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Ghiță Ionescu on the BBC

ARMAND GOȘU

On 9 March 1947, Ghiță Ionescu landed in London. He had a transit visa to “Belgium-France”, bearing the date 24 February 1947¹. He had obtained the visa at the General Consulate of Great Britain in Istanbul, Galata. The British clerk crossed out with his pen “valid for one day” and wrote “one month”.

Ghiță Ionescu had to hurry. On 22 March 1947, his diplomatic passport was set to expire². He had its validity extended by the chargé d'affaires at the Romanian legation in Ankara. He had just been recalled by Alexandru Cretzianu, Romania's Minister Plenipotentiary in Turkey. Shortly after, a new ambassador to Ankara was appointed, convenient to the Petru Groza government, which was dominated by communists. Most likely, his chances of carrying on as economic adviser at the Romanian legation in Turkey's capital, and therefore of having his passport renewed, were rather slim, and the political events in Bucharest did not inspire optimism, since Ghiță Ionescu made meticulous preparations to head over to the West. On 3 February 1947, he got his visa from the Belgian Legation in Ankara. With his luggage ready, he left for Istanbul, where he first knocked on the door of the Swiss Consulate, getting a transit visa on 18 February. He then went to the British Consulate, which issued him a transit visa on 24 February. To be on the safe side, on 27 February he requested yet another transit visa, this time from the Greek Consulate. The last hours before departure he spent in the company of his colleague Mircea Buescu, First Economy Secretary with the Romanian Consulate in Istanbul. The two would meet again after 25 years in Brazil, where Mircea Buescu had taken

¹ Upon an invitation extended by prof. Andrei Pippidi, I joined in the autumn of 2002 the Romanian Recent History Institute team, financed by the MATRA foundation of Holland, as part of a project initiated by Coen Stork, Dutch ambassador to Bucharest, 1988-1993. That year, by courtesy of Ms. Isabel de Madariaga, close friend to Ghiță Ionescu, writer of fundamental books on the history of Russia, and thanks to the efforts made by Andrei Pippidi, most of Ghiță Ionescu's archive was brought to the Romanian Recent History Institute. I had the privilege to research this archive for over a year, trying to put order in scattered papers, brought in large bags to Bucharest. Unfortunately, the Ghiță Ionescu collection in the archive of the Romanian Recent History Institute covers only a small part of the British political scientist's biography.

² This diplomatic passport can be found in the Ghiță Ionescu collection in the archive of the Romanian Recent History Institute. A part of the information in this article was collected from the Ghiță Ionescu collection in the archive of the Romanian Recent History Institute, which has not yet been inventoried.

refuge, and where he was a professor of political economics. On 28 February, Ghiță Ionescu boarded a plane for Rome. Turkish border guards wrote in his passport the destination he indicated: “Belgium”.

In December, he had obtained an Italian visa from the legation in London. He had been in the British capital between 15 and 21 December 1946, when he may have decided on his future place of refuge. He therefore crossed into Italy on 28 February, went north, and on 5 March crossed into Switzerland. The next day he went to the French embassy in Berne, where he got his French visa, but changed his mind on 9 March at the last moment, and took a plane from Geneva straight to London. As he had no intention of going to Belgium, his stated destination, and as time passed, the transit visa valid for a month was running out, and he applied to the Home Office in London to have it extended. An acquaintance told him that on 9 April, the very day the visa was expiring, he had been issued a three month extension. On 7 May, the police station in Piccadilly Place issued a registration stamp on his already expired diplomatic passport.

Ghiță Ionescu was born on 8 March 1913, in Bucharest, in the home of his parents, Elena and Alexandru, at 41 Călărăși Street. His birth certificate was issued by Ion C. Bacalbașa, “councilman of the commune of Bucharest and marital status officer”. His father, Alexandru Ionescu, came from a well-known family of Liberal politicians, especially in his native city of Ploiești, and was a lawyer. His mother, Elena, nee Simpson, was registered at City Hall, as was the custom at the time, as “profession – none”³.

Alexandru Ionescu was famous in interwar Bucharest as the entrepreneur behind the Athénée Palace, the most famous upscale hotel in Bucharest⁴. Which means he had very good connections in the political world, among great businessmen, and in foreign diplomatic circles. However, his son Gheorghe (Ghiță, the usual Romanian diminutive for Gheorghe) was never drawn to the business world, or to diplomacy, even less to politics, as was the custom in Romania. Most young people at the time were marching under the flags of the legionnaires, the main Romanian extreme nationalist Fascist party at the time. Going against the current, Ghiță Ionescu had leftist sympathies. After graduating law in Bucharest, he started writing articles in the left wing press. This was mostly small issue, ephemeral, culture oriented press. And he only published a few articles. The first, “The New Method”, appeared in the first of three issues of the *New Era* magazine in February 1936⁵.

Though very young, Ghiță Ionescu would make a name for himself, as recalled by his contemporaries, becoming an important presence in the circle

³ Romanian Recent History Institute’s Archive, Ghiță Ionescu collection, document has not been inventoried.

⁴ John Pinder, “Ghiță Ionescu 1913-96: Freedom and Politics”, *Government and Opposition*, X, vol. 31, no. 4, 1996, p. 400.

⁵ „Metoda nouă”, *Era Nouă*, februarie 1936, pp. 4-27.

revolving around the Romanian *Viața românească*, managed by Mihail Ralea and Constantin Vișoianu. However, he did not publish much in that magazine either.

The Spanish Civil War sparked his imagination. He decided it was time for action. In an autobiography in manuscript, Ghiță Ionescu recalled that he approached Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, himself a member of the Romanian Life circle, where he published several articles under the pen name Ion C. Ion, who told him to contact Ștefan Foriș, general secretary of the Communist Party of Romania (PCdR), to ask for assistance in enrolling in the Red Brigades fighting in Spain. Ghiță Ionescu goes on to recount how he got to Paris. Once there, after long conversations with left wing French journalists, his communist convictions collapsed. The last of his communist sympathies were crushed by the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, on 23 August 1939. In the few interviews he gave the Romanian press after '89, Ghiță Ionescu attributes his early communist sympathies to his virulent anti-Fascism. The moment Fascism and Communism joined hands, and the two dictators, Hitler and Stalin, divided Eastern Europe between them, Ghiță Ionescu started hating with equal passion both Fascism and Communism.

On 1 May 1940, Ghiță was hired by the economy department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After more than two years spent at ministry headquarters, he was sent as a commercial attaché to Helsinki; he was then moved, in the summer of 1943, and appointed as an economic adviser at the Romanian Legation in Sofia, headed by Ion Hristu. The documents in the ministry archive describe an extremely active young professional diplomat.

As a result, a short holiday in Turkey was welcome. On 11 August 1944, he got the visa from the legation of that country in Sofia, and on 21 August he crossed the border at Edirne. Ghiță Ionescu left behind some notes in a notebook, a makeshift diary:

“This is precisely the total novelty of my trip to Turkey: that it is in no way necessary, or forcible, you see, quite the contrary, I take it as a simple vacation, maybe my first true vacation since I've been around [...] It looks like it is deserved; it seems that I've done enormous amounts of work, and, even though I know how much was hidden in this thirst for work, the desperation in my soul and the long confirmed appetite for proving my abilities – it gives me pleasure to no end to take these trips that I am allowed in recompense” (notes from 22 August 1944, in the little diary called “La marche turque”).

On 23 August, Ghiță Ionescu crossed the Bosphorus and headed to Ankara. Somewhere, maybe even at the Romanian Legation in the capital of Turkey, he found out about the coup d'état of 23 August 1944.

A few days later, on 28 August, he got his Bulgarian visa from the Bulgarian Legation in Ankara, and left for Istanbul, then Sofia, then crossed the Danube into Romania at Giurgiu. Reaching Bucharest, Ghiță Ionescu was

enlisted by the Armistice Commission to deal with economic issues⁶. He took part in negotiations with Soviet representatives, heading the economic section of the commission until late in February 1945. During this time, as he later recalled, he came into violent conflict with the Moscow's emissaries, for which reason Constantin Vișoianu, foreign minister in the Nicolae Rădescu government, decided to protect him by appointing him economic adviser at the Romanian Legation in Ankara. On 28 February, with a terrible cold, running a temperature, by order of Minister Vișoianu he was put on a train to Giurgiu. He crossed the border into Bulgaria, and on 11 March he arrived in Turkey via Edirne. He took over his economic adviser position right as Romanian-Turkish economic negotiations were wrapping up in Ankara. Aside from very few reports analyzing the evolution of the Turkish economy in the new post war international context – reports that hint at the masterful future political scientist – most of Ghiță Ionescu's activity seems stifled by routine, by writing all kinds of messages (of the “see attached” type) to Romanian and Turkish companies related to trading in cotton, timber, asphalt, tar, and a lot of products with oriental names. In other words, Ghiță Ionescu fit perfectly in the mechanism of a legation as a conscientious clerk⁷.

His was completely caught up in his work. He left Turkey for the first time as late as 22 November 1946, but not to go to Romania. He reached London via Rome, Marseilles and Paris. He returned to Istanbul on 22 December. In his last two months in Istanbul, he made detailed preparations for his final move to Great Britain.

At 34, Ghiță Ionescu started life all over again. In a not-so-welcoming environment – Great Britain had a hard time dealing with its war wounds –, he had to make do for a few years with various temporary undertakings. Shortly after arriving in London, he applied for a job at the Romanian section of the BBC. As a result, on 24 July he was invited by the director for Eastern Europe, R.M.J. Gillot, to the BBC headquarters, the famous Bush House in the center of London, for the usual aptitude test at the microphone. It seems that Ghiță Ionescu did not show up at Bush House (George Campbell, mentioned in a letter as contact, did not recall anything about this episode half a century later). The contact with the BBC was postponed for a few years. On the back of the letter calling him in for the interview, Ghiță Ionescu copied an article in the French press about Titulescu⁸.

In his first years in London, Ghiță Ionescu worked on a book dedicated to his mentor, Nicolae Titulescu. He took down articles from the press, documents

⁶ John Pinder, “Ghiță Ionescu 1913-96”, cit., p. 401.

⁷ Diplomatic reports written by Ghiță Ionescu could be read in the Archive of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fond Turkey.

⁸ Romanian Recent History Institute's Archive, Ghiță Ionescu collection, documents have not been inventoried.

from the Foreign Office, but by the late '50s he had given up the project. He left behind a few chapters in manuscript (with French and English versions), and a few boxes of the most diverse notes on Titulescu, which are preserved in the Archive of the Romanian Recent History Institute in Bucharest.

In his first years of exile, he published notes and articles on Romania in the British press. Starting in October 1949, Ghiță Ionescu started teaching the Romanian language and history at the War Office as part of courses held by the prestigious School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) with London University. The British government was training officers for a possible conflict with the USSR. Most of them trained in Russian issues, while a few other officers took up the language and history of countries in Eastern Europe occupied by the Soviets after WWII. Eric Tappe, member of the British British Allied Commission in Bucharest, was appointed in 1947 lecturer for the Romanian studies section of the SSEES. As suggested by prof. Dennis Deletant, most likely it was Tappe who, in 1949, arranged for Ghiță Ionescu to be hired by the head of the institute, George Henry Bolsover, a remarkable expert on Russian problems. Bolsover had worked for a short time (1943-1947) for the Foreign Office as first secretary at the embassy in Moscow (as an expert on Russia). Until his retirement in 1976, George Bolsover worked closely with the BBC, with analysis and commentaries on Soviet topics. The director of the SSEES was probably the one who recommended Ghiță Ionescu for the European section of the BBC in 1950. Ionescu submitted an analysis of Cominform policies, eight pages long, in English, recorded on magnetic tape on 8 June 1950 and broadcast on 15 June after the 19:00 news bulletin.

Shortly after, the Romanian section of the BBC asked him for a longer version of that analysis. The initial text was submitted by Ghiță Ionescu in Romanian to the BBC – at least that is what his personal archive seems to indicate – entitled “Changing Forms of Government”, and was an analysis of international law with regard to “people's republics in East Europe”. Ghiță Ionescu's conclusion was that these states were neither popular democracies, nor dictatorships of the proletariat, but countries occupied by a foreign army, where the supreme authority is the Soviet army, and that there was no question whatsoever of sovereignty and independence. The text was broadcast by the Romanian section of the BBC on the evening of 22 June 1950. Ghiță Ionescu dedicated to the Cominform a second conference, whose broadcast date remains unknown, called “Unmasking the Cominform Peace”.

The Romanian section of the BBC was set up hastily, after WWII broke out. In just one week, a section was set up with four presenters, who, starting on 13 September 1939, were reading a morning news bulletin 15 minutes long⁹. On

⁹ Interview with Larry Galia who had started to work for the BBC Romanian Section, March 1943 (August 1999).

19 September 1940, the BBC management decided to introduce a second news bulletin. After Romania joined the war alongside Germany in the summer of 1941, Romanian language broadcasts expanded even further, reaching three hours a day¹⁰. The audience the BBC had could not be curbed, not by the jamming stations which the Germans had provided to the Romanians, very active starting in 1942, nor by the public appeals made by the government led by Ion Antonescu, so that by the end of the war Radio London had the largest audience of all foreign stations broadcasting in Romanian. Among them were the Voice of America, Radio Madrid, whose audience was made up mostly by former legionnaires, Radio Ankara and Radio Paris¹¹. After 1950 the the Romanian language section of Free Europe/Radio Liberty came on the air, and rose to dominate the list of foreign stations broadcasting in Romanian in the '70s and '80s.

But let us get back to London and the summer of 1950. One other conference read on the air at the BBC in Romanian, preserved in Ghiță Ionescu's personal archive, was entitled "The English and Aggression". The topic: the reaction of the political class in London and of British society to the breakout of the Korean war. The next broadcast was dedicated to August 23rd. Ghiță Ionescu fiercely contradicted the official propaganda, which attributed the coup d'état which had toppled Marshal Antonescu to the PCdR, leading to Romania joining the United Nations coalition, insisting on the contribution made by king Michael I. These initial radio conferences eventually led to the BBC turning them into a new feature in the Romanian language.

For five years, starting in 1950, "The Letter from London" was Ghiță Ionescu's signature feature. The title was likely inspired by features in the *Romanian Life* magazine where he had worked. In the December 1937 issue, where he had published an essay called "On Hope", D.N. Ciotori started his feature "Letters from London". It is possible that Ghiță Ionescu himself proposed the title of the feature in editorial meetings. What is certain is that the title "Letters from..." made a career in *Romanian Life*. "Letters from London" was first followed by "Letters from Prague", a feature by Eugen V. Torgashev, then by "Letters from Paris", a feature by Eugen Ionescu. It seems that the title of the feature continued to be an obsession for Ghiță Ionescu his entire life. After '89, when he was asked to contribute to *Meridian* magazine, he sent in an article called "Letter from London" (an article which, maybe not by accident, starts by recalling the atmosphere at *Romanian Life*).

¹⁰ Assa Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*, vol. III, *The War of Words (1939-1945)*, Oxford University Press, 1970, pp. 5-65, 240, 313-314, 352, 427-428, 617-618.

¹¹ James Wood, *History of International Broadcasting*, The Institution of Engineering and Technology, London, 1992; *Ibidem*, vol. II, London, 2000.

The first radio conference in the “Letter” cycle is from 6 September 1950, entitled “Ten Year Reign”. It was dedicated to king Michael I, who was in exile himself after being forced to abdicate by the communists in December 1947. The sovereign's ascent to the throne, which had occurred 10 years before, was “a much more important anniversary for all Romanians than all the other so-called anniversaries that the Russians are using to redden the pages of our calendars with”. It may not be a coincidence that the “Letter from London” feature debuted on that anniversary, a moment which held an obvious symbolic value both for the author and listeners within the country. King Mihai's figure recurred on many occasions in Ghiță Ionescu's BBC conferences. In fact, professor Ionescu remained a dedicated monarchist to the end of his life.

By the time the “Letter from London” feature started, Ionescu had become a true radio man. It is the first conference written in radio style, with short and high impact phrases. In only a few months, Ghiță Ionescu, with experience in the written press in Romania, consolidated subsequently in London, in the British press, confirmed by the fact that he became the president of the Association of Free Journalists from Behind the Iron Curtain, had moved beyond the stage of scientific conference on the radio. The first text he read in Romanian on BBC sounds more like an article in a scientific journal. He spoke about the conclusions of “researching the official texts of the Cominform”. It was very hard for Ghiță Ionescu, with a voice less than radio friendly, with 10 to 12 minute texts, full of expert details, to hold the attention of listeners, to gain wider audience. The first to understand this was Ghiță Ionescu himself.

In late August 1950, he decided to submit a proposal to BBC management to turn “Letter from London” into a regular feature to be broadcast on Wednesday night every other week. The head of the Romanian section, Doreen Berry, told him on 12 September that he could continue the feature until the end of the year. That is when they were discussing the general schedule, and, depending on reactions, would cut some broadcasts and introduce others. With the exception of “special occasions”, such as 23 August and 6 September, Ghiță Ionescu was asked to focus “more on the international scene and less on special Romanian events”, since the feature “Sign of the Times” was the one discussing the political evolution in Romania.

And, as a result, several installments in the cycle “Letter from London” in 1950 were dedicated to events on the international scene, but they were analyzed from a Romanian perspective. One of those conferences refers directly to the Romanian perspective, to the actions undertaken by the Romanian National Committee, a kind of government in exile, in the UN General Assembly. It seems that this is the first text which is violently against the communist authorities in Bucharest that Ghiță Ionescu read on a BBC microphone. He called the head Romanian diplomat, Ana Pauker, “cantankerous and incoherent, like a slum Lady Macbeth”, and Vyshinsky “an executioner of people and nations”.

At a first reading, the conferences read by Ghiță Ionescu on the BBC impress by their tough language. Soviet leaders are “murderers”, “the Kremlin gangsters”, or “Stalin and his gang”, and are more “idiotic” than the Nazis. The Soviet Union is nothing more than “a police state whose sole foundations are fear and terror, murder and assassination, blood and corpses”. Speaking of G.M. Malenkov, who became prime minister in Moscow after Stalin's death, Ghiță Ionescu wrote that his biography is that of a “mole in the underground corridors of the Bolshevik party, through the secretive morgues and laboratories of the ministry, until a door opened towards the sulfur springs of power: Stalin's rooms. Once there, the young candidate did not move. Lurking by his master's feet, he understood that if he stays there, one day he will be the Master. But will it be that way?”. About the underground communists in Romania, whom he had known well in his youth, he says that “they are deserters and felons”, calling the party leadership in Bucharest “gangsters”. Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, Ana Pauker, Vasile Luca and Leonte Răutu are the ones most often attacked in Ghiță Ionescu's conferences. Only Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu enjoyed a milder treatment, maybe thanks to the years spent in the editorial rooms of left wing publications, as well as to the fact that he was arrested by his own party colleagues.

The most violent text read on the air at the BBC by Ghiță Ionescu was broadcast on 24 August 1955. It was the last conference in the “Letter from London” cycle. He speaks “directly to an anti-Romanian, a non-Romanian, a defiler of the name Romanian”, meaning to Gheorghiu-Dej, the leader of communist Romania. The conference was called “Open Letter”. This explosion of fury was caused by statements made by Gheorghiu-Dej regarding Soviet troops staying in Romania.

“On 12 August 1955, a day I am sure you will bitterly regret, the Romanian and foreign press published statements you made to A.L. Bradford, vice-president of United Press. In them, you said that after the treaty with Austria was signed, Soviet troops would be pulled from Romania because they are no longer necessary to Romania as long as the Warsaw Treaty stands. In its turn, this treaty would remain into effect as long as the western military groups and the foreign bases in Western Europe are in place. This statement, which could only equal a request by you to Soviet commanders to maintain the occupation troops in a country whose leader you consider to be (for how else could you decide what the Soviet troops would do?), surprised both Romanians and foreigners.”

Since neither Khrushchev, nor other communist leaders in Moscow's satellite countries had asked for such a thing, Gheorghiu-Dej is “the most craven and most frightened of the possibility of facing alone the people you have been oppressing”, Ghiță Ionescu says to him, “even backed by the entire military-police apparatus he built with the help of the Soviets in the last eleven years. You cannot be fearful of an external threat... You only fear the Romanian people”. Gheorghiu-Dej is “an exceptional shame on Romania, stepping over

the limit of decency that any man is willing to go to, no matter how unpleasant one's situation. Whoever sells the beings he is meant to protect, his wife, his children, his people, surely is among the most despicable types in human society". Ghiță Ionescu ended his last conference for the BBC by assuring the communist leader in Bucharest that he is held in "the highest contempt that Romanians are capable of".

"Letter from London" was first and foremost a window to the world for listeners in Romania. On the whole, broadcasts dedicated to Romanian topics were relatively on a par with those dedicated to events on the world stage. For Ghiță Ionescu, there practically was no difference between "Romanian topics" and "international topics", everything was presented in context. What was going on in Romania was compared to the evolution in other communist countries. International events were analyzed from the perspective of the influence they may have on Romania and the entire "socialist bloc". Even when writing about the presidential elections in the United States and the parliamentary elections in Great Britain, Ionescu built his analysis from the perspective of those countries' relations with the USSR and the countries under Moscow's domination. Ghiță Ionescu combined a style of analysis in the Anglo-Saxon press with his experience with the Romanian press. The engaged, very clear and direct, profoundly democratic style sends to the interwar Romanian press, especially towards *The Free Word*, published by Tudor Teodorescu-Braniște, where Ghiță Ionescu contributed. However, the criteria used to pick the topics of his radio conferences, even more so their titles, as well as the incursions he makes into the history of certain countries, seeking his arguments in similar situations of the past, all these remind one more of Ciotori's "Letters from London" in the Romanian *Viața românească*¹². It is a type of press centered on international issues, fairly well represented in Romanian interwar publications, which proves the existence of a fairly well educated target public, a public interested in global political evolution. This kind of press disappeared utterly in communist Romania. What is sure is that in the early '50s, when Ghiță Ionescu was reading his "Letter from London" on the air at the BBC, this public still existed in Romania, very interested in what was happening all over the world.

In the communist period, for a foreign radio station broadcasting in Romanian it was very difficult to gauge its real audience. Some information reached London through the British embassy in Bucharest. That same embassy sent in the '50s "audience reports" on the quality of reception, on jamming and interruptions, therefore focused on the technical aspects. The most important instrument for gauging the audience of some broadcasts was discussions with people fleeing Romania. At the beginning of the '50s, there were few such fugitives, and of them, not all wanted to answer all 20 questions in the

¹² D.N. Ciotori, "Scrisori din Londra. Observații asupra politicii britanice", *Viața românească*, no. 1, ianuarie 1938; *Idem*, "Scrisori din Londra. Pax Germanica", *Ibidem*, no. 6, iunie 1938 etc.

questionnaire. Most such reports were filled in at the refugee camp in Trieste, where a lot of people fleeing through Yugoslavia ended up, and in Istanbul.

The person who had the highest audience on Radio London back then was Mircea Stoe, a former diplomat with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest, with his feature “Bazganov and Minciunin”, broadcast on Friday nights. Affecting a strong Russian accent, Stoe parodied communist leaders, along with everything happening in Moscow and Bucharest. It was a political satire show. Second in the rankings by number of mentions in audience reports after “Bazganov and Minciunin” was Ionescu's “Letter from London”. One Armenian man from Constanța on his way to New Zealand, while in Istanbul, on 30 June 1950, recalled how Ghiță Ionescu's broadcast is “listened by everyone in Constanța”, because it was clear and “against the communists”. When he asked his friends about Ghiță Ionescu, he was told that he was supposed to be a lawyer from Bucharest who had fled to the West. The Armenian remembered those things in Istanbul, and quoted several of Ghiță Ionescu's shows which had impressed him. According to an agricultural engineer from Timiș who had fled from Romania to Yugoslavia, Ghiță Ionescu's were the best and most widely listened BBC shows in Romania. A man from Bucharest emigrating to Canada, who listened faithfully to Ionescu's commentaries, said that what bothers him is that he lets himself get “too carried away with personal feelings”, even though he begins by saying that it is an “objective” show which he personally appreciates, first and foremost for “keeping alive the flame of hope”, namely the hope that the communist regime in Romania would collapse. The only thing that is certain, after reading the audience reports, is that Ionescu's “Letter from London” had a faithful audience¹³.

Ghiță Ionescu was very interested in the reactions of his listeners, in their commentaries and suggestions. His enthusiasm knew no bounds when getting letters from the country or from exiles like him. Most times, he answered amply those letters in his feature. He accepted some suggestions from his listeners, debating topics that interested them. However, he made sure he would not divulge any information that could lead to the letter writers being identified. It was hard not to be careful about that, since most of the letters insisted on it, with phrases such as: “Please do not divulge my name, my country, and the city where this letter was sent from”, or “I am forced to insist you do not divulge my name”, or “please do not answer me on the air, I have children and a wife back home!”. Most of the letters came from people who had managed to flee Romania. In any case, we know for certain that one letter, typed on a very thin piece of paper, reached Ghiță Ionescu straight from Romania, by means unknown. In fact, Ionescu found the anonymous letter, describing communist forced labor camp and prisons, so interesting that he dedicated two shows to it, one for the Romanian section of the BBC, the other in the European section¹⁴.

¹³ Romanian Recent History Institute's Archive, Ghiță Ionescu collection, document has not been inventoried.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

Ghiță Ionescu's aggressive commentaries drew the attention of the communist authorities in Bucharest from the very beginning. There was already a tradition of lashing out at foreign radio stations. The tone was given by anonymous journalists in the communist press, from *The Spark to Free Romania*, then the topic would be taken over by the mouthpieces of the propaganda wars against the West and what they called "lackeys of the West". Writer Zaharia Stancu was a spearhead of the ideological fight. In one of the first issues of the new *Contemporary* publication, he attacked the BBC violently, in his first page article "We and Radio London"¹⁵. A few issues later, he shifted from the BBC, taking issue with the press in Turkey. His main target was the Romanian section of Radio Ankara (the first three articles, from 1947, signed Zaharia Stancu, were called "Conflict with Ankara", "The Moussaka Press", and "Once Again... Ankara")¹⁶.

In Ghiță Ionescu's case, the tone of the attacks was given by the national radio station, broadcasting from Bucharest. The BBC's foreign press monitoring section recorded, on 19 February 1952, a commentary in which Ghiță Ionescu is called a "miscarried child", a "disgusting figure", accused of being the son-in-law of prosperous businessman Manolescu Strunga, and Ion Antonescu's envoy abroad. The conclusion drawn by Radio Bucharest was that the "imperialist Entente position" is shaky, since it leans on such "shady individuals" as Ionescu.

The *Contemporanul* was next on the attack, this time with a full page article. The article is entitled "Liberators' on the microphone". The settling of accounts starts with the BBC. The editors and contributors of Radio London were purported to be a "pitiful bunch of fugitive jugglers", in short, "lowlives". Ghiță Ionescu is the first target. The "left wing press" where he had been a contributor as a younger man was in fact "in the service of bourgeois hidden interests". The "theoretician windbag" and "early blooming diversionist" had been "lavishing" in an apartment in the Athénée Palace, which had been run by his father, and, much worse, he had been sent by Ion Antonescu as an envoy to negotiate economic contracts enslaving the country. Then, after 23 August, he had fled abroad. It was maybe his status as a permanent contributor, not employee, of the BBC, which convinced him to answer this attack on the air. In any case, the rule at the BBC was to not respond to personal attacks. However, Ghiță Ionescu violated that rule, explaining to his listeners that, after 23 August, he went back to Bucharest, where he sat on the meetings of the Armistice Commission, then he got sent to Ankara as an economic adviser, and only in 1947 did he flee to the West. After that, Ghiță Ionescu's past would never again be used as the main line of attack. It may be the result of his on the air response.

The attacks against him resumed with even greater intensity after 1958, while he was heading the Romanian section of Radio Free Europe. For three years, from 1955 to 1958, Ghiță Ionescu, invited by Constantin Vișoianu, had

¹⁵ Zaharia Stancu, „Noi și Radio Londra”, *Contemporanul*, no. 13, 13 of December, 1946, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Contemporanul*, no. 30, 13 of June, 1953; no. 53, 26 of September, 1947; no. 57, 24 of October, 1947; no. 62, 28 of November, 1947.

moved to the USA, acting as secretary of the Romanian National Committee. While he was head of Free Europe (1958-1963), the war waged by the communists in Bucharest against Ghiță Ionescu started being waged in the press for exiles published under Securitate (Romanian political police) supervision. The spearheads are “Voice of the Motherland”, printed by the Securitate in East Berlin as an official newspaper of the Romanian Committee for Repatriation, and the legionnaire press in the West.

In the early '60s, Ghiță Ionescu was convinced that the Securitate tried to eliminate him. While driving to Strasbourg, the car he was traveling in was “hunted down” by a truck. The chase ended with a minor accident, the car was thrown in a ditch, and Ghiță Ionescu suffered only a few minor injuries. This incident seems to have weighed somewhat in his decision to resign as head of the Free Europe Romanian section, and he retired to Great Britain for good this time, dying there in 1996.

After Nicolae Ceaușescu came to power, even though he was living in Great Britain, Ghiță Ionescu, by now a teacher at prestigious universities, still held the Securitate's attention. A few documents in his personal archive recount the attempts made by certain intellectuals, liked by the communist regime in Bucharest, who were sent to London as part of academic exchanges, to gain his trust and convince him to visit Romania. Circumspect, even suspicious, Ionescu never gave course to these invitations. However, he limited considerably his contact with academics from communist Romania. Even after '89 – as shown by his personal correspondence – he remained extremely suspicious of the authorities in Bucharest, constantly asking his friends to be vigilant and not let themselves get drawn into the propaganda issuing from the new leadership in Bucharest.

He only visited Romania once, in April 1993, holding an international seminar entitled “The New European Architecture”, being granted an honorary doctorate by Bucharest University¹⁷. As excited as the press was, covering extensively the event¹⁸, the authorities of the time showed a total lack of interest, refusing to meet with the delegation of university professors and high EU officials invited by Ghiță Ionescu to Bucharest for this seminar.

¹⁷ There is a draft of the programme “Visit in Romania/24-29 April, 1993”, Romanian Recent History Institute's Archive (Ghiță Ionescu collection, document has not been inventoried) which is not confirmed by the people who took part in preparation the Seminar.

¹⁸ Andrei Bădin, “Profesorul Ghiță Ionescu a venit în țară”, *Cotidianul*, 26 of April, 1993; Liana Petrescu, “Verdictul istoric-cultural se verifică și peste 100 de ani. Profesorului Ghiță Ionescu i-a fost acordat titlul de Doctor Honoris Causa al Universității din București”, *Cotidianul*, 27 of April, 1993; Andrei Bădin, “După 48 de ani renumitul politolog prof. Ghiță Ionescu se întoarce în țară. Bucureștii a refuzat organizarea vizitei unor funcționari ai Parlamentului Europei”, *România liberă*, 27 of April, 1993; „România poate redeveni și mâine o țară importantă”, Ghiță Ionescu interviewed by Vartan Arachelian, *Cotidianul*, 28 of April, 1993 etc.

ANNEX 1¹⁹

GHIȚĂ IONESCU

22 iunie 1950²⁰

Schimbarea definiției formei de guvernământ

Am să vă vorbesc astăseară despre o chestiune care, deși, poate, nu vă va părea atât de importantă din punct de vedere practic și imediat, poartă în ea însemnătăți deosebite de teorie constituțională și de drept internațional. Am să vă vorbesc, anume, despre felul în care, dela formarea Cominformului și până acum, definiția oficială a administrației comuniste din România, ca și din celelalte patru țări rămase sub controlul Kremlinului a fost progresiv și intenționat schimbată. Cum, dela primele ei forme, pline de asigurări asupra suveranității și independenței acestor state, trecând prin aceea a formulelor bolșevice ca dictatura proletariatului, republica muncitorească etc., a ajuns acum la ceea ce toți știam că a fost dela început și este în realitate: o definiție după care supremul organ în asemenea republici este armata sovietică. În alte cuvinte, nu am să vin să vă spun ceea ce știți mai bine decât noi de aici și anume că încă din 1945 și din ce în ce mai mult guvernul comunist din România a fost condus exclusiv de ofițerii și funcționarii sovietici. Nu; ci rezumând anumite studii pe care le-am întreprins de curând pe textele oficiale ale Cominformului, am să arăt cum înșiși comuniștii nu numai că numai ascund dar dimpotrivă cer ca să se recunoască, oficial și obligatoriu, că puterea în asemenea republici, foste naționale și populare, numai aparține guvernului sau măcar partidului comunist, dar armatei sovietice. Pentru aceasta vă rog să facem împreună o scurtă analiză istorică.

După cum vă amintiți, acum aproape trei ani, în Septembrie 1947, s-a anunțat că nouă partide comuniste, alese după faptul că aveau sau puteau să aibă o responsabilitate guvernamentală în țările respective, au fost strânse laolaltă într-o organizație nouă, numită Biroul de Informație Comunistă, sau, pe scurt, Cominform. Atribuțiile Cominformului au rămas dela început cam vagi și misterioase; dar știm acum din mărturisirile lui Tito, și din anchetele împotriva lui Kostov, Rajk sau Gomulka și Clementis că toți au bănuțit că inițiativa

¹⁹ Romanian Recent History Institute's Archive, Ghiță Ionescu collection, documents we publish below are not inventoried.

²⁰ Hand written by Ghiță Ionescu.

rusească ascundea de fapt intenția de a aduce celelalte partide comuniste și mai strâns sub controlul Moscovei.

Pentru mai multă vreme nu s-a mai vorbit mult despre Cominform până când s-a ținut un al doilea congres, mult mai puțin solemn și dedicat exclusiv “problemelor de presă și propagandă”, la Belgrad în Ianuarie 1948. La acest congres neînsemnat s-a hotărât printre altele ca deacum înainte editorul ziarului Cominformului, care apărea atunci la Belgrad, va fi, din întâmplare, un rus, d. Pavel Fedorovic Yudin, profesor universitar de marxism-leninism și cunoscut chiar printre comuniștii săi prin miopul său fanatism sovietic. De fapt, misiunea d-lui Yudin la Belgrad era una, dacă pot să mă exprim astfel, de spionaj doctrinal. Pe când agenții NKVD-ului și diplomații sovietici erau datori să urmărească acțiunea politică a comuniștilor din “țările liberate”, cum le numesc ei, d. Yudin trebuia să-i cerceteze din punct de vedere ideologic stalinist: erau acești conducători de state adevărați staliniști? Și pe de altă parte, erau statele înșiși conforme cu ceea ce vroia Kremlinul?

Pe vremea aceea definiția oficială a “republicilor populare” era de pildă următoarea, atribuită lui Dimitrov, pe care am găsit-o în primul număr al ziarului Cominformului și care, ca atare, poartă pecetea oficială. Întâi, o republică populară nu este o republică sovietică puterea într-o republică populară aparține majorității covârșitoare a poporului. În al doilea rând, proprietatea privată obținută prin muncă rămâne liberă și nestânjenită. În al treilea, o asemenea republică este antifascistă. Și, în al patrulea, asemenea republici sunt state suverane și naționale.

Pentru d. Yudin, desigur, asemenea definiții reprezentau o formă grozavă de erezie. O simplă cercetare istorică ne arată că, numai-decât, editorul rus dela Belgrad s-a pus pe treabă. El a alcătuit un raport fundamental asupra programului partidului comunist jugoslav, adresat partidului comunist rus. Acest raport, publicat mult mai târziu în ziarul Cominformului, a format baza discuției dintre ruși și jugoslavi, cum apare din scrisorile publicate acum cu ambele părți, și pe urmă, baza deciziei de excomunicare a lui Tito, luată de ceilalți membri ai Cominternului, la 28 Junie 1948, în al treilea congres public, la București.

Într-adevăr atunci, prin textul negativ luat împotriva lui Tito și a jugoslavilor s-a alcătuit și noua doctrină oficială asupra rolului și funcțiunii unei republici populare. Vă fac acum o comparație a noii definiții cu cele patru puncte citite mai înainte. În primul rând puterea în asemenea state nu este ținută de poporul întreg ci numai de clasa muncitorească. La rândul ei această clasă este condusă de partidul comunist respectiv, care, la rândul lui, trebuie să se conducă numai după pilda și instrucțiunile partidului comunist rus. În al doilea rând, proprietatea privată va trebui să fie progresiv lichidată. Scopul final este exproprierea. Una dintre ereziile majore ale lui Tito, denunțată cu vehemență de Luka Laszlo, este de a încerca a întreprinde colectivizarea producției agricole fără prealabila expropriere a pământului țăranilor. În al treilea rând, a spune că aceste regimuri sunt antifasciste nu este de ajuns: ele trebuie să fie dictaturi ale

proletariatului. În al patrulea rând, și cel mai de seamă, a spune că sunt naționale și suverane, aceasta e inadmisibil. Toate aceste republici au fost întemeiate de Armata Sovietică și nu pot fi menținute decât cu ajutorul armatei sovietice. A nu fi recunoscut aceasta și a fi încercat să trateze Rusia Sovietică ca o putere prietenă dar totuși străină, – a fi încercat să simuleze o formă de suveranitate “naționalistă”, aceasta a fost crima cea mai mare a lui Tito, Kostov, Gomulka, Rajk, Markos, Clementis și cei care vor urma.

Punctul acesta cu armata sovietică a devenit după aceea, după cum știți, refrenul obsedant al tuturor definițiilor comuniste, dată de toți șefii și repetate în mod sânguincios și monoton de orice vorbitor în orice ocazie, în țările puse sub control. Noua teză astfel cum a fost publicată în ziarul Cominformului a devenit următoarea – citez: “Atitudinea față de Uniunea Sovietică este piatra de încercare a unui comunist. Astăzi naționalismul este primejdia cea mai mare de care sunt amenințate republicile populare”. Formula de introdus în noua definiție se repetă în două forme. Una este oarecum mistică și servește la învățarea pe de rost de către mase. Ați auzit-o la Ana Pauker, Groza și Gheorghiu Dej: “Fără armata sovietică țara noastră (Cehoslovacia, Bulgaria sau România) nu ar fi fost eliberată și nici nu ar exista astăzi”. A doua este mai explicativă servește la instruirea cadrelor în partid și se referă mai ales la prezent. Citez: “Prezența armatei sovietice în țările noastre este singurul fapt care le apără împotriva războiului civil pe care burghezia și kulacii, ajutați de imperialiștii străini, n-ar întârzia de a începe”. Ca urmare a acestei recunoașteri oficiale, înalți ofițeri sovietici au fost numiți miniștri de război, ca Rokossovski în Polonia/controlând orișice/sau umple Statul Major ca în România.

Concluziile care se degajă din această cercetare sunt de feluri deosebite. Din punct de vedere teoretic pur, trebuie să se recunoască că deacum înainte aceste state numai sunt nici măcar dictaturi ale proletariatului, ci dictaturi ale proletariatului controlate de o armată străină conform chiar definiției lor. Aceasta face desigur o deosebire fundamentală cu definiția marxist-leninistă. Din punct de vedere politic intern, faptul că în mod oficial comuniștii recunosc că fără armata sovietică ar avea războiul civil, înseamnă pur și simplu că fără prezența acelei armate popoarele pe care le asupresc și opoziția națională i-ar fi alungat demult. Dar concluzia cea mai importantă mi se pare aceea din punct de vedere de drept internațional. Într-adevăr, faptul că conducătorii acestor republici și ai guvernelor lor sunt acum obligați să declare în mod oficial că prima lor autoritate numai este vreuna națională ci este o armată străină, înseamnă, fără îndoială, că problema suveranității și a independenței nu se mai pune pentru ei nici măcar din punct de vedere de propagandă.

Dimpotrivă ceea ce a apărut acum ca definiție corectă a acestor state se aseamănă mai puțin cu prima definiție a republicilor populare decât cu o definiție dată în dreptul internațional și anume în punctul 42 al Convenției dela Haga, stil [sic!] validă, și semnată de toate statele și anume, ascultați vă rog: “Un teritoriu se consideră ocupat când el este pus în mod real sub autoritatea armatei inamice”.

ANNEX 2

GHIȚĂ IONESCU

[August – before September 5, 1950]

The unmasking of the Cominform Peace

So this this was the peace of the leaders of Cominform! While they were collecting the signatures of people of good faith for the Stockholm petition “for peace and international understanding” they were starting in Korea a full-scale war, fully prepared but until they very last minuted undeclared, compared in its perfidy only with the Hitlerist aggression. Now even the blindest have seen that in this huge peace petition for which the Communists want signatures from all over the world, what really interests them is only to hoodwink people until the moment when they can attack. Even the deafest can hear in Anna Pauker’s words at the Rumanian Women’s Congress on June 15 “Our duty, the duty of those who love life and who love and who are ready to sacrifice their own lives for those whom they love, for their children” – even the deafest have heard behind these words the cries of the Korean children attacked by the soldiers of the Cominform.

In reality, the peace campaign has been decided at the Cominform Congress in Budapest in November 29 1949. On the basis of Suslov’s report, the main Russian delegate after Zhadnov’s death, the Congress decided that the Communist parties’ main task from on should be the Peace Campaign; any Communist, young or old should know that the popularisation of the idea of non-resistance to the Soviet Army should also be brought about indirectly through the peace campaign and through attempt to present the free governments as preparing an aggressive war against Soviet Russia. This system of substituting the aggressor for the victim and of speaking of peace right up to the launching of the attack is not a new discovery of the Cominform. On the contrary it is a subterfuge which all conquerors in history have used with more or less success from Philip of Macedonia who was denounced to the Athenians by Demosthenes up to Hitler whose treacherous offers of peace before and after each aggressive act were denounced at the time by all true democrats and patriots. That method is so well-known that the diplomatic Soviet strategists

consider it as a classical trick and quote it in their manuals of diplomacy from which the Sovietic students learn international law. They must know that such campaigns are only smokescreens. Who must not know are the Rumanians, the Poles, the French and the English. Listen then to what is written in the History of Diplomacy published under the auspices of the Soviet Foreign Office and of the Soviet Academy of Science by Vladimir Potiemkin. "The use of pacifist propaganda and of the idea of disarmament as an ideological smoke screen must be numbered too among the same category of diplomatic manoeuvres. The disarmament idea is always the favourite form of masquerade of governments suddenly "converted to pacifism". Any proposal for a reduction of armaments has a chance of being „warmly welcomed by public opinion"... This same idea has been explained also by Suslov in the Cominform Congress of November 1949 when he asked the European Cominform to undertake this enormous Peace Campaign it has been explained clearly also by the Soviet delegation to the Far East Cominform which as quoted by the world press was prepared at Harbin on November 20 1947 and is formed by Soviet Russia, China Outer Mongolia and Northern Korea. The only difference is that the Far East Cominform has got the order for war earlier. For the Korean people which only recently were collecting signatures for the Stockholm Campaign the hour has struck earlier.

For the benefit of those who would like to know how sincere a move is the Cominform petition or if it is simply a diplomatic manoeuvre – and especially for those who can be hoodwinked by priests like Andrei Agotha who under cover of the Peace Campaign is really trying to lead a schismatic Catholic Church – I have drafted here a number of questions which should be put to all those who come to ask you to lend your names and your signatures for that document. I believe it would be useful if they were put to any Communist and especially any Russian. The first is why if Soviet Russia and the Cominform want peace are the military budget of the countries from that bloc higher than ever? In Poland for instance the army budget which was in 1949 60 billion zlots has been more than doubled in 1950 to 130 billions. In Rumania where figures are kept even more secret Rumanian officers can tell you enormous sums of the military budget.

The second Why if Soviet Russia and the Comintern want peace have your states prolonged the term of military service. They have increased the number of recruits and in the three countries which in conformity with the Paris Treaty have a limited army, Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria have they created once more after Hitler's system para military organisations which like labour mobilisation youth organisation and very recently compulsory sports organisations do in reality only mobilise youth under another form.

The third why if Soviet Russia and the Cominform want peace is the whole industrialisation planned by them in reality armaments industrialisation

in all countries. Why is it that the Czechoslovakian uranium exploited at terrific speed and why in Rumania are you flooded with manifestoes and proclamations in connection with the intensification of the oil industry? Why M. Clodius Hitler's experts who demanded fro [?] the German troops in Russia the last drop of oil does he now ask is Soviet expert that the Rumanian oil should be porduced at greater speed and stocked in Rumania for the needs of the Soviet tanks?

Fourth why if Soviet Russia and the Cominform want peace are you obliged to pay enormous sums and quantities in the frame of special and secret commercial agreements as they call them and in which you are given old Soviet cannons and ammunition at prices at which nobody would dare to sell even the latest type of arms. [...]²¹

Why if Soviet Russia and the Cominform want peace why in all your papers and publications do you find only eulogies of the Soviet Army? Why is the Soviet Army considered as the supreme international authority in that part of the world and why is the war minister in Poland Rokossovsky or all the true heads of the Rumanian General Staff are Soviet officers of the Soviet Army?

Sixthly why is it that all Soviet delegates can come into the Western countries and speak of peace and no foreign writer or intellectual can come on his own to Anna Paukers Romania to speak of peace too. Why can no foreigners come to Rumania and now even foreign planes have to fly through special corridors at specific heights at which military preparations cannot be discerned.

And finally the seventh with which I started and with which I finish – why if Soviet Russia and the Cominform wanted peace – did they attack Korea?

²¹ Missed page.

ANNEX 3

GHIȚĂ IONESCU
*6 Septembrie 1950*²²

Ten years of reign

Ten years ago today, the sixth of September, King Michael came to the throne. So today, the sixth of September, sees the completion of ten years of his reign. This is surely a much more important anniversary for all Rumanians than all those alien “red-lettered” days with which our calendar, already red, red with blood and with Communist flags, is now, on Moscow’s orders, so stained. Rumanians do not commemorate Stalin’s day, no matter how constrained they may be to do so nor and how vociferous the propaganda. But dangerous as it may be, with their whole hearts they commemorate the historical days dedicated to their Kingdom and to their King. No Rumanian recognises his country under the alien initials RPR; but all of them, from everywhere, say today “God save the King. God save Rumania”.

Indeed, from a constitutional point of view, your Republic, Mr. Groza and Mr. Gheorghiu-Dej, lasted only two months and five days. On the 31st December 1947, you proclaimed it treacherously to the surprise and incredulous amazement of the Rumanian people. On March 4, 1948, King Michael, who until then had been forced to keep silent, spoke and said these words which should never be forgotten: “This act (the abdication) was imposed on me by force, by a government installed and maintained in power by foreign country. The removal of the monarchy constitutes a new act of violence in the policy for the enslavement of Rumania. In these conditions, I do not consider myself bound in any way by this act imposed upon me. With unshaken faith in our future, animated by the same devotion and will to work, I will continue to serve the Rumanian people, with whom my destiny is inexorable bound”.

In that very moment, the usurping republic ceased to exist. Legal country disassociated itself from the real country. RPR was not the Rumanian People’s Republic – it was only one of the Rumanian People’s Republics. In spite of it, the Rumanian Kingdom continues.

²² Hand written by Ghiță Ionescu.

From a political point of view, you have Mr. Groza and Mr. Gheorghiu-Dej, by your foolish step, rendered a great service to Rumania. That is, you have given back to her, her symbol and thus her liberty. A prisoner since March 6th 1946, when Vishinsky imposed the Groza Government, the Crown was faced with a dilemma – either to stay in the country with his people or to tell the world and his people, the truth – that the country had been taken over by the Russians. By forcing the King to go into exile, you gave him finally the right to speak. Now, as before, he speaks in the name of the Rumanian people, of the true Rumanian people; the people in prison, in fetter [?] in hiding. The whole world knew from that moment onwards that the real Rumania was no longer represented by the administration of the Gauleiter Groza; but that as the country was occupied, the Head of the State continues to represent her abroad.

Now when I look back on these ten uninterrupted years of reign, what most strikes me, apart from the devotion of the Rumanian people to its monarchy, and apart from the most exceptional personal qualities of our young King as an individual, which make him not only respected as a symbol but loved as a person – what strikes me most is to see how, in these ten fateful years, the destiny of the King as a person has been symbolically bound with the destiny of Rumania as a nation. In other words, in the few moments which are still left to me, I shall try to trace this parallel history of a King of a country which together form the real history of a true reign, in which through the biography of a King, one can read the history of his country, and through the history of his country, one can discern the fate of its King.

When on September 6th, 1940, the King came to the throne, neither the Crown nor the people were enjoying their full rights. The people were without a Parliament, under a government of dictatorship. To the King, it was made clear that he would be tolerated provided he did not ask that the rights of his people should be restored to them. If the King accepted this shadowed Crown, in a shadowed country, it was because he knew that his country would have to go through most difficult moments, cut off as she was in a continent dominated by the two accomplices, Hitler and Stalin. And his people were grateful to him for giving them, in these moments of distress, the safeguard of his reassuring presence.

On June 22, 1941, neither the King nor the people knew of Rumania's entry into the war. There was no Parliament to control the government; and the declaration of war, which under all constitutions, is the supreme prerogative of the people through their King, was not signed by the King of Rumania.

Throughout 1942 and 1943, both the Rumanian King and people expressed their anxiety about the course of this war imposed by Hitler and it is now publicly known that even then the King not only was constantly in touch with the leaders of the National Opposition Iuliu Maniu, C. Brătianu and C. Titel-Petrescu, but helped them through his personal actions in their endeavours to negotiate with the Allied Powers.

On April 2nd, 1944, both the King and the people believed in the sincerity of Mr. Molotov's promise that if Rumania caused hostilities Soviet Russia would respect her territorial integrity and her political sovereignty.

On August 23rd, 1944, the Rumanian people and the King, believed and hoped that, difficult as the initial sacrifice would be, they could see the double return of Rumania to her normal pattern. In internal politics, this meant a true Parliamentary democracy under the control of a constitutional sovereign. In external politics, this would have meant the return to the camp of the Allied countries, whose ideal of peace and international co-operation had been Rumania's line of action since she first played a part in the international scene.

On March 6th, 1946, these hopes were destroyed, for both the King and the Rumanian people. After the imposition by Vishinsky of the Groza government, it became clear that internally the new Rumanian democracy which lasted only six months was destined to be broken by the Communist totalitarian machine; while externally sooner or later Rumania would cease to be a free and sovereign country and become a Russian colony. The rights which on August 23rd, 1944, were restored to both the Russian Crown and to the Rumanian people were taken away from both of them at the same time. The King became a prisoner and so became his people.

From then on, this parallel tragedy, as you well know, continued its fateful development. Restricted in his rights, vexed in his function, threatened in his person, the King decided to go forward and to keep silent as long he was given the chance of being with his people, in his country, together with them in their Calvary. The Russian ruses to separate him from his people were innumerable. Sometimes, they tried to win him over with personal satisfactions; but when he received the highest Russian decoration, the Order of Victory he said that he considered it his duty to share it with his people. Sometimes they wanted to make his life so intolerable that, if given the opportunity, he would escape and leave his place; but to their consternation, he returned from abroad in 1947, although he knew the risks he was taking personally. Finally, exasperated by his courageous tenacity and by the growing love of the tortures Rumanian people, for their King, the Paukers and the Grozas the Laszos and the Bodnariucs bowed once more to Moscow and with the risk of losing the only bridge between their government and the country, they forced the King, with Soviet guns directed upon the Palace and with Groza the threat of civil war, to sign a false document, forged in the Kremlin.

But as I've told you this was not the end of the story. The story of this moving reign goes on. Now we are entering its eleventh year. May God give to his Majesty King Michael many more years and the fulfilment of all for which he and his people fight. In this hope and for this reason let me end in your name and with you "God save the King. God save Rumania".

ANNEX 4

GHIȚĂ IONESCU
Letter from London²³
[13 of February 1952]

Good evening. My London letter tonight will be very short. Indeed, London is at the moment a sombre and grave city. Everyone is in mourning and the shop windows have black hangings. A queue of tens of thousands of people, endlessly renewed, encircles the historic building within which lies the coffin of the late King. You have heard all this, and it will be better described in the news bulletins. I want only to invite you to a recollection on this occasion. I shall make it in a very few words.

King George VI of England, whose death we mourn, was an example. Here was a man who did not seem destined to assume the terrible responsibility which is the reward of kingship. He accepted the Crown from duty towards his people; towards the dynasty; and towards his family. His reign will be known as one of the most dramatic in English history. While Mr. Churchill, the Prime Minister during the hardest war which England has ever fought, remembers him as the King of that victory, of blitzed London and of the lonely fight which remains the pride of this country, – Mr. Attlee describes him as the Sovereign of the most uneasy peace, more sensitive than anyone else to the shadow of a new menace of war and as the perfect democratic King, in a time when great changes were taking place in an atmosphere of controversy. In his fifteen years as King, he did not enjoy one whole year of calm and relaxation. Here was a man who was warned by his doctors that his health, weakened by the efforts he produced during the war, would be endangered did he not rest; and who twice after two major operations rose from his sickbed to resume his duties. Here is a man of whom it is now believed that he knew that his second operation he had only a few months to live and who with the same gay and shy smile came back among his people, as though there were no shadow over him; who left with only one lung, yet decided to speak once more to his people at Christmas, not

²³ “Date of First Broadcast: Wednesday 13th February 1952/Time of First Broadcast: About 9 minutes between 7.00 – 7.30 p.m.” .

counting the cost to himself; who, adoring his daughter, sent her in his place on an official journey and who so much feared that he would never see her again that he took her to the airport and stood in rain and wind, waving his hand to her, even after the plane had taken off, with such a sad smile on his drawn face that I don't know why but when I saw the scene on a newsreel the day before his death, I felt a lump in my throat and a shadow of foreboding touched me. This man who happened to George VI was one of the most inspiring symbols of duty that I know of from Plutarch up to today. King or not, British or not, his example can be a source of moral strength for all those who, transformed by fate into unexpected martyrs, and obliged by fate to assume tasks for the sake of their families or of their nation which are simply a self-giving and martyrdom feel perhaps every day this task growing more and more difficult and chalice more and more bitter. Let us then mourn this King of will and of sacrifice in an epoch in which the salvation of the free peoples can come only from will and from sacrifice.

But let us, at the same time, wish, all of us, a glorious and long reign to his successor, Queen Elisabeth II.

For us Rumanian, for whom the institution of monarchy in itself, is so deeply anchored in our political tradition, the success of the British Crown in the modern world, this extraordinary fact that in a period so shaken by reforms and revolutions as is this century of ours, the British dynasty in Anno Domini 1952 imposes on its people and on the whole world the recognition of its perennity and is more unchallenged now than ever, – for the political instinct of our people this fact is something which we cannot overlook either now or in the future.

Let us wish then to the new Queen, first of all a person to the young daughter, wife and mother who leaves now forever the joys of private and is dedicating herself to her people and to her duty – let us wish that God will send her no greater trials than her strength can bear and will help her to see at the end of a long and fruitful reign her country and the world established in peace and freedom and prosperity.

Let us wish this also to the British Commonwealth whose Head she has now become. All the nations which are free and those who strive to regain their freedom should join in this wish. Great Britain is a Power of light, of stability, and of progress in a world torn with strife and menaced by the worst wave of darkness. All totalitarian Powers, all aggressive Powers have always started their plans of aggression with the hope of destroying the British Commonwealth. It is thus natural that all the free nations and all the nations who strive to be free should wish that this breakwater of invasions should be more and more powerful and should use its power for the defence of freedom in the world.

of [?]

Finally let us wish the same to the British people. I believe in all sincerity that this people is a true friend of the Rumanians. I don't refer now to governments; nor to policy or diplomacy. I refer to the people; to those simple people whose hospitality and friendship I have enjoyed for so many years since I arrived here, alone, unhappy and friendless as a refuge from a storm of which at the time they knew nothing. This people silent, shy and gauche – now harassed, tired and worried – they know in their own way, almost instinctively that a nation cannot be subjugated and its people handcuffed. From them, freedom is the first condition of life; and peace the second. In the measure in which they can make their voice heard in this strident world, this voice will be always for the oppressed against the oppressors.

God help them and their Queen!

ANNEX 5

GHIȚĂ IONESCU
Letter from London
[19 of March 1953]

The Portrait of the young dictator as a Prime Minister²⁴

Good evening. How should we look at Malenkov? This is the question which I want to discuss with you tonight.

I look first at his image as it appears in the photographs designed to replace for the future those of the dead Georgian. Of course, I am not the only one to be surprised by this appearance of rotundities. But photogeneity is not a measure of history. It is true that neither Alexander, the Great, Philip's son, nor for that matter Cardinal Mazarin, designed successor of Richelieu, appeared so rubocond at the moment of their historic succession; only Claudius' adopted son, a certain Nero, was resembled Stalin's successor. No, it is not the historical analogies of Malenkov's figure which strike me; but I would say the contemporary ones. Look at all the new dignitaries of the third Soviet era: men in their fifties, sons of the Revolution, like Beria or Krushev, Saburov or Pervukhin, as they look today, – all these fat ones seem to have elected Malenkov because he was the fattest. This is not a joke. I believe it is significant and right that the third Soviet generation presents itself to the world under the swollen and soft face of Malenkov. This precocious obesity does not belong to the man; it belongs to the whole regime of social parasites and of enjoyment in exploitation. The symptoms of these difficult digestions do not belong to the Prime Minister but to his country. Swollen by the country's which she tries to swallow, the Soviet Russia of today herself projects upon her faithful servants these features of premature hypertrophy.

The biography of the man is as barely known to you as to anyone. but it is indeed representative of this whole Soviet generation – the biography of a mole

²⁴ "Date and time of Recording: Wednesday 18 th March 1953"; "Date and time of Broadcast: Thursday 19 th March 1953".

through the subteranean corridors of the Bolshevik Party, through the secret morgues and laboratoires of the Secretariat until he found the avenue to the sulphurous springs of power: to Stalin's secret rooms. Once arrived there, the young candidate remained. Hidden, couched at master's feet, he knew that if he stayed there, one day he would be the master. But will it be so? In a period in which Soviet Russia herself made of her policy of conquest her true ideology will the Party remain, the constant source of power or the ideological Bonapartism will have to find its Bonaparte there where it should be in the barracks or in the camps of the army? Look at Bulgarian, whose ascension to power is almost as rapid as that of Malenkov. Look at Zhukov returning from the exile in which he was relegated by the Party since 1945. Look at Voroshilov, the Chief of the new State, replacing on behalf of the army, the representative of the Trade Unions.

If afterwards we look at Malenkov's "works" we see that until the report at the 19th Congress in October 1952, the Communist bibliography did not contain one single major work under his name. His literary activities were presumably limited to judicial sentences and to medical certificates. But this is also a fact to be noted. His first predecessor Lenin filled the shelves of the library; even his direct patron Stalin presented himself to the Party ever since 1915 with the resort on nationalities and since then never ceased to cover his political crimes, internal and external, under piles of works of genius, retouched and adapted as need arose, unreadable and dull, but however paying the price of the intellectual leadership which seemed to have been the condition of the political one. Zhdanov [Jdanov] the first Russian Communist who was not killed for Stalin's sake formed the contrast with the favourite Malenkov, also in that he was extremely active in the ideological field and prolific in writing an [?]. And in the Communist world of today the smiling, the enigmatic Mao Tse Tung, who does not run the risks of catching, like Gottwald, pneumonia at Stalin's funeral, opposes to Malenkov, among other things, also his own work which runs from poetry and philosophy to a personal political doctrine and to an ideology which tries to deal with the fatal dilemma of Communism today, with the permanent contradiction between a regime based on the proletariat in countries socially predominantly agrarian.

Malenkov's political line cannot yet be disentangled from that of Stalin. In October 1952, his report differed in [?] on a major point from Stalin's work published before the Congress and in Soviet Russia, his report was published in three million copies while Stalin's work in one million five hundred. This point was, as you can remember that while Stalin dreamt of war between the capitalist powers Malenkov underlined and again that the united capitalist power could stand a war against the Soviet Union. But here lies the key of Malenkov's political position and future. Stalin's successor is faced with the urge to solve the catastrophic problems of the policy of his benefactor. These problems are from an internal point of view the possible disintegration of the Soviet administration

in the rivalry between the various factions of the Bolshevik party itself and especially between the four major branches of their present State. From an external point of view, the leaders of the Soviet Union are faced with the immediate alternative question of peace or war, or abandonment of the policy of aggression or of extension of the aggression, of withdrawal into legality and within the frontiers of their country – or of launching the final attack.

These two problems, the internal and the external, are linked now because of historical circumstances in one single and immediate one – and this is the last and perhaps the most important angle from which we must look at Malenkov. His succession is taking place in a moment of counter-rhythm for the world policy of the Soviets. Stalin has died when a major cycle was just ending. The beginning of 1953 is historically also the beginning of a new cycle in which the initiative has passed into the hands of the West. The phase which is now starting cannot end but with the “great Parley” with which the free world must confront Soviet Russia. The enormous political and industrial effort of the West, speeded up by the Eisenhower Presidency, must bring sooner or later the clarification without which a true peace cannot be established. In this moment, Malenkov in order to obtain the Presidency divides the reins of power between four pairs of hands, each having now despotic power in the four rival branches of the Soviet administration. He believes presumably that the other three chefs will use their enlarged attributions to serve him faithfully??? But who assures us whether this is what think also Molotov, Bulgaria and Beria? Closed in their citadel, these forced accomplices will feel morcand [?] more the pressure of the free world. If in 1936 when the Soviet Union considered herself less threatened than today the administration of Stalin, who was in power then for ten years, disintegrated so deeply, what can to the conspirators against Malenkov who came to power in 1953? Not the adversaries of Soviet Russia but her leaders told us that Tukacevski the head of the army had made secret agreements with the German Army; that Yagoda the head of the police was ready to poison all his colleagues; and that Radek the head of the external relations of the Communist Party was in reality a spy of the imperialist powers; and that Lenin himself effected his revolution by coming during the war in a sealed waggon put his at his disposal by the German Army which was then attacking Russia and to whom afterwards he paid the price of the peace of Brest-Litovsk. Let's change the names, let's transpose the drama into 1953, let's add the preparations of the free world and the growing unrest of the occupied countries in Eastern Europe and then you will draw with me the conclusion that it is not entirely absurd to say that the decadent team which receives today in the Soviet bloc the terrible heritage of the last phase of Stalin's policy presents real possibilities of disintegration and self-destruction in a moment in which the new external pressure and the old internal pressure rise together quicker and quicker like the temperature and the pulse in the last medical communiques about Stalin. Good night.

ANNEX 6

GHIȚĂ IONESCU
[24 of June 1953]
Letter from London

Eroica

Good evening. The word hero has two meanings, each of which can be applied to the German workers who brought about the revolt of June 17th.

If, first, I define a hero as a person legendary for courage or who through his deeds has changed an entire situation, then surely I can give the name of heroes to the workers in Berlin and Eastern Germany. Only one week has gone by since their day of action and the impatient impression it created grows deeper with each passing day; after the first shock of surprise comes now that particular attitude of recollection with which history salutes those days which it will transform into dates. And how can the world not be startled, when in this period of heavy siege laid for eight years to the free world by the Communists and during which we have heard again and again the same problems being discussed ad nauseam without, speaking frankly, many results being visible, – suddenly, from behind that terrible Iron Curtain, first twenty, then 200, then 2000 and in the end many thousands of workers, without tanks, jets or atom bombs, without Fuhrers, Marshalls or Political Commissars, appeared with their bare hands at that frontier of the two worlds simply, naturally, and indomitably and for twenty four hours showed through their action and through their freely-offered sacrifice how powerful is, in reality, freedom and how precarious is tyranny? And also how can the world not feel that in the twenty-four hours of the day of June 17, 1953, something fundamental was changed in contemporary history, when in the flash of this lightning all could see: first that under the regimes of the People's Democracies the subjugated and exploited peoples live only in the hope of freeing themselves from them; that in the itself rises to break the dictatorship; and that without the presence of the Soviet Army, all these

regimes could be scattered in twenty-four hours. No, undoubtedly, the Eastern German workers have earned the same of the heroes of freedom.

The second definition of the word hero is the figurative one by which the word is applied to the main personage of say, a novel a play or a film. Here I think that there is food for thought about today's political situation. Indeed, if in the sense of the first definition we say that Willi Goetling, for instance, who was shot by Communists in the streets of Berlin the day after the rising is a hero, – who in the sense of the second definition is the hero of that extraordinarily important action which we witnessed and with moreover is the hero of political action generally speaking?

My answer is that in this sense the hero of the action in Germany is the whole subjugated German people in the Eastern Zone, in its solid and anonymous entirety; and that the heroes of political actions in general are the peoples themselves. What impressed above all, all correspondents and commentators was, indeed, the spontaneity, the anonymity and especially the unanimity of the action, – which began with the builders in Stalinalles and afterwards spread to all workers, in all industries, in all the towns throughout Eastern Germany. “This utter spontaneity”, writes for instance the *Observer*, which is the glory of the great revolt is also its strongest protection: “For it is impossible to take away from the million involved the newly-gained experience of their unity and power and it is impossible to break that unity and power by deriving them of their organisers and leaders, since there were no organisers and leaders”. Now, this old fact that the people is the protagonist of political action is new in the political atmosphere of the totalitarian era. Political commentators who have to write such sentences seem today rather taken back. Are we in 1953 or 1948 they seem to ask themselves and some of them do ask this question. In an epoch in which totalitarian dictatorship have transformed the state into a scientifically – organised machine for coercion, the entire political alphabet has been changed and expression such as “popular revolt” “rising of the people” or even “national revolution” have been discarded as anachronism. A people it has been said once fallen prey to a totalitarian power or, even worse, to the occupation or a totalitarian power can no longer be the guardian of its own freedom; it is only the impotent victim whose salvation can come only from without. The fact that the German people, even if only for twenty-four hours, was the hero of its own action of despair is a political novelty from which conclusions are being drawn on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

But, once arrive at this point and because we are speaking between Rumanians, I believe that it is extremely important to see what are the conclusions which we – a people fallen under the same curse – can draw from the day of June 17. The association of ideas is not mine. “The eruption writes the Diplomatic Correspondent of the Manchester Guardian comes very soon after the disorder in Czechoslovakia. The Russians may well fear that the rioting

will be contagious. Where may it break out next?" While the *Observer*: "This is also important for the whole of satellite Europe – a striking answer to the lazy notion that liberation of the enslaved peoples will never be possible without war". But we must not let ourselves be carried away by a hasty association of ideas and we must realise what are the similarities and what are the differences between our political situation and that of the Eastern Germans.

In common with rioters of the 17th June, the Rumanian people has the main slogan which Germans chanted triumphantly in the streets, We want free elections. In common, too, we have the fact that the Puppet Government would fall instantaneously were it not backed so massively by the Soviet divisions and tanks which acted so efficiently in Germany and of which we know too well that they are even stronger and more numerous in the countries nearer to Russia. In common with Eastern Germany is also the fact that in Rumania as well not only the persecuted classes, the bourgeoisie and the peasantry suffer from the oppression of the Communist regime, but also the class which should consider itself privileged: the working class, crushed under the ruthless norms of production and under the forcible regime of work imposed upon it.

As for the differences, the greatest of all lies still in the geographical position, in the fact that Rumania is a country without a single frontier open to the free world, while Eastern Germany has [?] three and is out by corridors and islands, like Berlin itself, where the Russian domination stops. The best proof of how operative an open contact with the free world is can be found in the fact that while every one is aware of everything which happened in Berlin, much less is known of what happened in the Soviet Zone and almost no one knows what exactly it was that happened in Prague a fortnight ago. The other fundamental difference lies in the fact that for some reasons as yet obscure, it is clear that the Soviet administration had taken, before the 17th June, certain steps towards a relaxation of the regime in Eastern Germany and that it had not taken and is still not taking, for the moment, such steps in any of the other satellite countries.

Now, in what measure the events of June 17 will indeed modify for the better or for the worse the general attitude of the Soviet toward the subjugated people and, from another point of view, in what measure those events will influence the thoughts of those who will meet in Bermudas on July 8th, this is surely the most important question which the heroic action of the German workers put to the whole world? Even if this were its only result, I think that the conclusion of our discussion tonight could be to devote our thoughts to those of the German workers who died or will die because of their action. Good night.