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INTERVIEW GRANTED BY PRESIDENT NICOLAE CEAUSESCU

TO L'HUMANITE

Marie Rose Pineau, Secretary General of the "L'Humanite" Editorial board, was received by Nicolae Ceaușescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, President of the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania, on May 8.

A talk took place on the occasion, when Nicolae Ceaușescu outlined to the French journalist aspects of socialist construction in Romania.

Question: Romania is a country which has recorded particularly important growth rates in recent years. Few people even in the capitalist countries do contest it. What one forgets, however, to mention is the past condition of this country under capitalism, a country which, in spite of its important natural riches, was on the eve of the Second World War characterized by a sort of semicolonial status.

Answer: Romania had been at that time an economically underdeveloped country. Industry was in an early stage and even agriculture - most of which was in the hands of the large estate owners - was in a state of backwardness. Foreign monopoly controlled an important part of the country's riches, in the oil, coal, chemical and metallurgical industries, as well as in the food industry, especially in the sugar refineries. All this contributed to a growing exploitation of the working class, of the Romanian people having at that time, - one may state - one of the lowest living standards in Europe.

This situation grew even worse during the Second World War as a result of the plundering of our country's economy by Hitler Germany and of the destructions caused by war. By the end of the conflict, production had dropped 50 per cent below the level prior to its outbreak.

Setting out from this situation, the working class, people's power proceeded after liberation to reorganizing the economy and to carrying into effect the socialist transformation of the country.

Question: What has your Party undertaken for a judicious exploitation of the natural riches?

Answer: During the years elapsed since the working class has seized power, the Romanian Communist Party has by cooperation with the other democratic and progressive forces in this country assigned foremost importance to the question of Romania's socialist industrialization, as well as of the socialist transformation of agriculture.

Gross industrial output is now over 16-fold that of pre-war. Romania is now in a position to cover out of domestic production nearly 70 per cent of the machinery and equipment for the whole national economy; a series of modern branches are being developed in Romania, such as electronics, peaceful uses of nuclear power, chemistry - especially the production of man-made fibres and of plastics; Romania exports a series of machines and equipment to many countries.

At this point our Party's essential concern in the sphere of economy is to ensure a high rate of industrial development.

The annual average rate of growth these last 20 years has been of some 14 per cent; for the next Five-Year Plan period we envisage an annual average rate of growth of over 10 per cent, with stress laid especially on introducing modern technique in all branches of economy.

Question: And agriculture? The latest plenary meeting of the Central Committee focused on this issue.

Answer: I want to stress first of all that following the completion of collectivization in 1962, the Romanian agriculture has not only managed to meet domestic consumption requirements, but also secured a series of agro-alimentary exportables.

Of course, in spite of the evident progress we have recorded, we consider that we still have much to do so as to be able to state that ours is a modern, advanced agriculture.

We bear in mind a series of most important measures aimed at expanding irrigation systems and mechanization, as well as the use of scientific gains, measures which will ensure a faster progress of farm output. We envisage to this end an important volume of investments; no less than 80 thousand million lei will be earmarked out of State funds alone, in support of this programme of agricultural advancement.

Question: It will be useful to specify for our French readers that Romania which for a long time was presented as an agricultural country encounters just in her agriculture some difficulties of a geographic nature.

Answer: This is a point we have taken account of in our programme. Although Romania has a relatively small surface there are regions where in some periods excessive humidity is recorded, and also fairly large regions where intensive drought occurs for several months of the year. That is why we are paying special attention to draining, fertilization and irrigation work. We intend to have more than two million hectares of irrigated land by 1975, as against the 230,000 hectares in 1965. Essential, however, in the last analysis, is Man, and human activity, for all geographic and climatic conditions may be improved, and socialism creates the premises for a best development of agriculture.


In this sphere, just as in other domains, our Party has paid and continues to pay special attention to the use of scientific gains. We are setting out from the fact that the building of the new society could not be achieved unless based on the latest gains of science, on the most valuable achievements of human thinking; therefore we care for the organization of scientific research activity, for the introduction of scientific gains in production, in social life on the whole. In this way have we won the successes I referred to.

Question: Consequently, in this country, where the initial situation had been such that there was a danger of its proceeding along the path of the underdeveloped countries, socialism has rendered possible a radically changed orientation.

Answer: The explanations that have been given prove it. However, I would like to further mention that parallel to the efforts for economic advancement made by our people - these efforts are illustrated also by the fact that we are annually earmarking more than 30 per cent of the national income for accumulations - an important role is played by the relations of collaboration and cooperation with the socialist countries and the other countries in the world.

As a matter of fact, the technical and scientific revolution renders it unconceivable for a relatively small country like Romania to develop unless there is broad collaboration and cooperation with other states. Accordingly, we are attaching special importance to the development of relations of collaboration and cooperation between the socialist states, relations which are apt to ensure the fast progress of each country. And the development of each socialist country contributes to the assertion of socialism in the world, to its growing strength and world-wide influence.

Question: Is this economic development concentrated in some key-areas? There is an orientation in France, for instance, where some departments are increasingly kept down and doomed to oblivion.



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and this at all levels of education. Let us not forget the health services; the State spends annually some 5,000 lei on the health protection of a family.

Question: Has the importance of education been due to the necessity of training skilled workers, the required cadres for economy?

Answer: In order to better grasp the importance of this issue, its ample scope in Romania, one should specify that before the war nearly 40 per cent of the population were illiterates. This situation has since long been done away with. From 1965, we have introduced compulsory eight-year schooling for the whole population, and from 1970 we have gone over to compulsory ten-year education for all children.

As to the number of students, it has grown fivefold, from 26,000 in 1938, to over 150,000 now.

We also attach great importance to the training of qualified personnel; to this end we had to concern ourselves with the development of vocational schools. Over 200,000 pupils are now enrolled in such schools; likewise, with a view to forming medium-trained personnel, we have organized technical and specialist secondary schools for various branches, attended by over 100,000 pupils. For the next Five-Year Plan we intend to proceed to both the expansion of vocational schools and of technical secondary schools, and from 1967 we also started organizing institutes to train sub-engineers.

But we have to develop concomitantly on-the-job training. If you would visit enterprises in our country you could note that intensive work is going on in this respect in numerous works, that the average age of the employees is of 19-20 years, which also proves both the efforts which have to be deployed for professional training, and the

extremely active role of youth in our society.

We may thus state that parallel to the advancement of economy, science and culture, the whole people has reached a constant improvement of its living standard. The results recorded following the building of the socialist society have an impact on the life of each and every citizen; and this accounts for their firm participation in this building activity.

Question: Socialism has changed the living conditions of the Romanian people, but Man - does he change? Have you recorded successes in this respect and what are the difficulties you encounter?

Answer: Of course, the development of the awareness in people is a long process; naturally, the determinant factor are the conditions of material life; yet, a high cultural level is also needed, as well as understanding of the objective laws of society. I don't think that particular difficulties exist in Romania in this respect; maybe this is due to the results obtained in the development of society which have convinced the people that the policy conducted by the communists accords with their fundamental interests.

Obviously, certain individual attitudes betray a survival of past vices, as concerns both social and family relations. There are still influences of mysticism, egotism and other retrograde mentalities; doing away with such attitudes presupposes a long process.

The formation of progressive-mindedness and the relevant attitude in the day-by-day conduct of the workers calls for an educational activity to which all the means available to society contribute: school, the press, the radio and television, the arts, mass cultural activity and the whole political and ideological activity.

Our Party pays special attention to artistic output. We are setting out from the idea that art and literature should reflect the realities of our society, should be based on our dialectical-materialist outlook on the world and society; however, it goes without saying that artistic output should be characterized by a diversity of forms and means of expression, that no uniformization should be imposed as, this, far from favouring the development of literature and the arts and their role in enhancing socialist consciousness would, on the contrary, limit their sphere of influence and attraction. Our men of art and letters actively contribute to the development of the socialist society; this applies to all our intellectuals. It should be mentioned that those of the older generation, most prominent people of the world of science and culture have supported our Party's policy; most of them have joined the Party and those who are not yet Party members are as a matter of fact acting the same as communists do - for the development of the socialist system.

If we have actually succeeded in achieving in a short lapse of time progress in the advancement of education, science and culture, this has been due to the fact that our Party has managed to realize the unity of all popular forces. Of course, the main role was and continues to be played by the working class which keeps being the leading class of society, but the lasting alliance of all the social forces of our socialist homeland has performed and still performs an important role.

In order to realize this unity of our people's forces we have also seen to it that fully equal rights are ensured to the other nationalities living in Romania and which account for some 11 per cent of the population.

Question: Which are the Romanian Communist Party's foremost concerns for the years

to come in the domains we have referred to?

Answer: The main stress will be further laid on a sustained rate of development of industry, especially of its modern branches - electronics, machine-tools etc.

We shall pay greater attention to agriculture, for in a country like Romania agriculture, parallel to industry, plays an extremely important role in ensuring a harmonious economic development.

We shall pay particular attention to a qualitative improvement of all economic activity; we are concerning ourselves to this end with cutting down material production expenditures and with raising labour productivity.

Scientific research activity, the role of which intensifies in the development of society, will keep focusing our special attention. And, obviously, we will continue improving the living standards of the people.

But if a complete picture of our future concerns has to be given reference to the development of socialist democracy is a must. Parallel to strengthening and improving economic and social management based on central planning we are concerning ourselves with extending the powers and the autonomy of the economic and administrative units; we want to create the best of conditions for an all-round participation of the working class, of all workers in the government of society, so that they may be able to state their views on all problems pertaining to the home and foreign policy of our Party and State. Certainly, the Romanian Communist Party gives direction to and guides all this activity. I should specify that the Party's leading role in society is an absolutely natural thing for us. The workers, our entire people have seen that it is only our Party which has proved capable of solving the complex problems facing Romania. Hence,

the support our Party enjoys from our people in carrying through the tasks posed by the Tenth Party Congress, tasks which are in harmony with the interests of the broad mass of the people.

M.R. PINEAU: On the eve of your forthcoming visit to France, this interview which you have kindly granted to our newspaper, will better acquaint our readers with the successes of socialism in Romania, with your outlook concerning the problems related to its consolidation, the experience won by the Romanian people in this field, - an experience which although based on the general laws of socialist development, has some original facets as well. The building of a socialist France too, will involve - based on the general laws - some original elements; you will know, for example, our concepts and theses with regard to our Party's vanguard role in the conditions of a fair cooperation of the democratic parties and groupings which should contribute to building that socialism. Getting to know your Party's and people's experience is of absolutely no lesser interest to our readers who in this way will be able know more closely Romania.

NICOLAE CEAUSESCU: In concluding, I would like to mention the good relations between the Romanian Communist Party and the French Communist Party, relations which are actually of long-standing tradition, and are rooted as a matter of fact in the links that existed in the past between the Romanian and the French revolutionaries. Of course, I do not want to start from 1848 or from the Paris Commune, but you probably know that there were some Romanians fighting for the Paris Commune; the fact is also of general knowledge that many Romanians participated in the French resistance movement. Further on, from after the war to this very day, good relations have developed between our parties. We have had fruitful contacts and meetings with Comrade Waldeck Rochet. I would like to wish the French Communist Party,

all Party members, the readers of your newspaper, best success in their activity.

Taking into account the fact that the French Communist Party plays an important role in the political life of France, I want to refer at the same time to the good relations existing between Romania and France, and to the favourable prospects of steady development of the friendship between the Romanian and French peoples.

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