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DIVERSITY IN THE WARSAW PACT:
BULGARIAN AND ROMANIAN SECURITY PERCEPTIONS*

INTRODUCTION

It is commonly believed in the West that the security perceptions of the Warsaw Pact countries are almost identical. This comparative study analyzes the threat perceptions and security considerations of the Warsaw Pact's southern flank, i.e. of Bulgaria and Romania, and reveals a different picture. The defense policies of these two communist countries certainly display a degree of similarity, but differences in national culture and heritage, as well as in geography, have resulted in different choices and priorities. The historical affinity with the Soviet Union and the common borders with two NATO countries (Turkey and Greece) have shaped the Bulgarian policy, whereas the Latin heritage and the more "sheltered" geographic position have marked the Romanian attitude. In fact, the latter country's foreign and domestic policy can best be understood as part of a concerted effort to enter the ranks of "medium developed states" and to become a significant, strong middle power with an independent national policy in much the same terms as that of France in the West.

I. BULGARIAN SECURITY PERCEPTIONS

Bulgaria's security perceptions are strongly influenced by its location in the heart of the Balkan Peninsula. It borders two NATO countries (Greece and Turkey), with which it has often fought in the past; a non-aligned country (Yugoslavia) with which it has a potentially destabilizing dispute over Macedonia; and a Warsaw Treaty Organization country (Romania), whose foreign policy at times diverges from that of its allies. In spite of this environment,

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Bulgaria has enjoyed remarkable stability in both its internal and international policy. Its foreign and security policy closely resembles that of the Soviet Union with which it has traditionally had a close relationship. However, in some areas such as the Balkans it has at times shown some limited signs of initiative.

Threat Perception

Bulgaria sees the primary threat to its security as a general war in Europe which would involve even small countries. Bulgaria would probably then have to fight against Greek and Turkish troops supported by American nuclear and conventional forces. Bulgaria does not see the threat emanating from a deliberate direct attack by one or both of its southern NATO neighbors. Rather, it is Greece's and Turkey's relationship with the United States and NATO that is the source of Sofia's anxieties.

Bulgaria interprets both American actions and doctrines as revealing intensive preparations for a preemptive attack against the Socialist countries. Leading politicians cite NATO's typical modernization of theater nuclear forces as well as "militarist actions carried out by the United States in the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf" as examples of such preparations¹. Sofia interprets these developments as an attempt by the United States to achieve both nuclear and conventional superiority and to improve its capacity to wage a "winnable" nuclear war. Through its arms build-up and deployment, Washington is seen not only increasing the risk of a nuclear war, but also exacerbating a new arms race. The new American missiles to be deployed in Western Europe are regarded as dangerous because Bulgaria "is situated within the range of numerous weapons systems that, according to NATO plans, have already been deployed or will soon be deployed on Central European territory"². Special attention is paid to the 112 cruise missiles to be deployed in Sicily. According to Bulgarian sources, their deployment will lead to a "drastic increase" in NATO nuclear systems targeted against the socialist countries³. Consequently, in the Bulgarian view, the INF talks in Geneva should include more systems (especially NATO's forward based systems)

1. See the speech by Bulgaria's Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov at the UN General Assembly; *Rabotnicheskoto Delo*, (RD), June 19, 1982, p. 10, as quoted by *FBIS, Eastern Europe*, (EE), June 24, 1982, p. C1.

2. *RD*, October 15, 1982, p. 7.

3. See the article written by the Bulgarian Minister of Defense in *RD*, March 9, 1983, pp. 1, 6 (*FBIS, EE*, March 16, 1983, C5-C8).

and additional countries (United Kingdom and France).

Another dangerous development is seen as the existence of the concept of limited nuclear war into American strategic doctrine, through which the United States is "hoping to escape the devastating consequences of the retaliatory blow and to avoid revenge"⁴. Like the other WTO members, the Bulgarians consider a limited war in Europe impossible. Any use of nuclear weapons would inevitably lead to a thermo-nuclear conflict.

For Bulgaria, detente has been made possible by "the basic change in the balance of forces in the world in favor of socialism and especially by the achievement of a military strategic balance between East and West"⁵. The Bulgarians give credit for detente to Soviet military ascendancy and political pressure, whereas some other Warsaw Pact countries see the whole process in more balanced terms⁶.

The Soviet Alliance

The cornerstone of Bulgarian security policy is its close alliance with the Soviet Union. This special relationship has its roots in ethnic, historical, cultural, and religious ties between the two countries. Moreover, in the late 19th century, Bulgaria was liberated from the Turks by the Russian army. Thus, in contrast to Bulgaria's southern and eastern neighbors (Turks, Greeks, and Serbs), the Russians have always been viewed sympathetically.

In addition, Bulgaria has received substantial economic assistance from the Soviet Union. According to Bulgarian sources, since the end of the 1940s more than 350 sizable industries and industrial complexes have been constructed in Bulgaria by the USSR⁷. The Soviets provide today about 60% of Bulgarian imports in machinery, 70% of metallurgy products and 77% of tractors⁸. This substantial economic assistance has allowed Bulgaria to industrialize and modernize its economy more rapidly than would otherwise have been possible.

4. *Narodna Armiya*, June 24, 1982, pp. 1-3; See *RD*, June 19, 1982 (*FBIS, EE*, June 24, 1982, p. C1).

5. See the speech by D. Stanishev, Secretary of the CC of the Bulgarian CP; Sofia BTA in English, August 3, 1982 (*FBIS, EE*, August 4, 1982, C1).

6. See F. T. Miko, *East European Views of SALT*; Paper presented at the 21st Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Los Angeles, March 19, 1980, p. 2.

7. R. Schoenfeld, "Bulgariens Aussenhandelspolitik und die Rolle der deutschen Wirtschaft", in: *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa*, p. 401.

8. S. Stoilov, *Bulgarien im System der RGW*; Paper presented at the Bulgarian-German Symposium "Bulgaria in Europe—1300 Years of Economic Relations; Sofia, June 9-10, 1982.

Bulgaria has been affected by the global energy crisis of the 1970s. While its domestic crude oil and natural gas production decreased substantially, energy consumption rose significantly⁹. Within the last decade 1970-1980 imports of Soviet oil and oil products doubled, amounting to 91.5 percent of total Bulgarian oil consumption¹⁰. Finally, the Soviet Union is helping in the construction of two nuclear power plants which will meet the country's demands for electric energy. Bulgaria is second to the Soviet Union among Socialist countries in nuclear energy development¹¹.

Economic relations with the Soviet Union are highly favorable to Bulgaria; Sofia buys oil for less than the world market price and is permitted to accumulate import surpluses. However, it is questionable how much longer the Soviet Union can continue these favorable conditions, given its own domestic economic problems as well as its global commitments of financial assistance.

Balkans

The Balkans have traditionally been the main focus of Bulgarian security interests. Bulgaria wants to maintain "peaceful coexistence" in this volatile area and strives for measures that could create a climate of active cooperation. Since the very first launching of the idea of a Balkan nuclear-free zone by Romania in the late 1950s, Bulgaria has persistently advocated fulfillment of this project. Immediately after the victory of Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, President Zhivkov revived the issue. Sofia's strong desire for a nuclear-free zone probably coincides with Soviet desires, but also conforms with Bulgaria's own national interests. According to the Bulgarian view, the creation of such a zone "would mean (that the Balkans) will not become the scene of a nuclear conflict... The absence of this threat will positively affect the political climate"¹². It would also set an example and "turn Europe gradually into a continent without nuclear weapons"¹³. At the same time, the Bulga-

9. J. Gurney, "Energy needs in the Balkans", *The World Today*, (February 1978), pp. 44-45.

10. UN Economic Commission For Europe; *Economic Survey of Europe in 1979*; mimeo, March 31, 1980, p. 101. The USSR also provides 94.2 percent of Bulgarian needs in natural gas and 88.7 percent of its coal consumption (Calculation by J. Bethkenhagen, quoted by Schoenfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 402).

11. *Sofia BTA* in English, January 13, 1983 (*FBIS, EE*, January 13, 1983, C1).

12. Interview of I. Ganev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, in: *Berliner Zeitung*, August 13, 1982, p. 4.

13. *Sofia BTA*, June 25, 1982 (*FBIS, EE*, June 29, 1982, C3).

rians have hinted that NATO's decision to deploy intermediate-range missiles in Europe could affect the nature of their support for a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans.

In recent years, Sofia has begun to focus increased attention on the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Having neither a sizable navy nor global interests, Bulgaria wants to see the Superpowers' navies withdrawn from the Mediterranean. Such a development would lessen the danger from American seabased nuclear systems (submarines and aircraft carriers). The Bulgarians have also shown an active interest in developments in the Middle East because of their country's proximity to the area. The Arab-Israeli conflict is seen as having the potential to lead to an all-out war¹⁴. Moreover, Bulgaria has charged that the US and NATO have taken advantage of the recent exacerbation of the Middle East situation to expand their military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean "under the flag of so-called multinational forces"¹⁵.

The Greek-Turkish dispute has also been an issue of particular concern. President Zhivkov has stressed that his country "never used and will never use the difficulties arising in relations between its various neighbors for egoistic purposes"¹⁶. The prospect of a war near the Bulgarian borders would certainly be an unwelcome development, as is the arms race to which Greece and Turkey have committed themselves since 1974. At the same time, Bulgarian sources have shown concern about US support for increased weapon modernization in Greece and Turkey. According to the Bulgarian Minister of Defense, "with the direct assistance of the United States and other NATO members, the armies of Turkey and Greece are being equipped with contemporary models of tanks, self-propelled artillery, antitank guided missiles, aircraft, ships, submarines and other things equipped with modern electronic systems of guidance and geared for radioelectronic combat"¹⁷. Bulgaria has also expressed concern over the "constantly increasing" size of the Greek and Turkish armed forces (estimated at 750,000 men), the "eleven large bases and dozens of other US military projects", as well as about the "hundreds of national military exercises" and the "15-25 annual average of large NATO exercises" held in the area. Finally, concern is increasingly focused on the

14. *UN Doc., A/33/PV. 64*, November 29, 1978, pp. 88-90.

15. See the article written by the Bulgarian Minister of Defense in *RD*, March 9, 1983, pp. 1, 6 (*FBIS, EE*, March 16, 1983, C6).

16. Quoted in an article by I. Radev reproduced in the Greek newspaper *Eleftherotypia*, June 16, 1978.

17. See his article in *RD*, March 9, 1983, pp. 1, 6 (*FBIS, EE*, March 16, 1983, C7).

establishment of forward operational bases for AWACS aircraft in both Greece and Turkey¹⁸.

Although both NATO countries are depicted as under pressure from the United States, the recent US interest in Turkey in particular has caused some apprehension. According to Bulgarian commentators, Turkey's strategic importance for the United States has increased since the Iranian revolution. "This policy creates premises for aggravating the situation in that region and it cannot but arouse anxiety in the peoples of the Middle East, the Balkans and Turkey herself"¹⁹. In the economic sphere (and especially in agreements involving, for example, dam constructions or transport projects), the Greek-Turkish competition operates like an auction, where Sofia can seek the best terms. While Greece is more developed and is Bulgaria's fourth largest trading partner (almost as large as Poland, and twice as big as Romania or Hungary)²⁰, Turkey's potential market is considerably larger.

Relations with Yugoslavia are still affected by the historical controversy over Macedonia, and are also influenced by the degree of warmth or coolness in relations between Belgrade and Moscow. Some foreign circles fear that Bulgarian irredentism over Yugoslav Macedonia could be exploited by the Soviet Union and used to apply political pressure on Belgrade. From the Bulgarian point of view, however, the situation is very different. Bulgarians are concerned by the persistent Yugoslav campaigns spearheaded by Skopje against Sofia's ethnic policy in Bulgarian (Pirin) Macedonia. The Yugoslav complaints about the treatment of the "Macedonians" in Bulgaria are seen as blunt interference in Bulgaria's internal affairs, since Sofia considers the alleged "Macedonian" minority to be ethnic Bulgarians²¹. Some Bulgarians argue that the Macedonian issue in the post-Tito era is largely the creation of Yugoslavia's press and leadership, who use it to keep the specter of a Bulgarian-Soviet threat alive as a spur to unify their own people²². Recent celebrations of historic anniversaries important to Bulgaria have given rise to polemics between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria over the Macedonian issue. When the festivities were violently criticized by Yugoslavia, the Bulgarians answered with a sharp response about the "hysterical, anti-Bulgarian feelings

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Narodna Armiya*, June 2, 1982.

20. *Statisticeski godishnik na NRB, 1981*, p. 373 ff.

21. See for example, T. Dragoycheva, *Iz moite spomeni* (Sofia: Partizdat, 1979), pp. 90-93.

22. Reported by J. D. Bell, "Bulgaria: The Silent Partner", in M. D. Drachkovitch, ed. *East Central Europe*, (Stanford University: Hoover Institution Press, 1982), p. 237.

that have possessed certain circles in Belgrade and Skopje”²³. President Zhivkov, however, has repeatedly underscored that Bulgaria respects the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and does not seek any alteration of the borders recognized after World War II. He has even offered to sign a treaty to this effect with Yugoslavia at any time²⁴.

The recent crisis in Poland is regarded in Sofia as a serious threat to stability within the Warsaw Pact. Bulgarian press coverage of the Polish events was initially hesitant. The Bulgarian news media reported that “difficulties” were occurring in Poland and that the party was taking steps to deal with them. Since the spring of 1981, press coverage became more critical, however, and the Bulgarian leadership followed the WTO line of supporting the imposition of martial law and the outlawing of Solidarity²⁵. It criticized American sanctions and the general Western response, which was seen as an effort “to reverse the developments in Poland and to change the equilibrium of forces in Europe in favor of capitalism”²⁶. The Bulgarians have been harshly critical of the American attitude toward the Polish problem. They are somewhat less critical of West Europeans, describing Western Europe’s stand regarding the Polish events as inconsistent but showing a “certain realism”²⁷.

Economic Aspects

Economic problems arising mainly from the worldwide recession could, in time, affect Bulgaria’s security. During the 1960s and 1970s, the country enjoyed a very high growth rate (6.1 percent average annual rate in the period 1976-80)²⁸. Some observers conclude that this Balkan country has been more successful than any other CMEA nation at sustaining a high rate of economic growth²⁹. At the end of the 1970s, however, the Bulgarian economy experienced an economic slowdown. In an effort to rectify the decline in the economy, Sofia has introduced a modest economic reform, which aims at reducing

23. *Otechestven Front*, April 6, 1979.

24. See T. Zhivkov’s speech in *RD*, February 12, 1980. Private assurances were allegedly given by Zhivkov to the Yugoslav leadership at Tito’s funeral; See: *The New York Times*, June 25, 1980.

25. See for example, *RD*, December 16, 1981.

26. Sofia BTA in English, January 28, 1982, (*FBIS, EE*, February 3, 1982, C1).

27. *Otechestven Front*, February 3, 1982.

28. J. Vanous, “East European Economic Slowdown”, in *Problems of Communism* (July-August 1982), p. 3, table 7.

29. G. R. Feiwel, *Growth and Reforms in Centrally Planned Economies: The Lessons of the Bulgarian Experience* (New York: Praeger, 1977), pp. 19-20, 270.

centralization in some areas. The performance of Bulgaria's economy in the first three years of the 1981-85 plan is impressive: economic growth averaged 4.6 percent a year, well above the 3.7 percent called for in the plan³⁰.

Most of Bulgaria's trade is conducted with the Soviet Union and the other Eastern countries (72 percent in 1981). With roughly half of its trade with the USSR, Bulgaria ranks as the "third or fourth trade partner" for Moscow³¹. Trade with the West had begun by the 1960s, but decreased after 1975³². The large trade deficits which were amassed in the early 1970s forced the regime to reduce Western imports by the end of the decade. In recent years, Bulgaria's foreign trade balance has been positive, and its foreign debt abruptly decreased in the early 1980s, thus constituting an exception in Eastern Europe; it dropped from 4.5 billion dollars in 1979 to a manageable 1.8 billion dollars in June 1983³³.

II. ROMANIAN SECURITY PERCEPTIONS

Romania's security perceptions have been strongly influenced by its geographic position in the head of the Balkans and its long struggle for independence. Romanian observers emphasize the strong links between Romania's past struggles to preserve its independence and more recent efforts. In this regard, Nicolae Ceausescu, the current leader of Romania, and the driving force behind Romania's relatively independent stance within the Eastern bloc, is often compared to legendary personalities. Romanians are also acutely aware of their distinct Latin heritage, preserved over many centuries of foreign domination.

30. *The Economist*, November 5, 1983, p. 57.

31. According to an interview of Bulgaria's Minister of Foreign Trade to *Zemedelsko Zname*, reported by Sofia BTA on August 7, 1982 (*FBIS, EE* August 9, 1982, C2). Also see *Statisticeski godishnik na NRB, 1981*, p. 372. Bulgaria ranks first in the CMEA in terms of the percentage of its exports to the Soviet Union (D. Bahry and C. Clark, "Political Conformity and Economic Dependence in Eastern Europe; The impact of Trade with the West" in R. Linden, ed. *The Foreign Policies of Eastern Europe* (New York: Praeger, 1980), pp. 146-147.

32. In 1970 the West's share in Bulgarian trade was 17 percent, the lowest among all Warsaw Pact members. In 1977 it had declined to 13 percent, again the lowest among all East European countries.

33. *The New York Times*, June 17, 1983, p. D1. For similar figures see: R. Schoenfeld, "Bulgariens Aussenhandelspolitik und die Rolle der deutschen Wirtschaft" in *WDS*, pp. 404-405. For recent figures on Bulgaria's foreign trade, see *Sofia BTA*, May 12, 1983 (*FBIS, EE*, May 13, 1983, C4).

Romania's distinctive approach to security has been reflected in its pursuit of an autonomous foreign and defense policy. While a member of the Warsaw Pact, Bucharest has often adopted positions on issues that differ markedly from these of the Soviet Union and the other WTO members. For instance, in 1967, Romania broke ranks and became the first Warsaw Pact member to establish diplomatic relations with West Germany; it also maintained neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict and refused to participate in the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968. More recently it has taken an independent position on the question of the deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe and Warsaw Pact defense spending.

Romania's special approach to security is also reflected in the organization of its armed forces. Romania acknowledges its obligations to the WTO in case of an external attack on the alliance, but places unusual stress on its position that a specific decision by its national leadership would be required before its forces could be made available for collective action³⁴. Romania has also refrained from conducting joint maneuvers with the other Pact countries on Romanian territory since 1964 and has limited its participation in joint maneuvers abroad to exercises that do not require actual troop movement. It has avoided full integration of its national strategy into joint WTO missions and a full standardization of its military equipment with its allies. Romania is the only WTO member to purchase defense items outside the socialist community. It has cooperated with Yugoslavia in the joint development of the IAR-93 fighter plane³⁵ and conducted regular exchanges of military delegations with Yugoslavia. Military material has also been purchased from Western countries and the Rombac I-II jet airliner has been recently manufactured in cooperation with British Aerospace³⁶. The Romanian navy has also bought 28 fast attack gunboats and 20 torpedo-equipped hydrofoils from China³⁷.

Threat Perception

Romania sees the primary threat to its security emanating from a massive conventional attack on its territory. The official Romanian view foresees

34. See T. Grozea, "General Characteristics of National Defense", in I. Cernat, E. Stanislav, *National Defense: The Romanian View*, (Bucharest: Military Publishing House, 1976), p. 80.

35. See *Air Force Magazine*, (February 1983), pp. 89-90.

36. See *Agerpres*, March 30, 1983 (*FBIS, Eastern Europe*, April 4, 1983, H9).

37. D. Ghermani, "Chinas Präsenz in Südosteuropa", in *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa*, 1978/8-9, p. 208.

the possibility of an attack employing ground and naval forces, as well as airborne troops, but not involving the use of nuclear weapons because such a use would not contribute to the attainment of the political objective of the war and might risk the escalation of the conflict into a general war³⁸. The Romanians see a possibility that enemy forces would seize the country's principal administrative, economic and communications centers, cut off naval access to the outside world via the Black Sea and the Danube, seal off Romania's land borders and attack the Carpathian mountain strongholds of Romania's operational army³⁹. According to this view, the aggressor would try "to establish a new administration on the occupied territory and form a puppet government with whose help it would try to legalize the aggression and seek to justify the character of the war by pretending it was initiated 'in support' of the so-called 'legal government'"⁴⁰. An implicit reference is often made to President Ceausescu's declaration in 1968 after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia:

"It has been said that in Czechoslovakia there was a danger of counter-revolution. Perhaps tomorrow they will say that our meeting has mirrored counter-revolutionary tendencies... If so, we answer to all that the Romanian people will not permit anyone to violate the territory of our fatherland"⁴¹.

The Romanian government insists that "no party be allowed to go over the heads of the party leaders of another country and even less to launch appeals for the removal or change in the leadership of a party"⁴².

Defense Policy

When one takes such scenarios into consideration, the rationale for Romania's special approach becomes more evident. One aspect of this special approach is the existence of a very large and strong paramilitary force, the

38. See Col. T. Grozea, "The Socio-Political Foundations of National Defense", in Cernat ed., *National Defense*, p. 98 (quoted by Christopher D. Jones, *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe*, (New York: Praeger, 1981), p. 250, n. 107).

39. See Cernat, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

40. Col. G. Stanculescu, "The Resistance Movement", in Cernat, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

41. Quoted by R. A. Remington ed., *Winter in Prague*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 358-359.

42. "Statement of the Stand of the Romanian Workers' Party", April 1964 (quoted by W. E. Giffith, *Sino-Soviet Relations, 1964-1965*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1967), pp. 292-294.

“Patriotic Guards”, which is structured for partisan guerrilla action. This force, generally estimated at around 700,000 men, closely resembles the Territorial Defense Forces of Yugoslavia. Romanian military writing specifically cites the Yugoslav experience during World War II and the current Yugoslav system as evidence of the practical possibility for a medium-sized Balkan state to wage a war of national liberation against the army of a much larger state⁴³. Bucharest claims that the Romanian doctrine has its origins in the Middle Ages. However, the decision to reintroduce such an idea in the nuclear age was probably taken in the late 1950s⁴⁴. The “War of the Entire People” concept developed through the 1960s and was extensively described and formulated in the 1972 Defense Law⁴⁵. This Defense Law prohibited collaboration between Romanian citizens and an occupation force. It states,

“It is forbidden to accept or recognize any action of any foreign state or any situation regardless of its nature, including general capitulation or occupation of the national territory, which in times of peace or war, would infringe upon the national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Socialist Republic of Romania... Any such act of acceptance or recognition is null and void as being contrary to the state regime and the supreme interests of the Socialist State”⁴⁶.

The primary objective of the regular military forces of Romania during a possible enemy attack is to slow the enemy advance sufficiently to permit mobilization of the Patriotic Guards so that the war will enter a second stage of nationwide resistance to the occupation. Neither the regular armed forces, nor the Patriotic Guards are equipped with very modern or sophisticated equipment. According to President Ceausescu, “It is not the weapons, no matter how sophisticated and destructive, that will decide the fate of the fight, but men, people”⁴⁷.

Romania’s multilateral foreign policy is designed to complement its defense policy. Bucharest strongly supports initiatives that make the use of force less likely and that deter states from intervening in the internal affairs of others. According to the Romanians, these principles apply to all countries with no exception whatsoever. In its efforts to ensure that these fundamental

43. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

44. *Ibid.*

45. See for the text, *Scienteia*, Decembre 24, 1972.

46. Article 1 of the 1972 Law.

47. N. Ceausescu, *Romania on the Way Toward Building Up the Multilaterally Developed Socialist Society*, (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1978), vol. 17, p. 232 and vol. 3, p. 334.

principles are respected, Romania has been very active in establishing an impressive network of relations with various countries, parties and movements. For instance, Romania has adopted a neutral stance in the Sino-Soviet dispute and has maintained cordial relations with a number of Eurocommunist parties, especially the Italian Communist party (PCI).

Balkans

The Balkans have traditionally been an area of special importance to Romanian security. For instance, Bucharest was the first country in the region to propose a Balkan nuclear-free zone in the late 1950s. Recent interest in this idea by other Balkan countries, particularly Greece, has stimulated renewed efforts on Romania's part to give the idea concrete shape. Romania has called for turning the Balkans into "an area free of nuclear weapons and foreign military bases" as an important step towards lowering tension between East and West and thus as an indirect contribution to Romania's security⁴⁸.

According to Romanian security specialists, the creation of a denuclearized zone in the Balkans is all the more important because of "the political and military strategic importance of the area, the interaction between the great powers, and the accumulation of forces and weapons; and because there are certain favorable conditions in the Balkans to give concrete shape to such a target"⁴⁹. The same circles stress that no attempt is being made to create a "Balkan bloc" and that a number of extra-regional factors exert an unfavorable influence on the Balkan situation. Romania has proposed the convening of a summit meeting of the Balkan countries to deal with these issues—an idea which has been given strong support by the Greek government under Andreas Papandreu.

Arms Control

Romania's approach to arms control and European security has been part of a wider effort to enhance its security. For instance, Bucharest has been a strong supporter of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which it sees as a useful vehicle for broadening support for its independent path and creating additional obstacles to Moscow's ability to invoke

48. See a relevant speech of President Ceausescu as reported by the Bucharest Domestic Service on January 25, 1983 (*FBIS, EE*, Jan. 27, 1983, H5).

49. See N. Ecobescu-I. Pascu: "Denuclearization of the Balkans" in *Lumea*, March 17, 24, 31 and April 7, 1983 (*FBIS, EE*, April 14, 1983, H3-H4).

the Brezhnev doctrine. In particular, it has sought to see the principles of sovereignty, equality and non-interference—basic principles of Romanian foreign policy—firmly anchored in all conference documents, and at times has cooperated closely with West European neutrals on procedural questions.

Romania has also strongly supported the convocation of the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE). From Bucharest's point of view, the conference offers the possibility of obtaining eventual agreement on a set of binding military measures that would make any military action against Romania more difficult. It also provides an important forum in which small and medium-sized powers such as Romania can have a direct voice in issues related to military security in Europe (in contrast to the MBFR negotiations in Vienna, which are conducted on a bloc-to-bloc basis). The conference thus contributes to eroding the bloc-to-bloc approach to security, which Bucharest opposes.

Romania has also taken an independent stand on the INF issues. On a number of points, in fact, Bucharest's position has been closer to that of the U.S. than to Moscow's. Romania has, for instance, called for a sharp reduction of missiles on both sides and demanded that the missiles be dismantled, not just removed. It has also called for a freeze on "new" missile deployments in Europe to be followed by a reduction of existing intermediate-range missiles, with the aim of eventually eliminating all nuclear weapons from Europe. Finally, the Romanian leader called recently for the "immediate resumption" of the INF talks, whereas Moscow insists that the United States must first remove the Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles that have already been deployed in Western Europe⁵⁰.

Economic Aspects of Security

In recent years, economic developments, particularly the deterioration of Romania's economy, has become a matter of increasing concern to the Romanian leadership. President Ceausescu has emphasized the link between security and the economy by saying that reducing military expenditures is essential not only to diminish the arms race and war preparations, but also "for creating the necessary conditions for overcoming the current world economic crisis and bringing about a socio-economic recovery". Romania's economic and political strategies are closely linked. Romania has sought to develop its economy rapidly, which it regards as an important prerequisite for maintaining its independent path in foreign policy. In the early 1960s,

50. *The Financial Times*, June 6, 1984.

for instance, Romania rejected proposals for a CMEA division of economic responsibilities that would have confined the country primarily to agricultural production, supply of raw materials and continuation of its existing petrochemical industry, leaving most industrial development to other nations. Romania apparently feared that such a strategy would make it overly dependent on CMEA for most of its manufactured goods and that national control of the economy would decrease in favor of supra-national authorities. It favored instead a program of diversified industrial development in all significant economic sectors. While Romania continues to reject any form of supra-national integration, it has also shown an increased desire to cooperate with its partners in CMEA—which comprises 40 percent of its foreign trade, especially in the area of energy and raw materials. At the same time it has occasionally complained that its CMEA partners have not adhered fully to the adopted program⁵¹.

Romania's policy of rapid development was also manifested in its conscious choice, especially since the late 1960s, to devote an unusually large proportion of its resources to investment at the expense of consumption (the investment rate long stood at a level of about 32%, one of the highest in the world). This rapid growth rate caused severe strains on the consumer sector of the economy during the last decade or more, but the pace was more bearable prior to the major economic dislocations caused by the overall world recession and such consequences as reduced markets and high interest rates.

Romania has also been confronted with a rapid increase of its foreign debt as a result of an uneven commercial balance and also as a result of the excessively high interest rates, which are to blame for the fact that part of the debt was never repaid on schedule, while money was allocated to paying the interest which kept increasing⁵². The recall of short-term loans by Western banks in 1981 (influenced to a large extent by their experience with Poland) resulted in a dramatic deterioration in Romania's gross debt to the West. This debt doubled between 1978 and 1981, reaching about 10 billion dollars by the end of 1981⁵³. Debt servicing thus imposed a heavy strain on the Romanian economy in 1982. At the end of that year, Bucharest informed its creditors that it was not able to pay the principal due for 1983 and requested a reschedu-

51. See *Scinteia*, December 17, 1982 and *Era Socialista*, No. 23, December 5, 1982.

52. Ceausescu, in *Scinteia*, January 21, 1983, pp. 1-2 (*FBIS, EE*, January 27, 1983, H13).

53. See K. Schroeder, "Rescheduling the Debts of CMEA Countries", in *Aussenpolitik*, 1983/2, pp. 145-152.

ling of its loans⁵⁴. The loans have subsequently been rescheduled according to Romanian sources.

In addition, the IMF has reportedly found Romania's performance in servicing its debt to be satisfactory and raised its standing accordingly. However, the country's debt is likely to remain an important concern, at least for the near future. Although President Ceausescu has repeatedly pointed to the desirability of cancelling the debts of poor countries and generally curtailing interest rates drastically⁵⁵, the real hope for amelioration lies in changing market conditions, notably the substantial decline in interest rates that began in the latter half of 1982 coupled with the extraordinary downward pressure on oil prices and Romania's ability to increase its exports.

Developments in Poland, and particularly their effect on Western attitudes, were viewed with concern in Bucharest because they could presage greater discontent with stringent economic and political limitations in Romania as well. Although the leadership appears committed to a high growth rate, continued belt-tightening is likely to be necessary for some time, which over the long run could affect the standard of living. Recently, there has been a shift in economic policy to place greater emphasis on the agricultural sector in order to try to address some of the problems in this sector. The government has also taken measures to improve food supplies and prevent economic dissatisfaction from turning to political turmoil⁵⁶.

CONCLUSION

During the last twenty years Bulgaria and Romania have followed different roads to security and this diversity has grown stronger. In assessing the prospects for stability in the Balkans, one can reasonably wonder whether the present differences are likely to sharpen or wane.

In respect to Bulgaria's security orientations, there is likely to be little spectacular change for the foreseeable future. Sofia can be expected to continue to coordinate closely its security policy with the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. Furthermore, the impressive performance of the Bulgarian economy during the first years of the 1980s is another factor of stability and continuity.

54. *The Wall Street Journal*, January 4, 1983 and June 23, 1983.

55. As reported by *Scinteia*, January 21, 1983, pp. 1-2 (*FBIS, EE*, January 27, 1983, H13).

56. New Year Message of President N. Ceausescu, *Agerpres*, December 31, 1982 (*FBIS, EE*, January 3, 1983, H6).

One area where there is room for significant Bulgarian initiative is in the Balkans, where the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone is likely to remain the centerpiece of Sofia's attitude. Being the Warsaw Pact's sentinel in the Balkans and sharing a common border with nuclear-armed Turkey and Greece, Bulgaria's interest in this idea is more acute than that of Romania.

The future nature of Romanian security will be affected by a number of factors. First, the deterioration of the country's economic situation could, if it persists, have a long-term negative effect on both socio-economic and political stability. Continued difficulties in this regard could, in fact, affect the independent course in economic and foreign policy so successfully charted by Ceausescu over the past few decades, and could provide the temptation for foreign powers to intervene directly in Romanian affairs.

The second important factor is the general evolution of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia's independent policy and commitment to non-alignment have been an important factor in allowing Romania to pursue its relatively independent path. Moreover, Romania and Yugoslavia have cooperated closely in the security area (one good example is their joint development of the IAR-93 fighter plane). Renewed political and economic instability in Yugoslavia or any weakening of Yugoslavia's commitment to non-alignment would therefore invariably affect Romania's security policy.

Another factor affecting Romanian security in the future will be the state of Romania's relations with Western countries. Whereas in the recent past Western support (political as well as economic) has been important to Romania in its pursuit of a relatively independent path, current difficulties in Romania's relations with these countries raise questions about whether the same degree of support will be forthcoming in the 1980s and beyond.

Lastly, a more long-term concern is the problem of succession. President Ceausescu has played such a pivotal role in Romania's development in the past few decades that his advancing age will eventually be a matter of great concern (although at 66 he is at present the youngest leader in the East). Even though (or perhaps because) the upper levels of the government bureaucracy are filled with friends of Ceausescu, the nature of leadership after his death, and his successor's ability to continue his distinctive approach to domestic and foreign policy matters, is not at all clear. While it is true that Yugoslavia weathered a similar "succession crisis" without major effects on its domestic or foreign policy, the dynamics of the situation in Romania are quite different.

It is precisely this "special status" of Romania within the WTO which is the aspect of Romanian security which will continue to receive the most attention, from both East and West, in the coming years. The maintenance

of this special status, and its impact upon the larger relationship between East and West, is bound to remain a central concern not only of the Ceausescu government, but of any Romanian leadership which would eventually succeed Ceausescu. In this way, the nature of Romanian security will continue to mirror the general evolution of East-West relations in the coming decades.

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