

Serbian/Yugoslav-Romanian Relations and Interactions in the 20th Century

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Yugoslavia, Romania and the June 28th 1948 Cominform Resolution: The First Consequences*

Abstract: This article examines the effects of the June 28th 1948, Cominform resolution on Yugoslav-Romanian relations in the initial months following its adoption, drawing on Yugoslav archival materials (predominantly information from the secret services intended for high party and state leaders) and pertinent literature. By June 1948, relations between Yugoslavia and Romania had become extremely tight in all areas, including politics, trade, culture, sports, economy, and transportation. One can observe which bilateral issues in the earlier, seemingly idyllic years of Yugoslav-Romanian relations were formally well resolved, but in reality, disputed, by closely examining which interstate ties were severed among the first and which population groups (mainly the Serbian national minority in the Romanian part of the Banat) were the first to suffer the consequences.

Keywords: Yugoslavia, Romania, Cominform, Cominform resolution in 1948, Yugoslav-Romanian relations

The years immediately following the Second World War were extremely dynamic for both Yugoslavia and Romania. In the new geopolitical landscape of Europe, both countries underwent the so-called „Sovietization” process, i.e. they went through radical political, social, economic and cultural changes that resulted in the creation of one-party political systems on the model already applied in the Soviet Union. However, this process unfolded at different paces in Yugoslavia and Romania. While Yugoslavia abolished the monarchy at the end of 1945, banned all political parties except the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, and began the nationalization of industry, Romania took an additional two years to reach the

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same outcome.¹ During this time, Tito's Yugoslavia, especially since the establishment of the government of Petru Groza in March 1945, was focused on more or less open support for the Communist Party of Romania in its efforts to achieve a one-party monopoly on power, like the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.² By mid-1948, this assistance, coordinated with the Soviet Union, had brought Yugoslav-Romanian relations to an enviable level, both in the field of politics and in the field of economy, culture, and even relations between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of Romania, i.e. the Romanian Workers' Party. In the spring of 1948, when Yugoslav-Romanian relations were at their peak, disagreements between the USSR and Yugoslavia, more precisely between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, as well as between Josip Broz Tito and Joseph Stalin personally, escalated far from the public eye.³ Until the adoption of the Cominform resolution on June 28, 1948, this conflict and its consequences for Yugoslavia's relations with all the countries of the Soviet bloc, including Romania, were not visible.

¹ For more on this, see: Branko Petranović, Sava Dautović, *Jugoslavija, velike sile i balkanske zemlje, 1945–1948. Iskustvo „narodne demokratije” kao partijske države*, (Beograd:1994); Marija Obradović, *„Narodna demokratija” u Jugoslaviji 1945–1952*, (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 1995); Ljubodrag Dimić, *Agitprop kultura: agitpropovska faza kulturne politike u Srbiji 1945–1952*, (Beograd: Rad, 1988); Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner, Daniela Bușe, Beatrice Marinescu, *Instaurarea totalitarismului comunist în România*, (București: Cavallioti, 2002); Gheorghe I. Ionița, *Istoria românilor – de la 23 august 1944 până în prezent*, (București: Editura Universității din București, 2001); Dennis Deletant, *Romania under Communist Rule*, (Bucharest: Civic Academy Foundation, 2006); Андреј Милин, Миодраг Милин, Цветко Михајлов, *Срби у Румунији за време комунизма. Звучни архив и приручник о страдању*, (Темешвар: Савез Срба у Румунији, 2011).

² Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, „Yugoslavia and the crisis of Petru Groza government (August 1945 – January 1946)”, *Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, s.n., Istorie*, LXVIII (2022), 65–77; Владимир Љ. Цветковић, „Од непријатеља до пријатеља и напредак: трансформације југословенске политике према Румунији 1944–1948. године”, *Нови хоризонти савремене историје Југославије – Балкан, Европа, свет*, Зборник радова, ур. Јован Чавошки, Александар В. Милетић, (Београд: Институт за новију историју Србије, 2023), 53–82; Vladimir Lj. Cvetković, „Josip Broz Tito, Petru Groza and Yugoslav-Romanian Relations 1945–1947”, *New Cultural and Political Perspectives on Serbian-Romanian Relations*, South-East European History, Vol. 5, Edited by Aleksandra Đurić Milovanović, Jovana Kolundžija, Mircea Măran, Otilia Hedeșan, Christene D'Anca, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2024), 173–197; Владимир Љ. Цветковић, „Обнова дипломатских односа Југославије и Румуније после Другог светског рата”, *Токови историје*, год. XXX, 1/2022, 131–150.

³ For more on this, see: Čedomir Štrbac, *Jugoslavija i odnosi između socijalističkih zemalja: sukob KPJ sa Informbiroom*, (Beograd: Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, 1975); Branko Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918–1988. Knj. III: Socijalistička Jugoslavija 1945–1988*, (Beograd: Nolit, 1988); *Jugoslovensko-sovjetski sukob 1948. godine*, Zbornik radova, Ur. Petar Kačavenda, (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1999); *The Tito-Stalin Split, 70 Years After*, eds. Tvrtko Jakovina and Martin Previšić, (Zagreb: Faculty of Humanities and Social Science; Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 2020).

This is most clearly demonstrated by Yugoslav sources, which reveal that authorities in Belgrade had information that was not released to the public in the period immediately before the adoption of the Cominform resolution. While the public image of friendship between Belgrade and Bucharest still prevailed, information from diplomatic and intelligence circles as early as mid-May 1948 testified to a sudden change in Romania's attitude towards Yugoslavia. It was then that the beginning of a negative campaign led by the Agitprop of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party was observed. Although it was known in Belgrade that the attitude of the Communist Party of Romania (from February 1948 the RWP) towards the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and Yugoslavia had not been „especially warm”, in the second half of May 1948 it took the form of an open campaign, and it was not clear whether it was a campaign against the Communist Party of Yugoslavia or against Yugoslavia as a state.⁴ Implementing the instructions of the Central Committee of the RWP, its Agitprop apparatus launched an open campaign in the second half of May to let the public know that the RWP has a negative attitude towards the CPY and Yugoslavia. The Romanian press published the writing of Belgrade's *Borba*, which was almost unknown in Romania, daily, openly criticizing its „line” as ideologically incorrect. On the occasion of Tito's birthday, May 25th, the ceremonial academy was canceled and a smaller gathering was organized instead, which could only be attended by members of the Plenum of the Yugoslav-Romanian Friendship Society (ARIUG) and employees of the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest. Despite being a closed event, this gathering was also used to further express the RWP's antagonism towards Yugoslavia, because the main speaker from the Romanian side, the instructor of the Central Committee of the RWP, Gheorghe Adorian, emphasized the role of the Red Army as crucial in the transformation of Yugoslavia into a „people's democracy”, without mentioning Marshal Tito.⁵ The articles about Tito and Yugoslavia, which had been prepared by all the newspapers in Romania for weeks, were not published on the orders of Agitprop of CC RWP, and the *Romano-Iugoslava* magazine was not even printed. A book about the new Yugoslavia by publicist Horia Liman, published only three days before Tito's birthday in 10,000 copies, was pulled from shelves the following day without explanation.⁶ The Week of Friendship with Yugoslavia, scheduled for the end of May in Timișoara, was also canceled, again without explanation.⁷ However, only a few days earlier, on May 21st 1948,

⁴ Državni arhiv Srbije [The State Archives of Serbia] (DAS), Zbirka Bezbednosno-informativne agencije (BIA), III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 5/48, 3. jul 1948. godine, 22.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Diplomatski arhiv Ministarstva spoljnih poslova Srbije [Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia] (DAMSPS), Fond Politička arhiva (PA), 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 17, Izveštaj o izložbi „Jugoslavija u izgradnji”, Pov. br. 416011, 1.

in Timișoara, in the presence of the press attaché of the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest, Milenko Stojanović, the exhibition „Yugoslavia under construction” was opened in a friendly atmosphere, although with the information that the Romanian authorities would not continue to finance the travel of the exhibition in the interior, even though it had only arrived from Brașov.⁸ All these and similar actions of the Romanian authorities, which took on the proportions of villainization of Tito and Yugoslavia, did not go unnoticed by the public. The Yugoslav diplomats in Bucharest, through a member of the Central Committee of the RWP, the aforementioned instructor Adorian, were conveyed the official explanation and position of the Romanian authorities. Adorian, in fact, announced the decision of the Central Committee of the RWP made at the proposal of Iosif Chișinevski, according to which the popularization of Yugoslavia in Romania will cease „due to the lack of reciprocity” until it is seen what Yugoslavia will do to propagate Romania.⁹ At the beginning of June, the departure of two Romanian work brigades, which were already set to start the construction of the highway in Yugoslavia, was prevented. Also, with the explanation that „something is wrong in Yugoslavia”, the previously agreed visits of a large number of friendly Romanian public workers and scientists to Yugoslavia were suspended.¹⁰

In the period before the publication of the Cominform resolution, future problems for the Serbian minority were foreshadowed by the unusual visit of Gheorghe Apostol to the Banat Gorge (Clisura Dunării) on June 11, 1948. Although the area they visited is as far as 900 kilometers away from Bucharest, the entire commission of the RWP Central Committee, headed by Apostol, went there to examine the participation of the Serbian minority in the liberation war in Yugoslavia. According to Yugoslav sources, however, the real purpose of the visit was to investigate the activities of minority organizations, which the „hostile elements” within the District Committee of the Romanian Workers’ Party in Timișoara alleged were under the influence of Yugoslav revisionist propaganda.¹¹ The interest of such a high-level delegation from Bucharest in the work of Serbian minority organizations, which had previously been accused of being chauvinistic and pro-Yugoslav, could certainly not be received as a good sign among local Serbs.

From the publication of the Cominform resolution on June 28th until mid-July 1948, the first consequences were visible even to the public. In the initial days following the publication of the resolution, the anti-Yugoslav

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 5/48, 3. jul 1948. godine, 22.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

campaign was evident primarily in the press, which, in analyzing the resolution's conclusions, directed its criticism chiefly at the Communist Party of Yugoslavia under Tito's leadership and its alleged „ideological deviations.”¹² The Central Committee of the RWP newspaper, *Scînteia*, was in the lead, following the directive that Yugoslavia could only be written about in a negative context, and most of the material for the contributions was provided by members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RWP, Vasile Luca, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Iosif Chişinevschi.¹³ The Serbian minority newspaper, *Pravda*, wrote negatively about Tanjug's correspondent, Pavle Stojanov, who was accused of sowing discord between the Serbian and Romanian populations in Banat, acting as an imperialist agent and an opponent of the Soviet Union and its ruling party. The Romanian-Yugoslav Friendship Society was dissolved, its premises sealed, and the Soviet film „In the Mountains of Yugoslavia”, which glorified Marshal Tito, was banned from showing in Romania. The first problems were also noticeable when it came to the hitherto intensive trade exchange: the Romanian authorities tried to stop the normal exchange by suspending the already agreed delivery of kerosene and rolled sheet metal, justifying, according to the Yugoslav side, the non-existent formalities regarding payment.¹⁴ However, in the first weeks after the adoption of the Cominform resolution, it became clear that the main target of the Romanian authorities would be the Serbian national minority and its organizations, especially the Union of Slavic Cultural and Democratic Associations of Romania (UACDSR) and its newspaper *Pravda*. In the first days after the publication of the resolution, the editorial board of *Pravda* was dismissed, and the newly appointed newspaper was ordered that in the future the newspaper must contain 80% information about Romania and the Soviet Union, 15% about the UACDSR itself and only 5% about Yugoslavia.¹⁵ In Clisura, which territorially belonged to the District Committee of the RWP Caraş, the expulsion of members who led minority organizations from the party began. However, the expulsion of 50 Serbs from the RWP caused a boycott of other members in Clisura, so DC of the RWP Caraş was soon forced to withdraw this decision. The „Yugoslav Book” bookstore in Timișoara, which played a significant role in the cultural and educational life of the Serbian minority in Romania, was forbidden from selling anything except Romanian party literature, especially not books by Josip Broz Tito, Milovan Djilas, Edvard Kardelj and Aleksandar Ran-

¹² DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 11, Telegram ambasadora FNRJ u Bukureštu Radonje Golubovića upućen Ministarstvu inostranih poslova FNRJ u Beogradu, Bukurešt, 3. jul 1948. године, Pov. br. 418103.

¹³ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948 – 1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 6/48, 17. jul 1948. године, 10.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

ković, in the premises from which Tito's painting had to be removed.¹⁶ All these measures, although unequivocally directed against the organizations of the Serbian minority, were secondary: the main goal of the Romanian authorities was for the leaders of the UACDSR to sign their consent to the resolution of June 28th and thus give legitimacy to the position of the RWP in this regard. On the night of July 2nd-3rd, 1948, the leaders of the Union were brought to the District Committee of the RWP for a meeting with Teohari Georgescu, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee and Minister of the Interior, as well as Central Committee member Bogdan, and were persuaded to sign a resolution. When they all refused, they were threatened with charges of treason and spying. They were called Yugoslav agents, their apartments were placed under surveillance, and the few of them who tried to leave Timișoara were forcibly sent back.¹⁷ The next day, as the pressure continued, some of them agreed to support the resolution. The action of Georgescu and Bogdan continued on July 3rd and 4th in Serbian villages in the area, where rallies demanded that the villagers declare themselves for or against Tito, remove his pictures, stop listening to Radio Belgrade and make lists of people who fought in Yugoslav units during World War II. In Serb-majority villages such as Diniaș, Ivanda and Sânmartinu Sârbesc, but also elsewhere, groups of Romanian communists appeared to organize controls in villages, make lists of people who spoke out against the Cominform resolution, organize monitoring of local leaders of the UACDSR and hold conferences at which they spoke derogatorily about Tito and Yugoslavia. In convoys of trucks full of people, they cruised through Serbian villages for no reason, most likely for the purpose of intimidation.¹⁸

From mid-July to mid-October 1948, the consequences of the resolution multiplied in all fields. Propaganda reached its peak: in the period from the 1st to 20th September alone, the Bucharest press published as many as 130 articles against Yugoslavia with a total of 220 columns. According to Yugoslav estimates, it was possible to issue a separate newspaper from this material for a whole 20 days.¹⁹ Also in mid-July, the disruption of the bookstore „Yugoslav Book” in Timișoara, which was opened in September 1947 as one of the first steps in the implementation of the Convention on Cultural Cooperation between Yugoslavia and Romania, began. On the night of July 9th-10th, 1948, a group of unknown people plastered the window of a bookstore with posters to prevent the sale of Yugoslav books.²⁰ The same attacks were repeated on July 13th and 17th, to

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11–12.

¹⁹ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 10/48, 9. oktobar 1948. godine, 5.

²⁰ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 11, Dopis sekretara ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu Ranka Zeca upućen Ministarstvu inostranih poslova FNRJ u Beogradu, Bukurešt, 30. jul 1948. godine, Pov. br. 421218, 1.

which the Yugoslav embassy responded with a note of protest sent to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which in response informed the Yugoslav side that it was withdrawing the bookstore's license and demanded the liquidation of the company.²¹ On July 21st, local authorities in Timișoara seized three bags of books that were destined for the „Yugoslav Book” bookstore, even though it had a proper license to import books.²² Finally, on August 19th, police authorities in Timișoara forcibly closed the bookstore and sealed its premises, prompting the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest to protest.²³ Yugoslav Foreign Minister Stanoje Simić also protested against closing the „Yugoslav Book” bookstore in Timișoara when handing over a note to the Romanian ambassador in Belgrade, Teodor Rudenco, on August 23rd, 1948, assessing such an action as a violation of the Convention on Cultural Cooperation.²⁴ In response to this note, the Romanian government for the first time presented the reasons for its actions, which it justified by the inability to tolerate the „anti-democratic work” of the „Yugoslav Book” branch in Timișoara, which it accused of „disseminating printed material with a chauvinist-nationalist character” with the aim of becoming a „focal point of nationalist agitation.”²⁵ Two days later, on September 11th, the local authorities in Timișoara sent a request to the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest to vacate the premises of the bookstore immediately, since their lease expired on October 1st.²⁶

Economic cooperation took place under increasingly difficult conditions and under the direct control of the Central Committee of the RWP, even when it came to trifles. Trade ties were severed wherever possible: firstly, all deliveries of oil and petroleum products agreed in foreign currency were suspended, and then all other deliveries outside the trade agreement, and even deliveries provided for in the trade agreement were interrupted before Ana Pauker's departure for a visit to Moscow.²⁷ After

²¹ *Ibid*, 1–2.

²² DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 12, Verbalna nota ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu br. 1137 upućena Ministarstvu inostranih poslova Rumunije, Bukurešt, 30. jul 1948. godine, Pov. br. 425523.

²³ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 12, Verbalna nota ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu br.1252 upućena Ministarstvu inostranih poslova Rumunije, Bukurešt, 21. avgust 1948. godine, Pov. br. 425523.

²⁴ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 12, Nota Vlade FNRJ Vladi NR Rumunije, Beograd, 25. avgust 1948. godine, Pov. br. 422618, 5–6.

²⁵ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 12, Verbalna nota Ministarstva inostranih poslova NR Rumunije br. 100.537 upućena ambasadi FNRJ u Bukureštu, Bukurešt, 9. septembar 1948. godine, Pov. br. 423839, 3.

²⁶ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 10, Dopis pomoćnika načelnika Ministarstva inostranih poslova FNRJ D. Govorušića upućen preduzeću „Jugoslovenska knjiga”, Beograd, 13. septembar 1948. godine, Pov. br. 423908.

²⁷ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 10/48, 9. oktobar 1948. godine, 5.

her return from Moscow, the situation remained the same. Officials in the Romanian Ministry of Economy claimed that they were not responsible for the problems, and the minister avoided giving explanations and claimed that it was not a break in economic relations, even promising that Romania would fulfill all its obligations under the trade agreement. With regard to economic exchanges, Yugoslav intelligence obtained data (from contacts with leading officials of Romanian foreign trade) which indicated that most of them were not satisfied with the new course towards Yugoslavia, arguing that Romania would lose more than Yugoslavia. Some of the leading officials went so far as to openly claim that they did not agree with this policy, that cooperation should have been expanded and not terminated, and that this attitude of the Central Committee of the RWP regarding foreign trade with Yugoslavia was not a consequence of the directive of the „Russians”, but a consequence of the servile attitude of the CC RWP, which thus wanted to go further than the Soviet wishes.²⁸

In addition to the interest in the concrete consequences for Yugoslav-Romanian relations, the Yugoslav authorities during this period were extremely interested in collecting information about the consequences of the Cominform resolution on Romanian internal politics, i.e. within the Romanian Workers' Party. According to the information gathered by official Belgrade, although the Central Committee of the RWP unanimously supported the resolution of the Cominform of June 28th, 1948, there were two mutually opposing groups within that body. The first group, which took advantage of the new situation by taking an extremely hostile attitude towards the Communist Party of Yugoslavia to strengthen its own positions with the Soviets, consisted of Ana Pauker, Iosif Chişinevski and Vasile Luca.²⁹ They openly persecuted anyone who expressed sympathy for Yugoslavia at any time or anywhere or had contact with its embassy in Bucharest. The second group, consisting of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Chivu Stoica, Gheorghe Apostol and Gheorghe Florescu, believed that the resolution should not have been adopted and that everything should have been resolved in direct talks with the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.³⁰ They also pointed to the direct damage that would result from an open campaign against the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. In August, the conflict between the two groups escalated to such an extent that there was a threat of a split within the Central Committee of the RWP. At the beginning of September, Ana Pauker managed to isolate Gheorghiu-Dej from public life and, accompanied by the famous Soviet agent Emil Bodnăraş, sent him on „vacation”. At the same time, efforts were initiated within the party to emphasize that it was inappropriate to promote a single individual, i.e.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

Gheorghiu-Dej, instead of making the whole RWP popular. In this regard, the Romanian press was instructed not to write about Gheorghiu-Dej, and all proposals for economic laws were submitted by Vasile Luca instead of Gheorghiu-Dej, although the latter was the Minister of Economy.³¹ Upon returning from his „vacation”, Gheorghiu-Dej began to give in and get closer to Ana Pauker, with whom he soon reconciled. In mid-September, the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest had information that existing differences were being overcome on the basis of a government reconstruction headed by Georgiu-Dej.³² His example of a settlement with Ana Pauker and her group within the Central Committee of the RRP was soon followed by Gheorghie Apostol, while Stoica and Florescu were soon removed from their positions.³³

At the end of October, as a result of the adoption of the Cominform resolution, there was a phase of open repression by the Romanian authorities against the Serbian minority, Yugoslav citizens living in Romania, and even against Yugoslav diplomatic staff in Bucharest. Boža Stanojev, former secretary of the Union and one of the individuals dismissed immediately following the publication of the Cominform resolution, was arrested on October 20th. According to Yugoslav sources, he was subsequently subjected to torture that left him unable to walk for a month, with the aim of forcing a confession that he had worked for the Yugoslav intelligence service - an accusation he denied.³⁴ At the same time, in the surrounding villages, mostly youth leaders or members of a minority who were soldiers in Yugoslav partisan units were arrested. On October 23rd, Đuro Stojanov and Jovan Mirkov were arrested in Dinaş and connected with the distribution of propaganda material from the recently held 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, although there were also examples of arrests of people who had nothing to do with that material.³⁵ As a member of the RWP, Stojanov publicly spoke out against the Cominform resolution, which may have been the main reason for his arrest. The arrest of the two young men was carried out with overt use of force, involving as many as fifteen police officers and carried out in the presence of the deputy head of the Romanian security service in Timișoara.³⁶ At the same time, four more villagers from a group of people who gathered in front of Đuro Sto-

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 128, dos. 2, Telegram ambasadora FNRJ u Bukureštu Radoša Jovanovića upućen Ministarstvu inostranih poslova u Beogradu, Bukurešt, 17. septembar 1948. godine, Pov. br. 424459.

³³ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 10/48, 9. oktobar 1948. godine, 4.

³⁴ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 12/48, 23. novembar 1948. godine, 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

janov's house in order to find out what was happening were arrested and kept under house arrest. In addition to members of the minority, repression was also applied to Yugoslav citizens. Among them, the most numerous were teachers and professors who worked in minority schools on the basis of an interstate convention, as well as students from Yugoslavia who studied in Romania. Among the first, on October 21st, was Nikola Jovanov, a Yugoslav citizen and former Yugoslav Army soldier who came to visit his parents in Dinaş with a valid Romanian visa. The arrest, however, was made in Timișoara, where Jovanov, together with his mother, came to visit relatives, and the reason was certainly his open advocacy of Yugoslav positions regarding the Cominform resolution, even in talks with local leaders of the RWP in Dinaş.³⁷ Shortly thereafter, on November 8th, 1948, Yugoslav citizens Gojko Vukmirović, a teacher, and Branko Ajvaz, a student, were given only six hours by the Romanian authorities to leave the country.³⁸ Vukmirović had been a teacher in Serbian minority schools for years, and Ajvaz was the son of a professor who worked at a Serbian gymnasium in Timișoara. Both men were forced to leave Romania within a given period of time, leaving their personal belongings in the custody of the Romanian authorities. Initially directed only against individuals, this measure was soon extended to all teachers and professors without exception, which put minority schools, without the necessary staff, in a difficult situation. In selecting the teachers who were going to replace the Yugoslav teachers, the Romanian authorities were guided solely by their opinion on the Cominform resolution, and not by their expertise. This led to the emergence of unskilled people working in minority schools, and even to the hiring of teachers and professors of ethnic Romanians, which, along with the constant lack of textbooks in the Serbian language, significantly hindered the work and caused almost daily disapproval of students.³⁹ At the same time, the expulsion of Yugoslav diplomats from Romania began. On October 30th, 1948, the First Secretary of the Yugoslav Embassy in Bucharest, Ranko Zec, and the Assistant Press Attaché, Smiljan Pečjak, were ordered to leave Romania within 48 hours.⁴⁰ The Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest managed to extend this deadline by barely 24 hours, and Zec and Pečjak left Romania within just 72 hours. All these measures, accompanied by abuses during the compulsory purchase of wheat and new arrests in villages, created an atmosphere of fear and insecurity among members of the Serbian minority. Most members of the Serbian and other Yugoslav minorities in Romania were ready to claim that their position during the period immediately after the publication of the Co-

³⁷ *Ibid*, 8–9.

³⁸ *Ibid*, 8.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

minform resolution was much worse than during the dictatorship of Marshal Antonescu.⁴¹

By the end of 1948, when the first six months of the Cominform resolution had passed, the previous measures were joined by those relating to freedom of movement. Their aim was to hinder or prevent the movement of Yugoslav diplomatic personnel in Romania, as well as to prevent members of the Serbian minority from crossing the Yugoslav-Romanian border. The first serious incident between the Romanian authorities and Yugoslav diplomatic staff, to which the embassy in Bucharest reacted with a note of protest due to the violation of diplomatic immunity, took place as early as July 10th, 1948, barely two weeks after the vote of the Cominform resolution. At that time, the villa Catarji in Sinaia, which was used for vacation by the families of Yugoslav diplomats and where the wives and children of Yugoslav military envoy Miloš Zekić and Vladimir Karišić were staying at the time, was violently invaded by three civilians and one representative of the Romanian authorities, who presented themselves as a „requisition commission”.⁴² They demanded to inspect all the rooms in the villa, and when they were refused, they forcibly moved from room to room, going upstairs, even though they were presented with the idea that the villa was used by diplomatic staff of a country that has signed a Treaty of Friendship with Romania. With derogatory words and insults at the expense of Yugoslavia, they peeked into every corner of the villa. The Yugoslav Embassy, protesting in particular against the fact that violence was used against women and children, demanded an investigation and punishment of the culprits for this incident.⁴³ However, not only has no one been punished for this incident, but similar incidents have begun to occur in Bucharest itself. On the night of July 30th-31st, 1948, the Romanian police blocked the residence of the Yugoslav ambassador, not allowing anyone to enter or leave it.⁴⁴ Previously, the building was under surveillance until the wife of the former ambassador Radonja Golubović, who was removed from his post on that day because he declared himself in favor of the Cominform resolution, moved out.⁴⁵ At the same time, the build-

⁴¹ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 13/48, 13. decembar 1948. godine, 2.

⁴² DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 129, dos. 8, Verbalna nota ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu upućena Ministarstvu inostranih poslova Rumunije, Bukurešt, 13. juli 1948. godine, Pov. br. 425523.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 129, dos. 8, Telegram ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu br. 1048 upućen Ministarstvu inostranih poslova u Beogradu, Bukurešt, 1. avgust 1948. godine, Pov. br. 420464.

⁴⁵ In connection with the dismissal of Radonja Golubović from the post of ambassador of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia to Romania, an interesting situation arose because, apparently without the knowledge of other officials of the embassy in Bucharest and the authorities in Belgrade, Golubović submitted his resignation, which was published in *Scînteia* on July 30th, 1948. In order to give the impression that Golubovic had been re-

ding of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at 34 Dorobanților Street was also under surveillance, while the blockade of the residence continued until the morning. During the night, the staff of the Yugoslav embassy demanded the removal of the blockade of the residence and the car located there, but to no avail, because the Romanian agents claimed that they had an order from their Ministry of Internal Affairs for their actions. Finally, there were protests over the phone at the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of which Cristina Luca, director of the information department, promised to remove the blockade.⁴⁶ Although the blockade was lifted in the morning, the building remained under the supervision of plainclothes police officers, which is why the Yugoslav embassy sent a new note of protest to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on July 31st. Also, patrols were set up on the roads leading from Yugoslavia to Timișoara, which had the task of stopping every car in which there were Yugoslav diplomats. Special platoons of the Romanian gendarmerie were ordered to stop, search and detain any such vehicle for up to 10 hours, regardless of whether it was day or night.⁴⁷ The platoon commander did not appear on the scene during that time, but he would arrive after those 10 hours and politely apologize, justifying the whole situation with the mistake of the soldiers on patrol. The aim of this procedure towards the diplomatic officers of Yugoslavia was to force them to travel by train, where the supervision of them was incomparably easier.⁴⁸ In Bucharest, their movements were monitored, with constant attempts to isolate them from the rest of the diplomatic corps. At the celebration of the Yugoslav national holiday, on November 29th, only the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and three junior officials came to the reception, although other Eastern European countries, the USSR as well as Western countries were represented by ambassadors and deputies.⁴⁹ On the same day, the reception at the Albanian embassy was attended by the entire Romanian government.

moved from office before his resignation was announced, the chargé d'affaires of the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest, Ranko Zec, informed the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a note on July 31st, but backdated the note to July 30th. To the same end, he asked the Presidium of the National Assembly of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia to backdate his certificate on the dismissal of Radonja Golubović to July 29th in order to make his backdating of the note more convincing. DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 129, dos. 8, Telegram Ranka Zeca otpravnika poslova ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu y br. 1049 upućen Ministarstvu inostranih poslova FNRJ u Beogradu, Bukurešt, 1. avgust 1948. godine, Pov. br. 420465.

⁴⁶ DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 129, dos. 8, Telegram Ambasade FNRJ u Bukureštu br. 1048 upućen Ministarstvu inostranih poslova FNRJ u Beogradu, Bukurešt, 1. avgust 1948. godine, Pov. br. 420464.

⁴⁷ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 14/48, 29. decembar 1948. godine, 10.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

In the same period, the regime near the Yugoslav-Romanian border, on the Romanian side, was drastically tightened in order to prevent the local minority population from moving to the Yugoslav side.⁵⁰ The Romanian army was significantly strengthened in the border zone, machine gun nests were installed, trenches were dug. Since December 10th, a special regime was introduced in the border zone of 15 kilometers from the border with a number of restrictions. A curfew was imposed in the zone and the military was ordered to open fire on anyone who tried to cross the border without warning. In some parts of the zone, those closest to the border, it was forbidden to move around, graze cattle, build any buildings, plant tall agricultural crops. Existing buildings and houses had to be demolished and orchards cut down. On the banks of the Danube, orchards also had to be cut down, boats on the river and trips to river islands were prohibited, under the threat of court penalties that went as far as the confiscation of all property.⁵¹ The population in Serbian villages was publicly warned about the provisions of the recently passed law on the introduction of the death penalty for acts of espionage, sabotage and treason against the country, which in some places was perceived as the height of intimidation.⁵² The intimidation was also supported by the very large presence of the Romanian army everywhere in the border zone, especially in the area of Clisura, where 40 soldiers who were deployed in each village patrolled day and night, supervised the enforcement of the curfew, which lasted from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., shooting at anyone who found themselves outside the house during that period.⁵³

From the previous presentation, we have seen the consequences for Yugoslav-Romanian relations, in the first six months after the adoption of the Cominform resolution of June 28th, 1948. Although it condemned the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for ideological deviations and mistakes in establishing socialism, the consequences were not suffered by the party, but, to a large extent, by interstate relations (diplomatic, economic, cultural, sports)⁵⁴ and the Serbian minority in Romania. The fact that immediately after the adoption of the Cominform resolution, the consequen-

⁵⁰ DAS, BIA, III/57, Bilteni SSUP-a o političko-bezbednosnim prilikama u emigraciji i zemljama okruženja (1948–1950), Bilten Str. pov. br. 2/49, 9. februar 1949. godine, 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁴ The fact that they were aware of this on both the Yugoslav and Romanian sides is evidenced by the conversation between the Romanian Prime Minister Dr. Petru Groza and the newly appointed Yugoslav ambassador in Bucharest, Radoš Jovanović, on October 15th, 1948. On that occasion, without the presence of others, Groza told Jovanović that he personally „has nothing to do with it” about the Cominform since he is not a member of the RWP, that the Romanian side tried to keep the conflict between the parties, but also „that it turned out that it is a relationship between states at the same time”. DAMSPS, PA, 1948, Rumunija, fasc. 129, dos. 4, Zabeleške o razgovorima ambasadora Jovanovića, bez broja i datuma, 1.

ces were felt by the Serbian minority in Romania, the Yugoslav diplomatic staff and the regime of crossing the border, points to the conclusion that the activity of Yugoslav diplomacy in Romania, and especially its contacts and influence on the Serbian minority there, were what fundamentally bothered the Romanian authorities. Using the adoption of the Cominform resolution in 1948 as a kind of an excuse, as well as the freedom to act it received from the Soviets, Romania, in fact, used the opportunity to deal with the very dangerous ideas of the unification of the local Serbs with Yugoslavia. It turned out that the mistrust that arose after the scheduled and then canceled Slavic Congress in Timișoara in May 1945 left serious consequences that could not be easily or quickly overcome.

Summary

Immediately after World War II, Yugoslavia and Romania entered the process of „Sovietization” of the state and society and became part of the Soviet bloc. This process progressed much faster in Yugoslavia, which was very quickly in a position to actively help the Romanian Communist Party come to power, which resulted in very good interstate relations in the period from 1945 to 1948. The adoption of the Cominform Resolution on June 28th, 1948, which condemned the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for „ideological deviations”, led to a sharp deterioration in inter-party and interstate relations between the two neighboring countries. The fact that immediately after the adoption of the Cominform resolution, the consequences were felt by the Serbian minority in Romania, the Yugoslav diplomatic staff and the regime of crossing the border, points to the conclusion that the activity of Yugoslav diplomacy in Romania, and especially its contacts and influence on the Serbian minority there, were what fundamentally bothered the Romanian authorities. Using the adoption of the Cominform resolution in 1948 as a kind of excuse, as well as the freedom to act it received from the Soviets, Romania, in fact, used the opportunity to deal with the very dangerous ideas of the unification of the local Serbs with Yugoslavia. It turned out that the mistrust that arose after the scheduled and then canceled Slavic Congress in Timișoara in May 1945 left serious consequences that could not be easily or quickly overcome.

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