interesting because of the cadet’s recognition of the layers of potential abuse among those at various levels of power. He reported on a superior to a Securitate commander, both of whom he did not know. We can only speculate as to why the Securitate commander, in turn, asked the cadet to remain silent about the case. Possibly he was just too busy with the inventory of items to address it, or he had his own interest in the ring. The cadet recognized his superior’s opportunity to steal and his own best interest was not to leave the information with an officer he did not know, but rather to report the abuse also to his own commander. He did what was expected of him — report to a direct supervisor — but also took measures to protect himself when he reported to his own unit commander.

While some workers informed on their supervisors, the majority of the cases that involved Interior Ministry workers concerned supervisors collaborating with workers to steal. Drivers transporting equipment, foreign aid, and rubble from the buildings and other items also had prime access and opportunities to steal. For example, the Interior Ministry found three of its truck drivers chauffeuring superiors so they could collect and take things from the rubble.¹⁴⁴ A tank brigade driver, lieutenant Teodor R., stole “four R.H.R. brand West German electric heaters and other valuables” while driving a foreign aid shipment in his tank from Bucharest’s Otopeni International Airport to the city’s Elias Hospital. The police searched his home and

¹⁴³ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 15, 357.

¹⁴⁴ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 288 reverse.

found three of the heaters; the fourth they found in the apartment of his unit's superior.¹⁴⁵ We can not know whether the superior officer demanded one of the heaters in exchange for allowing the driver Teodor R. to steal the other three, or suggested the plan himself, but it was one instance of superiors taking "cuts" and collaborating with their subordinates.

Both civilians and Interior Ministry workers tried to steal, but regime punished those caught radically differently even though the law applied to them equally. Under the 1969 Penal Code, looting was considered either a theft or robbery.¹⁴⁶ The law considered thievery an act of taking a "moveable" item that did not belong to you and mandated a prison sentence of anywhere from three months to two years.¹⁴⁷ The law defined robbery as either stealing while in a group of two or more people, at night, with a gun or under the influence of "narcotic substance," using false or true keys, or at the time of a "calamity." It permitted a prison sentence of anywhere from one to five years.¹⁴⁸ A 1973 amendment to the 1969 Penal Code expanded punishments and added "re-education" or "correctional labor" for such non-capital crimes, harkening back to the Gheorgiu-Dej era.¹⁴⁹

In the aftermath of the 1977 earthquake the Romanian justice system prosecuted and sentenced civilian looters more quickly— in many cases just days following an infraction— than

¹⁴⁵ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 298-298 reverse.

¹⁴⁶ The 1969 Penal Code, passed in June 1968 as Law 31/1968, kept capital punishment on the books, where it had been since 1948. It was reserved for capital crimes, and outlawed after Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu's executions on December 25, 1989. As outlined in Articles 185-188, the 1968 Penal Code outlawed women from having abortions, and doctors and others from performing them; possessing equipment to perform them, and not reporting known abortions.

¹⁴⁷ Penal Code 31/1968, Title III, Article 208, accessed December 15, 2016, <http://www.monitoruljuridic.ro/act/cod-penal-din-21-iunie-1968-emitent-marea-adunare-na-ional-publicat-n-buletinul-oficial-nr-38070.html>.

¹⁴⁸ *Idem*.

¹⁴⁹ Law 6/1973, accessed December 15, 2016, <http://lege5.ro/Gratuit/le2dinjw/legea-nr-6-1973-pentru-modificarea-codului-penal-al-republicii-socialiste-romania>.

the regime's workers. The Interior Ministry generally referred its accused workers' cases for review and punished very few. Interior Minister Coman commented on a case where four Interior Ministry workers caught stealing from the collapsed building and rubble dump sites were given "exaggerated sentences."¹⁵⁰ He advocated that they "not make petty cases into serious problems" and commanded that the four be set free until the Prosecutor's and Justice Offices could review their cases.¹⁵¹ Coman then decided that the punishment for such offenses should be fixed to one year of correctional labor and that the Interior Ministry's standard operating procedure would be to first confiscate the ministry issued firearm from officers and sub-officers accused of a crime. They would then be relieved from duty not because they might pose a threat, but rather so that they could organize their defense.¹⁵² He prescribed this *modus operandi* for officers and sub-officers and not the troops who served under them.

In Teodor R.'s case, the tank driver who tried to steal space heaters under the direction of or with his supervisor, a different supervising officer reported the case to his commander and to the secretary of the Romanian Communist Party political council. Yet, no record exists as to whether the regime also punished Teodor R.'s supervisor, whose case was referred to the military prosecution unit and the National Defense Ministry.¹⁵³ Like Teodor R.'s case, each of the almost two dozen extant cases of Interior Ministry soldiers and low-ranking officers caught stealing were either referred to their unit or department commanders for further action.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ CNSAS, D.011487 v. 2, 3 reverse.

¹⁵¹ *Idem.*

¹⁵² For the case, see CNSAS, D.011487 v. 2, 3 reverse.

¹⁵³ CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 103 and CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 304.

¹⁵⁴ See the annex from the March 17, 1977, report, CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 103-104 reverse.

The regime punished civilians caught looting after the earthquake much more severely than Interior Ministry workers. Prosecuted under the law for stealing during a calamity, civilians received sentences of years in prison for attempting to steal household items like manicure kits, electronics, or clothing. Examples of Justice Department sentences for civilian looters included: five years in prison for attempting to steal flatware and a magnifying glass; four years for a transistor radio and a manicure kit; three years and six months for a natural gas bottle and five TV bulbs; three years for a radio; two years and six months for a typewriter; two years for a stereo speaker; and one year and ten months for a pair of pants, a manicure kit, and a wallet.¹⁵⁵

Those Romanian citizens caught and sentenced for taking something from the collapsed and damaged buildings' rubble were primarily young men, unemployed, and from Bucharest. For example, Ion F., a twenty-eight year-old heavy machinery mechanic living in Bucharest, received a three-year prison sentence for stealing “many objects, including a gold chain necklace, a Soviet *Zarea* brand wristwatch, two sweaters, a silver ring, a pair of cufflinks, a perfume bottle, a cigarette lighter, and an eyeglass case missing the eyeglasses.”¹⁵⁶ The regime arrested some female looters, too. They sentenced Victoria S., an unemployed twenty-one-year old resident of a town near Bucharest, to one year and six months in prison for stealing two sweaters from a damaged building; and gave Mariana-Viorica I. one year and two months in prison for stealing a wristwatch and “other objects.”¹⁵⁷

The regime tried civilians and Interior Ministry workers for the same crimes. It made examples of civilians, especially “undesirables,” such as the unemployed, and took measures it

¹⁵⁵ CNSAS, D.11.737, v. 105, 105-105 reverse and 110.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹⁵⁷ No other demographic data was recorded for Mariana-Viorica. *Ibid.*, 105 reverse and 110.

believed might prevent crimes. In general, Interior Ministry officers made a point of noting ethnicity, as well as gender. In particular, they recorded when people were not ethnic Romanians and singled out Hungarians, Jews, and Roma. Because the Interior Ministry did not record the ethnicity of the civilian accused of looting, we can confidently assume that they were all ethnic Romanian. The Securitate's tracking of Roma after the earthquake, for example, was limited to only two extant reports, which documented loitering and drinking in areas near the damaged and collapsed building sites. The Bucharest Securitate mentioned that the evening after the earthquake "groups of gypsies, in particular youth, gathered near the damaged buildings and shops with broken windows, in order to steal objects and food."¹⁵⁸ The Securitate also noted a group of eleven Roma sleeping at a school who "in the morning drink alcohol and make a mess and noise...."¹⁵⁹ Neither report mentioned any arrests, only that Roma were milling around the buildings and shops. The Securitate's reports reflected its attempts to prevent any activity that might have been seen as malicious. Potential threats, in the eyes of the Securitate, merited notation just as much as actual infractions especially if coming from such "undesirable" groups as Roma, Hungarians, non-Orthodox, etc.

¹⁵⁸ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 33 reverse.

¹⁵⁹ March 6, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 48.

Conclusion

In the aftermath of the 1977 earthquake the Romanian government provided vague and unclear information to its citizens about the foreign assistance it received. A month after the earthquake a public communique in the state-run newspapers obliquely mentioned the in-kind and cash foreign donations. It did not, however, give their total value. It said: “Additionally, offers of help were received in the form of equipment and materials from some countries, institutes, businesses, and individual citizens and assistance from the Red Cross organizations, international organizations in the UN system, and other international nongovernmental organizations.”¹⁶⁰ While the amounts may never be known, the regime’s efforts around asset retrieval and solicitation exemplified the value it placed on its control of assets.

This chapter traced what the Ceaușescu regime valued as expressed by its efforts to recover assets, control foreign aid, and solicit foreign assistance. The jobs to collect, inventory, warehouse, and guard the more than 100,000 recovered household items reflected the regime’s interest in retrieving anything of value, sharing the power to distribute them, and, ultimately, controlling their disposal. Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu’s initially disapproved of the Interior Ministry’s efforts to recover valuables, but within days approved it. The operation lasted for months. The regime returned household items to people, but kept the majority of the unclaimed items it considered had value. It recovered as much usable material and equipment as it could. While the amount appropriated from all foreign cash, savings in state-owned bank deposits, and a portion of the valuable items found in the rubble may not have been especially significant, the

¹⁶⁰ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 48/1977, 50.

regime did value fungible items it could appropriate. It clamped down on the foreign assistance receipt and distribution process to deter movement of items to the black market to limit the power of mid-level regime members.

The regime claimed for the state what was not claimed by the individual. While it returned items to those who could prove ownership or inheritance rights, the regime appropriated unclaimed assets. A portion of the cash and fungible assets were intended to be deposited in the “1977 Account” for earthquake assistance, however no documentation of the account’s deposits or distributions exists. Furthermore, the regime scattered the warehouses for storage and claims of the valuables recovered across the city. This distribution made it more more difficult for individuals to find and claim their possessions while at the same time it allocated the administration of the unclaimed items to the city’s local leaders. This approach may have been in response to the need for warehouse space, but it also presented an opportunity for heads of the local councils to keep and distribute items as they wished. It seems likely that the state-level regime leaders made this opportunity available to their local counterparts.

The assets recovery actions were in-line with Ceaușescu’s priorities, where the state’s welfare superseded that of the individual’s within it, exemplified by the different punishments for regime worker and civilian looters. The discrepancy in the severity of punishments for civilians versus Interior Ministry workers caught stealing, whether a tube of toothpaste or an automobile, highlighted how differently the regime treated insiders and outsiders. Parity did not exist; power abuse within the system did. Yet, at the time of the earthquake, civilians and regime workers alike reported on the wrong-doings they observed. There was a perception of a justice

system that worked, although in reality it did not treat regime workers and civilians equally.

Furthermore, underlings within the Interior Ministry felt they could, and did, report on power abuses they observed their supervisors committing.

The regime chose how to report on the aid received and distributed. Ceaușescu himself instructed that if a donation was significant enough to merit “propaganda,” it should receive it.¹⁶¹

I believe that the Ceaușescu regime systematically recorded the cash and in-kind donations received not only for its own knowledge, but also because documentation to the fullest extent possible could be used to deter, control, and limit those within the regime who had access to foreign aid from skimming off the top for themselves. Officials documented to deter theft from within. The regime would then, as was regular practice, destroy such precise records after the fact, as was the case of the “Solidarity” telegrams burned seventeen months after the operation’s start. The clandestine “Solidarity” operation attempted to secure more cash and assistance for the regime in the name of the earthquake victims. It was not surprising that Romania’s secret police had such presence across the globe, although it is unclear how effective the operation was.

An accurate accounting of the foreign assistance received and relief efforts expended by the Ceaușescu regime in the wake of the 1977 earthquake is impossible to reconstruct without a revelatory or new release of documents, such as a ledger for the “1000” or “1977” accounts. There is a possibility one may exist. In 2009 the president of the Authority for State Asset Recovery announced that he planned to declassify the communist-era archives of the BRCE,

¹⁶¹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 16.

however, the archives still remain unavailable for research.¹⁶² While the total cash value of the 1977 earthquake foreign assistance is not known, the value the regime placed on controlling it was clear.

¹⁶² In Romanian, *Autorităţii pentru Valorificarea Activelor Statului*. See Banu, “Capitalişti Avant le Lettre” and Gherghut Ondine, “Conturile Securitatii vor fi desecretizate (Securitate Accounts will be declassified)” in *Romania Libera*, September 23, 2009, accessed October 18, 2016, <http://www.romaniaibera.ro/actualitate/eveniment/conturile-securitatii-vor-fi-desecretizate-165514>.

Chapter Three

Mandated Charity: Romanian Workers Exploited in the Name of the 1977 Earthquake Recovery

They have forgotten the misery we all went through and on all occasions speak about recovering the losses and performing superhuman work. It is as if we are not people. -- Physicist of the Atomic Physics Institute, March 26, 1977.¹

The entire Romanian population is working heroically to alleviate the earthquake's destruction. -- The Bucharest City Council Newspaper, *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 23, 1977.²

I do not understand what kind of democracy this can be. How can the management make claims on my money? What, didn't I also suffer from the earthquake? I need to make 3-4,000 Lei in repairs. I am not saying I will not contribute, because there was a lot of misery, but not all of my bonus, because I need it. -- Worker at the "Dacia" textile factory as recorded by the Bucharest Securitate, March 26, 1977.³

During the first week after the 1977 earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime began several initiatives that encouraged in name, but mandated in practice, workers and citizens to donate labor and cash to the recovery. These initiatives took several forms. The government expected Romanians to participate in brigades in the Bucharest streets during "Work Sundays"; make their own home repairs; work longer weekday and additional Sunday shifts; and donate salary and

¹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 289 reverse.

² See *Informația Bucureștiului: Ziar al Comitetului Municipal București al P.C.R și al Consiliului Popular al Municipiului București*, Anul XXIV, Nr. 7316, March 23, 1977, 8.

³ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 290.

annual bonuses. The expectations for work brigades and self repairs were short lived, but the additional shifts and docked pay continued through 1978. An official communique described the efforts: “The Political Executive Committee made a vibrant appeal to the working class, the farmers and the intellectuals, to all working people, regardless of their nationality, to spare no effort to fulfill the plan’s tasks, which depend on a firm forward movement of our society along the social and economic way of progress, for the material and spiritual benefit of the entire nation.”⁴ The regime played on the population’s sense of solidarity, capitalized on people’s benevolence, built on their charitable initiatives, and encouraged participation through propaganda and coercion. In the end, the Romanian people — women, children and men —involuntarily contributed labor and cash triple the amount Romania received through foreign assistance for the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts. The regime’s successful extraction through these mandated “volunteer” initiatives built on previous practices to solicit civilian participation, such as parades and holiday celebrations, but brought them to a scale not seen before 1977.

The Romanian government’s demands on citizens following the 1977 earthquake was a temporal example of what Foucault termed *etatization*, when a state or regime infuses itself into more and more areas of its citizens’ lives. The Anthropologist Katherine Verdery, who has worked in and written about Romania for more than forty years, argues that the Ceaușescu regime imposed “temporal disciplines,” or demands on citizen time, for its own benefit. In the case of the 1977 earthquake recovery efforts, the government infringed on people’s time. It demanded Bucharesters participate in clean-up brigades. It forced state-owned industry and service sector employees across Romania to work longer weekday and extra Sunday shifts. It

⁴ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 6 reverse.

charged industry managers to extract donations from their workers. And, it required those with damaged homes make their own repairs.⁵ Yet Verdery pinned the Ceaușescu regime's temporal etatization to the austerity policies of the 1980s, when time was "gradually slowed down, flattened, immobilized, and rendered nonlinear."⁶ She argued, "it is impossible to prove that an additional conscious intention was to deprive the populace of control over its schedules, but this was indeed an effect of the policies pursued [in the 1980s]."⁷ In 1977, the regime did control workers' schedules when mandating the unpaid shifts. In this chapter I argue that the Ceaușescu regime's actions that mandated worker and citizen contributions for the 1977 earthquake recovery served as a temporal etatization and marked the beginning of such large-scale practices before the severe austerity policies in the 1980s.

Why Did the Regime Expect Citizens to Participate?

The Ceaușescu regime saw Romanian domestic contributions as a rich source for extracting cash and labor. It demanded contributions in the name of earthquake assistance. It instituted mandatory longer shifts and extra work days specifically with the goal of putting the economy back on track. Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee: "We must, comrades, generally mobilize the population for realizing the [five year] plan, but also for

⁵ Katherine Verdery, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 39-40.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

performing supplementary production, but of course with no interference in the implementation of the plan for economic development or the measures to increase the established standard of living.”⁸ The economic plan guided the efforts and initiatives to use citizen labor and extract cash.

The dust, rubble, and clean-up efforts from the collapsed and damaged buildings, in the capital Bucharest created a situation that Ceaușescu perceived as “chaotic.” In the final account, the earthquake damaged 11% of Romanian homes, making 3% of them uninhabitable. Estimated housing losses totaled about one billion US dollars. The regime placed the burden for the non-catastrophic housing repairs solely on the shoulders of their owners. While finishing up in time to celebrate the May 1 holiday with parades in cleaned streets was one motivation for the regime’s demands on citizens, the primary one was that it did not want to remove laborers from industry.⁹

The policy to ask Romanians to help in the wake of a natural disaster was not new. The “good deeds” of Romanians following the 1977 earthquake were similar to those following an earlier natural disaster, devastating flood in 1970. Just days after the earthquake, Elena Ceaușescu recalled: “It was already discussed in the city that [people] want to give a day or a week from their salary.” To which her husband responded, “Good, people believe that they should proceed like last time after the flood.”¹⁰

⁸ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 51 reverse.

⁹ Ibid., 55.

¹⁰ March 9, 1977, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 60 reverse.

Mandated Expectations: The “Voluntary” Domestic Contributions

Early on the Ceaușescu regime recognized it would depend on its citizens to assist in the earthquake clean up. The regime asked for help from foreign governments, non-governmental organizations, and Romanian citizens simultaneously. Within two days after the earthquake it opened separate bank accounts to hold those foreign and domestic cash donations. The Sunday morning following the Friday night earthquake, Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee: “We will examine our financial situation and study if we have around 800 million to one billion [Romanian] Lei [about \$40-50 million] for assistance, including for housing, rebuilding homes, furniture, etc. Some are without clothing; some have nothing. Later will we appeal to the population for them to help. I don’t think today or tomorrow we will put this problem to the population. It will be announced in our [decrees] what we have decided and we will create an account for help, for intervening and repairing homes, and we will allocate around one million [Romanian] Lei.”¹¹ Initially Ceaușescu planned to solicit citizens’ help through Presidential Decrees. That did not happen. He informed county-level party leaders, too, that the policy applied to citizens all across Romania, telling them that, “the Political Executive Committee decided today to allocate one billion Lei for helping with repairs and construction including those who lost all their wealth. We will appeal also to citizens to contribute.”¹² It was not unusual for a government faced with disaster recovery to ask for domestic donations, yet in the case of 1977 Romania, people were not fully free to decide whether they wanted to contribute or not.

¹¹ March 6, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 17.

¹² ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 21/1977, 4.

Thirty-six hours after the earthquake Nicolae Ceaușescu came up with the idea for an account to hold domestic contributions in cash and from donated labor. Ceaușescu talked about the idea with the Political Executive Committee: “In regards to the voluntary contributions, I believe that we can open an account, without making an appeal to the population to contribute, being that many citizens have suffered and those that want to deposit something can know that an account is open with this goal.”¹³ Two and a half days later, the regime publicly reported that the Finance Ministry had opened the “1977 Account” for those contributions in the state-owned bank, or CEC.¹⁴ The government asked for contributions from people all over Romania and directed their donations to either the “1977 Account” or the same account the regime established for foreign assistance, the “1000 Account.”¹⁵

Ceaușescu planned to ask his people to contribute cash for earthquake recovery, but some managers noticed that people were already giving on their own initiative. They were donating their labor. People came to their neighborhood-level government offices and asked how they could help.¹⁶ On the Wednesday following the earthquake, a county-level regime leader, Virgil Trofin, Prime Secretary of Brasov County, described examples of workers in his county contributing to the earthquake relief efforts: “I would like to say that there are many offers on the part of citizens to give money. Some [workers] from the “Red Flag” [*Steagul Roșu*, a truck and vehicle manufacturing factory] and “Red Tractor” [*Tractorul Roșu*, a tractor factory] gave one week’s salary. Managers of some factories offered to give one month’s salary. There are

¹³ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 59.

¹⁴ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 11, 1977, 2.

¹⁵ CNSAS, OVS 31.160, v.1, 3 and 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 46 reverse.

factories that started from their own initiative to collect things, sheets, and some bought things in the stores for children. All of this could be good if we see how we could guide this action and have a positive effect.”¹⁷ Trofin then recommended opening two separate accounts, one for cash and one for materials and opined, “the action could be very important for the population.”¹⁸ As he described the idea for the accounts for donated labor he, too, reiterated Ceaușescu’s idea that the first solicitation for cash donations from Romanians should be voluntary.¹⁹ At the same time he presented the idea that citizen surplus production be used for export and described an offer from cooperative farmers, who gave “potatoes, legumes, animals, and we must welcome this because these are products that we have the need for [export] trade and the market and the cooperatives are giving their surpluses.”²⁰ During the first week of March 1977 some in the regime were already thinking about saving the best products for export, which became the norm in the 1980s under austerity. Another minister mentioned that his workers allegedly voluntarily worked an extra day that Sunday after the earthquake. Vasile Patilineț, Minister of Forests and Building Materials, described how some factories manufacturing pre-fabricated housing materials had started working additional Sundays on their own: “We have taken measures to work Sunday to satisfy the need [for more construction materials to build apartments].”²¹ In this case, it was clear that production managers did not wait for a directive from higher-ups to boost output and capitalize on workers’ benevolence, but rather demanded it of their workers. This anecdote exemplified the autonomy within the regime held by factory managers and others with localized

¹⁷ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 27/1977, 39 reverse.

¹⁸ *Idem.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁰ *Idem.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, 48-48 reverse.

power. Those lower-level management decisions and citizen initiatives contributed to the regime's opening of the separate "1977 Account" that held assistance in the name of the earthquake victims.

The measures that Minister Patilineț took that convinced factory workers to clock-in for an additional shift on a Sunday demonstrated the Romanian expression "duty with pleasure" (*datoria cu plăcere*), which was a common response one might give to a manager's request – and one a manager expected – such as participation in a parade. A manager would present the activity as voluntary, but the expectation was that one's participation was, in fact, mandatory.²² This was not unique to Romania, but occurred all across the communist bloc, where regimes "asked" for participation in parades and other ideologically charged manifestations, yet all knew that presence was obligatory.²³ Such mandated "charitable" actions as parade marching, and forced actions like Romanian prisoner "volunteers" digging Romania's Black-Sea Canal (many of whom died doing so), or Soviet deportation of "undesirables" to Siberia tainted the word "volunteer" in the post-communist period. As a Peace Corps Volunteer in the former Soviet Republic of Moldova in the late 1990s, just six years after its independence from the USSR, my host-country language teachers responded with comical pioneer-like salutes when we introduced ourselves as "volunteers." They prepared us to explain in Romanian to the people with whom we would live and work that we were in Moldova of our own free will and not sent by our government as "volunteers" because of some bad deed we had done.

²² My thanks to Olga Ursu Stefan for reminding me of this phrase, personal communication, November 18, 2016.

²³ For more on mandatory participation in manifestations and parades see Maria Bucur *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth-Century Romania* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009).

The workers' labor and cash donations in the name of earthquake victims were "duties with pleasure," or mandates presented as voluntary. Internally, the regime discussed how to present the initiative so it would be understood in this way. On the face of it, managers presented contributions as completely voluntary, yet with expectations for full participation. Ceaușescu told the Executive Committee members, "We will not recommend to [give] one day or a week of work for this account, but the people will know and those who want to can deposit [a day of their salary] into this account."²⁴ Ceaușescu explained the cash account for voluntary domestic donations, or the "1977 Account," was to be announced separately from the foreign assistance account to discourage any idea that contributions to the domestic account were mandatory and "not to give it momentum, nor amplify it as obligatory."²⁵ A week after the earthquake he told two hundred foreign journalists at his only press conference that the "losses to industry and agriculture caused by the quake could be made up in harder work by laborers."²⁶ During the first meeting of the twenty-nine member National Assistance Committee, members discussed the reorganization of the foreign assistance receipts and domestic support. Elena Ceaușescu described what would be known as the "1977 Account" (also referred to as the "Humanity" or "Benevolence Account") where "voluntary contributions from workers' salaries and 1976 bonuses to help the victims" were to be deposited.²⁷ This account for cash donations opened at the *Casa de Economii și Consemnațiuni* (CEC) state-owned bank was specifically, as Elena Ceaușescu explained to the Committee, "for the donations that will be received from the

²⁴ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 27/1977, 59.

²⁵ *Idem*.

²⁶ 1238/77 CN082 March 12, 1977, RFE/RL Corporate, Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institute Archives.

²⁷ March 11, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Political Administration 9/1977, 2 reverse-3.

homeland: those from institutes, factories, and industry. It will only be done through individual's or factories' accounts. It will be centralized and each will decide how much he will give from his salary, and it will be deposited into an account at CEC."²⁸ She told committee members: "Everything should be done in an organized manner, by the party organizations, not only because it is domestic help, but it is a political action of solidarity of our whole nation in the action of relief assistance."²⁹ The regime's official propaganda described the cash, labor, and bonus donations to the domestic "1977 Account" as voluntary. Elena Ceaușescu, too, believed the regime should not state that cash contributions were mandatory. She described her idea for a possible approach, "to start with, [tell] everyone: 'I give ten lei, another gives one hundred.'" Her husband critically responded, "this is not a collection, each deposits what they want."³⁰

“Work Sundays”: Brigades of Bucharest Women, Children, and Overall-Clad Youth

While the regime prohibited Bucharesters from helping to clean-up in or around the rubble of the collapsed building sites, it deployed citizens those first few weeks after the earthquake to clean up the streets and beautify the parks. These “Work Sundays,” the first of the “voluntary” citizen actions, occurred on at least the last three Sundays in March 1977. The daily described the first “Work Sunday” took place nine days after the earthquake, when “every citizen, every family, will participate in repairing the homes in which they live! In all the neighborhoods, on all

²⁸ ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 9/1977, 2 reverse.

²⁹ Ibid., 2 reverse-3.

³⁰ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 60.

the streets, the large movement of forces, will expend energy to ensure the effective clean-up work!”³¹ Such “volunteer” brigades and mass efforts were not unusual in communist Romania, for example, they occurred in preparation for large celebrations such as International Labor Day, on May 1, or Romania’s Union Day, on August 23.

The regime’s expectations that citizens clean-up and assist with earthquake repairs, in particular in the capital, continued on each of the remaining Sundays through the end of March 1977.³² Activities on the “Work Sundays” began as early as seven in the morning and centered around general clean-up.³³ The Bucharest daily newspaper titled its report: “In the Spirit Called on by the Secretary General, Intense Work, A Broad Action of the Masses that Included Hundreds of Thousands of Bucharesters: A Sunday in Work Clothes on the Large Restoration Front.” The article described, whether representative or fabricated, how people in the capital helped clean-up the city.³⁴ The regime lauded the efforts in state-run media. One Monday headline read, “In a Broad Effort, Youth in a Sunday Fortress of 100,000 Overalls.” The article explained, “On what was the second Sunday after the tragic day, March 4, on the streets and in the passages, there are those we have become accustomed to seeing these last nine days: busy people, in ordinary clothing, guards’ uniforms, or the patriotic blue overalls, on a Work Sunday in which all the capital’s residents, through self sacrifice, worked to return life back to normal.”³⁵

Following the second “Work Sunday,” the capital’s daily newspaper reported unimaginable numbers of people out in Bucharest: “200,000” were out “in work clothes” and

³¹ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 19, 1977, 1.

³² See the announcements for mandatory “Work Sundays” in *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 2; March 19, 1977, 1; and March 26, 1977, 1.

³³ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1, 4-5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

“groups of tens of thousands” cleaned up the city.³⁶ It claimed that: 7,000 workers assisted specialists with reinforcement work at damaged building sites; 13,000 children planted flowers; 15,000 citizens helped clean-up parks; 1,000 Communist Youth Members and patriotic guards unloaded materials from trains at the railway station; another 30,000 citizens cleaned up green spaces and planted roses; 40,000 citizens cleaned up green spaces; more than 22,000 citizens helped repair evacuated buildings; and thousands of citizens cleaned up debris from courtyards and streets.³⁷ While there may have been groups engaged in the work, it is hard to imagine that close to a quarter of the city’s population participated. If such large groups worked, the state-run media would have likely published images of such gigantic work brigades. They did not. Instead, the image of a “Work Sunday” brigade is a close up:



Figure 6. The original newspaper caption read, “Some of the tens of thousands of youth in the capital, students from General School nr. 121, participating in the planting for spring, a housekeeping mission.”³⁸

³⁶ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 21, 1977, 4.

³⁷ *Idem*.

³⁸ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 19, 1977, 4.

While obviously exaggerated, these claims of hundreds of thousands of people working together on any given “Work Sunday” suggested the regime expected full cooperation, and indeed described it as a patriotic duty to be a part of the clean-up. These “Work Sunday” brigades were made-up of primarily women, youth, and school-aged children. The regime “mobilized” young people — high school students, Communist Youth Members, and university students — for mandated “volunteer” repair work. The first week after the earthquake, “schoolchildren, teachers and parents...began repairing Bucharest schools that suffered only minor damage from the quake.”³⁹ Four months following the earthquake, in July, Bucharest Mayor Dincă mentioned that, in addition to the 29,000 Bucharest workers who left their regular work posts to repair industrial buildings, regime officials also mobilized “an important number of school children and university students” who repaired educational institutes and buildings.⁴⁰ Ceaușescu had ordered this, too, when he said: “[t]he same will take place with education, grab hold of the students and their parents to rebuild the schools.”⁴¹ He dismissed a suggestion from the Education Minister to repair 2,000 schools and commanded “repairs will start at all of them. Within two months all will be repaired using the work of the local population from the cities and the surrounding towns, with the exception of a few with severe damage.”⁴² He ordered the same for the repair of public and cultural institutions, such as libraries, museums, theaters, movie theaters, etc.

The regime’s propaganda and stress on returning life to how it was before the earthquake was more of a promise than a reality. This “return to normal” was something that Ceaușescu

³⁹ Telex RFE/RL #31 March 9, 1977, “To Walter Kingsley Bodin From Edwards” RFE/RL Corporate Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁴⁰ ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 5 reverse.

⁴¹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 43.

⁴² *Idem*.

sought and demanded and was one of his primary motivations for policies that placed demands on citizens. The regime described these mandated “Work Sunday” efforts not just as beneficial but necessary for the “return to normal economic-social life” and as a battle to be fought, with Ceaușescu the chief commander on this “battle front.”⁴³ The battle was against the “panic” and “chaos” — as perceived by Ceaușescu— and these “Work Sundays” were days when, according to the regime, all “citizens are employed in the battle for repairs and normalization.”⁴⁴ The government’s benchmark for “normal” was for industry to return to full production levels to meet planned economic targets. One component of that and what Ceaușescu wanted in particular, was for streets to be cleared of the earthquake debris. To return to ideal production levels and life before the earthquake, the regime mobilized women, youth, and children in necessary and arguable unnecessary earthquake recovery efforts. While participation in such mandated “voluntary” activities as parade marching was already a given by that time, these “Work Sundays” both built on previous efforts and ushered in a new wave of “voluntary” work, and from children in particular. The regime replicated the wide-spread “practical agricultural” work brigades commonplace since land collectivization of 1950, and later used by the Ceaușescu regime in the 1980s. School-aged children and youth made up the brigades; their teachers organized and supervised them as they assisted in the autumn harvest and other agricultural activities.⁴⁵

⁴³ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 3.

⁴⁴ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 19, 1977, 1.

⁴⁵ There has been very little research on the “volunteer” youth brigades (*Practica Agricola*) of the Ceaușescu era. Contemporary film footage of such a brigade from 1980 accessed March 3, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azgIDvfWP-o>.

Do-It-Yourself Home Repairs Expected from Citizens

The earthquake damage to the housing sector was very significant, estimated at about one billion US dollars. It affected as many as 600,500 Romanian homes, with a third of those left uninhabitable.⁴⁶ Bucharest was hardest hit, with almost half a million homes damaged, or 41% of the capital's housing stock.⁴⁷ The earthquake affected industry, too. The government prioritized repairs to industry, agriculture, transportation, communication, and retail trade; those losses were estimated at 690 million dollars.⁴⁸ The regime deployed workers to repair the industrial damage to put the economy back on track, and left practically all housing repairs to their residents themselves. Five days after the earthquake the regime admitted as much when Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee, “everyone must participate in repairing his house or apartment, of course under guidance, as every worker is able to plaster, to repair his own [home]. We will give them the materials because we don't have enough [workers] to do this.”⁴⁹ Elena Ceaușescu told the National Assistance Committee that her overarching concern for the those with damaged houses had to do with their ability to get back to work and repair their own homes: “therefore comrades, we will see what needs to be done because this is the problem of life, where in general

⁴⁶ The World Bank reported 178,335 homes, or 27% of those damaged, were uninhabitable. See The World Bank, “Report and Recommendation of the President”: 13. According to the Romanian National Institute of Statistics January 5, 1977, Census, 19 million people lived in 6,198,940 households (NB: this data excluded Arad and Alba counties). See Minnesota Population Center, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series*.

⁴⁷ According to the World Bank, the earthquake damaged 462,350 of the 1,127,257 total housing units in Bucharest. See The World Bank, “Report and Recommendation of the President”: 13, and the Minnesota Population Center, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series*.

⁴⁸ The government's 1977 estimated losses were \$473 million in industry, \$124 in agriculture, and \$93 million in transportation, communication, and retail trade as reported by The World Bank, “Report and Recommendation of the President”: 12.

⁴⁹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 54 reverse.

are the victims, and their situation in terms of re-entry into the production process, and in repairing their homes.”⁵⁰

Nicolae Ceaușescu said all residents could and were expected to make repairs. The regime did not want to take workers from industry to assist residents make repairs. Five days after the earthquake he told the Political Executive Committee: “In an organized way, youth, students, first everyone, will repair his own apartment or house. We give materials, we prepare all, we show, but they will make [the repairs]. Outside of the seismic structural reinforcement work which must be done by specialists, the rest much be fixed by all.”⁵¹ But, the regime did not give materials. Ceaușescu and regime ministers discussed many times in the days and weeks that followed the earthquake the lack of materials available for construction.⁵² Civilians, workers on the repair teams, and the Bucharest Mayor himself complained they did not have enough.⁵³ A state-owned construction company organized and dispatched fifty-five teams of eleven workers each to help citizens repair their homes. They complained, however, that they were only able to help less than 20% of those who registered for assistance because they did not have sufficient bricks, plumbing equipment, ceramic tiles, or scaffolding.⁵⁴ The Securitate noted that the managers “appreciated that if they had the construction materials in the quantity they needed they would be able to contribute in a much larger way to repairing the damaged homes.”⁵⁵

The reality of domestic upkeep in communist era Romania (and today) is that homeowners themselves maintained their own homes and made many repairs themselves.

⁵⁰ ANR, CCRCP Political Administration 9/1977, 3 reverse.

⁵¹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 54 reverse.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 24 reverse.

⁵³ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 326 and ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 6.

⁵⁴ The Securitate reported 100 repaired out of 573. *Ibid.*, 190.

⁵⁵ *Idem.*

Because of this, many had the skills necessary for such do-it-yourself repairs. This was not unique to Romania, but the regime capitalized on these skills and presented the task as a civic responsibility. In the weeks following the earthquake, the state-run Bucharest daily newspaper published articles about the expectation for citizens to make repairs with such headlines as: “A Civic Responsibility Imperative: Every Family, Every Citizen, Must Participate in Repairing the Home in Which They Live.”⁵⁶ The article featured a man, retired for three years, fixing his roof and quoted him as saying, “we know that in such difficult situations in which hundreds of people find themselves, we can not sit with our hands folded, waiting for others to come and repair our damage. The builders must work on rebuilding the large buildings.”⁵⁷ Here the state-run media used the handy pensioner as the mouthpiece for the message to preserve the experts (engineers, builders, construction workers, etc.) for more important tasks. Whether he actually spoke those words or the journalist created them was not important. One way or another, the regime used him to send the message that one can not wait for someone else, but rather each must make his own repairs.

The state-run media recycled this theme about citizen do-it-yourself repairs many times in the weeks following the earthquake with, for example, such newspaper headlines as: “For the Civic Responsibility Agenda, the Permanent Care for Order and Cleanliness” and “Every Citizen, Every Family to Participate in Repairing the Home in Which They Live — A Burning Request, High Civic Duty: Small repairs done on their own; now when every team is precious

⁵⁶ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 12, 1977, 2.

⁵⁷ *Idem*.

for the builders, the population's direct contribution to repair their apartments is imperative."⁵⁸

A weekday story featuring people repairing their homes described: "On this workday, when Bucharesters have rolled up their sleeves for fiercely continuing an impressive collective effort to remove the traces of the terrible disaster and to fight to normalize life, I [the author] met many people, from many different professions, after work, at their home, performing the ancient skills of masons and carpenters."⁵⁹ In the same article, after describing three cases of people not waiting for a repair team to come to their home and expressing joy and satisfaction at making repairs themselves, the author concluded, "our ancient vocation to construct reveals itself in such cases, shown through the foundations of homes rebuilt, the symbol of our never-ending persistence."⁶⁰

In addition to contributing their labor for the repairs, Romanians had to pay for them as well. The first Monday after the earthquake people stormed the shops; sales for construction materials tripled, resulting in a shortage perceptible later that week.⁶¹ The regime made available for purchase "construction materials for the population" — literally tons of cement and plaster, two billion bricks, and tens of thousands of feet of lumber, thousands of concrete slabs and tiles, and buckets of paint.⁶² Civilians needed materials for plastering and painting cracks in walls and ceilings, repairing roofs, refitting or replacing broken pipes, wires and lines, or mending or replacing broken furniture and household items. People paid for the repairs mostly from their own savings and labor, some from insurance claims, and very few from state issued credit.

⁵⁸ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 19, 1977, 4 and March 15, 1977, 3 respectively.

⁵⁹ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 15, 1977, 3.

⁶⁰ *Idem*.

⁶¹ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 25 reverse.

⁶² *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 12, 1977, 2.

Citizens who had home-owner insurance policies with the state-run agency used those claims to help pay for repairs, but those payments were quite small. In the summer following the earthquake, the state-owned insurance company that covered privately owned homes had received 3.7 million claims of property damage, representing almost 20% of all Romanian households.⁶³ The disparity between the claims from 20% of homeowners and the final figure that 11% of Romanian homes were damaged could have meant that the regime underreported damage to limit its responsibility and mask its economic weakness, many homeowners made false claims, or some combination of both.⁶⁴ But, most claimants received small insurance payments: a third of urban property owners and slightly more than half of rural owners received 1,000 lei (\$50) or less; the average payment to urban holders was 2,753 Lei (\$138); and to rural property holders 1,294 Lei (about \$65).⁶⁵ These small claims could cover the cost for some materials, but probably not payment for hired laborers.

The government gave citizens some credit to pay for repairs to supplement insurance payments.⁶⁶ In the days after the earthquake Ceaușescu did not want to give people credit, yet some in the regime did. One of the Political Executive Committee members, Gheorghe Oprea, Deputy Secretary for Labor Propaganda Issues of the Party Industrial Committee, asked that credit be given to urban Romanians to repair their homes. He addressed Ceaușescu directly, “I

⁶³ Data from the June 1977 report in ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 73/1977, 157 and calculated using the Romanian National Institute of Statistics January 5, 1977, Census available at the Minnesota Population Center, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series*.

⁶⁴ On April 8, 1977, the National Assistance Committee reported property insurance claims of 940 million Romanian Lei (\$78 million) and for industry 150 million Lei (\$12.5 million). See ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 98.

⁶⁵ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 73/1977, 157 reverse.

⁶⁶ August 16, 1977, Decree 286 provided “credit with interest to citizens whose homes were destroyed by or demolished after the earthquake.” Interest was 6% a year, and built on Law Nr. 4 of 1973. RFE/RL Broadcast Box 3796, folder 2, March 6-7, 1978, Hoover Institution Archives.

ask you, please, let us take measures to assure construction materials. Let's offer some credit for those who began to repair."⁶⁷ Ceaușescu dismissed the idea outright: "They are to put their hands to repair without credit."⁶⁸ Citizens felt the government's stinginess and complained about it. A retired railroad worker unknowingly told a Securitate officer (or informant) that he planned to write letters to the "presidents of the USA and West Germany with the goal to receive materials to help fix his home damaged in the earthquake."⁶⁹ This idea that those outside the regime could help if they only knew what was going on was a common refrain recorded by the Securitate.

The government did not only expect people to pay for part or all of the small repairs to their homes, it demanded they pay most of the significant seismic structural repairs as well. The government reimbursed only 15-25% of the cost of repairs to the interior of homes, such as covering cracks in plaster, repairing plumbing, etc. As for structural repairs, the state-run engineering institute paid the construction companies that performed the reinforcement work 40-60% of the total cost, with residents responsible for the remainder. Compensation payments to citizens for their damaged homes ended by the close of June 1977 (except for buildings still needing or approved for significant reinforcement repairs). As Finance Minister Dumitrescu told Ceaușescu that summer, "We give money to companies that are doing reinforcement work, we do not give to the industry that did the reinforcement work, and we do not give to citizens."⁷⁰

Furthermore, the regime took measures against citizens who did not pay. An engineer who

⁶⁷ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 33 and CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 443.

⁶⁸ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 33.

⁶⁹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 349 reverse.

⁷⁰ During the June 7, 1977, Political Executive Committee meeting members discussed the report titled "Proposal for compensation payments for damage suffered to valuables affected by the earthquake, on the base of the evaluations made during 13 May - 20 June 1977." ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 72/1977, 47.

worked on the damaged buildings explained, “Those [citizens] who refused to pay were put under surveillance and their salary or pension withheld.”⁷¹

Some residents feared making significant structural repairs because they thought they might be held responsible in the case of future damage from a natural (or other) disaster. A few weeks after the earthquake, residents of more than 1,000 apartments in a group of five buildings, who had begun to make repairs were upset and feared they might be held accountable for insufficient repairs. The Securitate reported, “it was affirmed that the majority of the residents decided to appeal” to other officials because they believed some experts made “...superficial repairs which do not secure the apartment buildings nor the residents who live in them.”⁷² While residents were told to make their own repairs, they were wary of being liable for such repairs. At the same time, they did not trust the repairs approved and made by “responsible” leaders.

Work Week Reduction Delayed and Overtime “Encouraged”

The regime extracted labor from citizens in the name of the 1977 earthquake victims through mandated, unpaid overtime, imposed on more than seven million Romanian workers in state-run industry. Additionally, the first large-scale action to extract more labor was an inaction: the government delayed the start of the reduced work week policy. Before the earthquake,

⁷¹ For the Securitate’s transcription of “*Europa Liberă*” bulletin nr. 412, broadcast on October 15, 1984, that used text of a letter signed by “Romanian tourists in the Federal Republic of Germany,” see CNSAS, D.21, vol. 55, 113.

⁷² This occurred in buildings along Pantelimon Highway Street, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 249.

Romanian employees of state-owned industry worked, on average, eight hours a day, six days a week. Planned for 1977, the reduced work-week policy would have cut one day's shift from eight hours to four, or a regular work week from forty-eight to forty-four hours.⁷³ During the first week after the earthquake, when discussing how to involve citizens in the recovery efforts, Ceaușescu stated, "Most likely, comrades, in addition to some work we will have to think about the eventual movement of the reduced work week until autumn and to start the beginning of next year."⁷⁴ In line with the expectation that people would comply with his request, he said: "Everyone will understand."⁷⁵ The government ultimately reduced the work week by two hours instead of four the next year. The 1978 two-hour reduction affected a "small minority of enterprises, basically including only those which have a high proportion of female workers and which have fulfilled plan targets."⁷⁶ It was a full two years after the earthquake before the government finally reduced the work week to forty-four hours.⁷⁷

The regime conceived of the extra work shifts immediately after the earthquake. In March, the Bucharest daily newspaper reported that people would be expected to work one longer weekday and an additional shift on Sundays in order for a return to previous planned output levels or even increased production at their workplaces.⁷⁸ In a phone conversation almost a month after the earthquake, Ceaușescu told the Soviet First Secretary Leonid Brezhnev about the need for voluntary shifts. In April 1977 Brezhnev asked Ceaușescu, "How is the rebuilding

⁷³ The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation of the President": 15.

⁷⁴ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 27/1977, 51 reverse.

⁷⁵ *Idem*.

⁷⁶ United States Embassy, Bucharest telegram to the US State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, February 7, 1978, 1, point 1, accessed November 24, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1978BUCHAR00813_d.html.

⁷⁷ Georgescu and Pomonis, "The Romanian Earthquake of March 4": 12.

⁷⁸ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 9, 1977, 6.

work after the earthquake going?”⁷⁹ Ceaușescu told him that the earthquake losses were “very large,” but that they had found additional funding for home construction he reassured him that “we will be able to resolve this problem.”⁸⁰ Ceaușescu commented to Brezhnev that Romania had not received enough heavy machinery (bulldozers, trucks, etc.) in foreign assistance, including from the USSR, then quickly moved to economic problems: “In industry we have had damage and losses in production, but they [workers] are working intensely and I believe that at the end of this month, in other words by 1 May, we will be able to recuperate totally, completely, all that was lost. We must, of course, work some additional Sundays, but in these conditions, of course we must.”⁸¹ Their conversation was not unusual. The Romanian government had frequent contact with its Soviet counterpart. A week after speaking with Brezhnev, Ceaușescu told the Soviet Ambassador in Bucharest, Valentin Drozdenko, that “practically, it will be the whole year and some of the next year [to clear the earthquake damage].” Drozdenko assured him, “we are always standing with you, Sir, and we are always ready to give you any kind of assistance.”⁸²

When Ceaușescu told Brezhnev about the need for additional Sunday shifts, Romanians had already worked two in a push to clean-up in time for the May 1 holiday celebration. In total, the regime mandated fourteen Sunday shifts in addition to the regular work week.⁸³ The first extra Sunday shift coincided with the first Bucharest “Work Sunday” clean-up work nine days after the earthquake. A state-run Bucharest newspaper described the extra Sunday shift for all blue-collar workers across Romania as “A Work Sunday, a Patriotic Sacrifice, for all the

⁷⁹ April 1, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 137.

⁸⁰ *Idem.*

⁸¹ *Idem.*

⁸² April 6, 1977, *Ibid.*, 33.

⁸³ The World Bank, “Report and Recommendation of the President”: 14.

Industrial Units.”⁸⁴ As it presented the “Work Sunday” as a civic duty, the regime propagandized the supplementary unpaid shifts as patriotic. Its primary motivation for doing so was to try and meet industrial production targets: the end of March simultaneously marked the end of the month and the first quarter of 1977. The announcement of the first mandated Sunday shift stated, “the consensus of the colleagues of the labor unions is that meeting and exceeding plan targets are required for the national economy.”⁸⁵ The Sundays were added onto Romanian workers’ regular six-day week. Some workers, as recorded by the Securitate, complained that the non-stop work without a break led to exhaustion. The Securitate noted that one of its informants reported a worker saying that “[working on Sundays] will lead to physical and mental exhaustion” resulting in decreased efficiency and outputs.⁸⁶

When Ceaușescu scheduled the mandatory shifts through the end of 1977, he explained to Ministry leaders who oversaw industry that the supplementary Sundays were to be presented to workers as “voluntary.” He said, “we must make an appeal until the end of the year that ten supplementary Sundays will be worked, in each month a Sunday. This will not be put in the [public] communique, I say this only for us.”⁸⁷ Here, “us” meant the regime ministers and members of the Political Executive Committee, who then communicated the mandated Sunday shift days to factory and other industry managers. Ceaușescu explained that the supplementary Sunday work would not be publicly announced or presented as an order. He said, “this initiative must not be put in an [official] communication; it will be announced separately... so as not to

⁸⁴ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 2.

⁸⁵ *Idem*.

⁸⁶ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 181 reverse.

⁸⁷ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 59.

present it as obligatory.”⁸⁸ Yet, managers interpreted the informal directive as exactly that. Industry-level managers oversaw the plan and required people to work the additional days. Romanians, in fact, worked a total of fourteen additional Sundays in 1977, not the initially planned ten, in addition to hours added onto their other shifts.

Alongside extra Sunday work, the regime imposed longer workday shifts on Romanian workers in the name of earthquake recovery. As with the mandatory Sunday shifts, the official justification was to meet production plan targets in the industrial sector. The mandated longer shifts, however, extended to service and other non-industrial sectors. The policy clearly not only had economic objectives — righting the economy — but also ideological ones. The expectation was that all able workers would participate. Taking their supervisors’ directive, in the name of the earthquake victims and recovery, industry and other managers “asked” workers to stay for longer shifts in addition to the Sundays.

While there were complaints and workers were exhausted from working the longer and additional shifts, the regime was able to impose them because it was legal. In 1972, when the Ceaușescu government amended the 1950 labor law.⁸⁹ It kept the eight hour work-day and six-day work week for most workers eighteen years and older. It also reduced paid vacations for some, from a fixed four weeks for all to a sliding range of two and a half up to four weeks. The 1972 labor law also stipulated that regular work days were not to exceed nine hours. More importantly, it allowed for 120 to 360 overtime hours annually per worker in “...special

⁸⁸ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 59.

⁸⁹ For text of the 1950 law see 1950 Labor Law 3/1950, accessed December 10, 2016, <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/21570> and for the 1972 Labor Law, 10/1972, accessed December 10, 2016, <http://www.legex.ro/Legea-10-1972-500.aspx>.

circumstances in connection with production and labor interests....”⁹⁰ The extended and monthly Sunday shifts for earthquake recovery fell within those legal limits, which allowed for more than two and a half, but not more than seven and a half overtime hours a week in “special circumstances.” There was not much workers could do, except quietly or openly complain.

In the weeks and months that followed the earthquake, Romanians complained that they were tired from working on Sundays and extra hours during the week. The Securitate noted: “Now it is very difficult for people to work the longer work program of twelve hours and Sundays because they are tired after all of this time working in that schedule.”⁹¹ The Bucharest Securitate recorded one engineer who accepted working one longer day, but not two, and an accountant who commented in a discussion with other workers that “one’s health goes down if you don’t give anything back to people.”⁹² The Securitate tracked such complaints and noted, “there are some cases in which workers affirm that because of their efforts following the earthquake they can not continue in that same rhythm without reaching a state of exhaustion....”⁹³ After three weeks of mandatory Sundays and longer hours, some tired workers just up and left their shifts at the regular time. The Securitate remarked: “The majority of workers at the Mechanical Section I of the Factory for Heavy Machinery did not work the twelve hour [shift]...because they are tired and can no longer work this lengthened program” and named three people who on “one day left work after eight hours saying they had difficult

⁹⁰ Article 119, 1972 Labor Law, Law 10/1972, accessed December 10, 2016, <http://www.legex.ro/Legea-10-1972-500.aspx>.

⁹¹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 254 reverse.

⁹² *Idem*.

⁹³ March 21, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 289.

situations in their families.”⁹⁴ In one case, managers physically forced workers to stay for an extended shift by locking the gate behind them. The Securitate noted: “the security guard closed the gate at the orders of the management, in order for the workers to work overtime.”⁹⁵

The 1972 labor law put some constraints on managers and prevented them from extracting any labor they wanted from workers. In one case, Ministers requested exceptions to the labor laws for people already taken from “urban planning institutes, country-level construction organizations, Ministry Executive Departments, factories, institutes, and a number of citizens... [to work at] three severely damaged areas — Bucharest, the industrial city Zimnicea along the Bulgarian border, and the town Roșorii de Vede.”⁹⁶ Iosif Uglar, President of the Committee for Popular Council Issues and Mihai Marinescu, President of the State Committee for Planning and a government Vice Minister, drafted a presidential decree to authorize a twelve-hour work day for those workers, which would have exceeded the 360 overtime hours annual threshold.⁹⁷ They also proposed for those workers to be reimbursed for their travel expenses and allowed to visit their families once every fifteen days.⁹⁸ I have found no evidence that the president signed the decree, but the proposal indicated the desire to extract additional labor from workers.

Many Romanian workers sustained the mandated longer and extra shifts for months. By autumn 1977 some workers at the “23 August” heavy machinery factory went on strike because they wanted to be paid for the two-hours of overtime they had worked weekly since the earthquake struck six months earlier. The US Ambassador reported to the State Department,

⁹⁴ March 26, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 289 reverse.

⁹⁵ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 39, 344 reverse.

⁹⁶ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 50/1977, 2.

⁹⁷ *Idem.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

“Management has taken the tack that even now [September 1977] approximately two hours of any time worked overtime should be considered an earthquake relief contribution.”⁹⁹ The US government knew of the Ceaușescu regime’s actions to dock workers’ pay for earthquake recovery. That September Secretary of State Cyrus Vance suggested edits to the Romanian section of a NATO report, to clarify the US assessment of Romania’s economy at the time, which he described as “...at a crossroads, between a) its old style of forced-draft growth based on profligate (sic) use of resources and b) growing hard currency, energy, capital, and labor constraints that are slowing economic development.”¹⁰⁰ Vance suggested edits for the 1977 NATO report: “some of the following ideas might also be added: ‘the Romanian worker is being asked to work harder and longer while the prospective rise in his living standards is slowed....Fulfillment of the housing goal in the [1971-75] plan depends on increased investment efficiency and use of private funds. Workers’ salaries and savings have been docked to pay much of the cost of repairing both industrial and housing damage wrought by the earthquake of March 4.’”¹⁰¹

The policy to demand overtime and Sunday shifts was legal. A year following the earthquake, the US Embassy in Bucharest reported to the US State Department’s Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, “Workers have been required to ‘volunteer’ one day of work per month in addition to their regular 48 hours [per week],” an indication that workers stayed for

⁹⁹ Telex from the Bucharest US Ambassador Barnes to US Secretary of State Vance, September 21, 1977, 1, point 1, accessed November 21, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR06998_c.html.

¹⁰⁰ “ECONADS: Recent Economic Trends in Romania,” September 14, 1977, US Department of State to NATO, 1, accessed November 24, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977STATE220640_c.html.

¹⁰¹ Idem.

additional unpaid shifts for a almost a year after the earthquake.¹⁰² The Securitate recorded workers' sentiments about the regime's policies, for example, "the development of the work program in three shifts, on Sundays, the reduction in 1976 bonus for victims...[the workers] are unhappy because the factory's leadership and Secretary of the Party Committee took these measures without consulting the workers in advance; the factory leaders do not have the right to [the workers] bonuses, and since not all employees received this benefit not all are contributing equally to the effort."¹⁰³

Pressure through Propaganda: Workers' Salary Deductions and Cash Contributions

Alongside the Sunday work brigades in the capital and longer weekday and extra Sunday shifts, workers and worker collectives gave cash, surrendered a portion of their salaries or their 1976 bonuses for the earthquake recovery: "To come to the aid of the [earthquake] victims, all working people across the country, including the victims, were convinced to give one [monthly] salary (which they were docked at their place of work in ten equal monthly installments) to be paid to 'The Humanity Assistance Fund.'"¹⁰⁴ This "voluntary" initiative brought in more cash than any other domestic earthquake recovery effort or the foreign assistance received. One month after the earthquake Elena Ceaușescu's National Assistance Committee reported "the

¹⁰² US Embassy Bucharest telegram, February 7, 1978, 1, point 2, accessed November 24, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1978BUCHAR00813_d.html

¹⁰³ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 39, 289 reverse.

¹⁰⁴ CNSAS, D.21, vol. 55, 112.

commitments from workers' collectives totaled more than 3.368 billion Lei (168 million dollars),” of which the government had already deposited 414.2 million Lei. Half, the equivalent of about ten million US dollars, came directly from individual workers' salaries.¹⁰⁵

It was not unusual that people wanted to give to help earthquake victims. Ceaușescu encouraged the idea, and argued that, because “many initiatives at workplaces are donating [money],” industry “...must begin to encourage these initiatives.”¹⁰⁶ Ceaușescu and local autocrats within the regime saw an opportunity to exploit Romanian workers' good will. People wanted to help the recovery, but Ceaușescu specifically discouraged their in-kind donations—food, clothing, household goods—and used advertisement and propaganda to encourage cash donations and put on pressure for more. Some workers complained. Three weeks after the earthquake the Securitate recorded a worker “protested that when he found out he had to personally contribute to the [1977] Account, ‘I am not talking about this, I am not giving one penny. I stayed long enough after my shift; I’ve given my contribution.’”¹⁰⁷

The government never passed a law, nor did Ceaușescu sign a decree, which mandated monetary donations or salary or bonus contributions, but people contributed due to propaganda and managerial pressure. One work site accountant, noted by the Securitate, explained: “There’s no legislation, there must be also some understanding, otherwise the system teaches you to be cowardly and a liar.”¹⁰⁸ This comment suggested that the unstated policy forced those who did not contribute to lie and say they did. The uniformity in the amounts “contributed” indicated

¹⁰⁵ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 98.

¹⁰⁶ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 28/1977, 11 reverse.

¹⁰⁷ March 21, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 289 reverse.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 344 reverse.

that many managers, most likely directed by their ministry heads, gave their workers a “suggested donation” amount. That suggested amount was either in the form of a day a week or per month, 2% of their salary for the remainder of the year, or some portion or all of the 1976 bonus, paid at the end of the first quarter of 1977, just weeks after the earthquake.

The state-run newspapers’ daily reports on how much money specific factories and enterprises donated to earthquake relief reflected the uniformity in cash donations. The press also published instructions for citizens how to make donations: “citizens who desire to arrive with help and assistance for the victims can deposit sums at all the CEC offices and branches.”¹⁰⁹ The newspaper published daily lists of which industrial groups donated and how much. For slightly more than two weeks, the state-run, capital city newspaper, *Informația Bucureștiului*, published a daily rubric titled: “The Benevolent Fund: Solidarity of Spirit, Warm Humanism.” It listed donations made by workers’ groups at factories and industry, some cultural groups, and a few individuals who gave to the “1977 Account.”¹¹⁰ The push for additional cash was made by workers’ collectives, or unions, at industrial sites. This was in line with the deposits made by and promised to the National Assistance Committee, where half of the contributions came from workers’ salaries, a third from industry and agricultural collectives, 2% from women’s and youth organizations, and 1% from cultural and sport groups.¹¹¹ Benefit performances have become common in the aftermath of a disaster like the 1977 earthquake, however the uniformity of salary deductions and proportions from bonuses suggested these were top-down directives. Managers suggested to workers how much to donate and many workers “agreed” to give up 2% of their

¹⁰⁹ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 11, 1977, 2.

¹¹⁰ Idem. The rubric ran from March 11th through March 26, 1977 in *Informația Bucureștiului*.

¹¹¹ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 98.

salaries and a third of their 1976 bonuses. The uniformity published in the newspaper accounts, too, point to a directive. Workers at the *Grivița Roșie* plant, which produced and repaired train and other vehicle parts, “agreed to give 2% of their salary for the remainder of the year.”¹¹² The director of the Metallurgy Research Institute stated that their cooperative “decided to donate all of their 1976 bonus.”¹¹³ The workers collective at the “23 August” factory, which manufactured train and train parts, decided to give 2% of their monthly net salary until the end of the year.¹¹⁴ More than 200 workers “decided to contribute a day a month of work and 13% of their 1976 bonus...the union of the Factory of Touristic Automobiles agreed to give half of their 1976 bonus.”¹¹⁵

The newspaper noted donations from individuals, although they were hardly representative, nor as frequent as workers’s donations through their workplace. During the first month of the effort (the only time for which we have any account), donations from individuals accounted for only 2% of the total deposited.¹¹⁶ A Bucharest University professor agreed to give one month of his salary; a collective of workers from the “Union Department Store” gathered a total of 4,000 Lei from individuals.¹¹⁷ Another professor from a technical school pledged to give 25% of his monthly salary; a pensioner pledge one day a month of her pension.¹¹⁸ The regime highlighted children’s benevolence, too: “students form General School nr. 149 decided to

¹¹² *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 15, 1977, 2. Using the inflation calculator accessed October 13, 2016, <http://www.dollartimes.com/calculators/inflation.htm>.

¹¹³ *Idem*.

¹¹⁴ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 4.

¹¹⁵ *Idem*.

¹¹⁶ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 98.

¹¹⁷ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 12, 1977, 5.

¹¹⁸ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 4.

deposit, from their own savings, about 10,000 Lei to help victims.”¹¹⁹ Two different groups of pioneers, the communist version of scouts, “collected 1,460 Lei from heartfelt children...and the pioneer group of class II-a of [a high school] deposited 750 Lei.”¹²⁰ As the contributions from university professors, pensioners, cultural groups, students, and soccer clubs demonstrate, it was not only factory-line, or blue collar workers, who donated cash from their salaries and bonuses. The newspaper listed technical and administrative staff of two different factories who pledged 30% of their 1976 bonuses.¹²¹

In addition to people donating cash, cultural and sports groups also, organized benefit performances and matches with the intention that the proceeds be deposited into the “1977 Account.” A quarter-column, boxed-in daily rubric ran in the Bucharest daily paper propagandizing the worker group donations list of factories and social groups’ donation pledges, and estimated total value. The factory or enterprise appeared in bold type with the amount of their cash donation printed in normal type: the emphasis was on who donated not how much. The Opera House, the National Theatre, and the Philharmonic pledged benefit performances.¹²² These group donations, like those from individuals, were a fraction of the total collected, representing only 1% of the total donations deposited within the first month of the effort.¹²³ Several of the Bucharest city soccer clubs also donated the proceeds from matches. Clubs such as *Olimpia* and *Rapid*, *Progresul* and *Voința*, donated on average a total of about \$3,000. Players,

¹¹⁹ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 4.

¹²⁰ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 19, 1977, 2.

¹²¹ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 4.

¹²² *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 11, 1977, 2 and Nr. 7313, March 19, 1977, 2.

¹²³ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 48/1977, 98.

too, pledged a part of their salaries.¹²⁴ In contrast, the Interior Ministry's soccer team *Dinamo* pulled together about five times as much from players' salary contributions.¹²⁵ It was one part of the Ministry's enormous total donation, over three million dollars, about which they boasted: "On this occasion expressing their profound devotion and attachment in the face of the Romanian national interest, the Interior Ministry personnel engages to contribute to...the sum of 61,510,000 Lei.¹²⁶ The Interior Ministry workers' three million US dollar pledge, while a huge amount for the time, represented barely 2% of the total Romanian worker pledges during the first month of the initiative.

At the time, some wondered why the regime demanded that workers contribute to the earthquake relief efforts. A few workers' comments exist about the possibility that the regime was hoarding cash — especially from foreign assistance— and extracting more from the population than was actually needed to address the earthquake recovery. More than a month after the earthquake, the Bucharest Securitate recorded that a medical pharmacist "insulted and expressed himself about the 1977 Account that 'the costs for the victims are covered by the foreign assistance and it should not be necessary for them to hold until the end of the year two days from our salary and 500 lei of the [1976 annual] bonus.'"¹²⁷ A month after the "1977 Account" opened, the Bucharest Securitate recorded that among workers at the Bucharest Construction Company "there were some really rough discussions [about the contributions],

¹²⁴ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 15, 1977, 2.

¹²⁵ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 17, 1977, 2.

¹²⁶ CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 10, 40.

¹²⁷ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 39, 344.

with shouts and insults, stating that ‘the state will profit from this, taking more than was lost from the earthquake.’”¹²⁸

Another case of unhappiness about the mandated donations came from workers of the Bucharest branch of The International Transit Group. Their truck drivers had a privileged job under communism because of their regular travel outside of Romania and the per diem they received in foreign currency. The state-run newspaper lauded their efforts: “the entire [Bucharest] collective of truck drivers, engineers, and mechanics... decided to donate a day from their monthly salary and because they work abroad [and receive a foreign cash per diem], around 1,000 truck drivers will each give twenty US dollars. Therefore, the contributions of this hard working collective means, in total, over 250,000 Lei and a collection of around \$20,000.”¹²⁹ Not all the hard working international truck drivers donated to the earthquake victims voluntarily and the Securitate noted their discontent. The Securitate kept tabs on the drivers because they worked abroad and had access to hard currency. The Securitate noted that the “salaried employees,” i.e., managers, had decided that “those drivers that went on driving trips abroad would each contribute twenty US dollars to the ‘Humanity Account.’”¹³⁰ Its report quoted one driver who felt the policy was “not well thought out and arbitrary” and said that those who drive trucks to foreign countries “have a small per diem.” He suggested that their contribution be a percentage based on the number of trips they made abroad.¹³¹ Another driver allegedly said (to whom was never stated, but within the earshot of the Securitate’s informant or informants): “if

¹²⁸ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 39, 344 reverse.

¹²⁹ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 14, 1977, 4.

¹³⁰ March 19, 1977, Bucharest Securitate Note, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 210.

¹³¹ *Idem*.

it is voluntary then there is no obligation to contribute” and “the measures taken by the state leaders for helping the victims are made only for the eyes of the world, in the end, however, the population will bear all the support.”¹³²

The truck drivers’ protests give us a glimpse into how industrial and cultural managers, university and school directors, and those in managerial positions organized the pledges and collections for the earthquake relief account. They, too, implemented the mandated longer shifts and oversaw the extra work days on Sundays. They pursued workers for their pledges. In a report filed the day after the official formation of the earthquake assistance fund, the Interior Ministry’s national Firefighter Chief, Gheorghe Briceag, lauded the idea for the “1977 Account” and the donation of funds to it, “Under the direct oversight of the Party Departments and organizations, [the firefighters’ department] is pursuing military enrollment lists and recording the amounts officers wish to deposit into the Humanity and Solidarity Account.”¹³³ It was these middle managers and directors who translated Ceaușescu’s “voluntary” program into mandatory actions from workers and citizens.

Management pressured workers for cash, salary, and bonus contributions. Some workers were upset because they did not agree with nor were they a part of the decision making process concerning contributions from their salaries or annual bonuses, or the mandated longer and Sunday shifts. An engineer at the Bucharest Telecommunications Department, recorded by the Securitate, allegedly complained: “Along with the fact that we are obliged to work late, including on Sundays, I don’t know who decided that we should contribute our bonuses and a day per

¹³² CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 210.

¹³³ March 12, 1977, report from Interior Ministry Firefighter Chief, Gheorghe Briceag, CNSAS, 12.639 v. 15, 15.

month until the end of the year without consulting our opinion, without asking us.”¹³⁴ More than a month after the “1977 Account” for domestic contributions opened, the Securitate recorded a nurse at a Bucharest Hospital “complaining that the hospital union created an agitated atmosphere because ‘those above made the decision to take 800,000 lei from those who had bonuses and a day from their salary for the victims.’”¹³⁵

Some workers rejected the expectation to respond as though one’s contributions to the “1977 Account” were voluntary. Workers complained that they, too, were victims with repairs to make and that they shouldered an unfair burden in comparison to their white-collar managers and peers outside industry. The Bucharest Securitate reported a worker who said “why should I give something to those in the center who gathered money into a sack while I do not have any food to give my children?”¹³⁶ The Securitate reported information gathered about workers at Bucharest’s urban planning department, who were told they must work an additional eight hours on Sundays, ten to twelve hours a week, contribute 2% from their monthly salary, and half of their 1976 bonuses; they commented that “some among those asked a colleague of theirs why they, also victims, ‘are obliged to contribute financially.’”¹³⁷ The regime expected all workers — white and blue collar alike — to work longer weekday and a Sunday shifts, and make cash donations, and salary and bonus contributions. The Securitate noted that “the introduction of a longer workday among the teaching faculty of the Exterior Commerce Department has birthed unhappiness and created a state of tension.”¹³⁸ The report also mentioned that an accountant

¹³⁴ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 254 reverse.

¹³⁵ April 10, 1977, *Ibid.*, 344.

¹³⁶ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 39, 289 reverse.

¹³⁷ *Idem.*

¹³⁸ March 19, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 205.

working at a Bucharest industry “was revolted by the fact that salaried workers are obliged to work Sundays and also must contribute part of their monthly bonuses into the 1977 Account.”¹³⁹

Some workers believed that the collections for the “1977 Account” were initiated by their managers and not prescribed by Ceaușescu or other higher-ups in the regime. The lack of a specific order, presidential decree, or other legislation with precise parameters left managers free to interpret the “voluntary” contributions as they saw fit. A comment from a painter at the state-run automobile manufacturing factory, recorded by the Securitate, demonstrates that workers believed their managers, not Ceaușescu, demanded the contributions. He said, “It is too bad that the Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party [Ceaușescu] showed so much compassion for the people, but he does not know what those under him are doing because he is misinformed.”¹⁴⁰

Examples suggested that blue-collar workers contributed a larger share of their overall salary and benefits than white-collar workers. Workers felt they could not afford the contributions asked of them because they were not paid enough, in particular in contrast to their managers’ salaries, benefits, and perks. The Securitate quoted a worker who said, “no one is the master of anyone else’s wallet. The bosses who earn 10,000 lei per month can pay until the end of the year, but a worker is not able.”¹⁴¹ Another Securitate officer noted that a high school teacher said that “he was not required to give money to the victims because ‘I have a servant’s pittance salary. Those who should give are the leaders who have 10,000 [Romanian] Lei a month, eat free at the cafeterias, have special stores where they can buy the very best at a low

¹³⁹ March 26, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 289.

¹⁴⁰ *Idem.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 344.

price; they have free services, which are like a state within a state, and the rest are as if they are not people.”¹⁴² The Securitate’s complaint reports showed that workers were well aware of the inequities between them and management and other higher-ups in the regime, who did have higher salaries, access to better housing, and permission to shop in exclusive stores with goods unavailable to most. Yet, some workers thought Ceaușescu did not know about the policy implemented by industry managers. A textile factory worker commented: “It is unfortunate that the Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party is filled with so much concern for the people, but he does not know the games those [managers] under him are playing because he is misinformed....”¹⁴³

How did the regime extract so much cash from workers? While “voluntary” in name, the uniformity of the pledges suggested it was mandatory in practice. The daily published rubric of donations in the state-run newspapers also put pressure on those who had not yet donated. This pressure exploited the important role of work and family networks in Romanian culture. The state-run newspaper’s publication of group, in contrast to individual donations, exemplified how the regime valued people not as individuals per se, but rather as part of a group, or as Katherine Verdery explains, “as socially embedded: composites of all the social relations running through them.”¹⁴⁴ The Ceaușescu regime knew that Romanians cared and were curious about what their fellow citizens were doing. In communist Romania one had to be a part of a work or school group to be considered a valuable contributor to the socialist project, which was one reason why, in addition to xenophobia, antisemitism, and anti-Roma sentiment, it was difficult for

¹⁴² CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 344 reverse.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 290.

¹⁴⁴ Katherine Verdery, *Secrets and Truths*, 187.

“outsiders.” The regime exploited the value of the networked group as one way to encourage more workers to donate. That first week after the earthquake Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee:

That is not to say that we will oblige anyone [to give or to work], but at the same time, daily we must popularize the initiatives, for example we publish [in the newspaper] about what has been gathered, donated in the country. One is an account where individuals can deposit [cash] and another [initiative] is in the factories and industrial units where they will work and it will be recorded and organized.¹⁴⁵

Ceaușescu then explained that benefit performances and sport friendly matches, too, would be organized in the name of the earthquake victims, concluding, “[w]e will do it like this, a mass movement.”¹⁴⁶ This mass movement was the largest that mandated citizens gave to the earthquake recovery and was a precursor to the sort of sacrifices the regime imposed on its people during its severe austerity measures of the 1980s.

Conclusion

After the 1977 earthquake the Ceaușescu regime appealed to citizens and workers for help in ways they had in the past, but on a scale not seen before. As Radio Free Europe reported one week following the earthquake, “the whole nation has been mobilized for the purpose of turning out supplementary production to compensate for losses, so that the annual and five-year

¹⁴⁵ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 28/1977, 11 reverse.

¹⁴⁶ *Idem*.

plans can be fulfilled.”¹⁴⁷ The regime popularized the initiatives as a civic duty. Bucharesters cleaned up the streets in Sunday work brigades. The government expected residents to make most repairs to their homes. Insurance payments were small and most people had to buy their own materials and pay for half of significant reinforcement repairs.

But the largest imposition on Romanian citizens and workers came in the form of mandated labor and cash contributions. The regime demanded Romanians work extra weekday hours or add a Sunday shift, participate in clean-up efforts in the capital, donate a portion of their salary or 1976 bonuses to the relief fund, and make and pay for repairs to their own homes. It did so to extract as much cash as possible from them in the name of the earthquake relief efforts. Furthermore, Ceaușescu did not want to give people credit to repair their homes. Whether that money was ever used for such earthquake relief is not known.

From extant sources we know that Romanian workers contributed at least three times more to the 1977 earthquake relief than the regime received from foreign assistance. Industry managers guided and mandated the contributions. While there was no final accounting, within a month after the earthquake the regime deposited contributions in the name of earthquake relief equivalent to 20.7 million dollars and reported pledges of at least 168.4 million dollars; most of that, or 85%, came from Romanian workers in industry, institutes, factories, and collective farms.¹⁴⁸ On the one-year anniversary of the earthquake, Radio Free Europe journalists researched Romanian state-run publications and found no published account balance for the

¹⁴⁷ “Situation Report: Romania, 11 March 1977,” 11 March 1977. [Electronic resource] HU OSA 300-8-47-199-8; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Publications Department: Situation Reports; Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest, 5, accessed October 27, 2016, <http://hdl.handle.net/10891/osa:184fe781-1c71-4ec2-81c9-8279b9aebbb2>.

¹⁴⁸ Reported as 3.386 billion Romanian Lei, April 8, 1977, Political Executive Committee meeting ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 98.

“1977” or “Humanity” accounts. RFE commented, “the people who were obliged to donate a part of their salaries to this account have the right to know its destination and the amount collected. Now, a year after the cataclysm of March 4, 1977, would be the time for the ‘Humanity Account’ to publish an account balance...it’s not only a moral obligation, but also a legal one...normal procedure is to publish a balance with the results of how the funds were administered.”¹⁴⁹ In 1978 the regime stated publicly that it had received 50 million dollars in direct cash from foreign assistance, but did not publicly disclosed the amount of money it collected from Romanian workers. Even today, no extant ledger of the “1977 Account” has been published nor found and the total contributions from Romanian citizens is not known.

The regime imposed on people’s time and took their cash in the aftermath of the earthquake, paving a path for the extraction policies of austerity rolled-out over the next decade. In 1977 the government never legislated or officially mandated that workers contribute their labor and money to the earthquake victims’ fund. Rather the regime expected its people would respond as such. Furthermore, such a mandate was not necessary since the labor law allowed for overtime work beyond the 360 hour annual upper limit in “special circumstances.” The regime replicated a similar appeal to Romanian workers in the name of economic advancement in the 1980s, although it removed any guise that it was voluntary. While not all Romanians gave, a significant majority did. This research into the actions and results of the “1977 Account” reveals, at the very least to the Romanian people, that they gave the most in the name of the victims.

¹⁴⁹ Transcript of March 5, 1978 “*Domestic Bloc*” read by E.R. Rafael, RFE/RL Broadcast, Box 3796, folder 2, 6-8 March 1977, 2, Hoover Institution Archives.

Chapter Four

Assessments, Investigations, and Internal Debates: The Regime's First Steps toward Ending Significant Repairs

There's panic in the capital. This must be stopped. It is known that especially the old [apartment buildings] are damaged, but everything must be done quietly, we must explain what we will do, but gradually. We can not just take all the people and put them in the street. -- Nicolae Ceaușescu to the Political Executive Committee, March 7, 1977.¹

The first day after the earthquake hundreds of experts started to assess the repair needs, and, in particular, the structural stability of buildings in the capital and in other areas affected across Romania. Civil engineers and other experts worked without interference for only one week until the regime took hold of the process. By the third day of recovery efforts, Ceaușescu perceived “panic” and “chaos” in the capital and among experts, residents, and officials. He disagreed with experts' conclusions about the needed evacuations and repairs. State leaders intervened, drastically changed the repair protocol, and demanded fewer evacuations. As the Ceaușescu regime itself did in 1977, in this chapter I review the investigations that followed Bucharest's — and Europe's — first high-rise building collapse following a similarly strong earthquake in 1940. Subsequent governments assessed many of the buildings left standing after 1940 as unsafe. Many of them did, indeed, collapse in 1977. Using the Ceaușescu regime's understanding of those post-1940 investigations, I also trace the incremental steps that led, ultimately, to the government doing little to fix the structural damage. Those steps included a

¹ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 23/1977, 13 reverse.

debate between regime members and specialists about the best practices to repair the damage; a reduction in the number of approved residential evacuations; and a May 1st deadline for clean-up and repairs, in time to celebrate the important international socialist labor day. The regime looked to the 1940 earthquake recovery efforts, and, like its predecessors, chose to do very little or nothing in terms of significant structural repairs. I also argue that Ceaușescu's concern about what he perceived as "panic" and "chaos" from damaged buildings, many dispatched assessment teams, hundreds of resident evacuations, and confusion about the process prompted him to introduce incremental efforts that eventually led to a stop to all repairs to significantly damaged buildings. In the end, he chose the path of least resistance: he chose to do nothing. This chapter traces the first step in this four-month incremental process, when the regime retreated from substantial repairs and stemmed the number of evictions. Begun days after the earthquake, the process culminated in an order four months later that ended all building assessments and hastened repairs to hundreds, if not thousands, of buildings in Bucharest.² The investigations, evacuation reductions, and Ceaușescu's fear of "panic" and "chaos" all contributed to his decision to issue that order.

² This is discussed in Chapter Five.

The First Days: Building Commissions' Assessments and Evacuation Recommendations

The 1977 earthquake damaged more than 660,000 homes, of which slightly more than a quarter were determined to be uninhabitable.³ The remaining three quarters of the damaged homes were in buildings still standing, yet many had insufficient resistance to the next earthquake. In the initial hours and days following the earthquake people left their apartments in damaged buildings for fear of injury or further damage. Some residents were afraid their damaged building might collapse in the event of an aftershock or even from other significant vibrations, such as from the city's street trams or ongoing subway construction.⁴

The regime, too, was concerned, but about the number of resident evacuations. There were too many. The day after the earthquake, civil engineers and other construction specialists formed commissions and started to assess the damaged residential and commercial buildings in Bucharest and across Romania. Those assessments were the first step in determining who should be evacuated and which buildings to repair.

The regime dispatched assessment commissions to work in the areas affected by the earthquake inside and outside the capital. Five teams of seismologists, geologists, students, teachers, and others, fanned out across Romania.⁵ In Bucharest, the regime formed two types of assessment commissions, one that examined buildings five stories or taller and the other for shorter structures. The capital's mayor, Ion Dincă, managed the commission that assessed the

³ The World Bank determined that 178,335 of the 660,500 apartments, or 27% of those damaged, were uninhabitable in its "Report and Recommendation of the President": 13. According to the 1977 census, Romania's 19 million people lived in more than 6 million households (NB: this data excluded Arad and Alba counties). See Minnesota Population Center, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series*.

⁴ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 204 and 307; CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 178.

⁵ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 21/1977, 206.

capital's taller buildings, known as the "central" Bucharest commission. The city was divided into administrative units, or sectors, and each of their leaders, presidents of their local Executive Committees, oversaw three to five member teams who assessed the shorter buildings within their jurisdiction.⁶ During that first week after the earthquake the regime dispatched ten to fifteen teams of specialists, with support from more than four hundred engineers.⁷ Such experts, along with planners, seismic specialists, and other professionals joined the commissions and conducted the actual assessments and drafted work plans, assessed visibly damaged buildings, but also responded to citizen requests for assessments and repairs.

Not surprisingly, some of those with access to power leveraged it to make themselves safe and repair their own homes. One Romanian engineer complained to Radio Free Europe, "Starting even on the night of the earthquake, the buildings in which Those Most High lived, as well as the party offices, fared quite differently from the 'civil' buildings. Some from among the very best engineers and professors were taken from the regular commissions to examine the homes of those high-ups, meter by meter. They took the very best and most efficient equipment, materials, masters, engineers, and so the Party [members'] Households [were reinforced], all overdone with excessive steel and concrete, and without any expense spared."⁸ Government departments, too, prioritized assessments of industrial and worksite damage. The Minister of Interior allocated 200 experts from among their ranks to repair seventeen damaged

⁶ The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation of the President": 14.

⁷ ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 6 reverse.

⁸ Transcript of "*Povestea Vorbei*" nr. 195, (*Aniversarea cutremurului*) by Virgil Ierunca, Sunday March 4, 1979, Romanian Broadcasting Department, box 3811, folder 2, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Romania Broadcast Department, 1960-1995, Hoover Institution Archives.

ministry buildings in Bucharest and fourteen in the rest of the country.⁹ Several officers within the Interior Ministry took troops away from searching for victims to clean up their own homes. For example, the morning after the earthquake a firefighter colonel supposedly removed military troops working to save victims to help him carry things from his apartment into a truck.¹⁰

While some high ranking members in the regime took care of their own worksites and homes, many Bucharest residents had to fend for themselves, wait for assessment commissions, or contest their findings. During the initial days after the earthquake, government officials found housing for survivors of the fully and partially collapsed buildings in Bucharest, yet they left many residents of the other damaged buildings to fend for themselves. In many examples, residents did not listen to the regime's recommendations and took their safety into their own hands. Some waited for assessment teams to recommend whether to evacuate, others ahead and evacuated without approval. In one case, within two days of the earthquake, 90% of the residents of one building evacuated on their own initiative.¹¹ Some of those that evacuated themselves moved their belongings to the street or their building's courtyard, contributing to what the regime perceived as "chaos" and "disorder."¹² Others evacuated themselves before an assessment team arrived as was the case with all but 10% of the residents of a building "with visible cracks on its interior and exterior [walls]." They, the Securitate reported, were "restless and worried" because their building's structural safety had not yet been determined.¹³ In another

⁹ CNSAS, D.011487 v.2, 6 and 23-24.

¹⁰ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 15, 151.

¹¹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 73 reverse.

¹² Ibid., 213 and the Associated Press video footage in the days after the earthquake accessed July 26, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZrIWYHtlc>.

¹³ Only thirteen of the 132 resident families stayed in the building the second night after the earthquake, see CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 73 reverse.

example all the residents of one building and three-quarters from the remaining four buildings of an apartment complex evacuated themselves because three of their neighbors, “specialists” on an assessment team, evacuated themselves and their families.¹⁴ Others were upset that their homes may not have been built to code. In one case, a group of residents complained to their building’s supervisor, who then reported to the Securitate, that “the state should give money back to them because their homes were not built correctly.”¹⁵

Other residents were upset that different commissions’ assessments conflicted with one another. In one Bucharest case, residents of a nine-story apartment building were “in a state of panic because the building experienced severe structural resistance damage and the three commissions that came to assess had different opinions and did not order an evacuation.”¹⁶ Some experts’ recommendations upset residents. The Securitate noted a man who said he would “only move from the apartment building on direct orders from the party and state leadership.” His anger was brought on when [an assessment] commissioner told him and all the residents in his building, “if you do not want to die, you should move to another building.”¹⁷

For some, the temporary or permanent housing options post-evacuation were untenable. Some people left their homes on their own initiative and stayed with relatives and friends. A retired woman, a resident of the one of the collapsed buildings, temporarily moved in with relatives and “refused to move to a shared home (a room within a communal apartment).”¹⁸ In

¹⁴ March 21, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 249.

¹⁵ March 8, 1977, *Ibid.*, 73 reverse.

¹⁶ At 29 Brezoianu Street, March 8, 1977, see *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁷ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15. 8.

¹⁸ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 326 reverse.

some cases assessment team experts approved evacuations, but did not tell the residents where to move.¹⁹

Many other Bucharesters, however, stayed in their damaged buildings and waited for an assessment commission to determine their homes' safety. The Securitate reported, "some residents [of a five-story building at risk of collapse] refused to be evacuated because they were not given comparable homes."²⁰ Interestingly, local-level city assessment team commissioners agreed with these residents and refused to evacuate them because they also, believed the housing alternative to be inappropriate.²¹

Experts took to the streets immediately after the earthquake to assess the structural stability of those buildings left standing: "Immediately after [the earthquake on] March 4, even the following morning, all the competent professional forces were mobilized, the engineer planners, builders, university professors, researchers in the field of structural engineering to evaluate the state of the buildings damaged by the earthquake."²² The regime followed their lead. On the morning of the second day, Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee to create several commissions and appointed Manea Mănescu, then Prime Minister, to oversee them.²³ In a meeting four days later, even though teams of experts were already working, Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee: "You are to form teams on the streets with engineers, with specialists... there are some apartment buildings that were near those that collapsed that were evacuated, but there are others [to be evacuated] and there must be more... In general, I saw that

¹⁹ CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 142.

²⁰ March 8, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 72.

²¹ *Idem*.

²² The information broadcast was from the engineer Gheorghe Ursu's letter sent to the station. See "*Povestea Vorbei*" nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

²³ ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 20/1977, 14 reverse.

our apartment buildings did not comport well. I must say this to you...these [apartment buildings] in the [city] center, the ones with cracks, we must view them from every part. Gather people from educational institutions, from the institutes, but do not take those who are afraid to enter the building because [it] will fall on top of them.”²⁴ By lunch-time the regime had formed fifteen assessment teams, or commissions, to work in Bucharest.²⁵

The regime’s initial purpose for the assessments was to gain control of the evacuations, the immediate structural support recommendations, and future repairs. Within days of the earthquake Ceaușescu demanded that experts complete assessments before authorities would approve any evacuations. In response to a local communist party official explanation for why he evacuated one state-run community meeting house (*casa de cultura*) and had plans to evacuate other buildings, Ceaușescu barked: “Not that way, dear! We must go to them and view the situation. It can’t be that they want to move and just move themselves. This is not allowed!...It is not allowed to move people until we have looked!...No one is to move without approval. This must be clear!...We are not allowed to create anarchy!”²⁶ Once again, his concern about potential chaos was paramount.

During that first week after the earthquake, Ceaușescu agreed there were reinforcement and repair needs. He told the Political Executive Committee, “I think that we must urgently move to reinforce [the damaged buildings] and start the repairs, as was discussed yesterday, to move urgently to reinforcement.”²⁷ At that time he recognized that future earthquakes would

²⁴ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 14 reverse.

²⁵ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 21/1977, 6.

²⁶ He directed his comments at Aurel Duma, member of the Romanian Communist Party’s Central Committee’s Secretariat, March 6, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 20/1977, 8.

²⁷ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 54 reverse.

again shake Romania, and told the Political Executive Committee they must reinforce to prepare. He said: “It is true, comrades, it is fair to say, that this earthquake, better said [one] of that intensity, will not be repeated, yet others have said it will be repeated...there are many discussions, some claim that after an earthquake that active, which happened in Romania, other earthquakes will not repeat; others say that it can be repeated, but not at that intensity...Therefore we must immediately take the measures to reinforce the damaged buildings, until we get to repair those that have large cracks, therefore we will reinforce them to stop their degradation. This week it must be worked day and night to realize the repairs necessary, the reinforcement of those [damaged].”²⁸ That first week he even agreed that the experts must lead the efforts: “Each engineer must work on reinforcement. It is difficult to say here [in the meeting] what there is to be done, what measures for reinforcement to be taken. Each and every engineer must go look at every house and determine what sort of reinforcement to make.”²⁹ The agency and authority he gave to engineering and construction experts that first week eroded quickly to nil: in the weeks and months that followed Ceaușescu changed his opinion drastically about the need to reinforce and repair the buildings damaged by the earthquake.

²⁸ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 54 reverse.

²⁹ Ibid., 35 reverse.

Inter-War Era Knowledge and Negligence: Lessons Learned from Romania's First High-Rise Building Collapse in 1940

While assessments teams were out in the field, Ceaușescu and the Political Executive Committee demanded an investigation into why so many buildings had collapsed during the earthquake that March 1977. After the earthquake a joke circulated: “Sand, Concrete, and Reinforced Steel appear in court to testify as to who was responsible for the collapsed buildings. Sand stands up and says, ‘I’m not responsible for supporting the apartment building, I was just added!’ Concrete stands up and says: ‘I support nothing unless the Reinforced Steel does his job, Steel, you are responsible!’ To which Steel said, ‘Me? I was stolen. I was never there!’”³⁰ This joke highlighted the use of inappropriate and insufficient materials and government corruption contributed to the collapse of dozens of Bucharest buildings in 1977. The buildings that collapsed shared the common trait of having been built before 1940 with reinforced concrete without proper structural support for Romania’s particular seismic risk, even though knowledge for how to do that was available at the time. A combination of builders’ and authorities’ greed and negligence contributed to the 1977 damage.

The 1940 and 1977 earthquakes were not anomalies; earthquakes are not new to Romania. The country sits atop the meeting place of three tectonic plates and experiences “intermediate

³⁰ Romanian engineer Szász Tibor András posted this joke as a comment on Facebook, accessed November 2, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1692382027757567&id=100009573577218&pnref=story. Staff of the US Bucharest Embassy in Bucharest dispatched a semi-annual “Joke-Gram” to the Secretary of State during the Ceaușescu regime, an interesting source for such jokes yet to be researched. See Romania country reader, Interview with Frederick A. Becker Rotation Officer Bucharest (1975-1977) in Romania Country Reader: 202 Available from the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training accessed February 29, 2016, <http://www.adst.org/Readers/Romania.pdf>

depth” or “deep” earthquakes.³¹ These “deep” Vrancea quakes, named for the epicenter of Romania’s seismicity, are much less common than the “surface” quakes experienced throughout Europe and the world. When strong, above 7.0 on the Richter Scale, these “deep quakes” produce a horizontal shaking that amplifies the movement of tall buildings in particular. In the case of 1977, the earthquake’s vibrations literally cut the high-rise buildings’ support columns at their bases, causing the floors above to collapse like a stack of pancakes.

The Ceaușescu regime reviewed the post-1940 earthquake investigations. The 1940 earthquake was the strongest to shake the continent in the twentieth century, and caused the collapse of the mixed-use, art deco style Carlton building, the tallest among dozens of multi-storied buildings constructed during the inter-war era.³² It was Romania’s and Europe’s first experience of a high-rise building collapse. The Carlton, finished in 1938, was the first European building made with reinforced concrete to collapse completely in an earthquake.³³ It had a movie theater at its rear, shops on the ground floor, and apartments in the twelve stories above, and was home to more than two hundred residents. The Ceaușescu regime and the Romanian governments under fascist and communist leaders knew that the Bucharest buildings constructed by capitalists during the inter-war era all had used reinforced concrete and were not reinforced sufficiently for Romania’s particular seismicity.

³¹ Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu, eds., *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake* (Switzerland, Springer International Publishing, 2016).

³² The 1940 earthquake struck on November 10th at 3:39 a.m. and measured 7.7 on the Richter Scale. Its damage killed an estimated 700 people and injured 1,200 across Romania with 24% of the deaths in Bucharest.

³³ Emil-Sever Georgescu, “The Collapse of Carlton Building in Bucharest at November 10, 1940 Earthquake: An Analysis Based on Recovered Images,” in *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake*. ed. Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu, 57-72 (Switzerland, Springer International Publishing, 2016), 60.

The Carlton building's immediate collapse and resulting fire killed almost three-quarters of its residents.³⁴ Romania's then fascist government, led by Marshall Ion Antonescu, studied why. Experts determined that the building's support structure was insufficient, in the wrong place, or of the wrong size and shape.³⁵ Its corner placement also contributed to its vulnerability. The Carlton's collapse and tragic death toll highlighted, to both the fascist regime of the 1940s and the communist regime that followed, the risks of building with reinforced concrete without adequate earthquake resistance.³⁶



Figures 7 and 8. (Left) Magazine illustration of the 1940 search and rescue operations at the Carlton in Bucharest — the first organized urban search and rescue in Romania — conducted by firefighters, police, and citizens and assisted by Nazi German soldiers and Italian volunteers.³⁷ (Right) Aerial photograph of workers clearing away the rubble of the Carlton building.³⁸

³⁴ One hundred and forty people died. For a series of images of the Carlton aftermath, see *Muzeul de Fotografie: Imagini noi - Cutremurul din 1940 - Blocul Carlton*, accessed March 2, 2017, <http://www.muzeuldefotografie.ro/2015/07/imagini-noi-cutremurul-din-1940-blocul-carlton/> and <http://www.muzeuldefotografie.ro/2016/10/cutremurul-din-1940-o-noua-imagine/>.

³⁵ Ion Vlad, "Causes and Effects of the November 10, 1940 Earthquake," 124-125.

³⁶ Georgescu, "The Collapse of Carlton Building."

³⁷ Cover illustration from *La Tribuna*, November 19, 1940, reproduced in Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu, eds., *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake*, (Switzerland, Springer International Publishing, 2016), 7.

³⁸ Romanian Ministry of Agitation and Propaganda 1940 photograph, published in Emil-Sever Georgescu and Antonios Pomonis, "Building Damage vs. Territorial Casualty Patterns during the Vrancea (Romania) Earthquakes

Similar to the Carlton building, private companies of the inter-war era used reinforced concrete without adequate support when erecting almost all the buildings that collapsed in 1977. One Romanian engineer explained, the interwar era saw a “new generation of high-rise reinforced concrete structures... which seemed to be made of a magic material, reinforced concrete, [considered] good for any purpose.”³⁹ After World War I Romanian builders exploited the new “magic material,” but cut corners when they erected these never before seen eight-, ten-, and twelve-storied mixed-use structures.

Investigations into the Carlton’s collapse brought attention to the high-rises built before 1940 using insufficiently supported reinforced concrete.⁴⁰ Those investigations revealed that specialists had the technical information to support the buildings, yet had not applied it. As early as 1903 Romanian engineers, professors, and other specialists discussed and published about the use of reinforced concrete and suggested regulations for building construction and permit issuance. Engineering Professor Ion Ionescu-Bizeț taught the first university engineering course on building with reinforced concrete. In 1915 Romanian professor Ion Ionescu published, in Romanian, *Reinforced Concrete (Beton Armat)*.⁴¹ Notable, too, was a 1926 article that claimed

of 1940 and 1977, ” Paper presented at the 15 World Conference on Earthquake Engineering (WCEE), Lisbon, 2012, accessed August 2, 2016, http://www.iitk.ac.in/nicee/wcee/article/WCEE2012_2123.pdf.

³⁹ Emil Sever-Georgescu e-mail message to the author, May 1, 2016.

⁴⁰ Georgescu and Pomonis, “Building Damage vs. Territorial Casualty Patterns.” For more on the effects of the 1940 earthquake to areas outside of Bucharest see Ionut Craciun, “Appendix C: Testimonies on the Aftermath of November 10th 1940 Vrancea Earthquake in the Putna County,” in *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake*, eds. Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016).

⁴¹ Published as Ion Ionescu, *Beton armat – expunere elementara a regulilor de construcție și a principiilor de calcul*, (Curtii Regale: Bucuresti, 1915) cited in Ileana Calotescu, Cristian Neagu and Dan Lungu, “Before and After November 10th, 1940 Earthquake,” in *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake*, eds. Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu, (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 45 and 47.

builders were using reinforced concrete without considering its seismic resistance.⁴² In 1927 a privately-owned engineering publishing house translated into Romanian the 1925 German standards for building with reinforced concrete, which was reprinted and modified in 1937 by the engineering professor M.D. Handan.⁴³

The technical information was available to architects, civil engineers, and builders working in the inter-war era, yet not all used it. Nor did the Romanian inter-war government under King Carol II demand they do so. Regulatory and permit issuance policies were slow to come and enforcement was scattershot with little to no stringent government regulatory oversight. Private construction companies were free to pick any civil engineer to assess and approve their plans.⁴⁴ Between 1935 and 1940 the Romanian government's concrete resistance regulations were at their lowest rate ever, down from 1910 levels, and were half of the rate recommended by German specialists of the time.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the government did little to ensure that the new high-rise buildings were designed and built to withstand Romania's particular seismic risks.⁴⁶ Civil engineers and architects did not collaborate with or flatly ignored seismic engineers' recommendations.⁴⁷

⁴² Published in the journal "*Architectura*," see Ileana Calotescu, et.al., "Before and After November 10th, 1940 Earthquake," 45 and 47.

⁴³ See Radu Petrovici, "The 10 November 1940—The First Moment of Truth for Modern Constructions in Romania," in *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake*, eds. Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu, (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 89.

⁴⁴ Vlad, "Causes and Effects," 116-118.

⁴⁵ Petrovici, "The 10 November 1940," 90-91.

⁴⁶ See Petrovici, "Architecture face to face with past and future earthquakes," and for a history of Romanian understanding of its seismic risks, accessed August 3, 2016, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Radu_Petrovici/publication/271909626_Architecture_face_to_face_with_past_and_future_earthquakes/links/54d6691f0cf25013d032f4e3.

⁴⁷ Vlad, "Causes and Effects," 126.

A 1936 event drew the Romanian inter-war government's attention to the risks. At the beginning of that year, two outdoor risers erected for the public to view King Carol II, collapsed, killing three and injuring more than seven hundred people. In late June 1936 the riser collapse sparked local Bucharest authorities to implement a new permit process that required civil engineers to calculate building resistance and sign off on architectural and building plans.⁴⁸ Outside the government, some engineers and architects used the riser collapse to draw attention to, and gain momentum for, improved building design, construction, and materials use regulations, although with little impact.⁴⁹ Specialists in the inter-war era knew what structural reinforcements were needed, but the government at the time did little to require them.

Lessons from the 1940 Earthquake Response

Within days of the March 1977 earthquake, the Ceaușescu regime researched the investigations that followed the 1940 earthquake. Prime Minister Mănescu told his boss, “Comrade Ceaușescu, I want to inform you that I found a [1941] study of Professor Beleş— I will show it to you — he indicated all the buildings, in the case of an earthquake, that would be damaged and proposed which [buildings] should be demolished: they are the same buildings that collapsed.⁵⁰” Mănescu was referring to Aurel A. Beleş’s article, “The Earthquake and

⁴⁸ Vlad, “Causes and Effects,” 118.

⁴⁹ Georgescu and Pomonis, “Building Damage vs. Territorial Casualty Patterns.” For more on the effects of the earthquake in 1940 to areas outside of Bucharest see Ionut Craciun, “Appendix C: Testimonies.”

⁵⁰ March 6, 1977, p.m. meeting, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 21/1977, 12 reverse.

Construction,” drafted in autumn 1941 in which the author, a prominent Romanian structural engineer and professor, assessed the seismic risk of the multi-storied buildings in Bucharest still standing after the 1940 earthquake, including many of the those that collapsed in 1977.⁵¹ In addition to listing specific unsound buildings in Bucharest, Beleş called on architects to calculate resistance, builders to follow plans, and investors not to skimp on or cut corners with building material quality for greater profits.⁵²

The Romanian inter-war government’s limited regulations and lax enforcement for new building construction contributed to the number of collapsed and damaged buildings in 1977, but so, too, did indifference and negligence following the 1940 earthquake and Romania’s political instability during WWII. This political turbulence contributed to the government’s inability to put in place and enforce new seismic building regulations, let alone make structural repairs, a pattern followed by Ceaușescu and his regime in 1977 and after.

During World War II Romania moved from a neutral party under a monarch, to one ruled by the fascist Romanian Iron Guard and allied with and occupied by Nazi Germany. On June 28, 1940 Romania ceded its territory in Bessarabia and Northern Bucovina to the Soviet Union. That September saw the quick ascent of Marshall Ion Antonescu, the fascist Iron Guard leader, who King Carol II appointed to be Prime Minister. After only two days, Antonescu forced Carol to resign, allowed his son Michael to sit as figurehead, and named himself “*Conducatorul*” or “Supreme Leader.”⁵³ A month before the 1940 earthquake, on October 7, Antonescu allowed

⁵¹ Referenced as Aurel A. Beles, *Cutremurul și construcțiile*, Extras of Buletinul Societatie Politehnice. Anul LV, nr. 10 and 11, (October and November 1941).

⁵² Petrovici, “The 10 November 1940,” 90-91 and Vlad, “Causes and Effects,” 126.

⁵³ For more on Romania’s Legion of the Archangel Michael, or Iron Guard, see Roland Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth: Fascist Activism in Interwar Romania* (Cornell University Press: New York, 2015).

Nazi troops to occupy Romania and almost two weeks following the 1940 earthquake, on November 23, the Romanian government officially allied with the Axis powers, Germany and Italy.

In December 1940 the Romanian government under Marshall Antonescu invited two German scientists to Bucharest to assess the earthquake damage. Their report highlighted the risks associated with the “high rise” buildings made with reinforced concrete.⁵⁴ A year later, Theodore Achim, a structural engineer and work-site supervisor for the Carlton building, authored a report, “The Collapse of the Carlton Apartment Building: Causes and Lessons Learned,” in which he specified the earthquake resistance needed for building with reinforced concrete.⁵⁵ In addition to specific technical recommendations, Achim noted: “It must be emphasized that the set of several hundred tall buildings built in the center of Bucharest, mostly in 1930–1940 decade, had the structural system made of reinforced concrete frames infilled with masonry walls. Those buildings often have a weak ground floor (for shops, restaurants, cinemas, etc.) and have been designed without considering, in any way, the possibility of an earthquake occurrence.”⁵⁶ This practice was widespread: builders or owners removed support pillars on the ground floor to create more open space for shops and restaurants. This was noted, too, in 1977, when the Securitate reported: “some [experts] claim that the collapse of some buildings most likely resulted from removing pillars without special reinforcing measures.”⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Vlad, “Causes and Effects,” 123-124.

⁵⁵ Published by Cartea Românească, 1941. See also Vlad, “Causes and Effects,” 123-124, Calotescu, et.al., “Before and After,” 42.

⁵⁶ Translated and quoted in Calotescu, et.al., “Before and After,” 44-45.

⁵⁷ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 306.

As a result of these post-1940 studies, in December 1941, the Antonescu government published a draft of its first technical instructions for earthquake resistant construction. After almost three years allied with the Nazis, in August 1944, Carol's son Michael, with help from Romanian communists, engineered a coup against Antonescu and Romania switched its allegiance from the Axis powers to the Allies; in September 1944 Soviet troops officially occupied Romania. In May 1945, the government under the communist Prime Minister Petru Groza, amended those technical instructions and published them as "Instructions for Preventing the Constructions Damage Caused by Earthquakes."⁵⁸ In 1948 King Michael's government established a new earthquake engineering institute, which drafted new seismic zones maps for the country and the capital.⁵⁹ One month later, in December 1948, the Romanian Communist Party took full power and, under Groza, forced King Michael to step down. In 1952 the communist government amended building regulations established after the 1940 earthquake, rewrote them in 1963, and revised them again in 1970.⁶⁰ A month before the 1977 earthquake the regime opened the Institute of Earth Physics and Seismology. New construction during the communist era considered, finally, Romania's particular seismic conditions.

Two examples of tragic outcomes in 1977 had direct links to the negligent regulation and construction between the wars and to post-war reinforcement and repair failures. The 1977 full collapse and resulting fire in the basement of the 1938 "Belvedere" building in Bucharest killed forty-one of its 129 residents. While architects initially designed the Belvedere with eleven

⁵⁸ The 1941 draft was titled "Preliminary Instructions for Preventing the Damage of Constructions Caused by Earthquakes and for Rehabilitating the Damaged," see Vlad, "Causes and Effects," 125.

⁵⁹ Vlad, "Causes and Effects," 124 and Glen V. Berg, "Earthquake in Romania, March 4, 1977: A Preliminary Report," *Engineering Research Institute*, David J. Leeds, Editor, Volume 11, No. 3B, (May 1977), 9-10.

⁶⁰ Berg, "Earthquake in Romania," 11. The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation": 17.

stories, the inter-war government approved an amended plan for twelve. Its builders then went ahead and constructed fourteen stories without permission.⁶¹ In another case, an architect claimed he wrote a report about the 1937 Nestor building in Bucharest before its collapse following the 1977 earthquake. He sent it to the main state-owned construction company to alert them that “the [Nestor] building did not conform to the project plans” and commented, “as is a usual habit for us, no one took into consideration the report”.⁶²

Many in the regime knew of the 1940 earthquake reports and many knew that the fascist- and communist-led governments had ignored them. Two days after the 1977 earthquake, on a Sunday evening, the Achim report came up during the the Political Executive Committee meeting. Ceaușescu, always the untrained specialist, told members, “we must look very seriously, it seems that some [buildings] were 70-80 years old and made of old materials.”⁶³ Within that first month after the 1977 earthquake, Romanians knew of the insufficient support for the reinforced concrete used in the buildings erected during the interwar era. They knew, too, of the investigations and reports that followed the 1940 earthquake. The Securitate noted that some “experts” and other “diverse categories of Bucharest citizens” talked about post-1940 earthquake reports, noting that they mentioned “an inventory was made in 1940 of the apartment buildings that needed repair, but WWII began and no one was concerned with their reinforcement and after that it was forgotten to take the necessary measures.”⁶⁴

⁶¹ The building was located at 7 Brezoianu Street, see Petrovici, “The 10 November 1940,” 93. For the Securitate accounting of the dead, see CNSAS, 14.800 v.1, 217-218 reverse.

⁶² CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 307.

⁶³ March 6, 1977, p.m. meeting, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 21/1977, 12 reverse.

⁶⁴ March 29, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 306.

Almost all the buildings that fully collapsed in 1977 were built just years before the 1940. Though they survived 1940, they sustained significant structural damage at that time. Romania's communist governments did little to reinforce those buildings they knew were structurally unsound in the case of the next significant earthquake. The deaths, injuries, and damage in 1977 in those buildings could have been avoided if any of the post-1940 Romanian governments acted on the original investigations. Nonetheless, in a repetition of the 1940 earthquake aftermath, following 1977 a few prominent builders claimed that the technical knowledge "had not been raised in general" before 1940 for how to build for earthquake resistance, which was not true.⁶⁵ In 1978 the World Bank concluded that Romania's "lack of resources" before 1977 was the reason why it had not tested "all new designs and construction materials."⁶⁶ However, as specialists at the time proved, and today's engineers, experts and scholars reiterate, they did have access to the technical knowledge for designing and constructing buildings using reinforced concrete to withstand an earthquake.

The 1977 Debate: Demolish or Reinforce the Damaged Buildings

While the investigations into why buildings collapsed was underway, a debate concerning what to do with the damaged buildings still standing emerged between regime leaders, ministry, and other government officials, who implemented and oversaw the building assessments, and

⁶⁵ Petrovici, "The 10 November 1940."

⁶⁶ The World Bank, "Report and Recommendation": 17.

those specialists who carried them out. They debated whether to demolish completely the buildings or make structural reinforcement repairs. On the ground this looked like “a dull and uneven fight” of technical specialists against regime apparatchiks: “On one side were the engineers, responsible for the reinforcement work of the damaged apartment buildings trying to defend their projects, to confer acceptable anti-seismic structural resistance, far from absolute certainty, but consistent with common-sense engineering. And, on the other side, were the Bosses...and some other specialists of high competence, obliged to support the view from above and looking for ridiculous arguments, which was clear they did not believe, yet denying their own conclusions of a week or a month before.”⁶⁷ Here was an example of expectations for alignment to regime expectations.

Government leaders and construction experts engaged in the debate also had to consider the urban planning projects already set in motion across communities in Romania. Eight months into his reign, Ceaușescu introduced systematization (*sistematizare*), the national territorial planning policy with the aim to urbanize, modernize, and reconstruct rural Romania.⁶⁸ After the 1977 earthquake this initiative eventually expanded to towns and cities. Under this policy, the regime moved people from villages to towns and located factories in smaller towns. Only after

⁶⁷ *Povestea Vorbei*, March 4, 1979, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁶⁸ Known as the Central Committee for the Village Systemization, see Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 300. For more on Systemization, see György Enyedi, “Urbanization under Socialism,” in *Cities After Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies*, eds., Gregory Andrusz, Michael Harloe and Ivan Szelenyi, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996); Per Ronnas, “Centrally Planned Urbanization: The Case of Romania,” *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, vol. 64, no. 2 (1982), 143-151; Steven L. Sampson, “Urbanization—Planned and Unplanned: A Case Study of Brasov, Romania,” in *The Socialist City, Spatial Structure and Urban Policy*, eds. R.A. French and F.E. Ian Hamilton, 507-525. (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1979); and David Turnock, “Restructuring of rural settlement in Romania,” *Slavonic and East European Review*, 54, 83-102; “Urban development in a socialist city: Bucharest,” *Geography* 59 (4), (1974), 344-348; “Restructuring of rural settlement in Romania,” *Slavonic and East European Review* 54, 83-102; and “The Planning of Rural Settlement in Romania,” *The Geographical Journal* vol. 157, Part 3 (Nov. 1991), 251-264.

the earthquake did Bucharest enter into a systemization plan, yet the demolitions in and reconstruction of the capital in the 1980s was a “special case” of urban planning outside of that policy.⁶⁹ As they did during the debate about how to rectify the damage from the earthquake, the regime leaders steered the systemization policy. The people directly affected could do little in the face of those directives. Many faced tough decisions about whether to follow or defy the policy. In the 1980s many rural residents agreed either to evacuate, and watch as the regime demolished their homes, or “chose” to demolish their own homes so as to avoid paying the state for a bulldozer and driver to do so.⁷⁰

Regime leaders and their managers, including some architects, managed the systemization policy, leaving construction specialists to implement it. This divide was mirrored in the debate about whether to demolish or reinforce buildings damaged by the 1977 earthquake. In those first days, weeks, and months in 1977, Ceaușescu consistently supported repairs over demolition. Some might find this surprising because during March, while he discouraged demolition of the buildings damaged by the earthquake, he publicly announced his plans to build the Civic Center Project and its House of the People. That initiative justified the regime’s demolition of almost a quarter of Bucharest, which began in earnest at the beginning of the 1980s.⁷¹ But, his position was in line with his penchant to avoid “panic” and “chaos.” Following the earthquake, Ceaușescu stated that damaged buildings must be assessed several times before any action can be taken, and that he, and he alone, could authorize demolition approvals: “I gave a few communications and I took some very firm measures...I review three

⁶⁹ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 304.

⁷⁰ *Idem*.

⁷¹ For more on the Civic Center and Ceaușescu’s public announcement on March 22, 1977, see the Epilogue.

times and on the fourth comes my approval and only after that [can they demolish].”⁷² Others in the regime echoed his position. For example, just two days after the earthquake, Gheorghe Cioară, member of the Political Executive Committee and Government Vice Minister, reported that fifteen commissions working in Bucharest had “identified some apartments where it is necessary to evacuate immediately, or not, and what needs immediate demolition, and what does not. At the same time it was seen what immediate measures are necessary and what could be reinforced because we do not want to demolish everything.”⁷³ Ceaușescu did not rule out demolitions, but initially he actively worked against a mindset that saw them as the best way to alleviate the damage. He imposed a necessity for repeated assessments and approval before any demolitions could take place. He told the Political Executive Committee: “The reality is that there will be a long period to demolish buildings that...are damaged and it is possible there will be others that appear after assessments are made.”⁷⁴ He railed against those who supported demolition as a first response: “we can not have people arrive with the idea to place explosives and to blow [the damaged buildings] up.”⁷⁵ He then responded to a member who noted that there had been requests for demolitions: “Some say, it is true, that we should destroy Bucharest. This is what people we have! Yes, comrades, indeed these people must be removed from their work responsibilities because they represent a dangerous line of thinking.”⁷⁶ This quotation exemplified Ceaușescu’s disdain for expert opinion, especially if it contradicted his own.

⁷² ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 35.

⁷³ March 6, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 21/1977 and CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R.*, 152-154.

⁷⁴ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 51 reverse.

⁷⁵ *Idem.*

⁷⁶ *Idem.*

By April Ceaușescu was set on no or very few demolitions of buildings damaged by the earthquake. When he spoke with Valentin Drozdenko, the Soviet Ambassador in Bucharest, about progress after a month of repairs and reinforcements, he told him, “Of course, there are many homes that have suffered a lot; the repairs of those will take a long time. We are starting to reinforce as many of them as possible so we are not obliged to demolish them. This is especially true for the large buildings.”⁷⁷ Drozdenko responded, “There is much work to do.” Ceaușescu continued, “Also, there are serious problems because we must make [the buildings] resistant.” Ceaușescu communicated to the Soviet Union a month after the earthquake that reinforcement and earthquake resistance were important for the damaged buildings. He described to the Soviet Ambassador the extent of the work and admitted it was moving slowly: “Practically, it will be the whole year and some of the next year.”

Two days after Ceaușescu’s conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, the regime announced that approvals were required for any demolition of buildings damaged by the earthquake. A summary of the April 8 Political Executive Meeting, published in the state-run newspaper, communicated to the Romanian people that, “the Political Executive Committee of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party decided the following: the party and state departments and organizations will continue to act with all the force necessary in the economy, construction, and all domains of economic and social life for the earthquake relief efforts and for assuring the realizations of the best conditions foreseen in the country’s development plan, and continue to raise the level of material and spiritual living standards of

⁷⁷ April 6, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 32-33.

those who work. It will strictly adhere to decisions previously made, which prohibit the demolition, without special approval, of residential buildings damaged by the earthquake.”⁷⁸

In early April, a month after the earthquake, Ceaușescu announced: “Nothing will be demolished without approval — I am referring to the apartment buildings.”⁷⁹ Some Political Executive Committee members argued for demolitions or more time to assess and repair. Bucharest Mayor Dincă tried to convince Ceaușescu to demolish some of the damaged buildings: “Comrade Secretary General, we have some more buildings, which I will present to you, that must be demolished. I report to you that we have in the Saint Vineri Square some homes that are very damaged. They need serious repairs and are in an advanced state of degradation. Of these, we have one apartment building with sixty-seven families that is completely cracked, but we still have not evacuated the families from there. The [assessment] commission has seen it and they drafted the act to request its demolition. Otherwise, [if not demolished], it will enter into the systematization [plan]. If it is reinforced it will last only a year or a year and a half and require [more] serious reinforcements.”⁸⁰ Not only did the regime allow people to live in buildings known to be structurally unsafe, in this case, the country’s leaders admitted that some reinforcement work was not sufficient, which they knew because of their research into the post-1940 findings. Prime Minister Mănescu, too, addressed the problem of reinforcement: “in connection to the issue of reinforcing the buildings, at the same time, Comrade Ceaușescu, allow us to pay special attention: the commission, the specialists give all their attention — in compliance with your indications — to perform the reinforcement work. For each and every

⁷⁸ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 3 reverse.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁸⁰ April 8, 1977, Ibid., 20 reverse.

apartment building — which you, Sir, have seen — so our committee, as well as the committees made up of urban planners, as well as those who carry out the work, will give great attention, and study carefully each and every case so that, indeed, we can solve this problem of the reinforcement of the damaged apartment buildings so that we are all safe.”⁸¹

While initially Ceaușescu supported repairs and discouraged demolitions of the earthquake damaged buildings, many specialists thought that demolition would cost less in time and materials than reinforcement.⁸² The Securitate noted, “specialists conclude that the amount of money needed to reinforce [a] building is so large that it is more economical to demolish it and construct a new building.”⁸³ An architect and manager at the systematization department said, “regardless of the methods and solutions used to reinforce the damaged apartment buildings, it can not be guaranteed that they will not collapse in the event of a possible earthquake. To be economical, they should be demolished and rebuilt.”⁸⁴ The support for demolitions stemmed from the cost of proper structural reinforcements and Romania’s lack of access to materials to do so. The Securitate reported, “other specialists from the institute’s workforce” said “reinforcing the buildings is much more expensive than demolishing them and rebuilding from scratch. We do not have a tradition of manufacturing suitable materials for reinforcements, which are made to order, almost specific for each property, and when they are unavailable we improve with inappropriate materials.”⁸⁵ In addition to the shortage of resources, specialists feared to stand up to the regime and state their opinions as the Securitate noted: “no one has the courage to

⁸¹ ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 48/1977, 21-21 reverse.

⁸² CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 365 and 386 reverse.

⁸³ They spoke of the building at 8 Nicos Beloianis Street, April 12, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 349.

⁸⁴ May 25, 1977, *Ibid.*, 365.

⁸⁵ *Idem.*

inform their respective departments' authorities."⁸⁶ Interior Minister Coman, too, cited evidence to support demolition. In a written argument to Ceaușescu, he cited Romanian, American, and Soviet expert opinions that the necessary research for assessment had not been done, that such research would be costly in time and effort, and that demolition was the preferred method to deal with the large number of damaged and potentially dangerous buildings.⁸⁷ He added that "some Romanian seismologists had the opinion that some areas of the capital most affected by the earthquake...should be completely demolished, since the thirty to forty buildings [in that area] would hinder the optimal arrangement of the respective thoroughfares."⁸⁸ Coman cited both foreign and Romanian specialists to argue for demolition and new construction to optimize the city's urban planning goals. Specifically, he used the American and Soviet specialists' conclusions that the repairs made during the first two months following the earthquake were superficial to support his own argument. He specifically cited their recommendations for demolition: "the reinforcement problem is more important and more difficult than new construction and can only be resolved after a detailed study of a building's strength, which requires at least three months of work."⁸⁹ The debate between regime managers and experts highlighted Ceaușescu's disregard for specialists' opinions that did not align with his own. His determination to demolish and rebuild as little as possible made arguments in favor of it mute.

Ceaușescu did not blame the lack of structural support on the improper reinforcement of the "magic material," reinforced concrete, for the damaged buildings. Rather, he blamed

⁸⁶ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 365 reverse.

⁸⁷ May 13, 1977, ANR, CCRCPC Political Administration 2/1977, 43 reverse.

⁸⁸ Coman mentioned Moșilor Street, Vacarești Avenue, and others. ANR, CCRCPC Political Administration 2/1977, 43 reverse.

⁸⁹ *Idem*.

individuals who were involved in their construction. In the case of the handful of collapsed buildings constructed after 1940, Ceaușescu pointed the finger at the construction companies and their managers who built them, not the communist state which owned and employed them, nor the regulations that should have prevented such damage.⁹⁰ In his view, individuals alone bore the burden of financial responsibility for repairing the damage caused by the earthquake. In July 1977 he said, “with the exception of those with large damage, the rest [of those whose buildings were damaged] will get to work without a damage assessment and not believe that someone will arrive and give them materials [for repairs]. [Industry] will use their own resources to rebuild their production units. It will work day and night to find the means, the cement, and to make repairs from their own resources.”⁹¹ Ceaușescu ordered that repair funds come from individual builders, “The state will not pay. We will identify who was guilty and we will dock his salary.”⁹² It is not clear whether the regime followed through on this statement, but it demonstrates clearly Ceaușescu’s thinking: the individual within the system, not the system itself, was ultimately responsible.

From the initial days after the earthquake until at least July 1977, Ceaușescu supported repairs rather than demolition. Yet, the Ceaușescu regime’s rhetoric was not internally consistent. At the same time as he claimed he did not want to demolish the buildings damaged by the earthquake he resurrected the plans for the Civic Center, his large-scale urban planning project with its gigantic House of the People, with the earthquake a clear catalyst for it.⁹³ In order to

⁹⁰ This included a computing center, a Ministry building, and the Bucharest University’s Chemistry Department. See ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 35/1977, 3 reverse.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 41 reverse.

⁹² ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 78/1977, 42 reverse.

⁹³ This is discussed in the Epilogue.

develop the Civic Center Project, the Ceaușescu regime ultimately demolished almost 25% of Bucharest. The homes, apartment blocs, churches, monasteries, and other buildings razed were not predominantly those damaged by the 1977 earthquake. Ceaușescu's rhetoric for repairs over demolition held only for those buildings damaged by the earthquake and not for those in the way of his modernization plans. Rather than evacuate, demolish, and rebuild or reinforce, the regime in March chose to limit, and then in July ultimately chose to do nothing to reinforce many of the significantly damaged buildings.

March 1977 Resident Evacuations Reduced

Residents reported any and all earthquake damage. Within a month following the earthquake, the government had already registered half of those across Romania it would eventually determine as damaged.⁹⁴ The state's leaders would consider new assessment proposals, but they had already decided that regardless of their findings, the numbers of resident evacuees would be reduced from initial proposals. Whether those findings were indeed inflated is difficult to know, what matters is that the regime was able to manipulate and read the data according to its own plans and desires.

⁹⁴ April 8, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 48/1977, 21 reverse.

As a result of the earthquake, the regime faced significant repairs to tens of thousands of buildings because it had promised housing to all affected.⁹⁵ The initial assessments teams determined that 350 buildings in Bucharest “needed reinforcement in the first urgency category,” and engineers immediately began repairs on half of them.⁹⁶ Assessments also determined that about 2,000 six-story buildings needed less urgent, although necessary, reinforcement. Thousands of others required minor repairs.⁹⁷ As discussed earlier, a debate emerged between regime leaders and construction experts about the best course of action. Either solution, demolition or reinforcement and repair, would require resident evacuations and months, or even years, of work, and significant expenses in time, labor, and materials. Given that thousands of buildings needed some intervention, ultimately, Ceaușescu found both options untenable. He proposed a third solution: do nothing. If experts assessed fewer buildings as uninhabitable then fewer people would require evacuation and, as the logic went, fewer buildings would need reinforcement repairs. Ceaușescu did not use economics as justification for the decision, rather, he demanded the reduced evacuations and capital’s clean-up in time to parade and celebrate through its streets. For that he needed to end the “panic” and “chaos” he saw created by the earthquake’s destruction.

Within days of the earthquake, the regime decided to reduce approved resident evacuations because it believed that experts’ evacuations recommendations were excessive and contributing to “panic” and “chaos.” Four days after the earthquake, the US Embassy in

⁹⁵ According to a March 16, 1977, telex RFE’s Lyon office sent to Washington DO, the Political Executive Committee announced the government would provide housing. See RFE/RL Corporate, Box 329, folder 15, ‘Romania Earthquake’, Hoover Institute Archives.

⁹⁶ *Povestea Vorbei* nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁹⁷ *Idem*.

Bucharest wrote in a telex to Washington DC, “Romanian government has become more cautious about evacuating damaged housing.”⁹⁸ Engineer Gheorghe Ursu later wrote, “I must say that the first stage of analysis gave some alarming conclusions. As a way to escape liability of a specific salaried socialist, a vast majority of the buildings assessed in these first few days were declared uninhabitable. Because of this exaggeration it is possible that it was not only a shirking of responsibility, but rather possibly a state of panic, with was present everywhere, like a pile of ruins that pushed the specialists toward a unanimous verdict.”⁹⁹ Whether from panic or to avoid liability, during those first days some assessment team members erred on the side of caution, and may have overestimated damage, for fear of being held responsible to “a specific salaried socialist,” i.e., Ceaușescu, if a damaged building were to collapse. Ursu’s comments point to the way in which the regime used fear to control and guide behavior. The task was enormous and engineering experts recommended evacuations to keep people safe, give themselves time to assess, and reduce their own liability in case of aftershock damage.

The experts on the assessment commissions worked for only three days before Ceaușescu, as reported by the state-run media, “told safety inspectors to stop ordering buildings evacuated for minor damage.”¹⁰⁰ He actually ordered an end to almost all evacuations regardless of the extent of the damage. Ultimately, the regime evacuated fewer residents than recommended by specialists. Government officers were also upset about the large number of evacuee recommendations because they just did not have the labor force to assess the damage. For

⁹⁸ US Embassy Bucharest, “Earthquake: Siterep 4 March 8” sent to Washington, DC on March 8, 1977, available at WikiLeaks, Public Library of US Diplomacy, accessed March 3, 2017, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR01634_c.html.

⁹⁹ *Povestea Vorbei* nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁰⁰ Telex RFE/RL #31 March 9, 1977, “To Walter Kingsley Bodin From Edwards” RFE/RL Corporate Box 1858, Romanian Broadcasting Department, Miscellany 1977-79, Hoover Institution Archives.

example, Ion Iliescu then President of the Iași County Political Council (and later Romania's first post-communist President), discussed with Ceaușescu and the Political Executive Committee days after the earthquake such “exaggerated” data about evacuations needs in Iași county: “Based on the required data it appears there had been a little exaggeration because no precise information was given about why 2,000 families were evacuated and relocated to better [living] conditions. Basically, we moved 600 families and will not move more. We sent them to the dormitories and gave provisional housing to many ...after which we will see if we can place them in a proper home or give them apartments within the plan for this year.”¹⁰¹ He described a wait and see approach for the 600 families given provisional housing and stated clearly they would not authorize additional evacuations.

It is not known who brought this possible “exaggerated” evacuation numbers to Ceaușescu's attention, but in a rash decision he intervened and annulled many of those first assessments and issued new guidelines. Specifically, the State Inspector for Construction, Mircea Georgescu, reversed “previous [assessment] opinions, those that were too large, putting pressure on project managers, and threatening with a specific harsh tone....”¹⁰² The regime provided new guidelines, well in place the second week following the earthquake.¹⁰³

The first direct impact of the change in assessment guidelines was on residents. The regime reduced their evacuations, reinforcements, and repairs. Ceaușescu ignored the specialists'

¹⁰¹ March 9, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 41 reverse.

¹⁰² *Povestea Vorbei* nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁰³ Ursu wrote in his letter broadcast in 1979 that the decision was in place on March 15, meeting minutes of the Political Executive Committee mentioned March 22, and official communication between engineering departments mentioned March 30, 1977. See *Povestea Vorbei* nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives; March 30, 1977, minutes of the Executive Committee at ANR, CCRCP Chancellery Section 42/1977 and reprinted in Lucian Boia, *Strania istorie a comunismului românesc [și nefericitele ei consecințe]* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2016), 214 and ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 43.

opinions if they were not in line with his own. He told the Political Executive Committee that experts “have their say” but “then we will decide” and asserted that with the new assessment guidelines “the number of apartments or families that would be [evacuated] would be reduced from the initial [assessment] proposal.”¹⁰⁴ It decided what was unsafe to fit its needs, not to ensure public safety. The new assessment guidelines instructed experts specifically to calculate whether a building could “hold” its own static load, i.e., not crumble under its own weight plus that of all its contents, without additional consideration for seismic resistance. As one of the experts who made structural assessments those first months said, “In other words, ignore what would happen if there would be a new earthquake tomorrow.”¹⁰⁵

Deadline for Repairs: The May 1 Holiday

At the same time the regime demanded fewer evacuations, it established May 1, the Socialist National Worker Day, as the completion deadline for assessments of the buildings damaged by the earthquake.¹⁰⁶ In July Ceaușescu again designated holiday celebrations as an earthquake clean-up deadline. For such celebrations, the regime orchestrated massive parades in all cities and towns, with the largest in Bucharest. The regime quite quickly removed the piles of rubble from the collapsed buildings, yet for Ceaușescu Bucharest was still a mess. The potential disruption from a high number of evacuations (as the regime saw them) and reinforcement work

¹⁰⁴ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 24.

¹⁰⁵ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁰⁶ ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 27/1977, 6.

would contribute to what Ceaușescu perceived as “chaos” in the capital and, in his mind, tarnish the celebrations. The changed guidelines would reduce the number of evacuations with the specific goal of fulfilling one of Ceaușescu’s many desiderata: his need for an end to what he saw as “chaos.” Ceaușescu saw the evacuations as disruptive. Declaring that a building did not need to be evacuated was an easy way to limit the disruption caused by moving people. If repairs did not begin this would also reduce disruption. The capital’s streets would be clear for the government’s important state holiday celebrations and the parades, the first on May 1.



Figure 9. The 1967 May 1 celebration parade in Craiova.¹⁰⁷

As the May 1 deadline approached superficial repairs became more common. The Securitate recorded informants’ reports that professors from the state university architecture school said they were concerned about the superficial repair work being done, noting that teams

¹⁰⁷ *Fototeca online a comunismului românesc*, 184/1967, accessed December 8, 2016, <http://fototeca.iicr.ro/picdetails.php?picid=33536X6X363>.

were “especially plastering walls, leading to the high risk of concealing major damage, and limiting the established commissions’ ability to assess the actual situation of the buildings and make structural repairs for reinforcement.”¹⁰⁸ The architect at one of a local construction groups, according to the Securitate, said his team made “inappropriate” building repairs and only plastered over cracks in the walls instead of introducing a filler that would provide seismic resistance.¹⁰⁹

The engineering experts did not meet the May 1 deadline for assessments and repairs to Ceaușescu’s satisfaction. Engineers and other specialists scrambled as “everything had to be done on the fly, there was not time for profound research... euphemistically speaking, the establishment of this deadline could be considered ‘motivating’...but the deadline was absurd, impossible to meet.”¹¹⁰ Following the new guidelines most specialists made what assessments they could. During a meeting just five days before the May 1 deadline, Bucharest Mayor Ion Dincă stated that “they” wanted all work on the buildings evaluated by that time — whether reinforcement or repair of facades and apartments — so “that people can live in good conditions there. Therefore, it is a helping hand that we are requesting from planners and builders so we can apply ourselves to reach the best solutions.”¹¹¹ He asked Ceaușescu and the Executive Committee for more time and human resources: “we need eighty more days just for the assessment and after that...we can move to reinforcement. And, I would like to revive this commission to the size it was before with the same rate of work in order for us to complete all of

¹⁰⁸ March 16, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 174.

¹⁰⁹ From the Institute for Construction, Repair and Local Administration (ICRAL), May 25, 1977, see CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 365 reverse.

¹¹⁰ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹¹¹ ANR, CCRCP Economics 59/1977, 27.

the assessments in the capital.”¹¹² The stenographers did not record Ceaușescu’s response. We do know that the commissions were not restored nor was reinforcement work given more time. By the end of April he was frustrated by the slow rate of repair. Ceaușescu, not satisfied with the pace or scale of the reinforcement and repair work, ultimately put a complete halt to all assessments and limited reinforcement and repair work two months later, in July 1977.¹¹³

Ending the Fictional “Chaos” Created Real Disruptions

The regime’s push to reduce evacuations to quell what Ceaușescu perceived as “chaos” actually created significant disruption in the city and the lives of many residents who, because the regime did not approve their evacuations, continued to live in damaged buildings. The Securitate noted “a state of dissatisfaction among the citizens who wait to be evacuated; they waste time waiting for commissions and are alarmed by the incompetence of one commission or the other....”¹¹⁴ People complained the commissions were no longer coming.¹¹⁵ When a commission did come, many people felt they did not give adequate information or help. Others wanted a second opinion as new cracks appeared.¹¹⁶ Engineer Gheorghe Ursu who led one of the assessment commissions described, “Thousands of citizens, after they were visited [for an assessment], requested a new [assessment] commission to come, because the first one did not see

¹¹² ANR, CCRCP Economics 59/1977, 27.

¹¹³ This is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

¹¹⁴ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 163. This same March 13, 1977, report appeared again in a slightly different form at CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 143.

¹¹⁵ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 73 reverse, 162 reverse and 204; CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 107, 142 reverse and 178.

¹¹⁶ See CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 73, 103, 307 and 336. CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 7 and 86.

all the cracks and within time another appeared.”¹¹⁷ People wanted the specialists to assess their homes and some bribed them to do it: “Thousands of citizens accosted these commission members on the streets, offering small presents for their help, a carton of Kents [cigarettes], for example, and [the citizens] were offended when they were refused.”¹¹⁸ While some specialists exploited residents’ need for them, others were stressed because of the workload. One resident reported to the Securitate that a second engineer who came to assess their building had “an irreverent attitude toward the citizens who suffered, refusing to hear the details of the damage to their homes, and did not advise them how to proceed. These attitudes created some tension among the residents.”¹¹⁹ Some residents complained that the commissions did not even have specialists on them. The Securitate recorded, “A frequent comment was that some of the assessment commissions are made up of people who are not specialists and as a result can not answer citizens’ questions nor are they able to reassure them.”¹²⁰

In the month that followed the earthquake many residents of damaged buildings were still scared. Some fought for their buildings to be assessed and repaired and ultimately threatened to go over the local authorities and appeal directly to Ceaușescu and the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party.¹²¹ The Securitate reported several cases of individuals and groups threatening to appeal to “leaders of the state and party.” It noted, “residents and their families were ready to go to the State Council and request that the decisions of the head of state be

¹¹⁷ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹¹⁸ *Idem*.

¹¹⁹ March 31, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 327 reverse.

¹²⁰ March 10, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 8 reverse.

¹²¹ See examples at CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 104, 204-205; 213, 326, 349 reverse, 365 reverse-366, and 373-373 reverse and at CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 7 and 143.

applied and not delayed, as was the case until now.”¹²² The Securitate also noted residents “threatening to present a memorandum” to the Central Committee of the Communist Party with complaints that their building had “severe cracks,” yet the commission that assessed it “did not give a definitive situational account for the future of the building.”¹²³ Residents complained when assessment commissions gave contradictory evaluations or bad advice. During the first week after the earthquake, “a university professor recommended that evacuees return to their building, yet to walk carefully on the stairs and in their apartments so as not to produce vibrations. These recommendations created discontent among the tenants; one threatened to go to the Secretary General.”¹²⁴

In addition to being upset about how the regime was handling the assessment, reinforcement, and repair process that first month after the earthquake, Bucharesters questioned who was responsible for their apartment buildings’ resistance failures. The Securitate noted that assessment specialists “affirmed that the earthquake damage was due to builders’ negligence and superficiality, as well as a lack of oversight from local leaders.”¹²⁵ Residents living in damaged buildings wanted to know who was originally responsible for what they perceived as poor construction. They sought to ensure that those same people would not be part of the 1977 assessment team because they might have personal interests in the results, i.e., they might sanitize them to shirk their liability.¹²⁶

¹²² March 13, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 163.

¹²³ March 8, 1977, *Ibid.*, 73 reverse.

¹²⁴ March 9, 1977, CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15, 7 reverse.

¹²⁵ March 21, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 249.

¹²⁶ March 13, 1977, *Ibid.*, 162 reverse and CNSAS, D.12.639, v. 15. 142 reverse.

Some residents, though few in number, shared their concerns about assessment and repair recommendations or defied them outrightly. A month after the earthquake and well into the new assessment guidelines, a group of residents refused to allow workers and an engineer to make reinforcement repairs to their building.¹²⁷ Upset that they were not informed about the planned work, they felt they should evacuate before it began. They also claimed that an engineer on the repair team was involved in the reinforcement of the building six years earlier and they did not have confidence in his abilities nor his intentions. The local city council sent a police officer who was unable to calm the residents, yet it was he who asked for a delay in the reinforcement until a second commission's assessment.¹²⁸ Ten days after the police intervened, the Securitate noted, "the citizens have decided no longer to live in the building...and do not have any confidence in a new reinforcement [project] as all the walls, including those from the ground floor to the fourth floor are crumbling from shoddy concrete, even though the building was reinforced in 1971 by three teams."¹²⁹

Conclusion

In the days and weeks that followed the 1977 earthquake the Ceaușescu regime dispatched teams to investigate severely damaged buildings and began their investigation into why so many buildings immediately collapsed. Structural engineers agreed that the use of

¹²⁷ They lived at 22 Emil Racovița, Bloc R23, see April 4, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 336 reverse.

¹²⁸ *Idem.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 337.

reinforced concrete without sufficient structural supports for Romania's potential seismic activity was the primary reason why twenty-six high-rise residential buildings in Bucharest collapsed completely in 1977. In the inter-war era Romanian structural engineers knew how to support the new building material, reinforced concrete, and design and build structurally sound multi-storied buildings with it. They did not, however, apply that knowledge nor did the government enforce regulations to do so. The political, cultural, and economic environment allowed for real-estate builders to cut corners without notice or repercussion.

In the capital city, inter-war and WW-II era Romanian authorities did not enforce building code regulations to ensure their structural safety in the case of an earthquake. What regulations that did exist were at their historically most lax. Before the 1940 earthquake Romanian architects, civil engineers, and other experts knew about and suggested seismic and other supporting regulations for building with reinforced concrete, yet private builders did not apply that knowledge nor did the government enforce its own regulations. Some laud Romania's inter-war era government for its expansion and inclusiveness, when the territory was called Greater Romania, yet the case of high-rise construction challenge that view. Privately owned construction companies designed and built the multi-storied high rises while Romanian's nascent democratic government was busy managing its post WWI territorial gains and the diverse people who inhabited them.¹³⁰ Yet, the experience of the inter-war building boom and public safety negligence in Bucharest points to a more nuanced picture of capitalist opportunism and

¹³⁰ For more on the political, cultural and economic environments of the inter-war era see Maria Bucur, *Eugenics and Modernization in Interwar Romania*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 2010); Clark, *Holy Legionary Youth*; Keith Hitchins, *A Concise History of Romania*, (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 2014); and Livizeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*.

government negligence of the time. During World War II, the Antonescu government supported investigations and experts published reports, yet it did little to repair the buildings determined unsafe after the 1940 earthquake. Research into builders' practices of the period may shed light on why they did not include resistance techniques nor use sufficient materials to support buildings in the event of an earthquake and highlight the role of rogue capitalists before Romania's fascist rule and Nazi occupation.

Nicolae Ceaușescu himself hypothesized why so many buildings collapsed in 1977 when he said, "it can be seen how poorly the buildings made with concrete performed."¹³¹ Yet, not once in its investigations did the Ceaușescu regime take note that the buildings that collapsed in 1977 were erected by capitalist builders working under regulations established and negligently enforced by a democratic inter-war government, headed by the Romanian monarch King Carol II. Nor, did the Ceaușescu regime highlight for themselves or for the public that it was the fascist regime under Marshall Ion Antonescu that investigated yet ignored the potential collapse risk for those buildings constructed before 1940, the same ones that collapsed in 1977. Romania's involvement in World War II, followed by its Soviet occupation until 1956, may have also contributed to why pre- and Ceaușescu-era government officials ignored the suggestions from experts for seismic regulations. Regardless of the reason, the result was the same: many of the buildings that specialists recommended for structural reinforcement following the 1940 earthquake collapsed or were severely damaged in 1977.

As if it used the post-1940 experience as a template, the Ceaușescu regime, too, at first was concerned about reinforcement, but then dialed down its efforts because of what it perceived

¹³¹ ANR, CCRCPC Chancellery 21/1977, 14 reverse.

as too many evacuations, disruptions, and expense. Rather than ignore experts' findings, as was the case for the post-1940 fascist Antonescu regime, the post-1977 communist Ceaușescu regime purposely reduced their guidelines and then eventually stopped assessments of damaged buildings all together. It swung the pendulum of risk assessments from one extreme to the other, where at first teams determined more buildings damaged and finally settled on far fewer than actually needed. It was the first step in an incremental process that, in part, reduced the perception of the 1977 earthquake residential damage by ignoring it.

The assessment commissions that worked across the city in those months after the 1977 earthquake, however, never finished their charge to assess, repair, or reinforce all the buildings damaged by the earthquake. In July 1977 the regime took drastic measures and stopped all assessments and limited reinforcement repairs. The arrival at assessment cessation was incremental, with the change in guidelines that second week after the earthquake to reduce the number of evacuations traced in this chapter a first step in that process. Ceaușescu's motivation was to remove the "chaos" in Bucharest and clear the city's streets for the mandatory celebration of May 1, but that actually created palpable disruption.

Chapter Five

The Second Earthquake: The July Order that Ended Significant Repairs

If March 4, 1977 remains in the Romanian consciousness as a date evoking cataclysm...the date of July 4, 1977 means something only to us insiders. For a small number of people — structural engineers and others responsible at different levels to relieve the earthquake damage — July 4, 1977 mean a sort of second earthquake. -- Letter from ‘an architect from the homeland’ broadcast on Radio Free Europe, March 4, 1979.¹

The “second earthquake,” referenced above, was Nicolae Ceaușescu’s July 1977 order that demanded all assessments of the structural damage to buildings in the capital stop completely and any repairs underway be quickly finished. During the four months of disaster recovery following the earthquake until the July cessation order, Bucharest officials took measures to reduce the number of evacuations and, at the same time, assessed the amount of damage to and made repair plans for the damaged buildings. They debated whether demolitions or reinforcement repairs were the best course of actions. Ultimately, however, Ceaușescu chose to do practically nothing to repair many of the significantly damaged buildings to avoid the “panic” and “chaos” as he believed to be caused by such significant efforts. The July cessation order established a six-week deadline to complete repairs and to clean-up worksites in time to celebrate one of Romania’s most important national holidays that August. Specialists met the

¹ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

order with trepidation; they were concerned about public safety and their own liability if sufficient repairs were not made. Ceaușescu disregarded the experts' opinions and recommendations, exemplified most acutely in the case of an unlikely dissident, engineer Gheorghe Ursu, who protested against the assessment cessation policy and who the Romanian police murdered a decade later. Today, forty years after the 1977 earthquake more than one thousand buildings in Romania's capital Bucharest are still at risk of serious damage and almost half of those are condemned to collapse in the next major earthquake.²

The July 1977 Cessation Order

On July 4, 1977, exactly four months after the earthquake, at a meeting with members of the Political Executive Committee, Bucharest city administrators, and experts in construction and engineering, Ceaușescu announced his plan to end significant structural assessments and hasten repairs to buildings damaged by the earthquake.³ He announced: “What must be done immediately, comrades, first, stop the [Bucharest] sector-level assessment teams. As of today, I gave orders to the police and prosecutors to arrest and imprison anyone who enters people's homes: no one has the right to enter anyone's home!”⁴ He explained his plan during that meeting

² Bucharest Mayor's Office, Director General for Development and Investment, Investment Department, Reinforcement Service, “Technical Expert List of Building Seismic Risk, updated February 28, 2017,” 2-6, accessed March 2, 2017, http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/alte_informatii/lista_imobilelor_exp/docs/Lista_imobilelor_expertizate.pdf.

³ The meeting minutes did not include names of the construction and engineering experts invited. See ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 1-31.

⁴ July 4, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 30.

and an official order was sent to specialists four days later. He demanded the end to assessments and repairs in order for the city to be clear in time for the important August 23 national holiday celebrations.

Two months earlier Ceaușescu made a similar gesture when he demanded clean-up in time for the May 1 holiday, a deadline which was not met, as discussed in Chapter Four. When he made the order in March that established the May deadline, Ceaușescu did not demand that the State Inspectorate office stop making structural stability assessments or hasten repairs already under-way. He only asked for work to be sped up and evacuations reduced. By contrast, in July Ceaușescu demanded that experts in construction reduce repair recommendations already drafted, not begin any new assessment plans, and quickly finish work underway.

On July 4, 1977, without prefacing the meeting's objective or mentioning his plans to end building assessments, Ceaușescu first asked each of Bucharest's sector administrative leaders to report on the damaged buildings' assessment and repair progress under their administration. Surprisingly, each reported practically the same number of assessments, a couple thousand. Considering that the damage was shared among seven of the eight city sectors, but concentrated in two, this suggested that the leaders could not gauge what Ceaușescu wanted during the meeting or where it might go. During the meeting, when asked how many commissions of specialists had worked in their sector, one leader "didn't know which way the wind was blowing and started to stutter, to the obvious irritation of the General Secretary."⁵ Ceaușescu, the General Secretary, asked whether youth, high school students, or those at university studying construction, participated in the assessments. A specialist at the meeting later explained the dilemma officials

⁵ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

faced: “How was it best to respond? If you said the high school or university students did not participate, you could be accused of being guilty of a lack of confidence in the youth, the new, dynamic, fresh elements. If you did say that they participated, you could be accused of lacking competence, having an ‘adventurist’ character, or allowing some runt to decide the fate of a building.”⁶

During the meeting most of the Bucharest sector leaders participated in such a balancing act, with one exception. The exchange between Ceaușescu and Adriana Moraru, leader of one of the city sectors with the most earthquake damage and the only woman, was illustrative of the tone of the meeting, the concerns of the regime, and the ways in which Ceaușescu approached the problem of earthquake repair and reconstruction in Bucharest that summer:

Adriana Moraru: We organized teams of two to three specialists. They evaluated 2,480 damaged buildings.

Nicolae Ceaușescu: Who gave you the permission to evaluate 2,400 buildings?

AM: Comrade Secretary General, the people came and asked.

NC: What people came?

AM: Citizens, they asked us to see their buildings.

NC: How many citizens did you evacuate from the buildings, do you know?

AM: Us, evacuate?

NC: Yes, yes.

AM: No.

NC: Your teams, not you. You did not go to talk to citizens, you sent emissaries [he used the verb, to send a boyar]. The teams that went, how many did they evacuate?

AM: They were not evacuated, Comrade Secretary...

NC: No, fine, I will show you how many were evacuated.⁷

⁶ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁷ There is little information about Moraru because she was a high-up communist party member. ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 10-10 reverse.

In this exchange Ceaușescu challenged sector-leader Moraru's claim that her teams assessed more than two thousand buildings. He accused her of not going herself to assess the damage in her city sector, but rather of sending a "boyar," a term used for Romanian landowners in the 14th and 15th centuries and then for Ottoman Phanariotes dispatched to the region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to govern the Romanian principalities of Wallachia and Moldova for the Sultan. His not so subtle comparison of her to the landowning ruling class who capitulated to the Turks was clearly a criticism of her leadership. Ceaușescu's concern about how many people evacuated had more to do with his concern about reducing disruption caused by the displaced than for their housing situation or safety.

The confusion among the leaders at the July 4 meeting— from Ceaușescu down through the local Bucharest sector administrators— about the assessment and repair process was palpable in Ceaușescu's exchange with Moraru. He ended their exchange, turned to Bucharest Mayor Ion Dincă, and said, "The building engineers arrived and the tenants complained. Yes, Comrade Dincă, we shrug our shoulders because we left the capital a mess and we did not lead it. We destroyed it. We did what the earthquake did not do."⁸ Ceaușescu indicated that Dincă shrugged at the state of the city and peoples' complaints and pointed to the mayor's fatigue from the earthquake clean-up efforts. Ceaușescu recognized the disorder caused by the unfinished repairs and the reality that many people still lived in unsafe buildings.

At first Bucharest Mayor Dincă believed demolition was a way to address the damaged buildings, but by July 1977 he concurred with Ceaușescu's order to stop assessments and hasten repairs. That summer, too, he took responsibility for the disorder Ceaușescu perceived in the

⁸ ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 11 reverse.

capital. During the July 4 meeting Mayor Dincă said, “Reinforcement? What is that? Repairs are what they are and what must be done.”⁹ He mimicked Ceaușescu’s disregard for expert opinion when he remarked that, in his opinion, specialists prescribed unnecessary repairs. He told Ceaușescu directly, “I assure you, Comrade Secretary General, to you sir personally, and to the party and state leaders, that I understand well your criticisms of me and the bitterness you have expressed because of the fact that Bucharest looks more desolate now than immediately after the earthquake.”¹⁰ Dincă’s opinions about how to resolve the city’s earthquake damage were especially important to consider because a year after the earthquake he left his post as Bucharest mayor to run the national and Bucharest level systemization departments.¹¹

By that summer of 1977 Dincă did not support the structural reinforcement of the damaged buildings and instead advocated superficial repairs. During the July 4 meeting he explained: “In the implementation of the repairs, of course, a series of mistakes of conception were committed, which in our opinion were because of the following cause: reinforcement of the entire building as opposed to localized repairs.”¹² Like Ceaușescu, Dincă was not an engineer nor did he value specialists’ opinion. Born in 1928, in a town on the southern edge of the Carpathian Mountains just 60 miles northwest of Bucharest, he left school in 1940 at twelve years old to care for his mother, two younger sisters, and their farm when his father was called to fight the Soviets in Romanian Bessarabia. After he returned and completed high school, he apprenticed and then worked as an iron turner. In 1947 he joined the Romanian Communist

⁹ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

¹⁰ July 4, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 6.

¹¹ On March 3, 1978 Ceaușescu named Dincă to serve as vice president of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee for Systemization and president of the Bucharest Executive Office of the Commission for Architecture and Systemization. See CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945-1989 dicționar*, 211-12.

¹² ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 4.

Party and studied in several different Communist Party sponsored military and political schools in Romania.¹³ Dincă supported Ceaușescu's order to stop building assessments and hasten repairs and criticized the specialists who advocated for them. In July 1977 he claimed that some city planners and civil engineers in the city's urban planning department, Project Bucharest, and in other departments involved in the city's earthquake recovery efforts, exaggerated what was necessary, did not base their recommendations on structural assessment calculations, and extrapolated recommendations from other buildings' findings.¹⁴ Dincă expressed the belief that many nonspecialists in the regime held: specialists exaggerated the need for such "extensive" repairs. Dincă's opinion about necessary repairs and his position in the debate about structural reinforcement versus demolition may have had an influence on the demolition and rebuilding of Bucharest in the 1980s, in which his role merits further research.¹⁵ During his tenure as head of the city's systemization department, Romanians gave Dincă two nick names: "Ion He-Ties-You-Up" for his propensity to have people arrested, and "Balconies" for the city ordinance he made that forbade people from enclosing their apartments' balconies to make more living space and further insulate their homes. He was with the Ceaușescu regime until its very end and considered one among Elena Ceaușescu's "personal court of hagiographers."¹⁶ Early in 1990 the post-communist government tried Dincă for genocide, as one of the "Band of Four," together with other Ceaușescu loyalists, Executive Committee, and party members Manea Mănescu, Tudor Postelnicu, and Emil Bobu. Dincă was sentenced to life, of which he served only fifteen

¹³ CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945-1989 dictionar*, 211-12.

¹⁴ ANR, *CCRCP Economics* 78/1977, 4.

¹⁵ No accessible archives hold the Bucharest city Political Executive Committee documents.

¹⁶ In Romanian "*Ion Teleaga*," see Lucia Hossu Longin, *Memorialul Durerii: Intuneric și Lumina* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2013), 358 and Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 205.

years due to medical reasons, and the loss of all his property.¹⁷ At his trial in December 1989 Dincă admitted that he “was a coward not to have opposed Ceaușescu's orders to shoot protesters in the Transylvanian city of Timișoara [in 1989],” the violence that initiated the Romanian revolutionary events. He died in 2007.¹⁸

Why Ceaușescu Issued the July 1977 Cessation Order

Nicolae Ceaușescu halted the structural assessments and hastened repairs to buildings damaged by the earthquake to stop the “panic” and “chaos” he perceived in Romania and in Bucharest, in particular. In the sources I consulted, Ceaușescu and the Political Executive Committee members did not discuss the economic costs of structural repairs. While it is certainly plausible that those discussions happened, they were not recorded in the minutes of the Central Committee meetings during the days, weeks, and months following the earthquake. While economics may have been a factor, over and over again, Ceaușescu talked about the “panic” and “chaos” caused, in his eyes, by the earthquake recovery efforts.

When he introduced the July cessation order Ceaușescu explained that it was necessary because the assessments “led to an increase in panic, it created a psychosis inadmissible in the capital.”¹⁹ While workers cleared the rubble from the collapsed buildings rather quickly, the

¹⁷ CNSAS, *Membrii C.C. al P.C.R. 1945-1989 dictionar*, 211-12.

¹⁸ *The LA Times*, “4 Top Ceausescu Aides Admit Complicity in Genocide,” January 28, 1990, accessed September 25, 2016, http://articles.latimes.com/1990-01-28/news/mn-1255_1_senior-officials.

¹⁹ July 4, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 25. Gheorghe Ursu wrote the text under the pseudonym “an architect from the homeland,” read on *Radio Free Europe* was true to the meeting minutes and vice versa, where

assessments and repairs lingered and contributed to what he perceived as disorder. This disturbed him and the ongoing repairs and reinforcement unsettled him. That July he told the Political Executive Committee, “We agreed to start the repairs, to stabilize, and to repair; and within a few months to complete the repairs, not for you to demolish the capital!”²⁰ The assessment teams deployed in Bucharest were daily reminders of the safety risks that remained and the work for reinforcement that needed to be done. If those disappeared from public view and discussion within the regime about them stopped, then those risks, in Ceaușescu’s eyes, disappeared as well. From Ceaușescu’s point of view, the various agencies that made assessments and their contradictory recommendations about whether to evacuate or even demolish buildings, whether to close factories or shops, all contributed to this “chaos.”²¹ He complained that the assessment teams determined “dozens” of apartment buildings to be uninhabitable and many stores unsafe for business “without one justification, except simply a false concept and irresponsibility on the part of the [Bucharest] Central Commission that approved this work.”²² He believed those closures contributed to the “chaos”: “with dozens of [industrial and commercial] buildings out of service we found ourselves in a worse situation than that caused by the earthquake.”²³

Further, evacuations, demolitions, and new construction had the potential, in Ceaușescu’s vision, to contribute to this “chaos.” One observer explained Ceaușescu’s view: “Obviously this decision [to stop assessments]...carried a certain risk, but the situation then was the only

Ursu wrote that Ceaușescu said “I have decided to put an end to the [assessment] commissions. It has created a psychosis,” see *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

²⁰ ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 29.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

²² *Ibid.*, 26.

²³ *Idem.*

attitude acceptable, otherwise you would have to evacuate a vast majority of the capital; the exodus, the chaos, the implications would be worse than the earthquake itself.”²⁴ Radio Free Europe broadcast information about this dilemma: “Because architects and builders had taken seriously a law that appeared after the earthquake on how to construct buildings to ensure their durability and resistance to earthquakes, the party and state superior leaders, in order to save money, gave guidelines to undertake superficial repairs and reinforcement that, in most cases, meant to cover the cracks with plaster.”²⁵ Here, Radio Free Europe’s source cited money as the motivating factor for the regime to end assessments and hasten repairs to the buildings damaged by the earthquake. The regime did indeed save millions — if not billions — of US dollars skipping those repairs. Unfortunately, the sources — meeting minutes, reports, etc., — do not point to economics as Ceaușescu’s primary motivation.

Following the 1977 earthquake, Elena and Nicolae Ceaușescu invited specialists to testify, yet used those opportunities to instruct the experts in the ways in which they were wrong. During the July 1977 meeting, when Ceaușescu ordered the assessments and repairs be stopped, he complained to the Political Executive Committee that they and the city’s sector leaders gave over decisions about the repair efforts to “professors” and that the responsibility for what happened in Bucharest was left in “the hands of specialists.”²⁶ He disapproved of civil engineers and other experts removing surface plaster from columns to inspect for damage, a routine diagnostic procedure of the assessment work.²⁷ Ceaușescu explained how he himself examined

²⁴ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

²⁵ CNSAS, D.21, v.55, 112.

²⁶ ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 28.

²⁷ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

cracks and fissures in a building and concluded that they did not negatively affect its resistance. He used the severely damaged Scala Café and Movie Theater as an example of where he believed decisions about reinforcement were incorrect. After the earthquake the theater and café continued to operate until an assessment team determined that they were unsafe. Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee, “[the foundations] were made thirty or fifty years ago and...have been fine. We have not proposed to ourselves here to remake all the foundations, which is the conception of the architects and planners. This would mean that we should change all of Bucharest. Where did this concept come from!”²⁸

Ceaușescu believed that the regime leaders under him were shirking their responsibilities by deferring to experts and that he could correct the experts’ “incorrect” conclusions. He told them, “I do not blame our comrade planners and comrade architects for having differing opinions, but rather we must seriously discuss with those from construction and with our architects what it means, this thinking, this faulty thinking, which must not be accepted....”²⁹ He had no patience for theory or any accompanying debate among specialists. After a long diatribe to that effect, Ceaușescu asked, “If there is a crack on a column the whole apartment building goes down; where in the world does that happen?”³⁰ The ruling couple’s disregard for specialists and their scientifically informed opinions was not a new phenomenon nor one that emerged after the earthquake. But the need for experts and specialists to evaluate the safety of tens of thousands of buildings across Romania brought their disregard for experts to the forefront.

²⁸ ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 26.

²⁹ Ibid., 28.

³⁰ Ibid., 29.

Throughout the communist era the Securitate tracked concerns about public panic. This was also the case immediately following the 1977 earthquake. From the hours and days following the earthquake, through the months until it stopped the assessments, the regime tracked any real, imagined, or potential “panic” from people who were concerned their damaged buildings might collapse. The regime knowingly kept some people at risk to reduce this “panic.” In one case, five days after the earthquake, the Securitate reported that after experts assessed an apartment building, with shops on its ground floor, they “concluded that there was an imminent risk of collapse,” yet “workers were not evacuated so as not to produce panic.”³¹ Experts conducted a second analysis that “confirmed the first evaluation: the building was leaning on all the metal structures and could possibly collapse at any moment.”³² The regime allowed workers to remain for several hours in a building that experts determined was at risk of collapse to preserve some semblance of order and stem any potential “panic.” The danger was not unfounded as Romania experienced about ten to fifteen aftershocks daily following the earthquake. Today about one such low-level quake occurs every few days.³³ Eventually, the regime allowed workers at the building to quit early and move to a temporary location in order for the building’s reinforcement work to be completed.³⁴

³¹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 94.

³² *Idem*.

³³ David Leeds and the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, “Earthquake in Romania, March 4, 1977: A Preliminary Report,” ed. David J. Leeds, Volume 11, No. 3B, (May 1977), 2.

³⁴ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 94-94 reverse.

The July Order Delivered and the August 23 Deadline Set

The July order was a directive for the specialists conducting the assessments and making repairs. It was not a law or a presidential decree. Romanian citizens did not read the text of it, only a vague mention of it in the state-run newspaper. Four days later civil engineers, and other specialists received the cessation order.³⁵ The July 1977 order, telexed on July 8, demanded they “proceed at a sustained pace” and outlined that “the reinforcement work for buildings damaged by the earthquake of March 4, 1977, will bear in mind the strict adherence only to damage reinforcement and for all to carry out only absolutely necessary repairs.”³⁶ Furthermore Ceaușescu ordered that old buildings adhere to previous seismic stability regulations and not use those applied to new construction. The July 8 telex communicated to engineers that “no additional measures to predict seismic stability of buildings will be admitted into the reinforcement plans.”³⁷ Another telex sent three days later, on July 11, to engineers at the Inspector General’s Office for Construction, communicated clearly that new assessments would not have additional or new seismic stability measures and, if included, they would be annulled. It stated: “supplementary measures for earthquake safety of buildings can not be introduced into the strengthening project...all planned and current work will conform to this order...any assessments contrary to this will be cancelled.”³⁸

³⁵ Presumably the regime gave the order on July 6, 1977, but the only extant documentation is Telex number 11264/75/15817 from July 8, 1977, of which excerpts are archived at CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 381.

³⁶ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 370 and 381.

³⁷ As quoted in the Securitate document of September 13, 1977, at CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 387 reverse.

³⁸ Bucharest telex 11264 160 127 / 16567 113 9/7 1454, Registered under No. 7387/11.VII 1977 at *Institutul de Construcții București* (ICB), currently the UTCB-University of Civil Engineering Bucharest, personal copy of Emil Sever-Georgescu e-mail message to the author, February 28, 2017.

The telexed order established a six-week deadline, August 23, for completion of started repairs and site clean-up.³⁹ The August 23 deadline was made specifically to coincide with one of Ceaușescu-era Romania's most important national holidays, Union Day. This holiday, celebrated on August 23, commemorated Romania's switch to the side of the Soviets in 1944 (and glossed over its prior alliance with Nazi Germany). Much of the earthquake damage was along the same boulevards where parades would march on both May 1 and August 23. Ceaușescu demanded "the capital had to be clean, without scaffolding, freshly whitewashed" for the streets to be clear for the holiday's mandatory parades and other commemorative events.⁴⁰ Romanians observed it with massive mandated participation in parades and festivities across the country, with the largest in Bucharest in front of regime leaders arrayed in viewing stands.



Figure 10. The 1977 August 23 parade in Bucharest. The original caption read: "A look at the great demonstration of working people in Aviator's Square on the 33rd anniversary of the Romanian people's antifascist and anti-imperialist national insurrection (23 August 1977)."⁴¹

³⁹ It did, however, give some schools a deadline pinned to the start of the academic year, September 1. See *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives; CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 371 reverse and 381; and ANR, CCRCP Economics 78/1977, 36.

⁴⁰ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁴¹ See August 25, 1977, US Embassy telex to the US Secretary of State, accessed December 21, 2016, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1977BUCHAR06247_c.html Image copyright, *Fototeca online a comunismului românesc*, 166/1977, accessed November 28, 2016, <http://fototeca.iicr.ro/picdetails.php?picid=44540X154X206>

The July order was the second time Ceaușescu pinned 1977 earthquake clean-up and repair deadlines to a national holiday. Three months earlier in March, he wanted clean-up completed in time to celebrate the May 1 holiday (discussed in Chapter Four). That the regime demanded such order for the parades, performances, and pomp was par for the course in communist Romania. Ceaușescu ramped up these celebrations after 1971, when North Korea's and China's leaders feted him with even grander parades and spectacles. Following those visits, during the last two decades of Ceaușescu's rule, the regime orchestrated and mandated citizens' participation in such celebrations of important party and state holidays: Union Day, when the principalities Moldavia and Wallachia merged and formed the Romanian nation in 1859 (January 24); Ceaușescu's birthday (January 26); May Day (May 1); Union Day (August 23), and the end of WWI (December 1). The August 23 celebration under the Ceaușescu regime ignored the roles of former King Michael and the Soviets in the ousting of the fascist Antonescu regime in 1944.⁴² Instead, they lauded the Romanian Communist Party's full ascent to power in 1948.

Challenges Specialists Faced Executing the July Order

Specialists faced several challenges implementing the July order. The order raised tensions between engineers and other construction specialists, on the one hand, and regime bureaucrats charged with approving and monitoring its implementation, on the other. Some believed it conflicted with a new law for construction quality. The order also troubled some

⁴² Bucur, *Heroes and Victims*, 166.

experts because they believed the minimal and rushed repairs would leave people in unsafe buildings. Some, like engineer Gheorghe Ursu, an unlikely dissident, grappled with their own moral responsibility to protect the public.

Four days following Ceaușescu's announcement of the cessation order, the regime communicated it via telex to civil engineers and other specialists in two different construction agencies, the Inspector General's Office for Construction and the National Research Institute for Construction.⁴³ Compliance with the July order meant that, in most cases, specialists had to ignore necessary structural repairs in favor of cosmetic ones as it mandated they carry out only "absolutely necessary repairs." Some of the civil engineers, urban planners, and others were especially concerned about compliance with the order as individual building's repair needs were particular, yet the July order's directives were general in scope.⁴⁴ With the July order the regime stopped using the term "structural reinforcement" and replaced it with "repairs" when it referred to work on the buildings damaged by the earthquake. Additionally, the Inspector General's Office reduced the amount of money allocated for reinforcement work.⁴⁵

Civil engineers and other specialists completed what repairs they could with the time and materials available to them. One INCERC supervisor told his team to start the very next day after receiving the July order. They injected epoxy into large cracks in support columns and coated them with eight to ten centimeters of concrete, the thickness common at the time and known as "jacketing." One engineer who worked on the repairs in the aftermath of the

⁴³ *Inspectoratul General de Stat in Construcții - IGSIC and Institutul Național de Cercetare – INCERC*, see CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 370 and 381.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 387.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 387-389 reverse.

earthquake recalled how they followed the July order and rushed repairs: “We finished!...in one day! Later on we realized that among us there was [a Securitate informant] to report...we did the best that was possible for strengthening, under the limited conditions, of course.”⁴⁶ Some specialists made cosmetic repairs to hasten the work as opposed to necessary structural ones. Residents, too, were obviously aware of such rushed and cosmetic fixes and joked how specialists used “anti-earthquake plaster” in those rushed repair efforts.⁴⁷

Many specialists were concerned about their liability for supervising and making limited repairs because they believed the July cessation order violated a new construction quality law passed.⁴⁸ One week before the July order, Romania’s Grand National Assembly passed the construction quality law “for ensuring constructions’ sustainability, operational safety, functionality and quality.”⁴⁹ Specialists had to navigate between their responsibilities under the new law and the July order. The 1977 construction quality law applied to new residential and industrial construction, yet specialists were particularly concerned about their liability under two of its articles when repairing earthquake damage. First, Article 4 required that all “projects adhere to the seismic zone guidelines outlined in the law” and that “planners and builders are obliged to mention in their design and construction plans the degree of seismic and fire resistance for which they were designed and built.”⁵⁰ Second, Article 14, had the potential to hold architects, civil engineers and builders liable. It stipulated that “workers, foremen, technicians,

⁴⁶ Emil Sever Georgescu e-mail message to the author, May 18, 2016.

⁴⁷ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁴⁸ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 370 reverse and 389 reverse.

⁴⁹ Georgescu, “Earthquake Engineering Development,” 8. and Law 8/1977 on “ensuring stability, operational safety, functionality and quality construction,” passed on July 1, 1977, published in “Monitorul Oficial,” nr. 64, July 9, 1977, accessed July 10, 2016, <http://www.legex.ro/Legea-8-1977-630.aspx>.

⁵⁰ Law 8/1977, Article 4, for the specificities of seismic regulations accessed July 10, 2016, <http://www.legex.ro/Legea-8-1977-630.aspx>.

and engineers [working] in the design and execution departments must strictly adhere to the design and work plans and are obliged to make a rigorous control of their work and to remove any deficiency produced.”⁵¹

Some specialists spoke out about their potential liability under the July cessation order and the new construction quality law. The Securitate noted, from an informant’s report, that an architect at the capital’s urban planning institute said he felt “the time established to finish the reinforcement work in the capital is very short because of the sheer volume of work and the fact that they have not drafted the specialists stipulated by law for documenting the damage.”⁵² The report noted that the architect “claimed that industrial outlets on the August 23 deadline for repairs no longer follow the reinforcement work plans provided, covering the cracks with mortar without taking into account that some of them are resistance breaks.”⁵³ The Securitate reported that the architect declared: “He who proceeds as such is committing a crime.”⁵⁴

Implementation of the July order highlighted divisions and tensions between regime bureaucrats and specialists. Bureaucrats reduced assessment plans while some specialists requested reinstatements. The regime’s multi-layered and redundant bureaucracy, especially due to the city’s administrative structure, made it difficult for specialists to know to which department or manager to appeal. Some specialists felt there was a “lack of unity” among them because they believed there were too many departments and supervisors involved for any one department to be responsible for the reinforcement and repair process.⁵⁵ In Bucharest

⁵¹ Law 8/1977, Article 4, July 10, 2016, <http://www.legex.ro/Legea-8-1977-630.aspx>.

⁵² The architect was with Project Bucharest, see CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 381 reverse.

⁵³ *Idem*.

⁵⁴ *Idem*.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 371.

construction specialists had to report to one or all of city sector level Executive People's Councils, the Central Institute for Research, Construction Projects and Planning, and the State Inspector General for Investment and Construction. Each department was involved in the assessment and repair process and at times gave specialists contradictory information.⁵⁶

The assessment team specialists were confused about to whom to report, the parameters for their job to determine structural safety, and the repair plans. So, too were the workers charged to implement them. The Securitate quoted experts from Project Bucharest, the urban planning and construction department, who said that the effectiveness of the repairs to public institutions and commercial and industrial buildings was compromised by using low skilled labor and rushing the work. They reportedly said that repair teams were "using their own workforces in haste with unskilled workers [and that] will result in superficial work, extending the dangers that they will not discover hidden defects."⁵⁷

To comply with the July order to end structural stability assessments and hasten repairs, state agencies reduced or completely eliminated the specialists' previous reinforcement recommendations. They drafted and approved new assessment plans, drastically reduced from the originals. In three different cases the State Inspector General approved reinforcement of four columns instead of the specialists' recommended twelve; repair to four or six areas as opposed to the forty-five originally identified; and "jacketing" reinforcement to three pillars went forward rather than to thirty-seven that engineering specialists recommended.⁵⁸ In another case an original

⁵⁶ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 371.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 307.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 389-389 reverse.

assessment recommended forty-five repairs, yet the State Inspector approved “five or six.”⁵⁹

One other case requested repairs to thirty-seven resistance columns, but the new plan approved only five.⁶⁰

The Securitate recorded instances when specialists requested reinstatement of the original plans or extra work, but only on rare occasions did officials approve. In one case, the State Inspector General returned to a worksite and approved additional “jacketing” of several columns in one building.⁶¹ In another case, the Inspector’s Office approved doubling the funds to pay for reinforcement work to a building based on an appeal by the Director of the Bucharest Industrial Construction Center.⁶² While some cases of additional work existed, administrators rarely brought plans up to original, pre-July order, assessment levels. Two months after the July cessation order, the Securitate recorded that experts assessed that a building needed reinforcement to twelve support columns, but the the Inspector General for Construction Investment approved only four.⁶³ Construction specialists appealed for approval to repair three additional resistance columns in addition to the four approved, even though, as the Securitate noted, “the specialists consider that even this would not sufficiently solve the problem for this building.”⁶⁴

The July order put engineering and construction specialists in a tough place. If they followed the July order to the letter, thousands of residents would continue to live in unsafe buildings and cosmetic repairs might give people a false sense of security. If they did not, some believed they might face retribution from the regime. While the regime, and Ceaușescu in

⁵⁹ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 389.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 389 reverse.

⁶¹ August 15, 1977, CNSAS, D.16.334, v.5, 5 reverse.

⁶² In Romanian, *Centrală Construcții Industriale București, (CCIB)*. CNSAS, D.16.334, v.5, 7-8.

⁶³ September 13, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 389.

⁶⁴ Idem.

particular, appeared not to be concerned about the public risk from the hastened, cosmetic, and incomplete repairs demanded by the July order, many specialists were. In one case, in early August, four unnamed engineering specialists took a stance against the July order.⁶⁵ They considered themselves “morally responsible for human life and society in the event of a new earthquake and they were dissatisfied with nonspecialists making decisions at worksites while the responsibility was placed on civic professionals and structural engineers.”⁶⁶ They were not alone.

An Unlikely Dissident’s Moral Imperative: The Case of Civil Engineer Gheorghe Ursu

The civil engineer Gheorghe Ursu was the one known urban planning and civil engineering specialist who publicly shared information and expressed his concerns about the ramifications of Ceaușescu’s July assessment cessation order.⁶⁷ He repeatedly took efforts to alert Bucharesters and Romanians of the public risks posed by the July cessation order. His 1985 murder at the hands of the Securitate and/or police can be connected to his public criticism of the regime’s post-earthquake response. In 1979 and 1984 he sent letters, penned under different pseudonyms, to Radio Free Europe, which used their texts in two separate broadcasts to Romania. As one of the few murders with strong evidence of a link directly to the regime, Ursu’s case highlights Nicolae

⁶⁵ August 3, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 372-373 reverse.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 372.

⁶⁷ For more on Ursu’s case see Victor Bârsan, *Marea calatorie: viata si moartea inginerului Gheorghe Ursu*, (Editura Pythagora: Bucharest, 1998); Cornel Mihalache’s 1995 film “Babu: Cazul Gheorghe Ursu”; and the website maintained by his son Andrei Ursu under the registered NGO “The Gheorghe Ursu Foundation,” accessed July 20, 2016, <http://gh-ursu.org.ro/>.

Ceaușescu's disdain for and intolerance of experts whose opinions conflicted with his own or his regime's objectives.

Gheroghe Ursu served as the lead engineer for Bucharest building assessment teams. In 1977 Ursu worked at the Bucharest Research and Design Institute for Systemization, Housing, and Municipal Engineering as a civil engineer and specialist in seismic engineering, an urban planner, and a manager. A month following the July order, he criticized reduced reinforcement plans for one of the buildings he supervised the Patria building's structural assessment, and questioned his own and his colleague's possibly liability under the new construction quality law.⁶⁸ The Securitate documented his critique, which specifically named the mismatch between the necessary reinforcement work he assessed and his team recommended and the State Inspectorate's approval of far fewer repairs.⁶⁹

Ursu's case started with the 1977 earthquake structural assessment of the Patria building, which was significantly damaged. It sits on a corner, a factor that increases any building's seismic risk. In 1977 the ground floor housed a single-screen movie theatre and shops; its residents lived in the fifty-four apartments, located above in the eight or ten story towers. That August the Securitate noted that Ursu and three colleagues, an engineer and two technicians, said that the repairs that authorities reduced and approved following the July order were "contradictory and completely confused the planners."⁷⁰ Ursu and his colleagues stated that the original reinforcement plan for the Patria was estimated to cost four million Romanian lei yet the

⁶⁸ The Patria building was also referred to as the ARO, the acronym for the insurance company that commissioned it. August 3, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 373.

⁶⁹ *Idem.*

⁷⁰ *Idem.*

Bucharest authorities cut that amount in half. The approved plan allowed for repair only to seventy level pillars, instead of the 288 recommended; four new resistance columns, reduced from the thirty-two recommended; and eleven structural support beams, as opposed to the forty-three recommended.⁷¹ Ursu and his team criticized those reductions in a conversation reported by an informant. The Securitate wrote that Ursu and one other engineer “felt the need to inform the state and party leaders” about the risks that they perceived from the reduced repairs to the Patria building.⁷² Almost a month after the July order’s deadline to complete repairs, the Securitate kept tabs on Ursu and his team working at the Patria. The secret police reported that he “declared in front of his colleagues that he ‘will appeal to the [State] Inspectorate for [the approval of] two more [resistance] columns even if he has to pay for them himself (around 6,000 lei).’”⁷³ The amount of money translated roughly to 300 USD, a significant amount for one person to contribute, equal to three months of an average salary. That expenditure was well beyond Ursu’s means.⁷⁴ Ursu ultimately did not sign-off as the engineer on the reduced repair plan for the Patria. While the Patria still stands today, and is finally undergoing structural reinforcements, since the mid-1990s the Bucharest Mayor’s office has listed it among the hundreds of buildings condemned to collapse in the next major earthquake.⁷⁵

Ursu did not let the risk of insufficiently repaired buildings rest. Without his efforts, Romanians and Bucharesters would not have known about the public risks associated with the

⁷¹ August 3, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 373.

⁷² *Idem*.

⁷³ September 13, 1977, *Ibid.*, 389 reverse.

⁷⁴ Personal communication with Andrei Ursu, November 20, 2016.

⁷⁵ Bucharest Mayor’s Office, Director General for Development and Investment, Investment Department, Reinforcement Service, “Technical Expert List of Building Seismic Risk, updated January 12, 2017,” accessed January 21, 2017, http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/alte_informatii/lista_imobilelor_exp/docs/Lista_imobilelor_expertizate.pdf.

July order to end assessments and hasten repairs. In 1979 they learned about it for the first time from Radio Free Europe, which used information from Ursu in two separate broadcasts.

Romanians did not have access to the text of the July order and learned from the state-run newspaper that earthquake repairs would be finished in time for the August 23 holiday. They did not know that the regime stopped new assessments, reduced already approved plans, and demanded repairs be hastened.

In 1979, on the two-year anniversary of the earthquake, Radio Free Europe broadcast via shortwave the text of a letter signed by “an architect from the homeland,” which described, explained, and criticized the July 4, 1977, meeting and the order to stop the assessment and repairs of buildings damaged by the earthquake.⁷⁶ Ursu almost certainly wrote that letter. Much of the 1979 RFE radio broadcast text matches notes Ursu made after participating in the July 4, 1977, meeting where Ceaușescu announced the cessation order. For example, Ursu’s notes quote Ceaușescu’s statement during that meeting: “An end to the activity of committees, which have created a psychosis. No building can be demolished without special permission. Orders not to close any shop. Central commissions have made irresponsible actions. Decommissioning dozens of buildings that did not have any damage. The buildings put in a situation that far exceeds what the earthquake destroyed. There is no justification, but simply a misconception of planners.”⁷⁷

In 1979 RFE quoted the “anonymous architect’s” paraphrasing of Ceaușescu’s July order: “I

⁷⁶ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁷⁷ Ursu made notes following the July 4, 1977, meeting with Ceaușescu, the Political Executive Committee, city-sector leaders, and other specialists. Following Ursu’s arrest, his son Andrei hid the notes inside a broken radiator and when he immigrated to the US following his father’s murder, kept them in safe keeping with a friend, only to retrieve them well after 1989. Personal interview with the author, November 20, 2016. See the image of the Ursu’s notes made following the July 4, 1977, meeting, accessed January 24, 2016, <http://gh-ursu.org.ro/19770704-sedintaCutremurCuCeaușescu.pdf>.

decided to end the commissions. They've created a psychosis. It's prohibited to close any shop. The sector commissions have taken irresponsible actions....Dozens of buildings without any damage were decommissioned. Engineers and planners have destroyed much more than what the earthquake destroyed.”⁷⁸

Ursu admitted to the Securitate that he wrote letters to Radio Free Europe. During a 1985 interrogation by the secret police, he told his interrogator(s): “I must do something to reinstate some of the reinforcement work... I believe that by presenting my viewpoint on Radio Free Europe, some parts of our country will become alert and will take action...I drafted some material with the conclusion that in Bucharest there has not been made sufficient reinforcement to ensure the stability of buildings damaged in the event a new earthquake.”⁷⁹ After the first letter's broadcast in 1979, the regime and the Securitate not did link Ursu to it. Nor was it even clear whether it even documented the earthquake's second anniversary RFE broadcast. This is not that surprising as the Securitate only expanded its monitoring of the radio station a year later, in its operation codenamed “The Ether.”⁸⁰

More than five years later, in October 1984, Radio Free Europe used text from a second Ursu letter in a broadcast about the public risks in Bucharest from the buildings that not been repaired. The Securitate noticed the autumn 1984 Radio Free Europe broadcast about the Ceaușescu regime's 1977 earthquake response, which was signed by “a group of Romanian

⁷⁸ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

⁷⁹ Victor Eskenasy, “*Cazul Gheorghe Ursu și Radio Europa Liberă*,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), November 18, 2015, accessed September 8, 2016, <http://www.europalibera.org/a/27373046.html>.

⁸⁰ Nagat, “Ceaușescu's War against Our Ears,” 233.

tourists in the Federal Republic of Germany.”⁸¹ Ursu also wrote that letter. The timing of the broadcast corresponded to when he admitted to the Securitate that he wrote a second letter. Four days after the 1984 RFE broadcast, Securitate officer Vlad Iulian circulated the department’s transcription of it and attached a memo that asked, “How were the letters sent abroad? What do you think needs to be done in this case?”⁸² The 1984 letter to and broadcast by RFE described the reduced repairs as well as labor extractions from Romanian citizens for the earthquake recovery (discussed in Chapter Three).

In December 1984, two months after the RFE broadcast, the Securitate searched Ursu’s office and home and confiscated sixty-nine notebooks and journals penned from 1949-1984, letters he wrote to and received from family and friends living in Romania and abroad, poems, travel notes, and movie and theatre playbills. Over the first nine months of 1985, the Securitate interrogated Ursu as many as twenty times. Then in September 1985 the police arrested him on the premise that he possessed seventeen US dollars, as it was illegal to most Romanians to have foreign currency. They held him in the shared offices of the Bucharest police and Securitate. There, police officers interrogated him and instructed his cellmate to beat him. To treat injuries from the beatings, so severe they required surgery, the regime moved him to Jilava Prison, about eight miles south of Bucharest. On November 17, 1985, Ursu died from abdominal trauma: he had been beaten to death.⁸³

⁸¹ An October 15, 1984 Securitate “note” about the Radio Free Europe broadcast on Sunday October 14, 1984, program “A word with listeners” presented by Vlad Georgescu, see CNSAS, D.21, vol. 55, 110-113 and 120.

⁸² CNSAS, D.21, vol. 55, 120.

⁸³ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 331.

Gheorghe Ursu's case is important to the history of the 1977 earthquake as he was the lone voice that tried more than once to reveal the public risks associated with the regime's July order to end assessments and hasten repairs to the damaged buildings. Ursu risked his own life more than once in attempts to save many others. He told the Securitate that the letters broadcasted by Radio Free Europe expressed his own "feelings to take a stand against the situation, considering it my conscious duty to express these feelings."⁸⁴ He felt he had a moral responsibility to speak up, and moreover he believed that someone who heard it might also recognize the risks to Bucharesters and do something about them. That did not happen.

Ceaușescu's Order to End to "Panic" and "Chaos" Created Disruption

Ceaușescu's motivation to issue the July order was to end the "panic" and "chaos" he perceived in Bucharest. While the destruction was significant, workers removed the rubble from the collapsed buildings quite quickly. By the first week after the earthquake most people were back at work and school; almost all industrial production returned to pre-earthquake levels. With the aim to stem the "panic" and "chaos," the July cessation order actually created its own disruption. The changes confused Bucharest residents, specialists, and officials alike.

Residents of damaged buildings did not know the specifics of the July cessation order and many were confused by the changes. Assessment teams no longer came. Repair teams changed plans. Bucharest authorities approved fewer repairs. Residents of damaged buildings were

⁸⁴ Eskenasy, "*Cazul Gheorghe Ursu*," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL).

frustrated and angry. Commissions arrived at buildings, but did not share their assessments with the residents, which “created the possibilities for unhappy and unfavorable commentaries” on the part of residents.⁸⁵ One female resident stated that her local city-sector council “was playing with people because after members told people to pack their bags to move, afterwards they told them to stop” because another commission was to come to evaluate their building again.⁸⁶ In August, a month after the regime stopped the assessment process, the Securitate documented a case where residents were upset that one commission first told them not to make repairs until structural reinforcement was done and then other officials cancelled all reinforcement work. Experts then told the residents to proceed only with repairs. Residents were upset not only because of the change in plans, but also because “new cracks appeared and old ones widened,” increasing their fear about their building’s structural integrity.⁸⁷

One case was particularly illustrative of the disruption that the July order created. Specialists were concerned that repairs approved for the building at 36 Maria Rosetti Street did not meet the “minimum” proposed by the city’s urban planners, a situation, noted by the Securitate, “that placed more than one hundred residents at risk and has the potential for a future serious accident.”⁸⁸ The Securitate’s report described specific recommended repairs and insufficient repairs completed, and recommended that repairs be returned to their original assessment recommendations.⁸⁹ Ceaușescu did not like what he read. Ten days after the document was drafted, a handwritten note written across its heading: “The First Secretary did

⁸⁵ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 103.

⁸⁶ CNSAS, D 12.639, v. 15, 86 reverse and CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 103 reverse.

⁸⁷ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 381 reverse.

⁸⁸ August 5, 1977, *Ibid.*, 374.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 374-375 reverse.

not appreciate this note and ordered that we report to him information about the planner, the source, and if he is an officer of the Interior Ministry.” The report’s annotator instructed the writer to “come to me now!” to discuss Ceaușescu’s lack of “appreciation” and the information’s source.⁹⁰ The Securitate tracked dissent from the July order, but it appeared only Gheorghe Ursu faced retribution for his public criticism of it.

Conclusion

During the initial four months of earthquake recovery efforts, the Ceaușescu regime buried the dead, assisted the wounded, and sorted through and removed the debris from the damaged and collapsed building sites in Bucharest. Civil engineers and architects began an assessment process to determine the extent of the structural damage to thousands of buildings, the majority in Bucharest, in order to approve evacuations and reinforcement repairs to bring them up to earthquake code. Yet that July Ceaușescu ended those efforts. As a result, Romanians continued to live in almost two hundred thousand damaged homes considered at one time by specialists to be uninhabitable.⁹¹

The regime stopped the process to assess, approve, and make significant structural repairs to buildings significantly damaged from the 1977 earthquake because Nicolae Ceaușescu was upset by what he perceived as “panic” and “chaos” from the assessment and repair efforts.

⁹⁰ CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 374.

⁹¹ 178,335 homes, or 27% of those damaged, were determined to be uninhabitable. ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 92.

To meet his demand for the city be cleared in time for parades and celebrations for the August 23 national holiday, that July he ordered structural assessments to stop and repairs to be hastened. In essence he chose to ignore the thousands of damaged residential buildings. He chose cosmetic fixes, ignored the public risk the damaged buildings posed, and dismissed construction and engineering experts' recommendations.

The July cessation order presented construction and engineering specialists with three different challenges. First, specialists were concerned about their liability under a new construction quality law passed at practically the exact same time as the July order. Second, construction and engineering specialists navigated the July order's directives that regime bureaucrats orchestrated and approved. People who lived in damaged buildings experienced the results of this tension between bureaucrats and scientific specialists most acutely. Lastly, some experts charged with ending assessments and hastening repairs believed they faced a dual dilemma if they followed the July order: they were concerned about their legal liabilities and had moral concerns about leaving people unsafe because of insufficient repairs. Gheorghe Ursu's lone voice about the public risks is a poignant reminder of the lack of public dissent in Romania in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Several aspects of the Ceaușescu regime's character are highlighted by the specialists' critique of the cessation order and lack of repairs, including the less than tight control it had on communist party members and non-party managers. The loose hold of the regime around assessments from March to July and the few cases before the August 23 deadline, demonstrated

that the regime, more often than not, did not have full control over the actions of those who worked within it.

The July 1977 order that stopped the structural assessments and hastened repairs has implications to this day. Bucharest authorities have identified thousands of residential and mixed-use buildings, with as many as 15,000 inhabitants, at risk of collapse in the next significant earthquake. This danger (discussed in the Epilogue) is directly linked to the Ceaușescu regime's July 1977 policy to stop assessments and significant repairs and has been exacerbated by post-1989 governments' limited actions to support repairs or relocate residents.

Epilogue:

Aftershocks in the 1980s and Beyond

In this epilogue I discuss three important legacies of the 1977 earthquake and the Ceaușescu regime's recovery efforts: the 1980s demolitions for and construction of the regime's new administrative political center, the Civic Center Project and its House of the People; the unresolved housing problem; and today's public risk in Bucharest from hundreds of buildings left condemned to collapse in the next significant earthquake.

The Civic Center Project and its House of the People

During the 1980s the Ceaușescu regime uprooted tens of thousands of residents, demolished homes, churches, synagogues, and other public buildings, when it razed almost a quarter of Bucharest's city center to build a new administrative and political complex.¹ Within weeks of the 1977 earthquake Ceaușescu resurrected the idea for such a complex from an exponentially smaller inter-war era plan and amended it to the city's systemization plan,

¹ Three short and long films on the Civic Center include "1980-1982: Cartierul Uranus din București demolat de Nicolae [sic] Ceaușescu" available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SD4w0DT1RV0>; TV Romania's 45' program, "Memorialul Bucureștilor - Episodul 8 - Casa Poporului" available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5P5ylj70Y4>; and the 11' program "Veneția din Suflete" is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUJ2yTSAN1s> all accessed January 30, 2017.

drafted for Bucharest in 1972.² Neither the destruction to build nor the actual Civic Center Project were made to repair earthquake damage as the area cleared for it experienced little destruction.

The regime used the earthquake's damage to justify the Civic Center Project's roll-out, even though the severe damage was not located where it would be sited, the Uranus neighborhood, atop Arsenal Hill. Rather, the 1977 earthquake drove Ceaușescu finally to start this project. No evidence points to whether Ceaușescu was considering the Civic Center Project before the 1977 earthquake as part of Bucharest's modernization efforts. Yet, the earthquake, its destruction, or the recovery efforts led him finally to introduce it. He did not need the natural disaster to justify the project or the 1980s' destruction of existing neighborhoods, churches, synagogues, other institutions, and homes in the Uranus neighborhood to build it. Ceaușescu placed the Civic Center Project within the capital's systemization, or territorial restructuring policy.

The Civic Center Project's direct link to the 1977 earthquake comes from Ceaușescu's announcement of its start within two weeks of the earthquake when he introduced its plan. The regime proposed the project for the purpose of a larger urban renewal within the framework of the regime's ideological, Romanian nationalist, socialist agenda. It also served Ceaușescu's cult of personality. Two weeks following the earthquake, on March 23, 1977, the state-run newspaper described the Civic Center Project:

² Law #58/1972, "Concerning the Systemization of Urban and Rural Localities," see *Monitorul Oficial*, nr. 135, Nov. 7, 1974, as cited in Sampson, *National Integration*, 82. On September 28, 1976, the regime passed decree number 283/1977, the systemization plan for Bucharest.

In this same spirit, the start of the construction of a new political - administrative center of the country was indicated, the reconstruction of some principal roads in Bucharest, and the realization of a number of important social-cultural buildings and art monuments, bringing to the capital the urban quality and value of superior architecture. All of this will be constructed on the base of a new conception, different from the practical, that emerged in the last year, and will impart both the principles of modern and traditional Romanian architecture. It will be realized in a specific, original style, and represent the epoch of socialism in Romania.³

At the same time, Ceaușescu told the Political Executive Committee: “You know that after the earthquake a number of very large buildings suffered damage, others collapsed, others suffered grave damage, and others among those are very old and no longer merit for us to repair them. In order to solve this problem, a better systemization of some the main streets where [buildings collapsed or were damaged] and at the same time along other arteries....⁴” State-run media echoed his claim of the damage as justification:

Because of the fact that certain important edifices were destroyed or severely damaged by the earthquake, or some very old buildings have shown they have a low resistance and can not be remade, Comrade Ceaușescu presented to architects and construction engineers the issue quickly to move to reconstruct certain important zones in Bucharest, and at the same time to accelerate the activity to develop the capital of our patriotic nation.⁵

³ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 23, 1977, 1.

⁴ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 2.

⁵ *Informația Bucureștiului*, March 23, 1977, 1.



FIGURE 11. A rear aerial view of the House of the People (today, the House of the Parliament) with mixed-use apartment buildings flanking the two boulevards that meet at a “T” at its front. With an area of almost four million square feet, it is the second largest administrative and fourth largest building in the world.⁶

The project served Ceaușescu’s vision of a capital representative of his regime and its ideology. Many believe Ceaușescu developed the idea for such the project after his 1971 visit to North Korea and China. That is impossible to confirm because archival documents are unavailable for research as the Civic Center Project’s House of the People now houses the Romanian Parliament, named the Palace of the Parliament. All documents related to its plan and construction are considered state secrets.⁷

Ceaușescu’s Civic Center Project Announcement

Two weeks following the 1977 earthquake, Ceaușescu discussed his plan for the Civic Center Project with Political Executive Committee members, architects, construction experts, and

⁶ Image accessed on January 18, 2017, <http://www.local-life.com/bucharest/articles/palace-of-parliament>.

⁷ Known as the Parliament Palace, or *Palatul Parlamentului*.

urban planners.⁸ The plan would move all government and political offices, including the state archives, telecommunications center, and the central offices of the Romanian Communist Party.⁹ Ceaușescu established its location in the Uranus neighborhood, near the city center, the same as the inter-war plan's site.¹⁰ He chose to build the gigantic House of the People on the neighborhood's highest point, Arsenal Hill. He described how he wanted the project to include a grand building to host new offices for himself, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, government ministers, the state Council, the Communist Youth Union, and possibly other departments; it would also include a large meeting hall, the state library, government ministries, and a museum.¹¹ Ceaușescu sketched out his vision for the area around the grand building: "There must be a large square, which will be here [possibly pointing to a map], and in the front of it, a terrace, because we must have a place to stand, we will make a semi-rotund meeting place, which will have a large opening...."¹² He wanted a large hall, able to fit four to six thousand people, and a stadium, too, but not for soccer, because, as he explained, "we have enough of those, but for cultural and artistic festivals and large meetings."¹³ Initially he suggested a hippodrome for parades, but that was never built.¹⁴ Ceaușescu prescribed that the architectural style not be modern (in particular he pointed out specifically not cubist), but would be

⁸ The meeting minutes are archived at ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 1-13.

⁹ CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 2, 4.

¹⁰ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 308 and CNSAS, D.11.487, v. 2, 4.

¹¹ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives and ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 3.

¹² ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 3.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 3 reverse.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

“Romanian,” and explained, “everywhere we will rebuild the architecture with Romanian elements.”¹⁵

The day after he discussed the Civic Center Project, state-run newspapers featured his presentation, writing that the meeting was “convened to discuss the issues related to the reconstruction, systemization, and modernization of the capital.” Participants included “the most representative forces in the domains of architecture and building — researchers, university professors, builders from certain planning institutes and other organizations of construction from the capital and other centers in the country.”¹⁶ He presented it as part of the capital’s modernization. Regime members signed onto the project and Ceaușescu’s vision for it.¹⁷

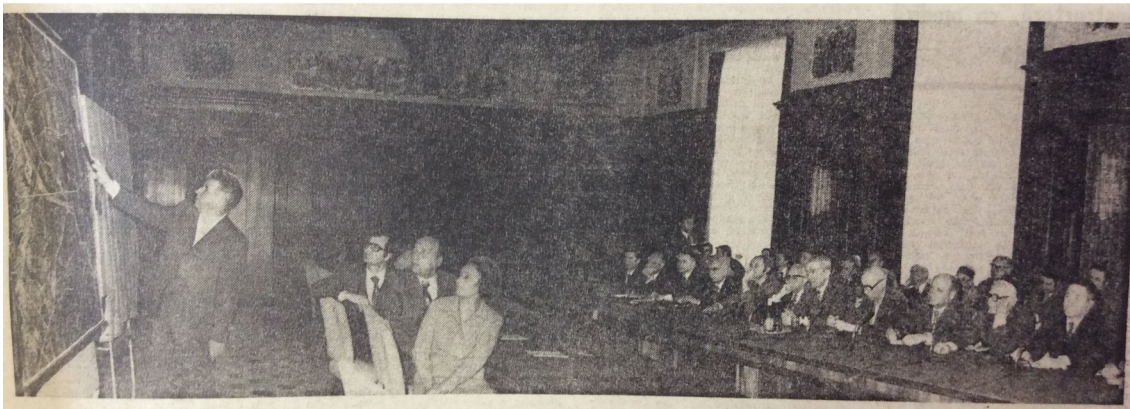


Figure 12. Newspaper photo of the March 22, 1977 meeting when Nicolae Ceaușescu (left, standing and pointing to a map) presented the Civic Center Project to architects and engineers (at the long table facing him) and (turned to face Ceaușescu) Elena Ceaușescu, an unidentified man, and Dumitru Popescu (in dark glasses), President of the Romanian Radio and TV Council.¹⁸

¹⁵ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 5 reverse.

¹⁶ *Flacăra*, 24 March 1977, 3 and *Informația Bucureștilui*, March 23, 1977, 1.

¹⁷ August 2014 persona interview with Alexandru Budișteanu, Bucharest Chief Architect from July 1977 – 1981.

¹⁸ *Flacăra*, Anul XXVI, Nr. 12 (1 137) 24 March 1977, 3 and *Informația Bucureștilui*, March 23, 1977, 1.

By the end of May 1977, architects presented Ceaușescu with three dimensional models of the new Civic Center Project and drafted a final plan that October.¹⁹ In December 1977, Ceaușescu approved the plans and told those present at the meeting held that month that “I believe something beautiful and useful will be the result.”²⁰ He named twenty-five year-old Anca Petrescu, a recent architectural school graduate, as the project’s head architect.²¹ The design was not completely hers nor were plans ever exactly final. In the 1980s Ceaușescu visited the construction site practically every Saturday and demanded changes in design, materials, etc., at almost every visit.²² He initially aimed for it to be built within five years, but its construction began the year after Ceaușescu originally wanted it finished.²³

Throughout its construction in the 1980s, the Civic Center Project was constantly behind schedule and delayed so much that it was not finished before 1989 nor used by the Ceaușescu regime. Whether some delays were intentional on the part of planners, builders, and others is difficult to know without access to primary sources. Most extant evidence suggests there was little resistance within the regime to the Civic Center Project. The Bucharest-level Executive Committee, led by Mayor Dincă, was responsible for evicting people for the neighborhood’s destruction, and moving or demolishing buildings. The regime ignored practically all resident and citizen complaints about the project, yet recorded a few. In August 1977 the Securitate reported that “the idea of demolitions and building a new civic center area has created a state of agitation

¹⁹ *Povestea Vorbei*, nr. 195, Hoover Institution Archives.

²⁰ The December 16, 1977, meeting participants included: Mircea Georgescu, State Inspector General; Nicolae Iordache, Vice President of the Bucharest Popular Council; Alexandru Budișteanu, Bucharest’s Chief Architect; and the architecture professors Octav Doicescu, Ascanio Damian, and Nicolae Porumbescu (from Iași) as well as the architects Constantin Savescu, Nicolae Vladescu, Romeo Bela and Anca Petrescu. ANR, CCRCP, Propaganda and Agitation 29/1977, 5.

²¹ Petrescu died in 2013.

²² For Ceaușescu’s 1988 agenda, see ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 123/1988.

²³ *Informatia Bucurestiului*, March 23, 1977, 1.

and anxiety, which is why some citizens have an inappropriate attitude, some even uttering insults to some departments of the state and the party.²⁴»

Neighborhoods Demolished to Construct the Civic Center Project and House of the People

The Ceaușescu regime demolished almost a quarter of the existing neighborhoods in Bucharest's center to build the Civic Center Project. Starting in 1981 Ceaușescu signed several presidential decrees to appropriate the land, demolish existing structures, and uproot tens of thousands of people.²⁵ The neighborhoods — Uranus, Antim, and Rahova — were some of the oldest in the city, and included its small Jewish quarter and many single-family homes. The regime gave residents six-months notice of the scheduled demolition of their homes, resettled them in apartments in the capital's outskirts, and compensated them at a fixed level of two years of the average worker's salary (80,000 Lei).²⁶

The regime also started demolitions in Bucharest following the earthquake that were unrelated to the Civic Center Project. Ceaușescu stated in March 1977, when he described the Civic Center Project, that the necessary demolitions and the systemization plan were to be completed before any construction began, “or at the very least until the stages have been complete.”²⁷ The regime demolished some buildings damaged by the earthquake, but those were not in area where the Civic Center was planned. For example, in April 1977 it demolished the early 18th century Ene Church which sat in the heart of Bucharest. Its loss was one of the first

²⁴ August 3, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 373.

²⁵ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 32/1981.

²⁶ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 295.

²⁷ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 4 reverse and 5.

non-residential buildings the regime razed after the earthquake not because of structural damage, but because Ceaușescu and regime members demanded it. A month before the bulldozers razed the church, Ceaușescu described how the entire block where it sat would be demolished: “We will take all from Ene Church Street to the hotel; all will be demolished and we will rebuild all of it, from the Dunărea Restaurant to the communal bathhouse...these will be in the first phase of the demolition plan.”²⁸ In late April 1977 the regime demolished the Ene Church.²⁹ Its destruction was separate from the larger Bucharest neighborhood destruction to build the Civic Center Project. It is often incorrectly conflated with the dozens of churches and handful of synagogues the regime demolished for the project in the 1980s.

In the mid-1980s the regime stepped up the pace of neighborhood demolitions for the Civic Center Project, but did not destroy every building. Engineering experts picked up and moved in their entirety apartment buildings and churches.³⁰ For example, engineers slid Bucharest’s Mihai-Vodă Church along makeshift tracks 950 feet, relocating it behind a large apartment complex, out of direct sight so, as is generally assumed today, Ceaușescu would not see it as he traveled through the capital.³¹ The regime moved a few buildings and let one church and its bell tower remain, but ultimately demolished structures in its way: large “villas,” one and two-story houses, small apartment buildings, and public buildings³² By the mid-1980s the

²⁸ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 41/1977, 5 reverse.

²⁹ For images of the church’s demolition made by a fifth year architectural student, see “Filmul demolării bisericii Enei - Aprilie 1977” at Muzeul de Fotografie, accessed January 19, 2017, <http://www.muzeuldefotografie.ro/2016/11/filmul-demolarii-bisericii-enei-aprilie-1977/>.

³⁰ Danta, “Ceaușescu’s Bucharest,” 181.

³¹ Adevarul, “Inginerul care a mutat biserici din calea buldozerelor,” accessed September 28, 2016, adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/inginerul-mutat-biserici-calea-buldozerelor-1_50ad21c77c42d5a6638f4697/index.html.

³² The Mihai-Vodă church was moved 740 feet (225 meters) and sandwiched between two apartment buildings. Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 311.

Uranus neighborhood's destruction was well underway and had already displaced an estimated 40,000 people with the exact total unknown.³³

In 1984 the regime further demolished five Orthodox churches, including the Vacarești Monastery, the largest 18th-century monastery in south-central Europe, which had been used as a prison from 1864-1970, and whose restoration the regime had begun in 1974.³⁴ In 1985 the government ordered the destruction of three Orthodox churches and, in 1986, six more churches, one synagogue, and the Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga's home.³⁵ The regime mobilized as many as twenty-five thousand workers, many from the army, to move or demolish structures to clear space to build the House of the People and other Civic Center Project buildings. Some Romanians inside and outside the country, alongside international non-governmental organizations, protested the Bucharest demolitions of the 1980s, in particular that of the Vacarești Monastery and other churches, but with little impact. More than seven years after the 1977 earthquake and the Civic Center Project's introduction, on June 25, 1984, Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu officiated over the House of the People's inauguration.³⁶

³³ "Situation Report: Romania 2 November 1984," 2 November 1984. HU OSA 300-8-47-208-16; Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute: Publications Department: Situation Reports, (Open Society Archives at Central European University, Budapest),10, accessed January 19, 2017, http://storage.osaarchivum.org/low/b5/73/b5737695-11a7-4409-924c-c8207e28ca8b_1.pdf.

³⁴ Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate*, 311.

³⁵ *Idem*.

³⁶ An excerpt of TV footage of the House of the People ground breaking, accessed January 19, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cE9MsOLkx0> and other contemporary film footage used in a 2012 TV Romania documentary on the Civic Center Project and House of the People, accessed January 17, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gCHhMXm7XI>.

Lingering Housing Shortages and Damage

The Civic Center Project included plans for new apartments, but those were reserved for state and party leaders. The housing shortages caused by the 1977 earthquake's damage remained well into 1978. It is estimated that the 1977 earthquake damaged more than 660,000 homes, or about 12% of all Romanian housing stock. In the year that followed the regime faced other economic and social-political challenges and left the housing problem among the last to be addressed. In 1978 the World Bank determined that Romania needed one billion US dollars to repair residential damage alone. The Romanian state did not have a natural disaster fund, nor did it allocate anywhere near that amount for repairs. Ceaușescu resisted extending credit or increasing assistance for residential repairs. Two weeks following the 1977 earthquake the Council of Ministers intended to present legislation to create a fund for residential repairs in the case of future natural disasters.³⁷ At the same time, the head of Romania's systemization department suggested that any future fund created to support repair following a natural disaster must account for seismic damage. He said that any new program "must include the seismic reinforcement to commercial, industrial, and apartment buildings, as it is possible that much more will be needed than what has been planned."³⁸ Ceaușescu responded clearly and firmly that he had allocated only about \$500,000 for such repairs: "And, I know. Do not start with me again. We established which buildings to be reinforced and those are the ones to be reinforced. As for repairs underway now, each puts his hands to work, makes repairs and does not wait for the

³⁷ ANR, CCRCP, Chancellery 35/1977, 6.

³⁸ From 1974 to March 3, 1978, Iosif Uglar was President of the Party and State Executive Office and Commission for Urban and Rural Systemization see March 17, 1977, ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 42 reverse.

state.”³⁹ That half a million dollars was only one half of one percent of the World Bank’s estimated cost to repair all housing damage.

Given that the Ceaușescu regime’s 1977 earthquake recovery policies demanded citizens make repairs themselves and called for an end to additional seismic assessments, it was not surprising that significant housing damage remained. In 1978 the regime attributed the delay to construction material shortages. There were apparently not enough cement panels, mesh, waterproofing sheets, windows, concrete, mineral compounds for concrete, or PVC pipes.⁴⁰ Transporting materials was problematic, too. Trucks broke down, and a shortage of spare parts for them stalled the repair work, too.⁴¹ Ten months after the earthquake, in January 1978, Ceaușescu signed a Presidential Decree that authorized an additional eight million US dollars to repair buildings damaged in the 1977 earthquake.⁴² The decree allocated forty percent of the monies to repair and reinforce government buildings and the remaining for private and mixed state-private homes.⁴³

An example from the largest city in Dej County, Craiova, illustrates the regime’s 1978 response to the housing repair delays. Almost a year after the earthquake, in February 1978, local officials in Craiova and its county, Dej, still had not addressed their housing repair problems. The central government took action and fired or demoted county communist party officials, including the directors of the county’s urban planning department and the head of the its systemization department for their “delay in drawing up the documents and carrying out the

³⁹ He allocated 1 million Romanian Lei, see ANR, CCRCP Chancellery 35/1977, 42 reverse.

⁴⁰ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 69 reverse.

⁴¹ *Idem*.

⁴² Decree 259/1978 allocated 155 million Romanian Lei, see ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978.

⁴³ The decree allocated 63 million Romanian Lei for 68 government buildings and 92 million Romanian Lei for citizen housing, see ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 4.

plans for reinforcement and repair work.”⁴⁴ Craiova’s mayor was also reprimanded for his “lack of firmness, inaction, and light treatment of his obligations as mayor to put into action the repair and reinforcement work.”⁴⁵ The regime proposed a new funding structure for the city’s repairs, taking almost \$650,000 from the housing and “social-cultural” funds to repair a couple museums, seventeen apartment buildings, three university buildings, and a high school.⁴⁶ At that same time, in March 1978, in Prahova county where Romania’s oil fields and petrochemical refineries were located, officials requested a budgetary supplement of \$620,000 for repairs not yet completed to more than three hundred industrial and twenty-nine apartment buildings.⁴⁷ As it did in Bucharest the year before, the regime imposed a May 1 deadline for Craiova’s repairs to be completed. Local officials estimated they mobilized more than two thousand people, “citizens, university students, high school students, and teachers,” to make repairs.⁴⁸

As Chapters Four and Five detail, the Ceaușescu regime prematurely ended its assessment of and significant repairs to residential buildings damaged by the 1977 earthquake. When confronted with the challenges either to demolish or repair, the regime ultimately did little. New research suggests that the Ceaușescu regime’s official housing damage reports undercounted the earthquake damage. Using a four-volume regime-produced, unpublished 1978 report, Georgescu and Pomonis estimate that the earthquake damaged 12% of Romania’s total housing

⁴⁴ This was in Dej County where the town Craiova sits. ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 17 reverse.

⁴⁵ *Idem*.

⁴⁶ The Interior Ministry listed 13.77 million Romanian Lei, see ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 36. The regime made a similar plan for Prahova, where Romania’s oil fields and petrochemical refineries were located; officials requested and a budgetary supplement of 12.4 million Romanian Lei for repairs to more than 330 industrial and 29 apartment buildings. See ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 36 and 44.

⁴⁷ ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 44.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 17-17 reverse.

stock.⁴⁹ They argue that official contemporary damage reports were misleading and that those inaccurate reports affected the country's economic recovery and influenced the rate and types of loans it received from international organizations, such as the World Bank. Of those losses, Georgescu and Pomonis estimate that 35,600 housing units were uninhabitable and half of the housing stock damaged needed significant reinforcement repairs to bring it up to the earthquake code. This new analysis of previously unpublished data reveals that the regime knew about an additional 81,902 housing units affected by the earthquake were not reported to the World Bank in 1978.

Georgescu and Pomonis suggest the regime did not report the full extent of the housing damage and losses because it was not “sufficiently prepared to gather data and investigate the loss in all aspects.”⁵⁰ They claim it underestimated or was unrealistic in its loss and replacement cost estimates because it “relied on conventional average apartment areas and fixed costs for repair” and did not calculate the more extreme reinforcement needs from the earthquake damage.⁵¹ As Gail Kligman argues in her work on the Ceaușescu regime's anti-abortion and anti-contraception, or “pro-natalist” policy, when the regime did not like what data showed, it stopped, or chose not to collect them.⁵² Georgescu and Pomonis hint at this without saying it directly when they argue that the regime feared the potential credit risk and embarrassment that might come from such high loss reports. They also argue that the regime's admission of its failure to repair the housing damage might have “tarnish[ed] Romania's image” in the outside

⁴⁹ Using regime-collected data from 1977-1978, they estimate 742,259 dwellings. Georgescu and Pomonis, “The Romanian Earthquake,” 2.

⁵⁰ Georgescu and Pomonis, “The Romanian Earthquake,” 7.

⁵¹ *Idem.*

⁵² Kligman, *Politics of Duplicity*, 12.

world.⁵³ I do not think it was so complicated. Rather, the regime saw the volume of repairs needed and estimated the cost. Because residential housing, in the leaders' view, did not directly affect economic production, they left those repairs in residents' hands.

In line with its modernization goals, the regime turned to build new housing instead. In June 1978, it drafted a new five-year national and rural systemization plan for more than two hundred villages, towns, and cities. The plan included a new "large investment plan" for "over one million homes" across Romania to help ameliorate the housing shortage.⁵⁴ That autumn, in October 1978, Ceaușescu gave urban planning orders to demolish old and construct new buildings in Bucharest neighborhoods outside the Uranus Hill neighborhood.⁵⁵ The regime implemented plans for new housing, but there was little follow through. Rather, in Bucharest, it focused on the construction of the Civic Center Project.

Bucharest's "Red Dot" Buildings: Condemned to Collapse with the Next Strong Earthquake

Today a serious public risk still lingers in Bucharest from the 1977 recovery efforts: thousands of buildings are structurally unsafe in the case of the next strong earthquake. We do not know when that will happen, only that it will as Romania is one of the most seismically vulnerable places in Europe. Since the devastating earthquake in 1977, half a dozen significant

⁵³ Georgescu and Pomonis, "The Romanian Earthquake," 7.

⁵⁴ June 21, 1978, ANR, CCRCP, Economics 198/1978, 51-56.

⁵⁵ October 3, 1978, Ibid., 87.

earthquakes have occurred, but they have led to only a few deaths and a few hundred injuries.⁵⁶

The question in Romania is not if the next significant earthquake will happen, but when. Nicolae Ceaușescu and the leaders in his regime lived through the devastating effects of the 1940 and the 1977 earthquake, yet did little following 1977 to prepare the country for the next.

After 1989 Romanian governments assessed about 2,500 buildings in Bucharest alone for their structural stability in the next earthquake and classified more than seven hundred according to a graduated, at-risk seismic class. More than half of those are predicted to collapse in the next earthquake.⁵⁷ The risks associated with the hundreds – if not thousands – of buildings are a direct legacy of the Ceaușescu regime's July 1977 order to end assessments and hasten repairs.

It was not until after 1989 that Romania established and enforced more stringent seismic building codes and assessments. The government made significant changes in 1991 and 1992, revised in 1997.⁵⁸ Under Ceaușescu the communist government did revise building codes for new construction immediately following the 1977 earthquake and again in 1981. In 1977 Bucharest and Romania's seismic zones maps were also amended, which required increased structural resistance in new construction. The government extended the requirement for resistance to the Richter Scale 7.0 to areas further west of the Vrancea epicenter and regulated construction in parts of Bucharest be resistant to quakes of an 8.5 intensity.⁵⁹ But, again, the Ceaușescu regime did little to repair or assist with existing damage to residential housing.

⁵⁶ Earthquakes that registered above Richter Scale 5.0 struck Romania in 1986, 1990, 1991, 2004, 2014, and 2016.

⁵⁷ Bucharest Mayor's Office, "Technical Expert List of Building Seismic Risk."

⁵⁸ Georgescu, "Earthquake Engineering," 7.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

After Ceaușescu's fall, the post-1989 government began a building stability assessment process and developed a tiered seismic risk classification system.⁶⁰ Based on legislation passed in 1994, between 1994 and 1996 experts assessed, in particular, buildings constructed before 1940 of six stories or higher for their seismic risk. After 1997 private owners had to pay for such assessments themselves.⁶¹ Using that data, the Romanian government classified those buildings into a tiered seismic risk classes, the list of which the Bucharest Mayor's office maintains and makes publicly available.⁶² The government has also assessed buildings outside the capital, but only the Bucharest list is publicly available.

The tiered classification system includes four "classes" for buildings six stories or taller considered to be seismically vulnerable. Class I are assessed as "likely to collapse in the next major earthquake."⁶³ In what the Bucharest mayor's office sees as an effort to alert Bucharesters and others to that public risk, the city has marked some of those Class I buildings with sign in the form of a giant "red dot" (*bulinea roșie*). Throughout Bucharest's compact city center, one can see these large "red dots" on hundreds of buildings. As of January 2017 the Bucharest mayor's office listed 349 buildings in Class I, those likely to collapse in case of earthquake; 327 in Class II, those highly likely to experience severe structural damage, but not collapse; 95 in Class III,

⁶⁰ Georgescu, "Earthquake Engineering," 9.

⁶¹ Sorin Penea, "Firea."

⁶² The office responsible is Direcția Investiții of the Direcția Generală Dezvoltare și Investiții of the Bucharest Mayor's Office, which frequently updates the list, "Listele imobilelor expertizate tehnic din punct de vedere al riscului seismic" accessed March 2, 2017, http://www.pmb.ro/servicii/alte_informatii/lista_imobilelor_exp/docs/Lista_imobilelor_expertizate.pdf

⁶³ Bucharest Mayor's Office, "Listele imobilelor expertizate tehnic," 2-10.

those likely to experience extensive damage although not necessarily structural; and six in Class IV, those that would expect some damage in a seismic event.⁶⁴



Figure 13. Apartment building in Bucharest with a prominent “red dot” indicating its assessment in Class I for seismic risk.⁶⁵

The government handled smaller, single-story to five-story, buildings differently. During the first years of the mid-1990s assessments, officials first classified more than 1,500 buildings into an “urgency” level (U1, U2 or U3), of which the six story and taller buildings were then assessed into one of the four seismic classes.⁶⁶ The smaller buildings remained with only an “urgency” designation. Many are either single-family homes or were constructed after 1940, both factors authorities and other specialists consider to have less risk than high-rises constructed earlier.

⁶⁴ Bucharest Mayor’s Office, “Listele imobileor expertizate tehnic,” 2-22.

⁶⁵ Located at 32 Saint Constantin Street, Bucharest July 1, 2014, photo by the author.

⁶⁶ Bucharest Mayor’s Office, “Listele imobileor expertizate tehnic,” 26-56.

The current classification of the Patria building, discussed in Chapter Four, is illustrative of one way in which Romanian officials have addressed the problem of seismically structurally unsafe buildings. In 1977 engineer Gheorghe Ursu recommended structural repairs, which regime officials dismissed.⁶⁷ Since the mid-1990s, the Patria has been listed in Class I seismic risk, yet at the same time, the post-1989 government placed it on an historical monuments and national treasures list.⁶⁸ The Patria building marked Romania's entrance into modern architecture.⁶⁹ Finished in 1931, architectural scholars and Romanian authorities consider it the country's first important modernist building, designed by Horea Creangă, grandson of one of Romania's most noted children's author, along with his wife and another colleague. While we do not know which repairs the Ceaușescu regime completed to the Patria building, if any, its listing today in Class I seismic risk clearly suggests it did not do enough. That Romanian authorities listed the building both as a national treasure and allowed it to remain structurally unsafe points to the inaction of the post-1989 government. Furthermore, only in 2015 did new legislation prohibit "large groups" from gathering in buildings classified as Class I. This law closed, for example, the movie theatre that operated in the Patria building.⁷⁰ The state of the Patria building highlights inconsistencies in Romania's treatment of the earthquake damaged buildings. Only in 2016 did repairs start on it.

⁶⁷ August 3, 1977, CNSAS, D.13.339, v. 37, 373.

⁶⁸ Mihai Navodariu, a respected engineer, inspected it in 1993, accessed September 1, 2016, <http://www.revistaconstructiilor.eu/index.php/2014/11/01/personalitati-romanesti-in-constructii-mihai-navodariu/#.V8gGjiMrIb0>; Bucharest Mayor's Office, "Listele imobilelor expertizate tehnic," 2-10; and Romanian Ministry of Culture, National Registry of Historic Monuments, *Lista Monumentelor Istorice LMI*, 2015, code B-II-m-A-19116: 624, accessed September 1, 2016, <http://patrimoniul.gov.ro/images/lmi-2015/LMI-B.pdf>.

⁶⁹ Maria Bostenaru Dan, Alex Dill and Cristina Olga Gociman, *Digital architecture history of the first half of the 20th century in Europe*, (Ion Mincu Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015), 164.

⁷⁰ Cristina Raduta "Cinematograful Patria a fost închis pentru că funcționa într-o clădire cu bulină roșie," *Adevarul.ro*, December 4, 2015, accessed September 6, 2016, http://adevarul.ro/news/bucuresti/cinematograful-patria-fost-inchis-functiona-intr-o-cladire-bulina-rosie-1_5661b76e7d919ed50ee3da5d/index.html.

In the summer of 2014 I rented an apartment in a seven-story art deco building, constructed in 1938. It was conveniently located in the heart of Bucharest, within walking distance of the National Archives, within a block of one of the city's picturesque parks, ideal for my small children, and steps away from grocery stores, the post office, and public transportation. The apartment's owner assured me that since it stood through both the 1940 and 1977 earthquakes and its seismic classification was class II, all was fine and it was, of course, safe. One Friday evening a neighbor, whose three-legged ancient dog my four and six year old children befriended, knocked on our door to tell us that an assessment team had been out that day and recommended that the building's seismic classification be downgraded to Class I. The building needed immediate reinforcement to four of its ten support columns.⁷¹ After a sleepless night of tossing and turning, the next morning I toured the basement with her and watched as she easily pulled lengths of steel rebar wire from the interior of several of the building's enormous support columns, as concrete crumbling out of them. The structural stability of the building did not change over night, but my awareness of it did. We moved a week later.

I am not sure if that 2014 reassessment of the apartment building where I stayed was the first since the its initial assessment and classification into Class II seismic risk fourteen years earlier. Like the residents in my building, even with an assessment and awareness of risk, few made necessary reinforcement repairs even though the government provided support to do so. Under 1994 legislation that started the building seismic stability assessment and classification system, the Romanian government also assisted building owners to assess and reinforce damaged

⁷¹ We stayed at 4 Gheorghe Lazar, building #139 in group II, Bucharest Mayor's Office, "Listele imobileor expertizate tehnic," 14.

buildings. It allowed for full government funding for the technical assessment of residential buildings constructed before 1977. Owners had access to twenty-five year interest-free loans to pay for reinforcement work, as well as to smaller benefits, such as a tax exemption for the building permit. For owners with a monthly salary lower than the state-calculated net average, the state allowed a tax exemption for the loan payment.⁷²

Even with that government assistance, few owners have repaired their buildings. Bringing a multi-story high-rise building up to seismic code is an arduous and expensive project and one Romanian officials have left-up to private building owners. While the national and Bucharest municipal governments have begun initiatives to assess and assist with repairs, the logistics and cost to do so have been prohibitive for private owners. Some think the repair costs are not a good investment and prefer to buy a new — and presumably safer — apartment as the average cost of one in the city (although outside its center) is about equal to reinforcement costs for an old one.⁷³ Furthermore, since the mid-1990s, owners of seismically at-risk buildings are not required by law to insure them.⁷⁴

In the case of my building, someone finally dropped a dime, and called for a team to reassess the building's structural integrity. The estimated cost of the experts' recommended repairs was about \$6,000, or \$300 a unit. This was quite low in comparison to the average. According to the Bucharest Mayor's Office's director, the cost to bring an apartment building to

⁷² Catiusa Ivanov, "Guvernul a aprobat planul de consolidare a cladirilor cu bulină roșie: In 2015 vor incepe lucrarile la 25 de cladiri din Bucuresti si din tara," Hotnews.ro (April 2, 2015), accessed September 7, 2016, http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-administratie_locala-19814150-guvernul-aprobat-planul-consolidare-cladirilor-bulina-rosie-2015-vor-incepe-lucrarile-25-cladiri-din-bucuresti-din-tara.htm.

⁷³ Bucharest cost of living averages for September 2016, accessed September 20, 2016, http://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/city_result.jsp?country=Romania&city=Bucharest.

⁷⁴ Georgescu, "Earthquake Engineering," 7.

code can range widely, anywhere from ten to as much as forty-five USD per square foot.⁷⁵ As many of the buildings are more than seventy years old, owners often choose also to upgrade heating, cooling, security, and plumbing systems, which account for the higher repair costs. Experts agree on an average cost of about nineteen US dollars per square foot.⁷⁶ A typical one-bedroom apartment in Bucharest is 540 square feet, arriving at a base cost for structural repairs of \$10,260, exponentially higher than the \$300 asked of each of my neighbors that summer.

The \$300 per apartment owners' share to reinforce my former building was a bargain. In a different 2016 case, city officials planned to bring to code an eight-story, twenty-five unit apartment building constructed in 1915. The state offered to pay a private company about \$8,400 per apartment to reinforce the building. The project moved forward without public comment or an open bid.⁷⁷ The building is one of eighty included in a February 2016 "action plan" passed by Romania's Parliament, the most recent effort to bring buildings assessed in Class I seismic risk up to code. Under the 2016 plan, reinforcement work was to begin on almost three dozen buildings (almost all in Bucharest), with work plans in the pipeline for an additional four dozen, almost three-quarters of which are in the capital.⁷⁸ The Romanian Parliament approved 6.3 million US dollars from the state budget to support the repairs in the 2016 action plan.⁷⁹ It

⁷⁵ Romanian officials estimate the cost at 100-450 Euros/square meter. See Peneş, "Firea."

⁷⁶ Estimated at 180 Euros/square meter, calculated with the 20% Value Added Tax (VAT) on top of the average 150 Euro/square meter, Emil Sever Georgescu, personal correspondence, September 5, 2016.

⁷⁷ The total cost was \$210,000. Cristina Macuc, "Incepe consolidarea cladirilor cu bulină roşie. Pe listă, un bloc vechi de 100 de ani de langa Intercontinental," Romania TV.net (June 21, 2016), accessed September 12, 2016, http://www.romaniatv.net/incepe-consolidarea-cladirilor-cu-bulina-rosie-pe-lista-un-bloc-vechi-de-100-de-ani-de-langa-intercontinental_299558.html#ixzz4K29dtcYF.

⁷⁸ Twenty-nine of the 33 buildings slated for reinforcement work and 33 of the 47 for plans are in Bucharest, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://www.juridice.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/nf-1.pdf> and http://media.rtv.net/other/201606/anexa-cladiri_51347300_69565700.pdf

⁷⁹ In 2016, the Romanian government allocated 25 million Romanian Lei to *Ministerului Dezvoltării Regionale și Administrației Publice*, see Fundamental Notes to the Parliamentary Decision, 6, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://www.juridice.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/nf-1.pdf>.

should be noted that the government drafted a similar “action plan” in 2015, and more than 80% of the buildings on the 2016 plan were on the previous one. Even more sobering, the buildings planned for reinforcement work in the 2016 “action plan” represent only 16% of the buildings in the Class I seismic risk category. The sticking point is the government’s inability to exert pressure on private owners of residential buildings to make necessary seismic stability repairs. Nonetheless, officials have authorized and repaired public buildings with some success. They completed structural reinforcement at about a hundred schools, a theatre, the old mayor’s office building, and an information center. Outside the capital, the government completed structural repairs to seventy-five public buildings. Residential buildings are where the problems rest.

Residents and private owners have their own reasons to ignore or deny making necessary structural repairs to buildings likely to collapse in the next earthquake. For many, it is cost prohibitive, difficult, and inconvenient. For repairs to start, 100% of the building’s apartment owners must agree to make them. This is very difficult as people do not want the inconvenience, expense, or they do not believe either a major earthquake will strike in their lifetime or that their building would be damaged if it did. Sara, an 80-year old widow living alone in the apartment adjacent to ours, felt that our building would not reach consensus for the recommended reinforcement repairs elderly and landlords made up the majority of the building’s owners. They, like Sara, either do not have the means to move, believe there would not be a strong earthquake in their lifetime, or care if there was. Sara’s conviction that consensus was impossible was not

unique. A handful of requests to reinforce buildings have stalled in the Bucharest Mayor's Office for years because residents refused the reinforcement work and thus delayed plans.⁸⁰

People also do not repair their homes because reinforcement can often take months or years to complete. Residents usually have to vacate the building while repairs are being made. When I learned the building we were living in could potentially collapse during the next major earthquake, I moved myself and my children to another building, located on a different side of the central park, which residents had reinforced ten years after its initial seismic structural stability assessment.⁸¹ It is listed with seventy-nine other buildings in Bucharest that have been reinforced.⁸² Neighbors confirmed that the reinforcement work actually happened. Outside confirmation is important because of corruption in Romania's local, regional, and national governing agencies.

My elderly neighbor Sara was unhappy about the building's structural downgrade. She believed that her apartment's property value would plummet if repairs were not approved and lamented that her family's inheritance would be more of a burden than a benefit. In the two and a half years since Sara's building was assessed by a team into Class I, it still remains in Class II on the official list, inspiring little faith in city officials' ability to provide accurate information to the public. This is not uncommon. My story is one example from among many. Some mistrust the seismic classification list as corruption of public officials is not that uncommon in Romania. Owners could bribe public officials to upgrade a classification or leave a building off the list.⁸³

⁸⁰ Peneș, "Firea."

⁸¹ Building #31 at 44 Ion Brezoianu, see Bucharest Mayor's Office, "Listele imobileor expertizate tehnic," 22.

⁸² Bucharest Mayor's Office, "Listele imobileor expertizate tehnic," 22-25.

⁸³ In January 2017 hundreds of thousands of Romanians took to the streets and protested a government order that limited criminalized bribery offenses above \$48,000. Romanians continued to protest what they see as a corrupt

Strong motivations abound for keeping one’s home or business off the Class I list. Not all buildings classified in Class I, however, display the “red dot” sign. Some owners of buildings assessed into the Class I category have removed the “red dot” bolted into their building. Those with access to power, money or ingenuity can try to remove or disguise it, as one building owner did when he painted over the “red dot” in an attempt to camouflage it.



Figure 14. Painted over “red dot” Class I seismic risk sign above the handmade, home-printed sign in a plastic sleeve that states, “Attention, falling plaster.”⁸⁴

The “red dot” system, which mark buildings classified as likely to collapse in the next earthquake, is flawed. It does not fast-track a building for repairs. Owners can not buy home insurance for their homes in Class I categorized buildings, although in 2016 the Romanian

system even after the government overturned the order, accessed January 23, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/22/thousands-march-against-prison-pardons-in-romania> Transparency International ranked Romania 57 on their 2016 “Corruption Perception Index” a recent and significant movement towards a more corrupt rating, accessed February 22, 2017, http://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016.

⁸⁴ On the apartment building at 9 Șipotul Fantanilor, Bucharest, July 1, 2014, photo by author.

Parliament introduced legislation to do so.⁸⁵ Owners fear decreased property values, lower rents, and lost business revenue from the designation. In the meantime, rents in “red dot” buildings are significantly lower than those in allegedly safer buildings. Some Bucharesters seize the opportunity to live in the city center with inexpensive rent. Yet for many residents, primarily the elderly, it is not a choice. They do not have the means to move to a safer place. Of the 350 or so buildings in Class I, only three have started reinforcement repairs, another eleven have drafted contracts with construction companies for the work, and another sixty-two have filed legal documents with their buildings’ homeowners associations to make plans for structural repairs.⁸⁶

How prepared is Romania, and in particular Bucharest, today for the next strong earthquake? No one can predict the next earthquake. Factors such as the quake’s epicenter, depth, wave, and vibrational characteristics as well the time it strikes contribute to the scope of the damage, injuries, and deaths. The costs Romania would experience to repair damage from the next major earthquake are substantial, estimated at twenty billion US dollars for Bucharest alone.⁸⁷ Bucharesters, for the most part, do not fear the next earthquake. Many believe that if a building survived both the 1940 and 1977 earthquakes, and smaller ones in 1986 and 1990, that it must be resistant to the next big earthquake. This logic, of course, is flawed. A 2004 study with

⁸⁵ Catiusa Ivanov, “Proiect de lege: Consolidarea cladirilor incadrate in clasa I de risc seismic si care prezinta pericol public ar putea fi gratuita pentru proprietari, banii urmand sa fie platiti de catre stat” Hotnews.ro (February 11, 2016) accessed September 6, 2016, http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-administratie_locala-20788565-proiect-lege-consolidarea-cladirilor-incadrate-clasa-risc-seismic-care-prezinta-pericol-public-putea-gratuita-pentru-proprietari-banii-urmand-fie-platiti-catre-stat.htm.

⁸⁶ Peneş, “Firea.”

⁸⁷ Andrei Bala and Dragos Toma-Danila, “The Strong Romanian Earthquakes of 10.11.1940 and 4.03.1977. Lessons Learned and Forgotten?” in *The 1940 Vrancea Earthquake. Issues, Insights, and Lessons Learnt: Proceedings of the Symposium Commemorating 75 Years from November 10, 1940 Vrancea Earthquake*, eds. Radu Văcăreanu and Constantin Ionescu (Switzerland, Springer International Publishing, 2016), 31.

Bucharesters who had lived through at least one strong earthquake found that only 10% feared the next one, and slightly more than half were “completely indifferent” to the risk.⁸⁸

Interestingly, higher education was correlated with higher indifference. A third of respondents believed there would “never be such an event in Bucharest.”⁸⁹ Only 15% expected the Romanian government to help them in such a case. In addition to the legislation and plans to reinforce damaged buildings, the Inspector General for Emergency Situations is responsible for earthquake preparedness and supports the campaign, “Don’t Shake During the Earthquake,” to educate the public in earthquake preparedness.⁹⁰ A 2004 study concluded that “the population living in Bucharest is not prepared to cope with the consequences of a major earthquake.”⁹¹

⁸⁸ Iuliana Armas, “Earthquake Risk Perception in Bucharest, Romania,” in *Risk Analysis*, Vol. 26, No. 5, (2006), 1229, accessed January 23, 2017, <http://www.geo.mtu.edu/rs4hazards/links/Social-KateG/Attachments%20Used/RomaniaRiskPerception.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Armas, “Earthquake Risk Perception,” 1231.

⁹⁰ See the public information flyers, brochures and 30 second short, animated videos that instruct how to prepare and what to do during an earthquake, accessed January 21, 2017, <http://www.nutremurlacutremur.ro/campanie.htm>.

⁹¹ Armas, “Earthquake Risk Perception,” 1233.

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Appendix

List of the 1977 Earthquake Victims

While incomplete, this is the most comprehensive March 4, 1977, earthquake victims list published to date.¹ Compiled from March 1977 regime produced documents, it includes 1,313 identified victims: the 1,162 people who died in Bucharest; and the 151 who died in the counties outside it, indicated by +. Some of the victims were Bucharest “migrants,” those who did not have legal residency in the capital, but who died there. They are indicated with *. A handful of foreigners died, too. They were from Congo, Greece, Poland, and Zaire. One undated list of “identified Bucharest victims” provided “occupation” for many adults and the age of some children.

Last Name, First Name	Address	occupation/age
1. Adam, Ingeborg	Victor Hugo 3, Timisoara	university student
2. Adam, Paraschiva	C.A. Rosetti 14, ap. 40, Bucharest	laborer
3. Albin, Hana	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
4. Alexandru, Stefan	Pantelimon 12, B.6, ap.4, Bucharest	laborer
5. Alexe, Ion	com. Oatja, Arges	tinsmith
6. Alterescu, Fany	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
7. Alterescu, Mendel	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
8. Ambrus, Elena	Pictor Grigorescu 2, ap. 40, Buch.	engineer
9. Ambrus, Letitia	C.A. Rosetti 14, ap. 53, Bucharest	pensioner
10. Anahorlis, Dumitru-Const.	Titu, sat. Salcuta, Dimbovita	teacher
11. Anastasiu, Filiftea	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	telephone operator
12. Andreescu, Aurelia	Caliman 54, Ploiesti, Prahova	
13. Andrei, Doina	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	student

¹ A March 14, 1977, list prepared by the Bucharest Executive Committee of those who died in Bucharest, CNSAS, 14.800 v. 1, 44-78 reverse; an undated “continuation of the list” at CNSAS, 14.800 v. 1, 74-78 reverse; and the undated, “Identified Bucharest March 4, 1977, Earthquake Victims” list at CNSAS, 14.800 v. 1, 14-43 reverse. NB: I omitted the Romanian diacritics as did the lists.

14. Andrei, Elena	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	medical assistant
15. Andrei, Elena Cristina	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	student
16. Andrei, Nicolae	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	police officer
17. Andrei, Victoria+	str. Valea Rosie bl. K, sc. 5, ap. 11, Craiova, Dolj	
18. Angelescu, Maria	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
19. Angelescu, Mihai Dan	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	student
20. Angelescu, Mircea	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	engineer
21. Angelescu, Niculina	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	engineer
22. Anghel, Ana	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap 11, Buch.	housewife
23. Anghel, Felix	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap 11, Buch.	child (age 3)
24. Anghel, Petre-Mircea	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap.11, Buch.	police officer
25. Anghelescu, Gheorghe D. S.	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
26. Anghelescu, Mihail	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	child
27. Anghelache, Grigore+	Calugareni, Prahova	
28. Antoniu, Maria	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	clerk
29. Antoniu, Mihaela L.	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	university student
30. Antoniu, Victor Paul	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	officer
31. Apetroaie, Adrian	com. Unteni, Botosani	student
32. Apostol, Gheorghe	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
33. Apostol, Stefana	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
34. Apostolescu, Ana	Colonadelor 3, et. 10, ap. 5, Buch.	clerk
35. Apostolescu, Armand	Colonadelor 3, et. 10, ap. 5, Buch.	
36. Arapu, Constantin	Giurgiului 48, Zimnicea	driver
37. Arapu, Eugenia F.	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
38. Arghir, Ioana	Anastasie Simu 6, ap. 17, Bucharest	pensioner
39. Aron-Schwartz, Ana	Florilor 22, Bucharest	pensioner
40. Arseni, Paula	Magheru 26, Bucharest	housewife
41. Arseni, Varvara	Magheru 26, Bucharest	housewife
42. Atanasiu, Henry	Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	pensioner
43. Aurica, Sanda	sat.Comaneasca, com.T.Vladimirescu, jud.Braila	pensioner
44. Avasiloaei, Jenita	Snagov 7, ap. 34, Bucharest	teacher
45. Avasiloaie, Gheorghe	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 41, Bucharest	inspector
46. Baba, Ionita	Everest 64, Bucharest	locksmith
47. Baban, Gheorghe	Victoriei 142-146, Bucharest	pensioner
48. Bacanu, Bogdan	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	student
49. Bacanu, Cristina Anca	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	elementary student
50. Babau, Ion+	str. Elena Doamna nr. 15, Ploiesti	
51. Baconski, Anatol	T. Arghezi 26, Bucharest	writer
52. Bacau, Marioara+	com. Babaita, jud. Teleorman	
53. Badea, Adriana	Santa 1-3, com. Farcasele, jud. Olt	domestic worker
54. Badea, Margareta	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	singer
55. Badulescu, Ipsilante Ilie	Dristor 97, Bucharest	engineer
56. Bagayamukwe, Walwimbo*	(home Zaire)	researcher
57. Bakonsky, Clara	T. Arghezi 26, Bucharest	housewife
58. Balaban, Marioara	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 57, Bucharest	pensioner
59. Balaban, Nicolae	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 57, Bucharest	pensioner

60. Balan, Ilarie	Oltului 21, Bucharest	warehouse manager
61. Balanescu, Dumitru	Piscului 43, Bucharest	pensioner
62. Bals, Andrei	M. Eminescu 127, Bucharest	pensioner
63. Baltaretu, Ernest	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 12, Bucharest	engineer
64. Baltaretu, Isabela	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 12, Bucharest	child
65. Baltaretu, Mariana	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 12, Bucharest	housewife
66. Baltateanu, Alexandra	Gh. Doja 38, Alexandria	
67. Ban, Petru	Nitu Vasile 121 ap. 31, Bucharest	pensioner
68. Banaseanu, Julieta	Fundeni 2, Bucharest	housewife
69. Banga, Dumitru	Dragos Voda 43, Bucharest	pensioner
70. Banga, Zamfira	Dragos Voda 43, Bucharest	housewife
71. Banica, Elena	E. Racovita 21, ap. 11, Bucharest	research professor
72. Baraboiu, Voica+	com. Minzatesti, jud. Buzau	
73. Barasi, Antoneta	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
74. Barbu, Gheorghe	Darasti, Ilfov	
75. Barbu, Mimi	com. Cudalbi, jud. Galati	
76. Bardan, Dumitru	Balcescu 3, Bucharest	pensioner
77. Barna, Alexandru Lucian	Sahia 58, Bucharest	child
78. Barna, Gloria	Sahia 58, Bucharest	architect
79. Barna, Vasile-Lucian	Sahia 58, Bucharest	engineer
80. Baroi, Maria*	Stefan cel Mare 15, Bucharest (home: com. Tunari, Ilfov)	baker
81. Barth, Catharina	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	housewife
82. Bartos, Dominic	Saturn 27, sc. A, ap. 1, Brasov	police officer
83. Basarabianu, Patru	T. Arghezi 1, et. 7, ap. 47, Buch.	driver
84. Basturescu, Traian	Virgiliu 22, Bucharest	pensioner
85. Bazacliu, Maria	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	
86. Bazgan, Paraschiva	Dreptaii 29 B, Bucharest	pensioner
87. Beleiu, Traian	Avram Iancu, Alba	
88. Belicov, Anastasia Luiza	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pharmacist
89. Belicov, Petre	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
90. Bena, Anca Rodica	Parcul Crizantemelor, vila D.7, Craiova	
91. Bene, Rodica Ana	Dentei 63 Simleul Silvaniei, Salaj	university student
92. Benescu, Marina	Sahia 58, Bucharest	
93. Bidilica, Maria Carmen	Uioara 14, bl. 33, sc.2, ap 112, Buch.	merchant
94. Bidiu, Luminita-Forina	Mihaila Radu 13, Bucharest	student
95. Bijutescu, Costel	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
96. Bilivsi, Vasile	Poenaru Bordea 18, S.5, ap.11, Buch	pensioner
97. Bintu, Nicolai	I.J. Suceava, Suceava	
98. Biolan, Aurica	Polizu 28, Bucharest	pensioner
99. Birladeanu, Maria	Sahia 58, ap. 16 Bucharest	pensioner
100. Birlogeanu, Stefan	com. Baci Cotorani, jud. Teleorman	tailor
101. Birsan, Marta Elena	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
102. Birsan, Mircea	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
103. Birsanescu, Ileana	Greaca 33 A, Bucharest	economist
104. Birsanescu, Radu-Octavian	Ing. Racu 12, Bucharest	economist

105. Bită, Ecaterina	Pantelimon 4, Bl.B-13, Buch.	technical editor
106. Bivol, Sergiu+	str. V. Lupu nr. 102, Iași	
107. Blaga, Partenie	sat. Baci, com. Ruciu, Teleorman	carpenter
108. Bobes, Maria	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	public official
109. Bobes, Paul Teodor	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	public official
110. Boboia, Rozalia	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
111. Boc, Doina*	Lapusneanu 43, Bucharest (home: Dumbrava Rosie, jud. Neamt)	
112. Bocai, Florea+	com. Rusanesti, jud. Olt	
113. Bocanetu, Alexandru Catalin	Iulian Valaorii 10, Bucharest	theatre director
114. Bociu, Aurel	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
115. Bociu, Cecilia	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
116. Bogdan, Ioana+	com. Calarasi	
117. Bolat, Ioan	Chilia Veche 4, Bucharest	bakery manager
118. Bonciu, Balasea	Colonadelor 3, et. 8, ap. 6, Bucharest	pensioner
119. Bonini, Dariu-Cristina	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	child
120. Bota, Teodor*	Victoriei 37, Bucharest (home Coroisinmartin Soimus 260, jud. Mures)	iron turner
121. Botez, Constantina	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
122. Bourceanu, Argripina	Apolodor 31, ap 7, Bucharest	teacher
123. Bourceanu, Vasile	Apolodor 31, ap 7, Bucharest	law student
124. Bragari, Ligia	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	housewife
125. Bragari, Nicolae	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	student
126. Bragari, Parfenie	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
127. Bratu, Bianca	Magheru 26, Bucharest	university professor
128. Bratu, Savin	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
129. Brincus, Daniel+	str. Brestei nr. 28, Craiova, Dolj	
130. Brintus, Ionel	T. Arghezi 1, et. 5, ap. 30, Bucharest	pensioner
131. Brintus, Rusanda	T. Arghezi 1, et. 5, ap. 30, Bucharest	pensioner
132. Brotman, Tirlea	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
133. Bruma, Ilarion	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
134. Bruma, Lidia	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
135. Bucsan, Elisabeta	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
136. Bucur, Aurel Grigore	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap 13, Buch.	doctor
137. Bucur, Laura	Ripiceni 2, bl. 12, sc.1, ap.35, Buch.	engineer
138. Bucur, Maria	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap 13, Buch.	architect
139. Bucur, Maria	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
140. Bucur, Vasile	Soldanu, sat Negoesti, jud. Ilfov	mechanic
141. Bucurescu, Alexandru	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	economist
142. Bucurescu, Claudia	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	project manager
143. Bucuroiu, Georgeta*	Berveni 50, Bucharest (home Com. Varbilau, sat. Cotofenesti, jud. Prahova)	
144. Bugulet, Sofia	Snagov 52, Bucharest	iron stoker
145. Buh, Aglaia	Dr. Felix 37, Bucharest	pensioner
146. Bulac, Florea	București-Ploiesti 44, Bucharest	mechanic
147. Bulai, Maria	Galati 33, Bucharest	pensioner

148. Bulandra, Gheorghe	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
149. Bungete, Niculina	Izvor 10, Bucharest	laborer
150. Bunica, Tudor+	str. Oltet, nr. 13, Craiova, jud. Dolj	
151. Burcea , Sevastita	Pacii 154-156, Bucharest	nurse (PhD)
152. Burchi, Maria	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
153. Burghiu, Ene	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
154. Burghiu, Lucia Sanda	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
155. Busch, Felicia	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
156. Busuioc, Ana	Grivitei 242, Bucharest	cashier
157. Busuiocanu, Ioan	Palas 3, Bucharest	technician
158. Butu, Lica	sat Sintesti, com. Vidra, jud. Ilfov	housewife
159. Butur, Teodora	Hristo Botev 10, ap. 26, Bucharest	pensioner
160. Buzincu, Jana Margareta	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	
161. Buzoianu, Stanca	Polona 102, Bucharest	operator
162. Caciula, Sorin*	Snagov 61, et. 3, ap. 4, Bucharest (home Independentei 2 Brasov)	student
163. Calavreza, Emanoil	Brezoianu 7, ap.52, Bucharest	pensioner
164. Calin, Maria	com. Domnesti, Ilfov	
165. Calin, Marin	Bolintin Vale, Ilfov	
166. Calota, Stefania	Piata Unirii bl. L.1, Craiova	doctor
167. Calugareanu, Vasile+	com. Fulga, Prahova	
168. Campeanu, Simion	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	quartermaster
169. Capata, Mihail	Gurbanesti 21, Bucharest	
170. Capata, Stefania	Gurbanesti 21, Bucharest	tailor
171. Capatina, Adrian	Hristo Botev 10, et. 1, ap. 3, Buch.	child
172. Capatina, Alexandru	Hristo Botev 10, et. 1, ap. 3, Buch.	train mechanic
173. Capatina, Domnica	Hristo Botev 10, et. 1, ap. 3, Buch.	laborer
174. Capatina, Iosefina Rhea S.	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
175. Capatina, Silvana Michaela	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	child (age 7)
176. Capatina, Theodor	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	service advisor
177. Cappon, Emanuel	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	engineer
178. Cappon, Georgeta	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	accountant.
179. Carafizi, Cristian	1848, nr. 44, ap. 41, Bucharest	official
180. Caragiu, Toma	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	actor
181. Caraman, Despina	Preda Buzescu 8, Constanta	pensioner
182. Caraman, Horia	Karl Marx B1.119 C, ap.11, Buzau	student
183. Caraus, Luca+	Catina, Buzau	
184. Carol, Corneliu Pericle	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	teacher
185. Carp, Lisetta	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
186. Carp, Saul	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	public official
187. Carpen, Aurelia	com. Podenii Noi, Prahova	
188. Carstea, Simona	Pacii 7, Bucharest	lab worker
189. Catrina, Gheorghe	V. Babes 9 Timisoara	professor
190. Catut , Lucica Ana	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	teacher
191. Caurea , Daniela Ecaterina	Prelungirea Ghencea 20, Bucharest	teacher
192. Cazac, Constantin	com. Badeuti, Suceava	

193. Cazacu, Antonina	Balcescu 3-5, ap. 105, Bucharest	pensioner
194. Cazacu, Eustatiu	Balcescu 3-5, ap. 105, Bucharest	pensioner
195. Ceaușescu, Afrodita	Sanatatii 18, Rosiori de Vede, Teleorman	laborer
196. Ceaușescu, Elena*	Iacobeni 3, Bucharest (home sr. Sanatatii 18, Rosiorii de Vede)	clerk
197. Celea, Iuliana	Apolodor 31, et. 5, ap. 23, Buch.	economist
198. Cercel, Stefan	com. Priboieni, Arges	driver
199. Cerchia, Nicolae	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	economist
200. Cerchia, Sofia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	economist
201. Cernea, Natalia	Snagov 52, Bucharest	pensioner
202. Cernomorcenco, Ana	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
203. Chear, Florea Florentina	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
204. Chele, Eugeniu	Brezoianu 7, et. 2, ap.9, Bucharest	editor
205. Chern, Avram	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
206. Chern, Hetty	Sahia 58, Bucharest	Janitor
207. Chicioara, Alda	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	teacher
208. Chicioara, Corneliu	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 1, Bucharest	engineer
209. Chiculita, Ilinca	com. Ganesti, Galati	pensioner
210. Chiculita, Vasile	Hristo Botev 10, et. 7, ap. 3, Buch.	public official
211. Chirani, Stelian	I.L. Caragiale 11, Tulcea, Dobrogea	pensioner
212. Chirca, Cezar	Stefan Cel Mare, 378, Braila	janitor
213. Chiriacescu, Adelina-E.+	str. Frunze nr. 40, Craiova, Dolj	
214. Chiribau, Olga	V.I. Lenin 74 Piatra Neamt, Neamt	teacher
215. Chirila, Ruxandra+	str. Mare nr. 356, Focsani, Vrancea	
216. Chisiu, Nicolae	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	medical researcher
217. Chitic, Lenuta	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	stenographer
218. Chitic, Petre	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	officer
219. Chivu, Nicolae	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
220. Cimpeanu, Elena	Magheru 26 / Intr. Jarului 2, Buch.	teacher
221. Cimpeanu, Vladut	Magheru 26, Bucharest	student
222. Cimporescu, Bogdan M.	Sahia 58, Bucharest	student
223. Cimporescu, Cringuta Ileana	Sahia 58, Bucharest	housewife
224. Cimporescu, Dionel	Sahia 58, Bucharest	engineer
225. Cioaba, Constantina	Serg. Lataratu 50, Bucharest	caregiver
226. Cioana, Marioara*	C.A. Rosetti 7-0, Bucharest (home Salasul de Sus jud. Hunadoara)	
227. Ciocan, Gheorghe	Popa Nan 172, Bucharest	driver
228. Ciocan, Marin+	str. Craiovitei nr 9, bl. 33, sc. 6, ap. 18, Craiova	
229. Ciochie, Floarea+	str. M. Basarab nr. 12, Craiova	
230. Ciociltan, Corina-Alexandra	Pacii 7, bl. 0D-16, Bucharest	child (age 18 months)
231. Cioclea, Mihail	Armenis, bl. Y-5, 8, ap. 120, Buch.	foreman
232. Cioescu, Florin-Neculai	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	academic
233. Cirjanu, Leontina	com. Ganesti, Galati	student
234. Cirlan, Doina	Pacii 7, Bucharest	student
235. Cirlan, Maria	Pacii 7, Bucharest	nurse (PhD)
236. Cirlan, Meita	Pacii 7, bl. 0D-16, Bucharest	public official

237. Cirstea, Mircea Eugen	Rahovei 406 Bucharest	caregiver supervisor
238. Cirstei, Agripina	Pacii 7, bl. 0D-16, Bucharest	laborer
239. Cirstei, George Roberto	Pacii 7, bl. 0D-16, Bucharest	child (age 2)
240. Cirstei, Nicolae	Pacii 7, bl. 0D-16, Bucharest	factory foreman
241. Cismas, Nicolae+	Ucea, Brasov	
242. Ciurea, Eufrosina*	Salaj 61, Bucharest (home str. Calomfirescu 225 Turnu Severin)	pensioner
243. Ciuta, Constantin+	Telega, jud. Prahova	
244. Coanda, Ana	Botosani 16, Bucharest	laborer
245. Coban, Beatrice Victoria	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
246. Coban, Mihail	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
247. Coca, Petre	Popa Rusu 11 A, Bucharest	pensioner
248. Cojocaru, Vasile	Pacii 7, Bucharest	teacher
249. Cojocariu, Vasile+	str. Razoieni bl. C 1, et. 3, ap. 122, Pitești	
250. Coman, Ioana	Dobra-Marcesti, Dimbovita	minor (age 16)
251. Coman, Theodor	Pacii, 48-50, bl. 2, et. 4, ap.58, Buch.	pensioner
252. Comsa, Elvira	C.A. Rosetti 14, ap. 76, Bucharest	statistician
253. Comsa, Vasilica (Emanuela)	C.A. Rosetti 14, et. 9, ap. 76, Buch.	engineer
254. Conea, Ana Dumitra	Sahia 1 / Al. Sahia 1-1, Bucharest	researcher
255. Cojocariu, Vasile+	str. Razoieni bl. C 1, et. 3, ap. 122, Pitești	
256. Constantinescu, Anoaleta	Magheru 26, ap 3, Bucharest	pensioner
257. Constantinescu, Bogdan-G.	A. Vlaicu 50, Bucharest	student
258. Constantinescu, Cecilia	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	pensioner
259. Constantinescu, Victoria	Vistierilor, 21, ap. 2, Bucharest	pensioner
260. Constantinescu, Viorica	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
261. Constantinidis, Panaiotis*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest (home Athens, Greece)	agronomist
262. Constantinidis, Paraschevi*	Athens Greece	commercial attache
263. Cordoneanu, Mihaela B.	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	child (age 8)
264. Cordoneanu, Mihai Razvan	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	child (age 8)
265. Cordoneanu, Stefanie Angela	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	engineer
266. Cornea, Alexandru	Snagov 52, Bucharest	engineer
267. Cornea, Elena	Snagov 52, Bucharest	janitor
268. Cornu, Pache Mihail	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
269. Cornu Maratea, Ioana-Maria	Brezoianu 7, ap. 43, Bucharest	pensioner
270. Corpodean, Ana	Selari 14, Bucharest	elementary student
271. Cosoianu, Ioana Maria	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	child
272. Cosoianu, Ruxandra Sofia	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	architect
273. Costa, Foru Olga	Pictor Grigorescu 2, ap. 50, Buch.	pensioner
274. Costache, Florea+	com. Costesti, jud. Arges	
275. Costin, Elena*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest (home com. Mihailasti, jud. Ilfov)	university student
276. Cotau, Lapadat*	D. Golescu 4, ap 5, OR Str. Salcutei 23, Buch.	
277. Cotco, Silvia	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	
278. Cotovitchi, Valentin	Ctin Brincusi 1, Bl. D 16, Bucharest	technician

279. Covaci, Maria	Gh. Doja 29, Bucharest	economist
280. Craciun, Grigorie	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	lawyer
281. Craciunescu, Niculina	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	pensioner
282. Craciunescu, Sergiu-Iulian+	str. Gh. Doja nr. 37, Alexandria , jud.	Teleorman
283. Craciunescu, Vasile	Nazuintei 6, Bucharest	iron turner
284. Craineanu, Maria	Godeni, jud. Arges	pensioner
285. Cretoiu, Stefan	Anastasiu Simu 6, et. 4, Bucharest	pensioner
286. Cretoiu , Georgeta Aneta M.	Anastasiu Simu 6, Bucharest	janitor
287. Cretu, Atena Anca Nicoleta	Victoriei 1, Bucharest	student
288. Cringusi, Susana	Galati 33, Bucharest	pensioner
289. Cristescu, Alexandru+	Motru, bl. H.3, sc.5, ap. 15, Motru, jud. Dolj	
290. Crisanu, Ecaterina	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	pensioner
291. Cristea, Eugen	Pacii 7, bl 0D-16, ap. 248, Buch.	child
292. Cristea, Eugenia	Pacii 7, bl 0D-16, ap. 248, Buch.	weaver
293. Cristea, Vasile	Pacii 7, bl 0D-16, ap. 248, Buch.	iron turner
294. Cristescu, Costel	Horbotei 8, et. 8, ap. 135, Bucharest	store manager
295. Cristescu, Ecaterina	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	pensioner
296. Cristescu, Niculae	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	pensioner
297. Cristi, Boris	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	
298. Cristodorescu, Elisa Beta M.	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	technical reviewer
299. Crocos, Gabriela Stancuta	Carpati 23, Hunedoara, Hunedoara	university student
300. Crocos, Mihaela Codruta	Carpati 23, Hunedoara, Hunedoara	university student
301. Tailoru, Vasile	Mosilor 71, Bucharest	mechanic
302. Crutescu, Beatrice Michette	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 4, Bucharest	pensioner
303. Cucu, Elena	com. Andresesti, Ialomita	pensioner
304. Cucu, Olga	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	teacher
305. Cucu, Trandafira*	Sf. Vineri 35, Bucharest	housewife
	(home com. Moara Vlasiei, jud. Ilfov)	
306. Cucu, Ygnes Georgiana	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	child (age 9)
307. Cunita, Silvia+	str. Valea rosie bl.22, sc. 4, ap. 1, Craiova	
308. Daboveanu, Elena	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
309. Damaschin, Dorin	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
310. Damoc, Adriana-Eliza*	Somesu Mare 2, Bucharest	
	(home Oltenitei 84 Bucharest)	
311. Dan, Deleanu Verona	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
312. Dan, Ilinca	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
313. Danila, Marita	23 August 44, Tunari, Ilfov	secretary
314. Dankanits, Adam	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	editor
315. Dankanits, Laszlo	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	student
316. Dariu, Aurora-Neti-Maria	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
317. Dariu, Gheorghe	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
318. Dascalu, Elena	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
319. Dascalu, Gabriel	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	senior inspector
320. Dascalu, Paraschiva	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	senior inspector
321. Dascalu , Andrei	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	dentist

322. Davidescu, Elena Olga V.	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
323. Decu, Ana	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
324. Dediu, Elena	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 46, Bucharest	accountant
325. Dediu, Stefan	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 46, Bucharest	doctor
326. Delian , Linorie	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
327. Denghel, Ioana*	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest (home com. Turnu Rosu, jud. Sibiu)	pensioner
328. Diaconescu, Dana-Cristina	Pacii 7, Bucharest	child
329. Diaconescu, Floarea	Pacii 7, Bucharest	weaver
330. Diaconescu, Ioan	Pacii 7, Bucharest	mechanic
331. Diaconescu, Niculina G.	Giulesti 42, Bucharest	pensioner
332. Dicu, Maria Hermina	Magheru 26, Bucharest	housewife
333. Dimitrescu, George Anton	Sahia 58, Bucharest	child
334. Dimitrescu, Gheorghe	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
335. Dimitrescu, Raluca D. L.	Sahia 58, Bucharest	lab worker
336. Dimitriu, Elena	Magheru 26, Bucharest	engineer
337. Dincă, Angela*	Poenaru Bordea 4, Bucharest (home com. Berceni, jud. Ilfov)	typist
338. Dincă, Fanita+	com. Ostroc, Constanta	
339. Dincă, Rada	Cozieni 4, Bucharest	engineer
340. Dinica, Ioana	Vidra, Ilfov	
341. Dinica, Maria	Vidra, Ilfov	
342. Dinopol, Aurelia	Anastasiu Simu 6, Bucharest	janitor
343. Dinu, Dumitru	Bursucani 12, Bucharest	housewife
344. Dinu, Petre	Biserica Amzei 7, Bucharest	teacher
345. Dionisie, Codruta-Maria	Cervului 11, Giurgiu	economist
346. Dita, Ion*	Dr. Staicovici 39, Bucharest (home com. Dragalina, jud. Ialomita)	electrician
347. Doaga, Margareta	Colonadelor 3, ap. 7, Bucharest	economist
348. Doaga, Radu	Colonadelor 3, ap. 7, Bucharest	
349. Dobre, Florica+	str. Cerbului nr. 35, Craiova	
350. Dobre, Gheorghe	Pacii 7, Bucharest	
351. Dobre, Ilie+	Str. Pentelimon nr. 3, Iași	
352. Dobre, Maria	Pacii 7, Bucharest	
353. Dobre, Stefan-Vasile	Mosilor 135, ap. 28, Bucharest	engineer
354. Dobrescu, Elena	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
355. Dobrescu, Ionela Florica S.	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	engineer
356. Dobrescu, Mihail Vasile	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	technical mechanic
357. Dobrescu, Nicolae	Birnova 93 A., Bucharest	mechanic
358. Domnisor , Ecaterina	Poenaru Bordea 18, Bucharest	pensioner
359. Dona, Dumitru Gabriel	Topraisar 13, Bucharest	child
360. Dona, Niculina-Gabriela*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest (home Petru Maior 94, Bucharest)	typist
361. Donea, Gabriela	Presei 9, ap.4, Bucharest	university student
362. Dorneanu, Dragos	Mosilor 95, Bucharest	child (age 6)

363. Dorneanu, Sorin	Mosilor 95, Bucharest	child (age 7)
364. Dorobantu, Eleonora	Faurei 5, bl. C 9, Bucharest	teacher
365. Dosa, Marioara	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	housewife
366. Dragan , Sofia	Sahia 58, Bucharest	photojournalist
367. Draghici, Lina	Bujoreni 23, et. 2 ap. 30, Bucharest	pensioner
368. Draghici, Mihail	com. Gaiseni, Ilfov	plumber
369. Draghioiu, Rozalia	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	cashier
370. Draghioiu , Nicolae	Mosilor 135, et. 4, ap. 13, Bucharest	police officer
371. Dragnea, Maria	Plopului 526, Afumati, Ilfov	dispatcher
372. Dragoescu, Niculina	Bibliotecii 6, et. 5, ap. 40, Bucharest	doctor
373. Dragomir, Maria	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	pensioner
374. Dragomir, Marin	Gh. Palos 15, Bucharest	tailor
375. Dragomirescu+ Maria	str. Brestei nr. 30, Craiova	
376. Dragu, Beatrice-Aneta*	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest (home Av. Draghicescu nr. 9)	pensioner
377. Dragu, Maria	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	housewife
378. Dragu, Viorica	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	engineer
379. Dragunoiu, Alexandru	Mosilor 135, et. 10 ap. 31, Bucharest	chemical engineer
380. Dragut, Ileana	Kiselef 10, Bucharest	caregiver
381. Drath, Sofiea	Mosilor 135, ap. 25, Bucharest	housewife
382. Drutu, Ecaterina+	str. Stefan Cel Mare nr. 49, Birlad, Vaslui	
383. Drutu, Catalina+	str. Stefan Cel Mare nr. 49, Birlad, Vaslui	
384. Dulhan, Ion	Jaristea, Vrancea	welder
385. Dumitrache, Ion	Pacii 7, Bucharest	
386. Dumitrescu, Alexandra+	com. Cervenia, jud. Teleorman	
387. Dumitras, Alexandru Oct.	Stefan cel Mare 1, Bucharest	officer
388. Dumitrescu, Avram Ion	Eroilor 12com. Pantelimon, Ilfov	tinsmith
389. Dumitrescu, Constantin	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
390. Dumitrescu, Constantin*	Independentei 290, Bucharest (home Tr. Severin, str. Crihala bl G-1, sc. B, et. 3,)	
391. Dumitrescu, Cornelia T.	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	engineer
392. Dumitrescu, Dumitru	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	meteorologist
393. Dumitrescu, Florian	Hristo Botev 10, et. 6, ap.18, Buch.	engineering director
394. Dumitrescu, George	Conductei 29-39, sc. B, ap. 41, Buch.	engineer
395. Dumitrescu, Marioara	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
396. Dumitrescu, Paraschiva	Sf. Elefterie 8, ap. 15, Bucharest	pensioner
397. Dumitrescu, Stefana	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	teacher
398. Dumitrescu, Tudor	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	janitor
399. Dumitrescu, Vasile	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 25, Bucharest	pensioner
400. Dumitriu, Dumitra	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
401. Dumitriu, Maria	Sahia 58, Bucharest	teacher
402. Dumitriu, Vasile	Sahia 58, Bucharest	
403. Dumitru, Aurel	com. Cozieni, jud. Buzau	
404. Dumitru, Gheorghe	Otopeni, Bucharest	
405. Dumitru, Ion	Fundeni, Ilfov	iron galvanizer

406. Dumitru, Vasile+	str. Brumarelelor bl. 132, ap 57, Ploiesti	
407. Duna, Vasilca	com. Grivita, Ilfov	teacher
408. Durlanescu, Aurel	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	police officer
409. Durlanescu, Verginia	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	official a PTTR
410. Dutchievici, Nicolae	Baba Novac 16, ap. 54, Bucharest	political "activist"
411. Dutchievici, Zoica	Baba Novac 16, ap. 54, Bucharest	planner
412. Eftimescu, Maria	Apolodor 27, Bucharest	
413. Eftimie , Ion	Caprioarei, Bucharest	unskilled laborer
414. Emanuel, Constanta	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
415. Emanuel, Eugeniu	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
416. Enache, Gheorghe	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	officer
417. Enache, Lucia	Veteranilor 7-9, Bucharest	scientific researcher
418. Enache, Olga	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
419. Enache, Petre	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	lawyer
420. Enache, Anca Mihaela	Colonadelor 3, et. 3, ap. 3, Buch.	child
421. Enachescu, Marioara	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
422. Enescu, Steliana+	str. Tunari nr. 42, Ploiesti	
423. Facaianu, Maria	com. Dobirlau-Mareuti, Covasna	janitor
424. Farcas, Floarea	Despot Voda 26, Bucharest	cook
425. Feldman, Sofia+	str. Alex. Cel Bun 2, Bacau	
426. Fer, Maria	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	engineer
427. Fer, Nicolae Jisus	com. Sarmasag, sat. Moiad, Salaj	professor
428. Feteanu, Ion	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	forestry engineer
429. Feteanu, Radu	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	child
430. Feteanu, Steliana	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	chemist
431. Fieraru, Ecaterina	Tamiioarei 105, Bucharest	baby
432. Fieraru, Ioana+	str. Bujorului nr. 23, Craiova	
433. Filip, Ioan+	str. Republicii nr. 191, Birlad, Vaslui	
434. Filipan, Maria	Anastasiu Simu 6, et.4, ap.23, Buch.	pensioner
435. Finchelstein, Anna	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
436. Finchelstein, Sergine Mihaila	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
437. Fintineanu, Dumitru	Galati 33, Bucharest	pensioner
438. Florea, Caliopi	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
439. Florea, Ecaterina+	Pungesti, jud. Vaslui	
440. Florea, Maria	Dobrovatului 36, Bucharest	pensioner
441. Florea, Marin	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
442. Florescu, Brindusa Anca	Dr. Turnescu 2, Bucharest	economist
443. Florescu, Dinu	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	police officer
444. Florescu, Georgeta	Brezoianu 7, et. 8, ap. 47, Bucharest	clerk
445. Florescu, Gheorghe	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	economist
446. Florescu, Margareta	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	agency manager
447. Folescu, Ioan	Furtuna 124, Bucharest	pensioner
448. Francu, Ioana	Bolintin Vale, Ilfov	
449. Fraseniuuc, Mihai	Romulus 36, Bucharest	driver
450. Fuia, George Cristian	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	child

451. Fuia, Hristu	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	university professor
452. Fuia, Vanghelia	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	doctor
453. Fussa, Ana	Pictor Grigorescu 2, et. 2, 19, Buch.	pensioner
454. Gabrian, Avia	Doamnei 27-29 Sc. A, Bucharest	guide
455. Gadarautanu, Delia	Stefan cel Mare 33, Bucharest	student
456. Gafita, Vlad Mihail	C.A. Rosetti 25, Bucharest	writer
457. Gagy, Maria*	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest (home Com. Capilnita, Harghita)	domestic worker
458. Galateanu, Cecilia Maria	Radu de la Afumati 64, Bucharest	agent
459. Gatoschi, Coralia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
460. Gatoschi, Elena	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
461. Gavrilesco, Emilia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	doctor
462. Gazararian, Hasmic	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	architect
463. Geamanu, Tudor	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap. 1, Bucharest	expert instructor
464. Georgescu, Adina Gabriela	Buzaului 37, Urziceni, Ilfov	university student
465. Georgescu, Alina Ioana	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	child (age 6)
466. Georgescu, Cecilia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
467. Georgescu, Constanta	Matei Voevod 120 Bucharest	pensioner
468. Georgescu, Elena+	Catina, jud. Buzau	
469. Georgescu, Maria	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
470. Georgescu, Niculai	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
471. Gheorghe, Ana+	str. Olteni nr. 8, Ploiesti	
472. Gheorghe, Ortansa+	str. Primaverii 22, Zimnicea	
473. Gherea, Filuta+	com. Dabuleni, Dolj	
474. Ghenu, Eugenia	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	tailor
475. Ghenu, Mihai	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	child (age 10)
476. Ghenu, Mihail	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
477. Gheorghe, Maria	Liviu Rebreanu 47, Bucharest	welder
478. Gheorghe, Maria	Libertatii 2, Bucharest /Glina	
479. Gheorghe, Oprea	Fuiorultui 6, Bucharest	laborer
480. Gheorghe, Serban	D-tru Barbu 3, Bucharest	equipment helper
481. Gheorghe, Teodora	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	unskilled laborer
482. Gheorghide, Adriana	Magheru 26, Bucharest	child
483. Gheorghide, Camelia	Magheru 26, Bucharest	child
484. Gheorghiu, Dinu Serban*	Sahia 58, Bucharest (home Magheru 26, Bucharest)	architect
485. Gheorghiu, Ecaterina	Sahia 58, ap. 61, Bucharest	pensioner
486. Gheorghiu, Ecaterina Rodica	13 Sept. nr. 10, Bucharest	ballerina
487. Gheorghiu, Florica	Hristo Botev 10, et. 6, ap.10, Buch.	secretary
488. Gheorghiu, Gheorghe	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
489. Gheorghiu, Herta	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
490. Gheorghiu, Mircea	Pacii 7, sc. 4, ap. 177, et. 7, Buch.	police officer
491. Gheroghiu, Maria	N. Balcescu 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
492. Gheroghe, Silvia+	str. Tomis nr. 7, Craiova	
493. Gheroghiu, Radita+	str. Brestei nr. 28, Craiova	

494. Gheranoc, Iosif	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
495. Gheranoc, Mina	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
496. Ghimici, Mina	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
497. Ghinea, Ion	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	mould maker
498. Ghinea, Maria	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	secretary
499. Ghingold, Liba	Buzesti 8, Bucharest	pensioner
500. Ghinoiu, Maria	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	housewife
501. Ghinoiu, Tudor	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	cobbler
502. Ghirvu, Elena	com. Bahna, Neamt	laborer
503. Ghita, Maria+	str. Calea București bl E 3, sc. 3, ap. 16, Craiova	
504. Ghita, Marin	Balanesticom. Racari, Dimbovita	
505. Gijila , Mihaela Cristiana	Intr. Arcuda 1, Bucharest	flight attendant
506. Ginzoiu, Anica+	com. Podari, Dolj	
507. Gioga, Aurica	Parfumului 3, Bucharest	janitor
508. Glavu, Ilie	Pacii 7, Bucharest	foreman
509. Glavu, Irina*	Pacii 7, Bucharest (home com. Stanesti jud Vilcea)	construction foreman
510. Glicor, Valeriu*	Motilor 51 (home Str. Lenin 13, Cimpeni, Alba)	butcher
511. Goaga, Gheorghe	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
512. Goaga, Radina	Hristo Botev 10, ap.15, Bucharest	housewife
513. Goldemberg, Tipra	Brezoianu 7, et. 5, ap. 29, Bucharest	pensioner
514. Goldemberg, Vily	Brezoianu 7, et. 5, ap. 29, Bucharest	pensioner
515. Golianu, Aurelia	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 16, Bucharest	journalist
516. Golianu, Dan	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	
517. Gonciu, Constantin+	com. Soimari, jud. Prahova	
518. Grabcenco, Mihai+	str. Aron Pumnu nr. 6 , Constanta	
519. Grabcenco, Camelia+	str. Aron Pumnu nr. 6 , Constanta	
520. Grabcenco, Ovidiu-Geo+	str. Aron Pumnu nr. 6 , Constanta	
521. Grabovschi, Elena	Poenaru Bordea 18, Bucharest	pensioner
522. Grabovschi, Laurentiu	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
523. Grajdeanu, Cleopatra	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
524. Grama, Steluta	Caminului 32, Giurgiu, Ilfov	
525. Granet, Iulian	Snagov 52, Bucharest	pensioner
526. Granet, Silvia	Snagov 52, Bucharest	housewife
527. Grecu, Manuela+	str. Bucovat, nr. 20, Craiova	
528. Grecu, George Daniel+	str. Bucovat, nr. 20, Craiova	
529. Grecu, Eduard+	str. Bucovat, nr. 20, Craiova	
530. Grigore, Nicolae+	com. Blakani, jud. Buzau	
531. Grigorescu, Lucian Lucrețiu	1907, nr.21 Tr. Magurele,Teleorman	agronomist
532. Grigorescu, Rucsanda	Magheru 26, Bucharest	housewife
533. Grigoriu, Aglaia Maria	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
534. Grigoriu, Livia Georgeta Th.	Episcop Radu 6, Bucharest	economist
535. Grigoriu, Lucia	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
536. Grigoriu, Vasilica	Serban Voda 121, Bucharest	pensioner

537. Griscenco, Esfir	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
538. Grodinischi, Teodor	Galati 33, Bucharest	pensioner
539. Gross, Helene	Anastasia Simu 6, Bucharest	
540. Gruber, Gabriela Irma	Giurgiului 5, Bucharest	janitor
541. Has, Anastasia	Giurgiului 1, Bucharest	pensioner
542. Heberling, Florica Margareta	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	
543. Heberling, Ion	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
544. Heisser, Somoil	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
545. Hening, Friederich	C.A. Rosetti 14, et. 7, apt. 71, Buch.	police officer
546. Hening, Melitta	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	student
547. Hening, Susana Hermaine	C.A. Rosetti 14, et. 7, apt. 71, Buch.	housewife
548. Hobeanu, Teodor Mihail	Sahia 58, Bucharest	child
549. Hobeanu, Teodora Georgeta	Sahia 58, Bucharest	engineer mechanic
550. Hondru, Antonina	Anastasia Simu 6, Bucharest	pensioner
551. Horceag, Ana	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
552. Horescu, Dumitru	Baraganului 20, Popesti Leordeni, Ilfov	auto mechanic
553. Hristea, Ioana	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	actor
554. Hutanu, Elena	C.A. Rosetti 14, ap. 48, Bucharest	engineer
555. Hutanu, Mihai	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	child
556. Hutanu, Vasile	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	engineer
557. Iacob, Gheorghe	Labirint 40, Bucharest	locksmith
558. Iacob, Nastasia+	str. George Enescu nr. 4, Craiova	
559. Iacobini, Maria	Magheru 26, Bucharest	economist
560. Iatan, Marioara	C.A. Rosetti 14, apt. 71, Bucharest	teacher
561. Iatan, Mircea	C.A. Rosetti 14, apt. 71, Bucharest	technician
562. Ieftinie, Vasile+	str. Tatarasi nr. 26, Iași	
563. Ilie, Andrei	com. Toporu, sat Tumulesti, Tulcea	mould maker
564. Ilie, Gheorghe	Pacii 7, ap. 250, Bucharest	iron turner
565. Ilie, Ioana	Pacii 7, bl, 0D-16, Bucharest	weaver
566. Ilie, Marcela Iuli	Pacii 7, ap. 225, Bucharest	child
567. Iliescu, Vasilica	Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	baker
568. Iliev, Ioana	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	doctor
569. Ilinca, Constanta+	str. Carpenului nr. 3, Ploiesti	
570. Ioan, Georgeta Ivonne	Scoalei 2, ap. 7, Bucharest	pensioner
571. Ioan , Catalin-Marian	Magheru 26, Bucharest	child
572. Ioanid, Maria	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	
573. Ioanitescu, Andrian	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	medical assistant
574. Ioanitescu, Florica	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	teacher
575. Ioanovici, Nicolae	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
576. Ioardache, Stan+	str. Oltului nr. 12, Zimnicea	
577. Ion, Florin	Stavropoleos 5, Bucharest	pensioner
578. Ion, Mariana	com. Ogrezeni, Ilfov	child
579. Ion, Violeta	Pacii 7, et. 5, ap 244, Bucharest	project manager
580. Ionescu, Adrian	Sf. Apostoli 59, Bucharest	architect
581. Ionescu, Beatrice	Inclinata 47, Bucharest	laborer

582. Ionescu, Cecilia+	com. Malaesti, jud. Prahova	
583. Ionescu, Constantin	T. Arghezi 1, et. 1, ap. 30, Bucharest	pensioner
584. Ionescu, Cristina	Cernisoara 63, Bucharest	unskilled laborer
585. Ionescu, Eufrosina	T. Arghezi 1, et. 1, ap. 30, Bucharest	pensioner
586. Ionescu, Filofteia+	str. Panciu nr. 13, Ploiesti	
587. Ionescu, Gabriela Constranta	Traian 27, Bucharest	telegraph operator
588. Ionescu, Ion+	str. Zoltan Simion nr. 9, Craiova	
589. Ionescu, Ioana	Mosilor 228, Bucharest	pensioner
590. Ionescu, Letitia Maria	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	clerk
591. Ionescu, Maria	N. Balcescu 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
592. Ionescu, Matrona	Mosilor 257-259, Bucharest	pensioner
593. Ionescu, Teodor	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
594. Ionita, Corneliu	com. Dumnesti, Vaslui	auto mechanic
595. Ionita, Floarea	com. Magurele, sat. Dumitrana, Ilfov	housewife
596. Iordachioaia, Mariana+	com. Tiganesti, jud. Teleorman	
597. Iordachescu, Barbu-Costin	Sahia 58, Bucharest	student
598. Iordachescu, Emil-Const.	Sahia 58, ap. 37, Bucharest	director
599. Iordachescu, Maria-M.	Sahia 58, ap. 37, Bucharest	teacher
600. Iordachioiu, Rozalia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
601. Iorga, Alexandrina	Legliu, Ialomita	pensioner
602. Iorgulescu, Adriana	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	baby
603. Iorgulescu, Luminita Ileana	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	dentist
604. Iosif, Elena	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
605. Iovanescu, Dan	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
606. Isacescu, Mihai	D. Petrescu 73, Bucharest	public official
607. Isaila , Radu-Viorel+	str. Silozului nr. 10, Craiova	
608. Ispas, Maria+	com. Racoviteni, jud. Buzau	
609. Isserson, Lucia	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
610. Istocescu, Dumitru	Bibliotecii 6 et.2, ap.10, Bucharest	geologist
611. Istrate , Gheorghe	Gral Cristescu 10, Bucharest	pensioner
612. Istrati, Elpinichi-Despina	Sahia 58, ap. 44, Bucharest	painter (artist)
613. Ittu, Teodor	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
614. Ittu, Virginia	Apolodor 31, ap 7, Bucharest	pensioner/widow
615. Ivasiuc, Alexandru	Pict. Iscovescu 44, Bucharest	writer
616. Jamba, Anatolie+*	Pitești (home: Congo)	
617. Jega, Maria+	str. Cimpia Islaz 5, Craiova	
618. Joldes, Sofia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	janitor
619. Katz, Ada Simona	Pantelimon 305, Bucharest	
620. Katz, Allan Oded	Brincoveanu 107, ap. 5, Bucharest	engineer
621. Kirmayer, Cristian	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	medical technician
622. Kirmayer, Ruth	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	janitor
623. Klang, Rasel	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
624. Locksmithu, Filofteia*	Ana Ipatescu 31, rm. Vilcea, Buch. (home str. Eroilor bloc A, Tg. Jiu)	artist

625. Laptoiu, Catalin	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	student
626. Laptoiu, Daniela	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	student
627. Laptoiu, Gabriela	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	doctor
628. Laptoiu, Ion	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	engineer
629. Lazar, Cornelia	com. Podgoria, jud. Buzau	materials presser
630. Lazarescu, Aneta	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
631. Lazariciu, Anca Ioana	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	
632. Lazariciu, Eugenia Laura	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	
633. Lazaroiu, Vasilichia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
634. Lazarovici, Florin*	Mosilor 135, Bucharest (home str. Karl Marx nr. 32, Focsani)	janitor
635. Lazarut, Victoria	C.A. Rosetti 14, et. 4, ap. 23, Buch.	nurse (PhD)
636. Ledca, Vergil	Stefan cel Mare 33, ap. 2, Bucharest	iron stoker
637. Lejnenco, Valentin*	Stavilari 11, Bucharest (home sos Pipera-Tunari nr. 52, com. Voluntari)	conductor
638. Lica, Ion	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
639. Ligda, Julieta	Anastasie Simu 6, et.1, apt.17, Buch.	procurement officer
640. Ligda, Maria*	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest (home str. Carol Davilla 57, Bucharest)	pensioner
641. Lilea, Ion+	com. Perisor, jud. Dolj	
642. Linguraru, Stefania	Ciceu 7, ap. 3, Bucharest	unskilled laborer
643. Liteanu, Adriana	Mitropolitghina 11, Bucharest	child
644. Livescu, Marie Claire	Lipscani 102, Bucharest	child
645. Luca, Ovidiu Dan	Pacii 7, Bucharest	child
646. Luca, Sofia	Aleea Tiparului 10, Piatra Neamt	economist
647. Lugojanu, Constantin	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
648. Lugojanu, Maria	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	housewife
649. Lupu, Stefan+	str. Nicolae Iorga, Valeni, jud. Prahova	
650. Lupu, Vasile Costel	Pacii, 148-152, Bucharest	unskilled laborer
651. Luta, Maria*	Traian 9, Bucharest (home Sos. Salaj 253, et. 4, ap. 27 Buch.)	ticket seller
652. Magda, Aurel	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
653. Maiescu, Nicolai	Bibliotecii 6, et. 4, ap. 44, Bucharest	pensioner
654. Maiescu, Silvia	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	medical assistant
655. Man, Dumitru	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	programmer
656. Manac, Emilia	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	editor
657. Manac, Marin	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
658. Manailescu, Gheorghe	Progresului nr. 17A, Bucharest	mechanic
659. Mancas, Mari Jana	Sahia 58, ap. 61, Bucharest	teacher
660. Mancas, Româna	Sahia 58, ap. 61, Bucharest	child (age 12)
661. Manciulescu, Petru Stefan	Sahia 58, Bucharest	architect
662. Manciulescu, Rodica	Sahia 58, Bucharest	architect
663. Manea, Evghenia	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest	pensioner
664. Manole, Vasile+	Rosiori, jud. Braila	
665. Mantz, Constanta	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pharmacist

666. Mantz, Ovidiu Dan	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	doctor
667. Maracineanu, Ioana Mihaela	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	artist
668. Maran, Anna	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	
669. Marcu, Arlette	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
670. Marcu, Haim	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
671. Marcu, Karly	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	university professor
672. Marcu, Lucian-Valeriu	Grivitei 23, Bucharest	illustrator
673. Marcu, Minerva	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
674. Marcu, Tilla	Circului 2, ap. 63, Bucharest	pensioner
675. Mardiros, Ion	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	legal consultant
676. Mardiros, Zamfira	Scoalei 2, Bucharest	pensioner
677. Marescu, Catoni	Magheru 26, Bucharest	
678. Marescu, Paulina	Magheru 26, Bucharest	janitor
679. Margineanu, Alexandru	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	child
680. Margineanu, Aurelian	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	student
681. Marin, Alla	L. Rebreanu 35, Bucharest	
682. Marin, Constantin	Tunari, Ilfov	security guard
683. Marin, Gheorghe mould maker	com. Balaceanca, Ilfov	elementary student
684. Marin, Marin	Pacii 7, ap. 225, Bucharest	pensioner
685. Marin, Stan	com. Independenta, Ialomita	laborer
686. Marina, Gheorghe	Ciulnita, Ialomita	iron turner
687. Marinescu, Constantin	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
688. Marinescu, Dan Virgil	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	architect
689. Marinescu, Elisabeta	Ion Sulea 9, et. 8, ap. 122, Bucharest	restaurant server
690. Marinescu, Irina	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
691. Marinescu, Margareta	Mosilor 135 B, ap. 10, Bucharest	pensioner
692. Marinescu, Nicolae	Mosilor 153, Bucharest	physicist
693. Marinescu, Sanda	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
694. Marinescu, Vasile	Mosilor 135 B, Bucharest	engineer
695. Marta, Petru+	str. Andrei Murescanu nr. 24, Anina, jud. Prahova	
696. Martin, Constantin Traian	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
697. Martin, Lucica	Imasului 8, bl. 45, et.3, ap.54, Buch.	restaurant server
698. Martin, Paraschiva	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
699. Maruntis, Adrian+	str. Zambilelor, nr. 3, Ploiesti	
700. Matache, Elena Constanta	T. Arghezi 1-3, Bucharest	housewife
701. Matache, Gheorghe	Com. Bucsani, sat. Vadu Lat, Ilfov	locksmith mechanic
702. Matache, Ion	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	doctor
703. Mateescu, Carmen Rodica	I.C. Frimu 23, Bucharest	economist
704. Matei, Ioan	com. Plopana, Bacau	laborer
705. Mateiu, Marin	Padureni 6, Bucharest	polisher
706. Medrea, Iuliana	Ctin Exarcu 3, ap. 9, Bucharest	pensioner
707. Meitoiu, Elena	Cpt. Preotescu 22, Bucharest	painter (artist)
708. Merisescu, Virgil	Colonadelor 3, ap. 4, Bucharest	accountant
709. Metta, Constantin-Serban	Dr. Brindza 10-12, Bucharest	student

710. Micia, Aurelia	Mosilor 135 B, Bucharest	pensioner
711. Micu, Danut+	com. Suletea, jud. Vaslui	
712. Micu, Ioana	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	cashier
713. Micu, Danut+	com. Suletea, jud. Vaslui	
714. Micusca, Costache	Ceplenita, Iași	plumber
715. Midoiu, Tudorita*?	Magheru 26 (migrant?), Bucharest	merchant
716. Mioreanu, Bogdan	Poenaru Bordea 20, et. 4, ap.7, Buch.	student
717. Mioreanu, Constanta	Poenaru Bordea 20, et. 4, ap.7, Buch.	cashier
718. Mioreanu, Ion	Poenaru Bordea 20, et.4, ap.7, Buch.	economist
719. Mihaescu, Ruxandra	Snagov 52, Bucharest	chemist technician
720. Mihai, Doina	Magheru 26, Bucharest	telephone operator
721. Mihai, Gheorghe*	Leordeni 94, Bucharest (home com. Nicseni, jud. Botosani)	locksmith
722. Mihaila, Gheorghe	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
723. Mihaila, Maria+	str. Industriei nr. 4, Ploiesti	
724. Mihailescu, Octavian	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	police officer
725. Mihailescu, Penelope	Dorobanti 149, Bucharest	housewife
726. Mihailovici, Louis Robert I.	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
727. Mihaita, Floarea	com. Sohatu, jud. Ilfov	university student
728. Mihalcea, Ana	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
729. Mihaly, Anna	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
730. Mihiu, Alexandru Andrei	Colonadelor 3, et. 5, ap. 8, Buch.	student
731. Mihiu, Ileana	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	psychologist
732. Mija, Dionisie	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
733. Mija, Maria	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
734. Mileschin, Alexandru	Partizanilor bl. E2, Bucharest	economist
735. Milica, Dan	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	child
736. Milica, Dragos	Hristo Botev 10, et. 1, ap. 3, Buch.	child
737. Milica, Elisabeta Virginia	Hristo Botev 10, et. 1, ap. 3, Buch.	technician
738. Milica, Stan	Hristo Botev 10, et. 1, ap. 3, Buch.	research pharmacist
739. Miloglav, Maria	Giulesti 115, et. 6, ap. 60, Bucharest	accountant
740. Minea, Constantin	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	engineer
741. Minoriceanu, Nicolae+	com. Lipanesti, Prahova	
742. Mircescu, Valentin	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
743. Mirea, Ion	Snagov 40, Bucharest	
744. Mirea, Nicolae	Italiana 7, Bucharest	engineer
745. Mirescu, Valeria	Ghica 1, Bucharest	pharmacist
746. Mirica, Bogdan	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	student
747. Mirica, Iuliana	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	economist
748. Miroiu, Sara	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
749. Miroiu, Traian	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
750. Miscu, Petrica+	com. Calarasi	
751. Mitranescu, Gheorghe	Banu Mihalcea 1, et. 1, Bucharest	
752. Mitroi, Petre+	str. Bucovat, nr. 70, Dolj	
753. Mocanu, Georgeta	Armata Poporului 1-3, Bucharest	typist

754. Mocanu, Ion+	str. Rafael nr. 7, Odobesti, jud. Vrancea	
755. Mocanu, Isabela Cristina	Sahia 58, Bucharest	child (age 6)
756. Modrogan, George	Colentina 51, et. 9, ap. 81, Buch.	student
757. Moga, Ana Teodora	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	economist
758. Moga, Ioan	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	economist
759. Moisan, Dumitru	Prel. Ferentari 52	
760. Moisescu, Alexandrina*	Pictor Grigorescu 2 (visitor), Buch. (home Treboniu Laurian 3, Buzau)	pensioner
761. Moisescu, Georgeta Stefania	Pictor Grigorescu 2, et.4 ap.27,Buch.	pharmacist
762. Moisescu, Mircea	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	police officer
763. Moldovan, Ana	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	
764. Moldovan, Cristina	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	janitor
765. Moldovan, Rafila	Cpt. Mircea Vasilescu nr 15, Buch.	pensioner
766. Moldoveanu, Stefana	com. Podgoria, Buzau	
767. Moranescu, Silvia	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
768. Morocos, Nicolae*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest (home Jucu de Jos, jud. Cluj)	mason
769. Moruzov, Stefana (Ghica)	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	janitor
770. Mosteoru, Maria	Compozitorilor 17, Bl.Z, Bucharest	setter
771. Motateanu, Dumitru	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
772. Motriuc, Mihai	I.O.R. nr 1, bis, Bucharest	engineer
773. Muhrad, Ides	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	
774. Munteanu, Aurelia	Ecaterina Teodoroiu 27, Bucharest	pensioner
775. Munteanu, Gabriela Victoria	V. Conta 7-9, Bucharest	housewife
776. Munteanu, Gyorgy	Rahovei 139, Bucharest	pensioner
777. Munteanu Lucinescu, R.-M.	Pictor Grigorescu 2, ap. 45, Buch.	judge
778. Muntianu, Alexandrina	Popa Rusu 11, et. 4, ap. 20, Buch.	housewife
779. Muresan, Ana+	str. Steagul Rosu 10, Brasov	
780. Muresan, Vasile	com. Branesti, Ilfov	pensioner
781. Muresanu, Ioan	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 46, Bucharest	pensioner
782. Musetescu, Adriana	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	housewife
783. Musetescu, Bogdan Cornel	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	student
784. Musiu, Radu+	str. Brates, nr. 8, Craiova	
785. Mustaciosu, Maria-M.	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pharmacy assistant
786. Mustaciosu, Valeriu Dumitru	Compozitorilor 34, Bucharest	
787. Mustata, Dumitru	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
788. Mustata , Alexandrina E.	Sabina Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
789. Nadolu, Dana	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	tourist agent
790. Nafornta, Cristiana Ofelia	Colonadelor 3, et. 7, ap. 3, Bucharest	janitor
791. Nafornta, Dimitre	Colonadelor 3, et. 7, ap. 3, Bucharest	police officer
792. Nagy, Irina	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
793. Naiculescu, Constanta	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	typist
794. Nanescu, Margareta	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	accountant
795. Nanescu, Sorin	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	student
796. Nanuveanu, Maria	Mosilor 135, et. 1 ap. 11, Bucharest	pensioner

797. Neagoe, Maria+	Poiana Cimpina, jud. Prahova	
798. Neagu, Ion+	com. Fulga, jud. Prahova	
799. Nedelcu, Constantina+	str. Cimpia Islaz 48, Craiova	
800. Nedelcu, Petre	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
801. Nedelcu, Smaranda	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
802. Negoe, Nuta+	Carpen, jud. Dolj	
803. Negoii, Eleonora	Poenaru Bordea 20, et.4, ap.7, Buch.	economist
804. Negoii, Marina	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	student
805. Negomir, Ana*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	assistant
	(home Salasul de Sus, jud. Hunadoara)	
806. Negrea, Dorinel	com. Guru Galitei, jud. Vrancea	
807. Negrini, Paraschiva	Occidentului, Bucharest	pensioner
808. Negulescu, Constantin	com. Pietari, sat. Barbuletu, jud. Dimbovita	
809. Nemes, Teodora	Amurgului 39, Bucharest	telephone operator
810. Nemesu, Gheorghe	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	technician
811. Nenitescu, Elena Ana	N. Titulescu 50, Bucharest	pensioner
812. Netta, Secareanu Lucia	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
813. Nia, Vasile+	Bucov, jud. Prahova	
814. Nica, Elena	Budesti, Ilfov	
815. Nica, Maria	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	university student
816. Nica / Nicu, Anton	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest	engineer
817. Nica / Nicu, Elisabeta	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest	economist
818. Nica / Nicu, Oana	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest	student
819. Nica / Nicu, Onut	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest	student
820. Nicoara, Ghita+	com. Avicesti-Zeletin, jud. Prahova	
821. Nicoara, Elena+	str. Alunelor bl. 4, ap. 13, Valeni, jud. Prahova	
822. Nicolae, Emilia	Drumul Taberei 22, Bucharest	merchant
823. Nicolae, Ofelia Carmen	Ilie Pintilie 50, Bucharest	university student
824. Nicolaescu, Lucia	N. Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	housewife
825. Nicolaescu, Nicolae	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
826. Nicolaescu, Silvia	Precupetii Vechi 20, Bucharest	pensioner
827. Nicolaescu, Vasile	N. Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	pensioner
828. Nicolau, Constantin	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	engineer
829. Nicolau, Demostene	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
830. Nicolau, Ileana	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
831. Nicolau, Ion	Episcop Chesarie 10, Bucharest	pensioner
832. Nicolau, Irina	Aurel Vlaicu 68, Bucharest	janitor
833. Nicolau, Petre	Sighisoara 2, Bucharest	
834. Nicolau, Sofia	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
835. Niculescu, Ilie	Gr. Alexandrescu 100, Bucharest	pensioner
836. Niculescu, Silviu	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	pensioner
837. Nita, Margareta Mariana I. L.	Poenaru Bordea 18, Bucharest	lecturer
838. Nita, Violeta	Aviatorilor 78, parter, ap. 1, Buch.	receptionist
839. Nitu, Luciea	Colonadelor 3, ap. 3, Bucharest	pensioner
840. Nitulescu, Aurica+	str. Smeuleui nr. 30, Ploiesti	

841. Nuhamsohn, Herman	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
842. Nuhamsohn, Maria	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	janitor
843. Nutu, C. Florica	Brezoianu 7, ap. 60, Bucharest	pensioner
844. Oance, Victoria	Iulius Fucik 10, Bucharest	clerk
845. Olaneanu, Dumitru Stelian	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	
846. Olescu, Florina	Prevederii 4, et. 3, ap 16, Buch.	dispatcher
847. Olescu, Victoria*	Lizeanu 33, Bucharest (home Stefan cel Mare 33 et.3, ap.9, Buch.)	pensioner
848. Olteanu, Victor	Cervenicu, Teleorman	laborer
849. Oncescu-Bestelei, Ana	Sahia 58, Bucharest	
850. Oncescu-Bestelei, Lucian	Sahia 58, Bucharest	engineer
851. Oncescu-Bestelei, Mihai	Sahia 58, Bucharest	
852. Onete, Vasile	D. Bolintineanu 5, Bucharest	police officer
853. Oprea, Elena	Covasna 14, Bucharest	computer operator
854. Oprea, Ion+	com. Vlad Tepes, jud. Ialomita	
855. Opris, Alexandru	Arinii Dornei 4, et. 2, ap 9, Buch.	doctor
856. Oprisan, Constantina	Irimicului 2, bl.1, sc.2, ap.45, Buch.	laborer
857. Oprisescu, Simona	Pacii 7, et. 8, ap 253, Bucharest	planner
858. Oravanu, Jean Sirius	Pricopan 20, Bucharest	
859. Osman, Paul+	com. Visina, jud. Dimbovita	
860. Ostermaier, Elisabeth	Sahia 58, Bucharest	clerk
861. Palmes, Dorin	Ion Cuza 6, com. Vilcea	economist
862. Paltineanu, Elisabeta	Sahia 58, Bucharest	pensioner
863. Pana, Petre	str. Independentei 3, Plopeni, Prahova	
864. Panaitescu, Elvira	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
865. Panaitescu, Viorica	Snagov 45, Bucharest	clerk
866. Pandele, Bogdan Ionut	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	doctor
867. Pantilie, Elena+	str. Porumbescu bl. 14, ap. 27, Ploiesti	
868. Panturu, Dumitru*	Baraj Cucuteni 6, ap. 44, Bucharest (home bd. Muncii 184, et. 4, ap. 17, Buch.)	mould maker
869. Panturu, Vasilica	Baraj Cucuteni 6, ap. 44, Bucharest	typist
870. Papa, Dimitriu Marta	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
871. Papa / Papadimitriu, Dimitriu	Petru Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
872. Papadima, Georgeta Victoria	Magheru 26, Bucharest	clerk
873. Papadis, Tasos	Magheru 26, Bucharest	Office manager
874. Papazisi, Mihaela Rita	Bistra 1, et. 7, ap. 38, Bucharest	economist
875. Paraschiv, Alexandru	19 Nov. nr. 49, Bucharest	metal wire specialist
876. Paraschiv, Maria	Darasti, jud. Ilfov	housewife
877. Paraschiv, Marin	com. Domnesti, jud. Ilfov	mason
878. Paraschivescu, Mircea	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
879. Paraschivescu, Neonica	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
880. Pasca, Georgeta Aurora	Zabrautului 5, Bucharest	baker
881. Pastean , Ioan Romulus	Bisericii Ortodoxa 26, Cluj	inspector
882. Pateanu, Aurica	com. Petrachioaia, Ilfov	technician
883. Patrascu, Florea	Gaiseni, Ilfov	

884. Patrascu, Liliana	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap 9, Bucharest	university student
885. Patrascu, Liviu-Florin-G.	Poenaru Bordea 20, ap 9, Bucharest	student
886. Paul, Vasilica	Vespasian 31, Bucharest	laborer
887. Pavelescu, Ana	Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	clerk
888. Pavelescu, Vasile	Pictor Grigorescu 2,et.4 ap.20, Buch.	technician
889. Pavelescu Segarcea, Aurelia	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
890. Pavlovschi, Ana	Vasile Gherghel 70, Bucharest	merchant
891. Pelmus, Ecaterina	Niculitel 8, Bl.2. Sc. A, ap. 1,Buch.	project manager
892. Pelmus, Victor Gheroghe	Niculitel 8, Bl.2. Sc. A, ap. 1,Buch.	engineer
893. Penciu, Aurelian	Eroilor 37, com. Pantelimon, Ilfov	child
894. Peris, Onoriu Mircea*	Mr. Ene nr. 12 (camin), Bucharest (home Com. Cenade, jud. Alba)	
895. Pesu, Marian+	bl. A, A. 4, ap. 5, Tr. Magurele, jud. Teleorman	Teleorman
896. Petis, Victor	Oltului 88, Bucharest	mechanic iron stoker
897. Petre, Cecilia*	Independentei, 290, Bucharest (home 13 Sept. 7, ap 1, Gh. Gh Dej, Buch.)	
898. Petre, Constantin	com. Ciorani, Prahova	
899. Petre, Mihaela	Somesul Rece 24, Bucharest	student
900. Petrescu, Alexandrina	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 25, Bucharest	teacher
901. Petrescu, Aurica	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 23, Bucharest	teacher
902. Petrescu, Gheorghe Romulus	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 25, Bucharest	tourist agent
903. Petrescu, Maria	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
904. Petrescu, Matilda	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
905. Petrescu, Paul	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	academic
906. Petrescu, Victoria	Postavarului 22, l.12, et.8,a.87,Buch	librarian
907. Petrila, Virgil	Militar oficeri 37, Bucharest	laborer
908. Petrov, Jorgyia	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	musician
909. Petrusca, Marioara	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	technician
910. Piciorus, Eugenia	T. Arghezi 1, et. 2, ap. 15, Bucharest	pensioner
911. Pietreanu, Gheorghe+	str. Lenin nr. 55, Zimnicea	
912. Pietreanu, Petre+	str. Pietii nr. 54, Zimnicea	
913. Pinte, Horia Constantin	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	technician
914. Pintilie, Gheorghe	Inocentei 4, Bucharest	pensioner
915. Pintilie, Ruxandra	Oituz 1, Bucharest	child (age 2)
916. Pirici, David	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	electrician
917. Pirici, Vasile	Tohan 2, com. Runca, jud. Gorj	electrician
918. Pirooska, Ioan	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
919. Pirtoaca, Maria+	Cimpina, jud. Prahova	
920. Pirvu, Maria+	str. Craiova, nr. 9, bl. 28, sc.1, ap.9, Craiova	
921. Piso, Ioan*	Apolodor 31, Bucharest (home str. Postei 5, Tirnaveni)	pensioner
922. Piso, Magdalena-Iohana	Postei nr. Tirnavei, jud. Mures	pensioner
923. Pituleanu, Elena	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
924. Platz, Iohan	Jiului 93, Bucharest	pensioner
925. Platz, Valeria	Jiului 93, Bucharest	pensioner

926. Pleșa, Sava+	str. Prof. Stere nr. 35, Focsani, jud. Iasi	
927. Pletea, Marius-Constantin+	str. Lenin 33, Drobeta-Tr. Severin, Mehedinti	
928. Pop, Felix Max	Pictor Grigorescu 2 A, Bucharest	pensioner
929. Pop, Suzana-Cecilia	Gala Galaction 53, Bucharest	pensioner
930. Popa, Adriana	Anastasie Simu 6, ap. 25, Bucharest	university student
931. Popa, Ion	Anastasie Simu 6, ap. 25, Bucharest	foreman instructor
932. Popa, Liviu	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	architect
933. Popa, Lucea	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	accountant
934. Popa, Mariea	Ana Davila 35, Bucharest	pensioner
935. Popa, Victoria	com. Gruiu, jud. Ilfov	tailor
936. Popa, Viorel Vasile	Primaverii 123, Topoloveni, Arges	medical assistant
937. Popescu, Alexandru Valentin	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	teacher
938. Popescu, Anca Marina	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	child
939. Popescu, Daniela	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	machine operator
940. Popescu, Daniela-Rene	Anastasie Simu 6, Bucharest	student
941. Popescu, Dorina	Baba Novac B1.11 A sc. 8, Buch.	machine operator
942. Popescu, Elena	Pacii 7, et. 9, ap. 222, Bucharest	laborer
943. Popescu, Elena	Al. Capidava 2, Constanta	pensioner
944. Popescu, Elena	Pictor Grigorescu 2, et.2 ap.19, Buch.	teacher
945. Popescu, Eugen Pompiliu	Sahia 1-3, ap. 25, Bucharest	doctor
946. Popescu, Eugenia	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	pensioner
947. Popescu, Fanel-Stelian	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	engineer
948. Popescu, Florica	Vatra Dornei 4 Burceni, Ilfov	technician
949. Popescu, Gabriel	Pacii 7, bl, 0D-16, Bucharest	child
950. Popescu, Georgeta	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
951. Popescu, Gheorghe	Pictor Grigorescu 2, ap. 19, Buch.	police officer
952. Popescu, Gheorghe	Al. Capidava 2, Constanta	pensioner
953. Popescu, Ion	Viitor 93, Bucharest	mould maker
954. Popescu, Lucia	Mosilor 135 B, Bucharest	pensioner
955. Popescu, M. Corneliu	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	student
956. Popescu, Marcela	Judetului 15, Bucharest	
957. Popescu, Maria	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
958. Popescu, Maria	Cimpia Turzii 29, Bucharest	pensioner
959. Popescu, Maria Domnica	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	housewife
960. Popescu, Mircea	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	professor
961. Popescu, Petre+	sat. Izvoarele, com. Voinesti , jud. Dimbovita	
962. Popescu, Radu-Leon	Exercitiului 1, Arges, Pitești	student
963. Popescu, Rodica	T. Arghezi 1, ap. 18, Bucharest	pensioner
964. Popescu, Sebastian Ion	Sahia 1-3, ap. 25, Bucharest	child
965. Popescu, Stana	Pacii 7, bl, 0D-16, Bucharest	pensioner
966. Popescu, Stanca	Republicii 221, Breaza	pensioner
967. Popescu, Stefania	C.A. Rosetti 14, ap. 82, Bucharest	pensioner
968. Popescu, Stela	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	
969. Popescu, Teodor	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
970. Popescu, Vasile	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	economist

971. Popescu, Vasilica*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest (home address Barbu Bradescu 32)	economist
972. Popovici, Renee Emilie S.	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	janitor
973. Popp, Maria	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	
974. Preda, Gheorghe	30 Decembrie, Ilfov	
975. Preda, Ion	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	driver
976. Preda, Veronica	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
977. Predescu, Maria+	str. T. Vladimirescu 101, Craiova	
978. Racman, Dragos Alexandru	Brezoianu 7, et. 3, ap. 17, Bucharest	accountant
979. Radescu, Maria	Berzei 86, Bucharest	pensioner
980. Radescu, Mircea	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
981. Radescu, Silvia	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
982. Radoi, Aurica	Eugen Carada 5-7, Bucharest	bank inspector
983. Radu, Alexandru	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
984. Radu, Dumitru	Brezoianu 7, et. 3, ap. 38, Buch.	engineer
985. Radu, Ecaterina	Magheru 26, Bucharest	housewife
986. Radu, Maria	com. Darasti, jud. Ilfov	housewife
987. Raducanu, Mihaela+	Alexandria, jud. Teleorman	
988. Radulescu, Alexandrina	dr. Garii 66com. Pantelimon, Buch.	messenger
989. Radulescu, Anne Aymone	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	child
990. Radulescu, Chirita	Pacii 7, Bucharest	iron galvanizer
991. Radulescu, Floarea	Pacii 7, ap. 226, Bucharest	laborer
992. Radulescu, Georgeta L.	Delea Veche 28 A, Bucharest	registrar (PhD)
993. Radulescu, Ilinca	C.A. Rosetti 14, et. 2, ap. 49, Buch.	pensioner
994. Radulescu, Maria	Marasesti 135, Bucharest	housewife
995. Rainhart, Cristina Iulia	Arcului 17, Bucharest	student
996. Rameta, Dan Rasvan	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	student
997. Rapas, Viorel	Teiului 4, Bacau	janitor
998. Raux, Maria-Mariana	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
999. Reiner, Alfred	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
1000. Reiner, Mircea	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	student
1001. Reiner, Stefana	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
1002. Remus, Aurel	T. Arghezi 1, et. 1, ap. 4, Bucharest	driver
1003. Rodean, Ion	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
1004. Român, Aurel	Crimului 71, Bucharest	engineer
1005. Român, Elena+	str. Municipiorului nr. 40, Craiova	
1006. Român, Maria	Petre Poni 18, Bucharest	nurse
1007. Rosu, Elena	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	accountant
1008. Rosu, Gabriela	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	child (age 8)
1009. Rosu, Ionel+	com. Goicea, jud. Dolj	
1010. Rosu, Iulia	Sighet 10, Ploiesti	pensioner
1011. Rosu, Traian	Pictor Grigorescu 2, ap. 24, Buch.	electrician
1012. Rotman, Dora	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	
1013. Rotman, Iosif	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	pensioner
1014. Rozanide, Constantin	Brezoianu 7, et. 6, ap. 32, Bucharest	pensioner

1015.	Rozenfeld, Alexandrina	T. Arghezi 1, et. 4, ap. 28, Bucharest	manicurist
1016.	Rozenfeld, Irina	T. Arghezi 1, et. 4, ap. 28, Bucharest	actor
1017.	Rozenfeld, Mihaly	T. Arghezi 1, et. 4, ap. 28, Bucharest	pensioner
1018.	Rudaru, Gheorghe	Mosilor 229, Bucharest	laborer
1019.	Rudeanu, Ion	Ion Neculce 77, Bucharest	pensioner
1020.	Rufa, Maria	Victoriei 161 / 181, Bucharest	pensioner
1021.	Rus, Ion / Ioan*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest (home str.Ospatariei 10 or Marinescu 25, Cluj)	PhD nursing student
1022.	Ruse, Polixenia	Drumul Taberei 102 et.1, ap.11, Buch.	pensioner
1023.	Rusescu, Margareta V.	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
1024.	Russo, Ritta	Popa Rusu 11, ap. 8, Bucharest	pensioner
1025.	Sachelarie, Anca Maria	Mosilor 135 B, Bucharest	economist
1026.	Sandru, Nicolae	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	biologist
1027.	Sandu, Alexandrina	Vasule Conta 3-5, Bucharest	janitor
1028.	Sandu, Alexandru	Colonadelor 3, et. 5, ap. 3, Bucharest	tailor
1029.	Sandu, Emilia	Colonadelor 3, ap. 3, Bucharest	tailor
1030.	Sandu, Marian	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	student
1031.	Sandu, Tudora	com. Movilita, sat Rosiori, jud.Ilfov	housewife
1032.	Saraga, Samoil	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1033.	Sarba, Ecaterina	Podarului 13, Bucharest	machine operator
1034.	Sarkadi, Iulianna	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
1035.	Sasareanu, Paraschiva	Intr. Staicovici 25, Bucharest	pensioner
1036.	Saulea, Mihnea Radu	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	
1037.	Sava, Aristita	Dacia 2, et. 2, ap. 31, Bucharest	pensioner
1038.	Sava, Constantin	com. Magirsti, Bacau	public official
1039.	Sava, Gabriela	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1040.	Sava, Ifrim	Dacia 2, et. 2, ap. 31, Bucharest	pensioner
1041.	Savu, Verona	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
1042.	Scally, Romvald Teodor E.	13 Decembire 29 et.7, ap.25, Buch.	pensioner
1043.	Schifner, Leonard	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
1044.	Schiopu, Maria	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
1045.	Schiopu, Vasile	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
1046.	Schneider, Ilinca+	str. Namaloasa nr. 19, Ploiesti	
1047.	Schrager, Savel	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
1048.	Schuman, Ecaterina	Mosilor 135, bl. B, ap. 7, Bucharest	pensioner
1049.	Scintei, Alexandrina	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	housewife
1050.	Scintei, Cristina-Mihaela	Mosilor 135, Bucharest	student
1051.	Scotnitchi, George	Cimpia Turzii 31, Bucharest	administrator
1052.	Scurtu, Maria	Balcescu 3-5, et. 3 ap. 53, Bucharest	pensioner
1053.	Secareanu, Vasile	Lizeanu 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1054.	Sechel-Mandoi, Florica	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
1055.	Secui, Virgiliu	M. Constantinescu 7, ap.248, Buch.	public official
1056.	Senoaica, Florica+	com. Motatei, jud. Dolj	
1057.	Serban , Petre-Bogdan*	Stefan cel Mare 218, ap. 3, Buch. (home Teilor 20, bl. 12, sc. B, ap. 2, Pitești)	

1058.	Serbanescu, Florica	Giulesti 109, ap. 150, Bucharest	administrator
1059.	Serdan , Alexandru	Borsa 170 /com. Borsa nr. 160, Cluj	locksmith
1060.	Seropian , Armenuhi	Colonadelor 3, ap. 8, Bucharest	pensioner
1061.	Seropian , Daniela Silvia	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	student
1062.	Sezonov, Ana	Bibliotecii 6, et. 4, ap. 20, Bucharest	pensioner
1063.	Siadbei, Ion	Scoalei 2, et.5, ap. 90, Bucharest	pensioner
1064.	Siadbei, Matilda	Scoalei 2, et.5, ap. 90, Bucharest	pensioner
1065.	Siboriu, Alexandru	N. Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	pensioner
1066.	Sichitiu, Mihail	Juilui 1, Hunedoara	
1067.	Silimon, Radul Bert Liviu	Retezat 8, Brasov	student
1068.	Simioana, Florian	Drumul Taberei 38, Bucharest	bus boy
1069.	Simion, Daniela	Sahia 1, Bucharest	student
1070.	Simion, Ionel	Sahia 1, Bucharest	teacher
1071.	Simion, Maria	Sahia 1, Bucharest	economist
1072.	Simion, Stefana+	sat. Braniste, com. Podari, jud. Dolj	
1073.	Simu, Gheorghe*	str. 9 Mai, bl.A.s, ap. 20, Bucharest (home Prof. Ion Ursu 31, Tg. Jiu, Gorj)	
1074.	Simu, Ion	Eroilor 37, Tg. Jiu, jud. Gorj	warehouse manager
1075.	Simu , Anisia	Eroilor 37, Tg. Jiu, jud. Gorj	housewife
1076.	Sinca, Niculina*	Apolodor 31, Bucharest (home jud. Arges, com. Ratesti, sat Furduiesti nr. 70)	
1077.	Sirbu, Mircea+	com. Voineasa, jud. Olt	
1078.	Sirbu, Zina	Sahia 58, Bucharest	
1079.	Sitaru, Edith Therese	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
1080.	Sitaru, Jean	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
1081.	Slavinschi, Alexandru	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1082.	Slobozeanu, Gheorghe	Crinilor I, Bucharest	house painter
1083.	Smeu, Ana Paulina	Dobrogeanu Gherea 126, Calafat, Dolj	pensioner
1084.	Smeu, Andrei Claudiu C.	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	child
1085.	Smeu, Traian	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	engineer
1086.	Smeu, Traian Bogdan	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	child
1087.	Soare, Tudor+	str. 6 Martie nr. 16, Zimnicea	
1088.	Soare, Marin+	sat ADincăta Guru Ocnitei, jud. Dimbovita	
1089.	Socolov, Nicolae	Anastasiu Simu 6, Bucharest	pensioner
1090.	Socolov, Valentina	Anastasiu Simu 6, Bucharest	pensioner
1091.	Sofroni, Vera	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	teacher
1092.	Soigan , Ileana	Log. Nestor 13, Bucharest	clerk
1093.	Soigan , Mircea-Florian M.	Log. Nestor 13, Bucharest	public official
1094.	Solomon, Karoline	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	statistician
1095.	Somesan, Ion-Florin	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	engineer
1096.	Sonea, Ioan Emil	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	professor
1097.	Sonea, Margareta	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	doctor
1098.	Sora, Domnica	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1099.	Spartariu, Ion	com. Ilovat, jud. Suceava	police foreman
1100.	Spataru, Stefan Mihai	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	child

1101.	Spataru, Susana	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1102.	Staicu, Maria+	com. Goesti, jud. Dolj	
1103.	Stainberg, Izac	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1104.	Stainberg, Roza	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1105.	Stamatin Iovanescu, R.L	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	pensioner
1106.	Stan, Constantina	Litografiei 20, Bucharest	caregiver
1107.	Stanca, Letitia Valeria	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	housewife
1108.	Stanca, Octavian	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1109.	Stanca, Roxana M.	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	child (age 5)
1110.	Stancu, Maria*	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest (home com. Cazanesti, jud. Ialomita)	iron stoker
1111.	Stanculescu, Anca Maria	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	economist
1112.	Stanculescu, Emilie Irena	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	
1113.	Stanescu, Ioan	Domnita Ruxandra nr 18, Bucharest	engineer
1114.	State, Ion	Glinka 6, et. 3, ap. 12, Bucharest	painter (artist)
1115.	Steanta, Elena	Catelu 29, Bucharest	
1116.	Stefan, Carmen Iuliana	Doina 11, Calarasi, Calarasi	student
1117.	Stefan, Gheorghe	Tamadaul Mare, Ilfov	unskilled laborer
1118.	Stefanescu, Anca Ruxandra	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	university student
1119.	Stefanescu, Camelia A.	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	child
1120.	Stefanescu, Elena	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	
1121.	Stefanescu, Florica	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
1122.	Stefanescu, Lylliana	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	housewife
1123.	Stefanescu, Marcel	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	foreman
1124.	Stefanescu, Maria-Emilia	T. Arghezi 1, et. 7, ap. 44, Bucharest	pensioner
1125.	Stefanescu, Marioara	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	typist
1126.	Stefanescu, Nicolae	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
1127.	Stefanescu, Razvan	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	minor (age 15)
1128.	Stefanescu, Romeo-Mircea	Circumvalatiunii, nr. 3, Timisoara	police officer
1129.	Stefanescu, Stefan	T. Arghezi 1, et. 7, ap. 44, Buch.	pensioner
1130.	Stefanescu, Varvara P. O.	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	janitor
1131.	Stefanescu, Werner H.	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	pensioner
1132.	Stefanescu, Zanoaga E. A.	Magheru 26, Bucharest	medical assistant
1133.	Stefanita, Elena	Catelu 29, Bucharest	merchant
1134.	Stegaru, Irina+	str. V. Lupu nr. 6, Ploiesti	
1135.	Stegaru, Victoria	Carol Davila 101, Bucharest	pensioner
1136.	Stinghie, Angela	Pacii 7, Bucharest	pensioner
1137.	Stirbu, Maria Gina	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	
1138.	Stirbu, Paul Stefan	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	
1139.	Stoenescu, Sultanica	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
1140.	Stoian, Ion	Rotunda 4 et. 1 ap. 8, Bucharest	teacher
1141.	Stoica, Livia	Lipscani 102, Bucharest	pensioner
1142.	Stoica, Maria	com. Pestera, jud. Constanta	glazer
1143.	Stoica, Nicolae	Biserica Alexe 21, et.3, ap.4, Buch.	mechanic
1144.	Stoica, Valentin	Lipscani 102, Bucharest	doctor

1145.	Stoica, Vasile	Val. Oltului 4, ap 63, Bucharest	merchant
1146.	Stoica, Victoria	Bucegi 49, com. Voluntari, Ilfov	project technician
1147.	Stoicescu, Efrosina	Magheru 26, Bucharest	housewife
1148.	Stoicescu, Razvan-Mihai	Galati 33, Bucharest	
1149.	Straus, Dumitra (Ecaterina)	Popa Rusu 11, Bucharest	elevator operator
1150.	Strava, Mircea-Ioan*	Hristos Botev (registered Rodnei 1) (home Timisoara)	engineer
1151.	Streche, Mariana+	com. Viisoara, jud. Teleorman	
1152.	Streche, Tudorel+	com. Viisoara, jud. Teleorman	
1153.	Streche, Ioana+	com. Viisoara, jud. Teleorman	
1154.	Stroe, Alexandru+	com. Galbinasi, jud. Buzau	
1155.	Stroe, Dumitru	Peris, Ilfov	
1156.	Stroe, Lidia	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	teacher
1157.	Stroe, Stefania	Sahia 1-3, ap. 13, Bucharest	student
1158.	Stuparu, Florica	Conductei 29-39, Bucharest	assistant
1159.	Suleimanovici, Sadin	Smirdan 19, ap. 2, Bucharest	pensioner
1160.	Susan, Nicolae	Dristor 97-119, ap. 605, Bucharest	officer
1161.	Szilagyi, Geza-Attila	Masina de piine 41, bl 0D 55, Buch.	student
1162.	Tabacaru, Eufrosina	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	housewife
1163.	Tabla, Aurica	com. Stoenesti, jud. Ilfov	concrete worker
1164.	Tambalagiu, Nicolae+	str. Ale. I.Cuza nr. 33, Cimpina, jud. Prahova	
1165.	Tamler, Ernst	T. Arghezi 1, et. 7, ap. 51, Bucharest	engineer
1166.	Tanase, Angela	Branesti, Ilfov	pensioner
1167.	Tanase, Cristian	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	student
1168.	Tanase, Florica	M. Eminescu 58, Bucharest	administrator
1169.	Tanase, Gelu Octavian	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	engineer
1170.	Tanase, Gheorghe	Pacii 7, Bucharest	engineer
1171.	Tanase, Maria-Magdalena	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	professor
1172.	Tanase, Radu	com. Soldanu, jud. Ilfov	concrete worker
1173.	Tanasescu, Eugenia	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	laborer
1174.	Tanasescu, Lucia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1175.	Tanska, Hanna*	Hotel Victoria (Poland)	child
1176.	Tanska, Wieslawa*	Hotel Victoria (Poland)	
1177.	Tantulea , Gherghina	Hristo Botev 10, et. 6, ap.18, Buch.	pensioner
1178.	Tapu, Constanta	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	economist
1179.	Tapu, Marina	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	university student
1180.	Taranu, Aurel-Emil	Midia 21, Bucharest	jeweler
1181.	Taranu, Aurelia	Colonadelor 3, ap. 8, Bucharest	housewife
1182.	Taranu, Cosmin	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 11, Bucharest	child
1183.	Taranu, Marian Petre	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 11, Bucharest	construction engineer
1184.	Taranu, Wanda Marina	Bibliotecii 6, ap. 11, Bucharest	construction engineer
1185.	Tatu, Ecaterina+	Chiojd, jud. Prahova	
1186.	Teaca, Dumitru	Piscului 43, Bucharest	child

1187.	Teaca, Margareta+	str. Oltet, nr. 7, Craiova	
1188.	Teaca, Maria	Piscului 43, Bucharest	student
1189.	Teodor / Teodoru, Aurelia	Colonadelor 3, et. 4, ap. 10, Buch.	housewife
1190.	Teodor / Teodoru, Dionisie	Mosilor 95, Bucharest	student
1191.	Teodorescu, Ferdinand	com. Brosteni, Suceava	laborer
1192.	Teodorescu, Iulia+	str. Unirii nr. 115, Boldesti, Prahova	
1193.	Teodorescu, Mihai	Sahia 58, ap. 31, Bucharest	police officer
1194.	Teodorescu, Rodica	Sahia 58, ap. 31, Bucharest	housewife
1195.	Teodoru, Aurelia	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
1196.	Teodoru, Ecaterina	Mosilor 95, Bucharest	weaver
1197.	Teodoru, Elena	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
1198.	Teodoru, Victor	Colonadelor 3, et. 4, ap. 10, Buch.	pensioner
1199.	Tepelus, Petre Constantin	Pacii 7, bl, 0D-16, Bucharest	engineering lecturer
1200.	Teposu, Virginia	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	pensioner
1201.	Terchila, Carmen Ana	T. Arghezi 1, Bucharest	university student
1202.	Terchila, Valeriu	Pinzarilor, nr. 4, Sibiu	officer
1203.	Teslaru, Maria+	str. Orbie nr. 321, Buhusi, Bacau	
1204.	Theodosiu, Nicolae	Independentei, 283, Bucharest	pensioner
1205.	Tigoiu, Mircea	N. Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	pensioner
1206.	Tigoiu, Simona Florenta F.	N. Balcescu 3-5, Bucharest	pensioner
1207.	Tipa, Gheorghe*	Marasti 59, Bucharest	university student
		(home sat. Solonat, com. Todiresti, jud. Suceava)	
1208.	Tiru, Barbara	Brezoianu 7, apt. 21, Bucharest	pensioner
1209.	Tisu, A. Constantin	Colentina 10, et. 4, ap. 83, Bucharest	hunting technician
1210.	Tomescu, Vasile	N. Balcescu 3-5, et. 6, ap. 89, Buch.	pensioner
1211.	Toncea, Angela*	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	merchant
		(home str. Bujorului 23 A, Craiova)	
1212.	Torok / Turuk, Etelka	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	
1213.	Trandafir, Silvia	Gimalau 43, Bucharest	accountant
1214.	Trica, Florea	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	housewife
1215.	Trocan, Constantin*	Siret nr. 58, Bucharest	locksmith
		(home Izvoarele, com. Voluntari, Ilfov)	
1216.	Tuculescu, Andreia Voica	Sahia 1-3, ap. 25, Bucharest	engineer
1217.	Tudor, Petre	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	
1218.	Tudor, Stefan	Socului 40, Bucharest	barber
1219.	Tudorache, Florina	Fundulea, jud. Ilfov	student (age 16)
1220.	Tudorache, Ionut	G. Cosbuc 20, Slobozia, jud. Ialomita	child
1221.	Tudorache, Vasile	Caderea Bastiliei, 46, Bucharest	iron turner
1222.	Tugui, Florica	Apolodor 31, sc. 6, Bucharest	law student
1223.	Tugui, Ionel	Apolodor 31, sc. 6, Bucharest	doctor
1224.	Tuinea, Lina	Macesului 3 / Mosilor 135, Buch.	electrical mechanic
1225.	Tutoiu, Didina	Stefan cel Mare 33, et. 1, ap. 1, Buch.	cashier
1226.	Udrea, Ion	com. Stefanesti, Ilfov	locksmith
1227.	Udricea, Antoaneta	Hristo Botev 10, Bucharest	pensioner
1228.	Udricea, Niculina+	str. Izbiceanu nr. 28, Rosiori de Vede, jud. Teleorman	

1229.	Ungureanu, Angela+	str. Drumul Jiului 46, Craiova	
1230.	Ungureanu, Constantin+	str. Cooperatiei nr. 1, Ploiesti	
1231.	Ungureanu, Emilia+	str. Cooperatiei nr. 1, Ploiesti	
1232.	Ungureanu, Marius Stefan	Grivitei 142, ap. 8, Bucharest	student
1233.	Ursescu, Elena	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	clerk
1234.	Ursescu, Vasile	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	public official
1235.	Ursescu, Virginia	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	clerk
1236.	Vaduva, Alexandru	Nuferilor 40, Bucharest	shopkeeper
1237.	Vaduva, Ilie	I.O.R. 3 et.1, ap 47, Bucharest	welder
1238.	Vaduva, Liviu Mihail	Dobrogeanu Gherea 78, Calafat, Dolj	technician
1239.	Vaduva, Niculina	Pictor Grigorescu 2, et.6 ap.38, Buch.	clerk
1240.	Vaduva, Stelian	Pictor Grigorescu 2, et.6 ap.38, Buch.	public official
1241.	Vagner, Matilda	Bibliotecii 6, Bucharest	pensioner
1242.	Vahnovann, Valeria	Balcescu 25, Bucharest	housewife
1243.	Valerian, Mihail	Alexandrina 17, sector 1, Bucharest	pensioner
1244.	Vancea, Livia*	Apolodor 31, Bucharest (home str. Cubles 58 Com. Dirja, Cluj)	engineer
1245.	Vas, Andriana Mira	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1246.	Vas, Marta	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1247.	Vas, Pavel	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1248.	Vas, Petre Lucian	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1249.	Vasile, Alisa	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	economist
1250.	Vasile, Constantin+	str. 23 August, nr. 91, Cimpina, jud. Prahova	
1251.	Vasile, Ion	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	economist
1252.	Vasile, Maria+	str. 23 August, nr. 91, Cimpina, jud. Prahova	
1253.	Vasile, Odeta Ioana	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	student
1254.	Vasilescu-Dinu, Adrian-Ion	Dimitrov 21, Bucharest	child
1255.	Vasilescu-Dinu, Antoaneta	Dimitrov 21, Bucharest	
1256.	Vasiliu, Eugen	Galati 48-50, Bucharest	planner
1257.	Vasiliu, Dumitru	Colonadelor 3, Bucharest	
1258.	Vass, Marta	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	
1259.	Vatamanu, Alexandrina	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	
1260.	Vatamanu, Nicolaie	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	pensioner
1261.	Veis, Erna	Onesti 5, Bucharest	
1262.	Venczel, Vanda	Dreptatii 35/VII, ap 1, Bucharest	pensioner
1263.	Verde, Nicolae	Closca, Gherla, jud. Cluj	doctor
1264.	Veres, Zoltan*	Independentei 290, Bucharest (home G. Enescu 50, Hunedoara)	
1265.	Vermont, Cornelia	Sahia 58, Bucharest	housewife
1266.	Vermont, Teodor	Sahia 58, Bucharest	doctor
1267.	Vezetu, Alexandru	Bahluiului 17, Bucharest	pensioner
1268.	Vezetu / (Vizitiu), Ana M.	Bahluiului 17, Bucharest	housewife
1269.	Vilceanu, Alexandrina	Poenaru Bordea 20, Bucharest	pensioner
1270.	Vinatoru, Carmen Adriana	Magheru 26, Bucharest	child
1271.	Vinatoru, Paul George	Magheru 26, Bucharest	child

1272.	Vintila, Ioan	Valea lui Mihai 5, Deva	composition teacher
1273.	Visan, Maria	Drumul Taberei 66, Bucharest	pensioner
1274.	Visinescu, Rodica G.	Cernica 7, sectorul 3, Bucharest	dietician
1275.	Vizante, Viorica	Brezoianu 7, Bucharest	pensioner
1276.	Vlad, Cristian+	str. Renasterii nr. 9, Rosiori de Vede, jud. Teleorman	
1277.	Vlad, Gheorghe+	com. Furculesti, jud. Teleorman	
1278.	Vlad, Ilie+	str. Renasterii nr. 9, Rosiori de Vede, jud. Teleorman	
1279.	Vlad, Lina+	str. Renasterii nr. 9, Rosiori de Vede, jud. Teleorman	
1280.	Vlad, Nicolae	Gloriei 70, com. 30 Decembrie	security guard
1281.	Vladimirov, Dumitra	I.L. Caragiale 17 Bl 4, Tulcea	telephone operator
1282.	Vlase, Andrei	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	
1283.	Vochin, Virginia	Sold. Ionescu Horia 20, Bucharest	nurse
1284.	Voin, Nicolae	T. Argezi 1, Bucharest	pensioner
1285.	Voica, Dumitru+	com. Costesti, jud. Arges	
1286.	Volosciuc, Maria	Bd. Independentei 57, Tirgoviste	teacher
1287.	Volosciuc, Mariana	Bd. Independentei 57, Tirgoviste	student (age 14)
1288.	Volosciuc, Vasile	Bd. Independentei 57, Tirgoviste	public official
1289.	Vrinceanu, Carmen	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	student
1290.	Vrinceanu, Daniela	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	student
1291.	Vrinceanu, Elisabeta	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	teacher
1292.	Vrinceanu, Maria+	com. Faurei, jud. Vrancea	
1293.	Vrinceanu, Nicolae	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	engineer
1294.	Vulpe, Stefan+	str. Henri Barbus nr. 9, Craiova	
1295.	Vulpe, Lidia+	Verbita, jud. Dolj	
1296.	Weber, Carol	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1297.	Weber, Mica	C.A. Rosetti 14, Bucharest	pensioner
1298.	Weis, Oloze Constanta	Magheru 26, Bucharest	pensioner
1299.	Wozniak, Andrzej R.*	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest (Poland)	
1300.	Wylezynski, Alexandrina	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	janitor
1301.	Wylezynski, Kazimierz	Pictor Grigorescu 2, Bucharest	doctor
1302.	Zaharia, Elena	Apolodor 31, Bucharest	pensioner
1303.	Zaharia, Emilia+	str. Kogalniceanu bl. 33, sc. C, et. 4, ap. 9, Vaslui	
1304.	Zamfir, Gheorghe	Lacului 5com. Glina, Ilfov	iron turner
1305.	Zamfir, Ioana	Potaisa 6, etc. 9, ap 57, Bucharest	barmaid
1306.	Zamfiriu, Gheorghe	Hristo Botev 10, ap. 23, Bucharest	technician
1307.	Zapata, Solbalvarro R. B.	Sahia 1-3, Bucharest	child (age 8)
1308.	Zednic, Gheze Victor	Magheru 26, Bucharest	editor
1309.	Zimel, Herman	Sahia 1, ap. 23 / Sahia 1-3, Buch.	doctor
1310.	Zorenghea, Pastita+	str. Valea Rosie bl. 32, sc 1., ap. 16, Craiova	
1311.	Zorzon, Paula	Operetei 6, Bucharest	student
1312.	Zubas, Ion	com. Pogoanele, Buzau, jud. Prahova	
1313.	Zubas, Maria	com. Pogoanele, Buzau, jud. Prahova	