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RUMANIA

GOVERNMENT

The recent dismissal of STOIAN Stanciu from his post as Minister of Religious Affairs and his replacement by POGACEANU Vasile, is another example of the ultimate fate of opportunists whom the Communists use to carry out certain unsavory tasks and then discard.

STOIAN is of Bulgarian origin, coming from a village in the department TELEORMAN. He started his career in Rumania by working in the rural section of the Carol I Royal University Foundation in BUCHAREST. During the reign of Carol II and later, during the dictatorship of ANTONESCU, he wrote articles for the "Albina" cultural review praising the policies of the former and the regime of the latter. At the time of King Michael's forcible abdication, STOIAN was Director of the Royal Foundations, which he promptly helped suppress. He later became an active member of the "Frontul Plugarilor" (Laborer's Front,) a puppet peasant party created by GROZA Petru in order to destroy the Peasant Party of MANIU.

STOIAN joined GROZA's government, became Minister of Religious Affairs and in this capacity signed the decree dissolving Orthodox and Roman Catholic seminaries. STOIAN replaced the old theological seminaries with a new one which accepted only students politically and socially favored by the CP. STOIAN was the one to sign a decree in 1948 which suppressed the Rumanian Greek-Catholic Church, a body whose membership exceeds one and a half million. He also caused the arrest and imprisonment of five of this Church's bishops and hundreds of its priests. He is, therefore, responsible for the death of Bishops AFTENIE and FRENTIU, two of the five arrested.

The dismissal was announced on 25 June 1951 by Radio BUCHAREST.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: June 1951

EVAL. COMMENT:

Source : fairly reliable;  
Information: confirmed by other sources.