

## RETREAT OF SOVIET OCCUPATION TROOPS FROM ROMANIA DURING THE SUMMER OF 1958

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**Abstract:** The article briefly reveals some of the main actions that established the soviet military occupation on Romania since World War II and by the summer of 1958 and also pursues the steps that have made possible this event taking place successfully, which will undoubtedly foster a new direction in the Romanian politics. Unless subsequent Albania, Romanian People's Republic was the only member country of the Warsaw Treaty of which the Soviet Union withdrew its troops. Also on this issue are different views: was it the result of the subtlety of Romanian Workers' Party leadership, especially Gheorghiu-Dej, as evidenced in memoirs, or higher was for economic and military purpose of the Soviet Union, especially Nikita Khrushchev, as researchers considered in terms of studying the Romanian and Soviet archival sources?

**Key words:** soviet troops in Romania, Khrushchev, Gheorghiu-Dej, communism, 1958.

Perceived as a strategy of the Soviet leadership to improve the image of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on international field, as a consequence of the brutal repression of the Hungarian Revolution during the 1956 Autumn and the involvement in the Swedish Crises and in the Arabian – Israeli conflict, as well as a re-organization measure of the Soviet Block in the Eastern Europe from a military point of view, the event of Soviet troops retreat from Romania, which took place during the summer of 1958, had consequences of first significance for the subsequent political evolution of the regime in Bucharest. It could follow its own distance course to the Moscow trusteeship, at first on internal plan, and then progressively in the relations with other states<sup>1</sup>.

In the Romanian historiography, especially, as well as in the foreign one, the retreat of the Soviet troops from Romania represents a problem on which there are some different points of view. On one side, it is considered that the event represents mainly a consequence of the Bucharest leadership subtlety,

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<sup>1</sup> See Dan Cătănuș, *Între Beijing și Moscova. România și conflictul sovieto-chinez (1957-1965)*, I<sup>st</sup>, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, București, 2004.

which knew how to use its credibility and manage this delicate problem in the relationship with Moscow. This is usually the position which arises from the memoirs of some communist leaders of those times, such as Alexandru Bârlădeanu, Gheorghe Apostol, Silviu Brucan.

On the other side, it is said that the retreat was made because of economical and military reasons, so the decision would have been made, in last instance, by Moscow, without denying the merit of the Romanian communists. This is mainly the position of the researchers, in the light of the information offered by the Romanian Archives, but also by the Soviet ones.

The presence of the Soviet troops on the Romanian territory had found legal grounding at the same time with the September 1944 Truce Convention. With this purpose it had been established that the participation of Bucharest in the Anti-Hitlerist War was going to be made under the general leadership of the High Ally Commander, meaning the Soviet one. It had also been foreseen in this sense a full freedom action for the Soviet troops on the entire territory belonging to Romania, with the concurrence and the expense from the Romanian side.

The maintenance of the Soviet troops on the Romanian territory was going to pursue the insurance of Kremlin control on this one, even if it had been justified in a different manner, as specified in article 21, the 4<sup>th</sup> part – Retreat of Ally Forces – of the Peace Treaty of February 10, 1947. According to this article, all the ally military forces were going to be retreated from Romania, in a 90 days term from the date the Treaty entered in force, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reserved the “right to keep the army force on the Romanian territory, forces that could be necessary to maintain the communication lines of the Soviet Army with the occupation area in Austria”<sup>2</sup>.

The same aspect results from article 1 of the Romanian Economic Tasks after the Peace Treaty signed on February 10, 1947 between Romania and the Allied and Associated Countries.

The Treaty sets a time limit: 90 days (three months), for the retreat of the ally forces from Romania. But this term issues from the date the Treaty enters in force, meaning its ratification. It is not exaggerated to foresee that the completion of the retreat operation of the troops will not take place any sooner than the end of the current year. Until then we will have (the government of Popular Republic of Romania) the task of supporting these troops. It goes today to up to 18-20.000.000\$ on trimester, meaning 72-80.000.000\$ each year. Even if at the end of the year the task may become less of a moment obligation, during the year there will be supplementary performances for the purpose of compensation of some deficiency in the past<sup>3</sup>.

In the following it was recalled that

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<sup>2</sup> National Central Historical Archives (in the following it will be read as A.N.I.C.), Fund “Royal House - Mihai”, file no. 4/1947, f. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, f. 26.

“there will be – after that too – Soviet troops on the territory to assure the communication lines with Austria. The term for their retreat is unpredictable in this moment. The same goes for the volume of the troops. It is true that the Treaty foresees the compensation “of the supplies and facilities” assured by the Romanian Government to these troops. But it is very probable that it will not be total”<sup>4</sup>.

The Soviet military domination on Romania was accomplished through the Presence of the Red Army and of the Soviet counselors on the Romanian territory, until the year of 1958, as well as through the transformation of the military system and of the Romanian security system according to the model adopted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Additionally, the new regime from Bucharest had a precious help in repressing the dissidence trials in the system, and on external plan it was pursued the assurance of the necessary force in the communist block to “protect itself in front of the Imperialist aggression from Europe”<sup>5</sup>.

This way under the legal frame offered by the foresights of the Peace Treaty from Paris, important Soviet military forces were kept on the Romanian territory. Their quantum on the Romanian territory, during the period starting with the end of the World War II to the retreat in 1958, is variable. If during 1945-1946 there were 400-500 000 solders, after 1948 the effectives vary between 20 000 and 30 000 solders<sup>6</sup>. Relative to this aspect, in his memoirs, Nikita Khrushchev mentions that in the period after 1955 there were on the Romanian territory “a few Soviet divisions”, whose retreat “in the vicinity” (Moldavia or Ukraine) had come to the conclusion that would not affect the security of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics<sup>7</sup>.

From strategic reasons, but also because of the moment necessities, the Soviet troops were placed in more regions in the Romanian territory. A first concentration of forces was in Banat, with garrisons close to localities such as Timișoara, Arad, Radna and Lipova<sup>8</sup>. From here, they could easily be redirected to Yugoslavia and Hungary, if the moment situation would have been asserted.

Another area that hosted the Soviet troops was Walachia, these being present around the localities of Bascov (County Argeș), Ploiești and Crângul lui

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, f. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *O politică românească de realizări democratice*, București, Editura Partidului Comunist Român, 1946, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Sergiu Verona, *Military occupation and diplomacy: Soviet Troops in Romania, 1944-1958*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1992, pp. 47-49.

<sup>7</sup> Ioan Scurtu (coord.) *România. Retragerea trupelor sovietice.1958*, București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, Bucharest, 1996, p. 234.

<sup>8</sup> Ioan Scurtu (coord.) *cited work*, pp. 326-327.

Bot (County Prahova). From here it was easy to operatively intervene in the south area of the Carpathians, inclusively in the Capital.

In the east of the country, around the localities of Focșani, Râmnicu-Sărat, Brăila, Galați there was a significant group of armies, probably even a division (a Soviet division of tanks usually had 10.000 solders, and an infantry of 12.000 solders). Also, in Dobrogea there were troops at Medgidia, Constanța, Mangalia, Basarabi. Additionally, in these two area aviation Soviet regiments activated, using for this purpose the aerodromes from Otopeni, Boboc - County Buzău, Alexeni - County Ialomița, Ianca - County Brăila, Mihail Kogălniceanu – County Constanța<sup>9</sup>.

From this disposal in the territory of the “friendly” Soviet troops we can reach the conclusion that the power from Bucharest was submitted, at least under psychological aspect, to a considerable pressure from the occupant.

The decision to retreat the Soviet troops from Romania was taken, beyond the Romanian communist actions, in a favorable international context.

A first factor which favored this process of the Soviet troops retreat we consider it to be, even if in ideological plan, the relative thawing which followed the death of the Soviet Dictator, Iosif Stalin. This event could allow the typing of the *Pospelov Report*<sup>10</sup>, document that underlined the abuses and the mass repression of the Stalinist regime and which culminated in the presentation made by Nikita Khrushchev through the report *Concerning the cult of personality and its consequences*, with the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress' works of the Communist Party (b) of the Soviet Union, in the night of February 24 to 25, 1956<sup>11</sup>. Here we call a project that was dear to Khrushchev: De-Stalinization.

Then, the signing on May 14, 1955 of the Friendship, Collaboration and Mutual Assistance Treaty between the countries in the Soviet block with the occasion of the second Conference of the European countries to assure the security in Europe, which took place in Warsaw. This treaty, which subsequently was known as the Warsaw Pact, must be the answer, in some way, of the Soviet block to the adherence of the German Federal Republic in 1954 to N.A.T.O. structures<sup>12</sup>.

According to Article 11, the Treaty from Warsaw was in force for 20 years, with the possibility of extension on another decade for the contracting parts which officially denounced it a year before its expiry<sup>13</sup>. Its supreme action

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> See Nicolas Werth, “Revelații despre Raportul Hrușciiov”, în Doina Jela, Vladimir Tismăneanu (coordinators) *Ungaria 1956: revolta minților și sfârșitul mitului comunist*, București, Editura Curtea Veche, 2006, p. 86 and the foll.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>12</sup> Vasile Buga, “Relațiile politice româno-sovietice, 1953-1958”, I, in the *Arhivele totalitarismului*, no. 1-2/2004, p. 111.

<sup>13</sup> A.N.I.C., Fund C.C. of Romanian Communist Party– Section external affairs, file no. 48/1955, f.11.

forum in military plan was the Unified Commander of the Army Forces, whose supreme commander was nominated the Soviet Marshal Ivan S. Konev. Each signatory state had to “complete and endow with armament and technique, in the first place, the troops destined in the Unified Army Forces”<sup>14</sup>. Romanian contributed with “8 divisions of the troops on land, 3 divisions of hunting aviation, a division of hunting – bombardment aviation and the entire military maritime navy”<sup>15</sup>.

Another favouring factor is represented by the signing of the State Treaty for Austria. At only one day after the official establishment of the Treaty Organization from Warsaw, on May 15, 1955, the *State Treaty for the re-establishment of independent and democratic Austria* was signed in Vienna between U.S.A, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, France, Great Britain, on one side, and Austria, on the other side, the signatories being the Ministers of External Affairs in the five states: Viaceslav Molotov, John Foster Dulles, Antoine Pinay, Harold Macmillan, respectively Leopold Figl.

The Treaty was going to enter in force on July 27, 1955 and it foreseen the retreat of the troops of the four great powers from the Austrian territory, whose Parliament proclaimed then a permanent neutrality of the country. In this situation, if we analyze the motivation suggested by article 21 of the Peace treaty from February 10, 1947, the presence of the “friendly” Soviet troops is not justified anymore in Romania, even if it was easy to invoke the fact that Bucharest was signatory of the Warsaw Pact.

But, in August 1955, Moscow decided the reduction of the Organization military troops on peace time, letting the Romanian part know through a letter that, due to the relaxation of the international situation after the Geneva Summit from July 1955 and “in the purpose of the expense reduction for the support of the armies, we consider that it is the moment to examine the problem of the total effective of the army forces on peace time established through the Protocol of Conference (the Treaty from Warsaw) from 250 000 to 210 000 people”<sup>16</sup>.

This strategy from Kremlin was seen by the occidental countries, and probably by the Romanian communists, as a sign that Khrushchev and the people close to him were taking into account the gradual retreat of the military occupation effectives from Romanian and Hungary.

Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, who was required by a “united Press” Agency representative to confirm the information according to which the Soviet troops which stayed on the Romanian territory were going to be retreated around the date of October 1, 1955, says that, even if their presence in Romania to assure the communication with the troops in Austria was according to the Peace Treaty

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<sup>14</sup> Details in Gavriil Preda, Petre Opreș, *România în Organizația Tratatului de la Varșovia, 1954-1968*, vol. I, București, Institutul Național pentru studiul Totalitarismului, 2008, p. 63.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Apud Ioan Scurtu, *cited work*, p. 216.

from 1947, in the European situation there were some changes that arose at the same time with the State treaty with Austria and at the same time with the Pact Organization from Warsaw, and “if the foreign troops belonging to the occidental states would be retreated from the Western Europe in the limits of their national borders, and the military groups in the Occident would be terminated, the situation in Europe would change and the necessity of the Treaty from Warsaw would be discarded, as well as those measures to assure security which are foreseen in this Treaty”. Case in which, says Dej, “it is obvious that the necessity of the Soviet troops would be discarded from Romania too and these troops would be retreated from Romania”<sup>17</sup>.

The problem to set in discussion the retreat of the soldiers from Moscow was proved not to be so simple. It should take place at a high level, and a possible refusal would not be seen as positive by the initiators. Under these conditions, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej arranged that Emil Bodnăraş, who “enjoyed a certain political credit before the Soviet leadership and, additionally, knew Russian very well”<sup>18</sup>, to be the person who approached the problem of the Soviet troops retreat. Bodnăraş proved to be an inspired choice. In his memoirs, Khrushchev presents him as “a good friend of the Soviet Union, an old Bolshevik friend who had been in the prisons from Romania and who enjoyed our entire trust and respect”<sup>19</sup>.

This casting, made without consulting the other members of the Political Office, was not made toll free by the Gheorghiu-Dej’s adversaries, Miron Constantinescu accusing him of avoiding the responsibility, on the occasion of a meeting in the Political Office of C.C of Romanian Communist Party, developed on April 1956: “In August 1955, when it was decided by the Political Office to raise before Khrushchev, with consulting character, the problem of the Soviet troops in our country, it was established that Comrade Gheorghiu-Dej should be the one to submit the problem. To our surprise, Comrade Gheorghiu-Dej did not accomplish this task, but used Comrade Bodnăraş to submit it”<sup>20</sup>.

Prudence made the Romanian part to set this problem in an unofficial way before the Kremlin leadership. The occasion chosen by the Romanian communists was the festivities organized on August 23<sup>st</sup>, 1955, the 11<sup>th</sup> celebration of the “liberation day from the fascist leadership”, the Soviet dictator was also invited, and who was already on a visit to Sofia. In his memoirs, Khrushchev noted with surprise the problem raised by the Romanian leaders: “without warning me, [Bodnăraş] raised the problem: “What would you think about the retreat of the Soviet troops from Romania?” The arguments brought by Emil Bodnăraş, that Romania had as neighbours only socialist states and that the

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 218.

<sup>18</sup> Vasile Buga, *cited work*, p. 112.

<sup>19</sup> Khrushchev, *Remembers*, London, Publishing House Edward Cranksaw, 1971, p. 514.

<sup>20</sup> A.N.I.C., Fund C.C. al P.C.R. – Chancellery, file no. 32/1956, f.9.

Soviets could come if it was necessary, determined the Soviet leader, to later make a note, “he was more than satisfied by the explanation given for the proposal to retreat the Soviet troops from their territory” and that “the Romanians re-affirmed their sincere belief to build socialism”<sup>21</sup>.

But the events developed in a turn somehow different to the version offered by the Khrushchev’s memoirs. In a speech from August 22<sup>st</sup> at Bucharest, with the occasion of the above mentioned visit, and in the those times press, Khrushchev was content to say that the Soviet people remained the “faithful, trustworthy friend of the Romanian people, and that he will support it also in the fight to build socialism, to continuously strengthen the popular democratic state”<sup>22</sup>, and from his memoirs we find out that this problem tormented him in the following period, being rather sensitive if we consider the events in the next year that were developed in Poland, respectively in Hungary<sup>23</sup>.

Still about the speech that Khrushchev gave, Grigore Gafencu noted in his diary: “Khrushchev spent the day of August 23<sup>st</sup> at Bucharest, to celebrate the □liberation□. He took advantage of the discouragement feeling and the Genevian fogs provoked by Romania, to show the Romanian the Soviet solicitude. Talking about the problem of disarmament, he was not eager to talk about the eviction”<sup>24</sup>. As it can be easily see, the same problem of the occupation troops eviction was pursued by the important members of the Romanian Immigrants.

There is a certain contradiction in the paternity of the success concerning the retreat from 1958. The memoirs of some leaders of the Romanian Labour Party from those times (Alexandru Bârlădeanu, Ion Gheorghe Maurer) give the merits of obtaining this desideratum to Gheorghiu-Dej, respectively to Emil Bodnăraş. The latter, leading a Romanian Delegation which took part in Moscow at the festivities in November 7, 1955, was announced by Khrushchev that the decision to retreat the troops was already made. According to different sources, the Romanian communists would have been fallen in disgrace, being stigmatized as promoters of a “nationalist line”<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Khrushchev, *cited work.*, p. 514.

<sup>22</sup> *Scântea*, August 23<sup>st</sup>, 1955.

<sup>23</sup> Silviu Brucan says that after the defeat of the Hungarian revolution, in November 1956, he was called back in the country by Gheorghiu-Dej, who would have required an informative material on the means through which a gradual statement could be made for a more independent position of Romania on international ground, which shows, especially to the Romanian people, that we give a high priority to our national interests, and not, as until now, to the Soviet ones”. Silviu Brucan, *Generația irosită. Memorii*, Bucureşti, Editura Univers/Calistrat Hogaş, 1992, p. 73 ssq.

<sup>24</sup> A.N.I.C., Fund Gafencu Grigore, file no. 294, pp. 404-405.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Dan Cătănuş, “Destalinizarea în viziunea lui Emil Bodnăraş”, in *Dosarele Istoriei*, no. 5/2001, p. 28.

In reality, the decision was taken only in stages, after much calculus, and as proof we have the long period which passed between the moment the discussion was first made and the moment the problem was finalized. After some consultation Nikita Khrushchev made with the members of the Central Committee Presidium of the Soviet Union Communist Party, especially with the marshals Gheorghii Jukov and Rodion Malinovski, who succeeded in that period in the function of Minister of Defense of the Soviet Union, the Soviet government expressed on October 1956 the availability to approach at official level the problem of the Soviet troops:

The Soviet government starts from the general principle that the deployment of the troops of a state which participated at the Treaty from Warsaw on the territory of another state that was a participant at the Treaty from Warsaw is made based on the agreement between all the socialist states which participated at the Treaty and only with the consent of that state on whose territory, at his request, the troops are deployed or the troops will be deployed<sup>26</sup>.

In this context, from Kremlin there will be the idea to set in discussion the abidance of the Soviet Counselors in Romania. Though a letter of January 14, 1957, The Central Committee of the Soviet Union Communist Party was sending, the principle position concerning this matter:

Presently, when you country has qualified personnel, who acquired an important experience in building the socialism, the permanent stay of the Soviet Counselors in Romania doesn't correspond to the cause's interests, and this form of collaboration was practically exceeded. More than that, even the name of "Soviet Counselors" does not correspond to the role they accomplish, and in fact, maybe in an involuntary way can lead to a wrongful opinion that through his counselors a country interferes in the internal affairs of another country<sup>27</sup>.

The proposal was immediately accepted by the leadership in Bucharest.

On April 15, 1957 a Romanian – Soviet agreement was signed concerning the temporary deployment of the Soviet troops in the Romanian territory, on condition that they "don't interfere in the country's internal affairs"<sup>28</sup>, as well as some conventions relatively to the crimes judging, solving the civil trials of the Soviet soldiers, at the way and the conditions to use the casernes, the service buildings, the warehouses, the aerodromes etc.<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Mioara Anton, *Ieșirea din cerc: politica externă a regimului Gheorghiu Dej*, Institutul Național pentru Studierea totalitarismului, București, 2007, p. 107.

<sup>27</sup> Ioan Scurtu (ed.), *cited work*, pp. 241-242.

<sup>28</sup> Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului român*, București, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București, 1997, pp. 491-492.

<sup>29</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria contemporană a României (1918-2005)*, București, Editura Fundației "România de Măine", 2005, p. 137.

The process was speeded a year later, when, in April 17, 1958 Nikita Khrushchev underlined in a letter sent to the Central Committee of the Romanian Labour Party that: “the deployment of the Soviet troops is not necessary on the Romanian Popular Republic territory anymore”. Their presence was speculated on by the occidental propaganda, and Romania, showed Khrushchev in the following, had at that time “trustworthy army forces”<sup>30</sup>.

On the occasion of the Consultative Political Committee of the Treaty Organization from Warsaw, which took place at Moscow on May 24, 1958, an agreement was approved between the two states concerning the retreat, in the near future, of the Soviet troops from Romania. Subsequently in the same sense an agreement was signed between the Minister of Defense of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and the Minister of Army Forces of the Romanian Popular Republic, which contained a foresight in favour of keeping on the Romanian territory of a “consistent quantity of munitions in two warehouses and 9 800 tons of fuel and lubricants in three warehouses belonging to the Minister of Defense of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic”<sup>31</sup>; in the same sense a Convention was signed on October 22<sup>st</sup>, 1957:

The Convention between the governments of Romanian Popular Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic on the temporary dislocation of a part of the military navy belonging to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic in the military maritime bases, ports and aerodromes belonging to the Romanian Popular Republic, if this were to be imposed by situation<sup>32</sup>.

On June 21, 1958 the minister Council of the Romanian Popular Republic issued a decision to set in application the Agreement signed at Moscow on May 24, 1958, through which the retreat of the Soviet troops from Romania was established<sup>33</sup>.

To supervise the eviction process of the Soviet troops from the Romanian territory, it is already constituted, on April 10, 1958 a mixed Romanian – Soviet Commission, the Romanian part being represented by the General Lieutenant Floca Arhip, General Lieutenant Corneliu Mănescu, General Justice Major Bucșan Gheorghe, and for the Russian part by the General – Major A. Kosenko, Colonel V. Markareanț and Colonel V. Soprun<sup>34</sup>. Several trains were set in function to travel on the period of June 15 – August 13, 1958, in the frontier points from east (Ungheni - Iași, Reni - Galați), where most of the Russian soldiers are retreated, as well as from west (Curtici-Lokoshoza)<sup>35</sup>. Under these

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<sup>30</sup> Ioan Scurtu (ed.), *cited work*, p. 273.

<sup>31</sup> Idem, *România. Retragerea trupelor sovietice ...*, p. 277.

<sup>32</sup> A.N.I.C., Fund C.C. of P.C.R. – Chancellery, file no. 21/1967, f. 245-251.

<sup>33</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *România. Retragerea trupelor sovietice...*, pp. 342-344.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 272

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, p. 293.

conditions, at the end of 1958 summer, the last Soviet soldiers left the Romanian Popular Republic territory.

The retreat was celebrated, and there is a special plan on the improvement of the importance concerning the event, in the use of the internal and international socialist propaganda. Among the activities and ceremonies dedicated to this event, we can recall: sanctification of the Romanian – Soviet army brotherhood, friendship evenings between the two armies, sessions, and communication of A.R.L.U.S. (Romanian Association for Connections with the Soviet Union). In the end, the medal for the “Liberation under Fascist Leadership” was conferred to all the military and civil personnel from the units belonging to the Soviet armies deployed on the territory of the Romanian Popular Republic<sup>36</sup>.

The action to retreat the Soviet troops deployed on the Romanian territory was considered by the Bucharest leadership propaganda as a contribution to the cause of peace and detention consolidation in Europe and in the entire world. To drop off the Moscow vigilance, the leaders from Bucharest tried to present this event as a good will action from the Soviet Union, and the Romanians seem to be the beneficiaries of this measure. But, no matter, the appearances Romania was going to be the only country in the Treaty from Warsaw in which the Soviet troops retreated completely<sup>37</sup>.

From a geostrategic point of view, this retreat could not affect the security if Moscow. As Bodnăraș once stated to Khrushchev, Romania had no borders with any enemies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics because from all the length of the Romanian frontier of 3 153 de km, only 546 km were bordered by a country which was not a member of the Warsaw Treaty – Yugoslavia, the rest of 2 607 km representing a frontier with the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, respectively the Black Sea.

The development of this event with certain implications on the evolution of the communist regime from Bucharest was under the attention of the occidental states, which had different positions in this sense.

At Washington it was considered a minor action, which “had no impact” and which had as purpose “to bring a closeness of the Soviets to Yugoslavia”<sup>38</sup>.

At London, the action was perceived only as a part of a more vast script. The Soviets wanted to obtain a new balance of the military power in Europe, which could allow them to guide the economic resources “without any danger for them or for the actual government in Romania and Hungary”<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p. 287.

<sup>37</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria contemporană a României...*, p. 141.

<sup>38</sup> Sergiu Verona, Donald R. Falls, “1944-1958, 14 years of Soviet military presence in Romania”, in *Magazin istoric*, no.5/1995, pp. 51-52.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*.

At Paris too some diplomatic dispatches were sent on this problem by the French Embassy from Bucharest<sup>40</sup>. In a document on June 4, 1958 it results that the number of the Soviet soldiers in Romania did not exceed 40 000 people and that, according to the military diplomats' reports, the Soviet military occupation was not as considerable as one could think. Additionally, the representative of France in Bucharest considered that the retreat of the Soviet troops from Romania was not going to bring any changes in the internal politics of the country, having a propagandistic value<sup>41</sup>.

After the retreat of the Soviet troops from Romania, the leadership from Romania oriented itself more and more to the edification of a "own way" in building socialism. From here, more quarrels appeared in the relation with Kremlin, which were caused by the desire the Romanians had to escape the tutory which the Soviet Union understood to exert on its satellites through the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance, i.e. the Warsaw Treaty. The divergences extended also on the external policy problems, the Romanian state finding a counter-balance by maintaining good relations with the other great communist state which is China and, thing that was appreciated, though the mediation of the ideological conflict they had with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

But, if from this to the Soviet intervention as the one which took place in the 1956 autumn in Hungary or later, in August 1958 in Czechoslovakia, it was proved to be a long way, it is due to the fact that the Romanian Communist Leaders never considered to change the political regime; this is the reason for which Kremlin tolerated some tendencies, and this is the explanation for the success Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and his collaborators had in gradually obtaining the freedom to act, in an era which followed the retreat of the Soviet occupation troops.

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<sup>40</sup> Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, Ion Pătroiu, "Retragerea trupelor sovietice din România în documente diplomatice franceze", în *Omagiu istoricului Ioan Scurtu*, Focșani, Editura D.M. Press, 2000, p. 683.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

