

## THE DECREE OF CEAUȘESCU REGARDING THE GRANTING OF A PENSION FOR ADINA BRĂȚIANU

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**Abstract:** In 1969, Adina Brătianu – the wife of the National Liberal Party leader, Constantin I. C. Brătianu (who died in prison on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August, 1950, at Sighetu Marmăției) sent a letter to Nicolae Ceaușescu for requesting financial aid. The communist leader wrote “2000” on the copy of the document and Adina Brătianu received a pension amounting to 2,000 lei.

**Keywords:** Adina Brătianu, Constantin Brătianu, Nicolae Ceaușescu, communism, National Liberal Party, pension, prison.

Twenty-five years after the assassination of Nicolae Ceaușescu in some barracks from Târgoviște, along with his wife, the re-evaluation of certain judgements of the first president of Romania, could be regarded as unusual, due to the fact that there are well-known the irrational decisions of the presidential couple from the 1980s. Nonetheless, we have chosen to unravel for the public, a less known aspect, that is the attitude of Nicolae Ceaușescu on addressing the wife of a Romanian politic leader – an anti-communist enemy during the 1930s-1940s, who died in prison, as a consequence of the decrees emitted by the communist authorities from Bucharest.

Adina Brătianu (born Costinescu), was married on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1907 to Constantin I. C. (Dinu) Brătianu (born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1866, Florica – deceased on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1950, Sighetu-Marmăției), the second-born son of the former Prime Minister I. C. Brătianu (1821-1891). After the death of his brothers, Ion I. C. Brătianu (1927) and Vintilă Brătianu (1930), and the assassination of Ion Gheorghe Duca by the legionaries (at Sinaia, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December 1933), Constantin I. C. Brătianu took over the leadership of the National Liberal Party.

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Immediately after the coup d'état from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1944, Constantin I. C. (Dinu) Brătianu became a target for the communists, who accused him repeatedly and unfairly of treason of the national interests of Romania. Firstly, they imposed the house arrest, and then he was included in the group of high officials from the interwar period who went, in the spring of 1950, in the prison from Sighetu-Marmației (where they were exterminated).

After nearly two decades from her husband death, Adina Brătianu sent a letter to Nicolae Ceaușescu, in which she asked for financial support. What determined the leader of R.C.P. (Romanian Communist Party) to write “2,000” on the copy of that document, will remain, probably, unknown. Hitherto, we know that the members of the Permanent Presidium approved the proposal of Nicolae Ceaușescu, at the meeting from the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1969, noting: “The Permanent Presidium of C.C. (Central Committee) of R.C.P. decides that *Adina C. I. Brătianu*, with the domicile in Bucharest, str. Galați nr. 70, sector II, to be granted a pension of 2,000 lei monthly, starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 1969”<sup>1</sup>.

The decision of Nicolae Ceaușescu, to give Adina Brătianu a pension, was followed, two years after, by the bringing from Sighetu-Marmației and the depositing in a niche belonging to Brătianus' necropolis from Florica (commune of Ștefănești, Argeș County) of the mortal remains of Constantin I. C. (Dinu) Brătianu and Gheorghe I. Brătianu (2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1971)<sup>2</sup>. Later, Ioan and Dan Brătianu – two of the sons of Constantin I. C. (Dinu) Brătianu – had an official discussion with the director of Historic and Socio-Political Studies Institute of C.C. of R.C.P. about the significant deeds of their family members in the edification of the modern Romanian state, and the authorities from Bucharest, eventually, accepted their ideas – in the favourable context created by the ceremony in which there were celebrated 100 years from the declaration and obtaining of state independence of Romania<sup>3</sup>.

It is interesting to notice the fact that the pension received by Adina Brătianu according to a decree emitted by the State Council, was not a singular case. Using as reference point the life annuity decided for the wife of Mihail Moraru (2,000

<sup>1</sup> Central Historical National Archives Service (will be further cited as SANIC), *fund of C.C. of R.C.P. – Chancellery*, file no. 16/1969, f. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Aurel Pentelescu, *Vintilă I. C. Brătianu. Omul și faptele sale (1867-1930)*, in Constantin Moșincat, Bujor Dulgău, Augustin Țărău (coordinators), *O viață printre documente – Ioan Aurel Popovici. Omagiul la 70 de ani*, Oradea, TIPO MC Publishing, 2005, p. 128.

As regarding the scientific activity and the faith of the historian Gheorghe I. Brătianu (deceased in the sinister penitentiary “Dunărea” from Sighetu-Marmației, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1953), see Aurel Pentelescu, *În fața istoriei: Gheorghe I. Brătianu (1898-1953). La 50 de ani de la moartea sa*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing, 2003, passim; *Gheorghe I. Brătianu în dosarele Securității. Documente. Perioada domiciliului obligatoriu. Arestarea. Detenția. Moartea (1947-1953)*, selection of documents, introductory study, notes and addenda: Aurel Pentelescu, Liviu Țăranu, Bucharest, Enciclopedic Publishing, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> For details, see Mihai Pelin, *Operațiunile “Melița” și “Eterul”. Istoria EUROPEI LIBERE prin documente de Securitate*, Bucharest, Albatros Publishing, 1999, p. 386-388.

lei), in 1955, and that established for the wife of Theodor Iordăchescu (2,500 lei)<sup>4</sup>, Nicolae Ceaușescu decided, and the members of the C.C. Secretariat approved, similar support for:

a) Pensions approved by the C.C. Secretariat of R.C.P, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1965:

– 2,000 lei for Otilia Solomon, wife of Barbu Solomon (the vice-president of the Supreme Court, between 1962-1965). Until the issuing of the State Council's decree, which enforced the decision of the C.C. Secretariat of R.C.P' members Otilia Solomon received a monthly pension of about 500 lei, to which she renounced, in favour of the life annuity one;

– 2,000 lei for Elena Macavei, wife of Mihai Macavei (the honourable president of the Romanian Institute for the Foreign Cultural Relations, between 1952-1965). Elena Macavei initially had a monthly pension of 1,200 lei and acted in the same way as Otilia Solomon;

– 800 de lei for Elena Oprea, sister of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, who had been a substitute primary school teacher between 1942-1949. Although Dumitru Cristescu (the leader of *Gospodăria de Partid* (Party Administration) of C.C. of R.C.P.) proposed the granting of 2,000 de lei monthly, Nicolae Ceaușescu wrote on the document only 800 lei, and the members of the C.C. Secretariat of R.C.P. approved the proposal of the party leader.

b) Pensions approved by the C.C. Secretariat of R.C.P, at the meeting from the 9<sup>th</sup> of May:

– 2,500 lei for Ofelia Manole, as alimony “due to the activity carried out for the illegal working-class movement”, along with an indemnity of 1,500 lei;

– 1,200 lei for the Rear-Admiral Horia Ion Măcellariu, commander of the Romanian Navy in August 1944, member of the National Resistance Movement (1948), sentenced, in a political trial, to lifelong hard labour (November 1948). After the pardoning from July 1964, the former Rear-Admiral received monthly support of 400 lei, as a consequence of a Minister Board's decision (starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1964). Grigore Răduică, the leader of the Working control Department for the Ministry of Armed Forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Justice, did not agree with the proposal of the Ministry of Armed Forces, to give Horia Măcellariu a pension of 1,200 lei (starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 1966), but the members of the C.C. Secretariat of R.C.P. approved that decision;

– 1,500 lei for Colonel Atanase T. Chiriță, the head of the general staff for the Mountain Corps on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1944. He requested repeatedly to the communist authorities from Bucharest the raise from 1,000 to 1,500 of his working

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<sup>4</sup> The name of Theodor Iordăchescu was the first registered on the list of the 428 delegates for the General Congress of the Socialist Party from Romania (Bucharest, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> of May 1921), who voted the unconditioned affiliation to Communist Third International (Comintern), founded in March 1919 at Moscow. Gheorghe Onișoru, *Pecetea lui Stalin. Cazul Vasile Luca*, Târgoviște, Cetatea de Scaun Publishing, 2014, p. 21.

pension. Although Grigore Răduică decided against the proposal received from the Ministry of Armed Forces in April 1966, the members of C.C. Secretariat of R.C.P. approved it<sup>5</sup>.

In conclusion, Nicolae Ceaușescu did not bear a grudge and agreed that Adina Brătianu and Horia Măcellariu to receive financial support, although they were placed on adverse political positions against the communist leader. The irony of faith was that, the pension established for Adina Brătianu, had the same amount as that established on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, also by Nicolae Ceaușescu, for Elisabeta Luca (Birnbaum)<sup>6</sup>, the former wife of Vasile Luca (sentenced to death on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 1954, a sentence changed in lifelong hard labour, and deceased on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 1963, in the penitentiary from Aiud<sup>7</sup>). In order to make a comparison, we should mention that, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1963, Ecaterina Borilă received a pension of 3,000 (after the proposal of the Administration of the Party Department, approved at the meeting from the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1961 of C.C. Secretariat of R.W.P. – Romanian Working Party<sup>8</sup>), the former “underground communist fighter” from C.F.R., Vasile Bâgu, was given a raise of the pension in May 1966, from 1,900 to 2,500 lei, and Teohari Georgescu, the former communist minister of the Internal Affairs (1945-1952), received a pension of 2,500 lei<sup>9</sup>, starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1963, along with an indemnity of 5,000 lei.<sup>10</sup> It is possible that the wife of Petre Borilă to have been rewarded in 1961 with a pension for being an “underground communist fighter” and for the part that she played in the action

<sup>5</sup> For details, see Mihnea Berindei, Dorin Dobrinu, Armand Goșu (editors), *Istoria comunismului din România. Documente*, volume II: Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1971), Iași, Polirom Publishing, 2012, p. 67-68; 155-158.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 476-477; 479. Until the arresting of his husband (16<sup>th</sup> of August 1952), Elisabeta Luca was a member in the Central Committee of the Antifascist Women Union from Romania (1944-1952), member of the C.C. of R.W.P. (from 1948), member in the Executive Committee of Democrat Women Union from Romania (1948-1952), and in the leading staff of the State Committee for Cinemas from Romania (1950-1952).

<sup>7</sup> Initially, Vasile Luca was accused of sabotaging the monetary reform, applied in January 1952. The investigation took two years and, after the trial from “Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej” Court from (4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> of October 1945), the former minister was sentenced to death (for sabotaging the national economy) and lifelong hard labour (for his actions against the working class).

<sup>8</sup> For details, see SANIC, *fund of C.C. al R.C.P. – Chancellery*, file no. 24/1961 (vol. I), f. 9; Petre Opriș, *Un adevăr multă vreme ocultat. Despre numărul membrilor Partidului Comunist din România la 23 august 1944*, in Cornel Carp (coordinator), *România în contextul internațional la sfârșitul celui de-al doilea război mondial. Studii și comunicări*, The Centre of Studies and Historical Military Archives Preservation, Bucharest, Centrul Tehnic-Editorial al Armatei Publishing, 2005, p. 159-160; 176.

<sup>9</sup> Cristina Diac, *Greva de la Grivița din februarie 1933, văzută de protagoniști. O declarație a lui Vasile Bâgu*, in “Arhivele Totalitarismului”, The National Institute for the Studying of Totalitarianism, year XX, no. 3-4 (76-77)/2012, p. 204.

<sup>10</sup> Doina Jela, *Lexiconul negru. Unelte ale represiunii comuniste*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing, 2001, p. 125; Mihnea Berindei, Dorin Dobrinu, Armand Goșu (editors), *Istoria comunismului din România. Documente. Perioada Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1945-1965)*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing, 2009, p. 761.

brought against Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu (6<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> of April 1954), where both Ecaterina Borilă and Ilka Melinescu (Wassermann) declared calumniously that the former minister of Justice had been conspiring for a long time against the other members of the Political Department of C.C. of R.C.P., and his public declarations had had a nationalist character<sup>11</sup>.

In the same time, it is worth mentioned that Elisabeta Luca was arrested on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1952, then tried and sentenced in the autumn of 1954, after the finalisation of the action abusively brought against his husband, and the members of the Political Department approved this penalty, at the meeting from the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1954<sup>12</sup>.

The rehabilitation of Elisabeta Luca was done in the fall of 1968, after there had been published the results of the two enquiries, done by a committee of R.C.P., which analysed, during 1966-1968, the way in which the investigation had been conducted and the defendants from “Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu” case had been tried, along with the way in which Ștefan Foriș was dismissed from the position of general secretary of the party (4<sup>th</sup> of April 1944) and killed (summer of 1964). Later, Elisabeta Luca, was decorated with the order “Tudor Vladimirescu” (2<sup>nd</sup> degree), according to the Decree no 157 from the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1971, emitted on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the creation of the Romanian Communist Party.

In 1968 too, the Secretariat of C.C. of R.C.P., offered a monthly support of 4,000 lei for one of the most well-known members of the communist repression staff from the country, General Alexandru Drăghici – the double of the pension given to Adina Brătianu and Elisabeta Luca by Nicolae Ceaușescu. That proposal was not convenient for the former minister of State Security, who had held the same position in the period when Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu had been investigated at Bucharest for an inexistent guilt, and the historian Gheorghe I. Brătianu had been dying in “Dunărea” penitentiary Sighetu-Marmației (27<sup>th</sup> of April 1953). Moreover, Alexandru Drăghici refused to move in a new house in the fall of 1968, although it had been recently renovated by the Party Administration of C.C. of R.C.P. – which had spent 318,000 lei, an amount equivalent with the value of five or six apartments in that period. Consequently, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1968, Gheorghe Stoica admonished the former minister of the State Security for his huge financial pretentions, but Nicolae Ceaușescu approved, eventually, that Alexandru Drăghici to receive a monthly pension of 7,000 lei, concomitantly with the demoting of the General and his putting in the reserve, with the rank of soldier<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Ghiță Ionescu, *Comunismul în România*, Bucharest, Litera Publishing, 1994, p. 186.

<sup>12</sup> SANIC, *fund of C.C. al R.C.P. – Chancellery*, file no. 123/1954, f. 3-4. Apud Florian Banu, *Instrumentalizarea justiției de către regimul comunist (1945-1958)*, in “Caietele CNSAS”, year II, no. 2 (4)/2009, p. 142.

<sup>13</sup> Gheorghe Buzatu, Mircea Chirițoiu (coordinators), *Agresiunea comunismului în România. Documente din arhivele secrete: 1944-1989*, vol. I, Bucharest, Paideia Publishing, 1998, p. 230-231; Lavinia Betea, Cristina Diac, Florin-Răzvan Mihai, Ilarion Țiu, *Viața lui Ceaușescu*, vol. 2: *Fiul Poporului*, Bucharest, Adevărul Holding, 2013, p. 310.

## ANNEX

**February 1969.**

Letter sent to Nicolae Ceaușescu by Adina Brătianu, the wife of the leader of National Liberal Party, Constantin I. C. (Dinu) Brătianu (deceased in the prison from Sighetu-Marmației in year 1950)

*Chancellery of C.C. of R.C.P.*  
*No. 315 / 12.02.1969*

[Hand-written note:] 2000  
COPY

*Archive of the Executive of C.C. of R.C.P.*  
*No. 203 / 20.02.1969*

## COMRADE PRESIDENT

Undersigned, Adina C. I. Brătianu, with the domicile in Bucharest, str. Galați nr. 70, sector II, I bring to your attention the next facts:

I am the wife of the former president of the National Liberal Party, deceased in conditions that you are fully aware of. His activity in the service of the democratic principles, dignity and Romanian freedoms, which culminated with the events from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1944, in which he was one of your collaborators, are familiar to you.

I find myself in the position of writing to you, reminding the role of my husband in the history of our Country, in order to show you that the pension of 399 lei, which was given to me as his successor, is insufficient to cover the necessary expenditure for the care of a sick woman.

Hoping that you will appreciate, objectively and according to the true Romanian values, the activity carried out by my husband, you will find a possibility for granting me a pension that can support my living.

I am yours very truly,

Adina Brătianu

TO COMRADE NICOLAE CEAUȘESCU, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE COUNCIL

• Central Historical National Archives Service, *fund C.C. of R.C.P.* – *Chancellery, file no. 16/1969, f. 42.*