

THE RED ARMY AND THE CHANGING OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN ROMANIA

Constantin HLIHOR*, Ioan SCURTU**

Abstract. The radical transformation of Romanian society and its transition to a system similar to that in the Soviet Union implied, on the one hand, the elimination of the influence exerted by the traditional (historical) parties, and, on the other hand, the formation of a government that would entirely serve the interests of the Kremlin. The concrete plan for seizing political power by the Communist Party and its allies was drawn up outside the country's borders. The victorious powers at the end of the World War II were concerned with shaping the postwar world. In Romania, the democratic opposition increased its attempts to make Western political-diplomatic circles aware of the evolution of the political situation in Romania. Iuliu Maniu sent messages to the Potsdam Conference (17 July-2 August 1945) in which he asked for the support of the Great Powers in establishing a representative government in Romania, a government that would consist of all democratic political forces and that would prepare the groundwork for free elections. Immediately after Stalin's death, the Soviet Government began to reevaluate its relations with its satellite countries. The policy of detente, proclaimed by N. Khrushchev, influenced the situation in Romania. In March 1955 the work camps were abolished and several political prisoners were liberated. In April 1956 the council of ministers allowed disgraced persons to return to their original homes and they were given back their confiscated houses and lands. After the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Romania, the Communist leaders in Bucharest could express their disagreement with the leaders in Moscow with respect to the debates which took place at the end of the 1950s and at the beginning of the 1960s and which tackled the functioning and organizational principles of the Economic Council for Mutual Assistance.

Keywords: Red Army, armistice, convention, Allied Control Commission, Andrei Vyshinsky, Petru Groza, King Michael I, I.V. Stalin, N.S. Khrushchev, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

The withdrawal of Romania from the Axis on 23 August 1944 had profound consequences for the subsequent evolution of Romanian politics¹. During the first weeks after the overthrow of Marshal Ion Antonescu's government, Romanian society

* Prof. univ. dr., Universitatea Creștină „Dimitrie Cantemir”, București.

** Prof. univ. dr., Academia Oamenilor de Știință din România.

¹ For more details, see Gh. Buzatu, *Din istoria secretă a celui de-al doilea război mondial*, București, 1988; Eliza Campus, *Din politica externă a României 1913-1947*, București, 1980; Ion Enescu, *Politica externă a României în perioada 1944-1947*, București, 1979; *România în anii celui de-al doilea război mondial*, vol. III, București, 1980; Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania: British, and American Policies towards Romania 1938-1947*, Los Angeles, 1977.