

RADIO FREE EUROPE *Research*

COMMUNIST AREA

2 2
● YUGOSLAVIA: Foreign relations

RUMANIA: Foreign relations
Internal affairs

16 JULY 1968

RUMANIAN INDEPENDENCE EXTOLLED BY "BORBA"

Summary: People in Rumania not only support the policy of independence conducted by their Party and government, but have been pleased with this policy. Borba's foreign policy editor, Zivko Milic, who recently toured Rumania, claims that the most popular song in Rumania and a real hit is the French national anthem, the Marseillaise. Gypsy orchestras play it frequently and are enthusiastically applauded. Milic was told that all Party leaders consider as provocative the claim that there have been some anti-Russian elements in Rumanian foreign policy. No, he was told, "our policy is, above all, a Rumanian policy," not an anti-Soviet one. Still, the Rumanians are very happy that de Gaulle came to Rumania because his visit was a demonstration of Rumania's independence.

The most important expression in Rumania today is "the Emancipation," said Zivko Milic, Borba's foreign policy editor, in a report from Rumania.¹ Milic added that "since three or four years ago the Rumanians have begun to be on their own." Visitors to Rumania "are expected to recognize this fact and to give compliments." Recently, at one of the many beautiful lakes near Bucharest, Milic says, "the gypsy orchestra suddenly interrupted its standard program and started playing a composition which since last spring has been considered the hit of the season: the Marseillaise. The applause of the audience was extremely heartfelt and loud, nearly a demonstration.

"Is the Marseillaise really so popular?" -
I asked a real connoisseur of contemporary
Bucharest and of the current atmosphere in

1) Borba, Belgrade, 13 July 1968.

Rumania. He replied: "The march of the [French revolutionary] citizens became a hit during de Gaulle's visit. De Gaulle rather pleased the Rumanians by calling them, right here, on their own territory, his brothers of Latin origin."

Milic further said that he asked "one diplomat, two journalists, two members of the Central Committee of the Rumanian Communist Party, two writers and several citizens, whether they agreed that the Marseillaise on the lake means the disappearance of the Rumanian timidity toward their own history? They all answered in the affirmative." Rumania is no longer hermetically closed, Milic said, although more people visit Rumania than there are Rumanians who are allowed to leave. Another Rumanian friend of Milic told him:

"De Gaulle was not as important as was the fact that his visit was an occasion to demonstrate how far the Rumanians have come in their struggle for independence. The applause for the Marseillaise, played by the gypsies, can be easily decoded: the Rumanians have not only approved the foreign policy line of the Party and government, but are also pleased with this line."

Of course, many Rumanians complain that foreigners can visit Rumania more easily than Rumanians can gain permission to go abroad. However, "there are only a few doubting Thomases who are not sure that all this will change very soon," Milic said. One of Rumania's deputy foreign trade ministers told Milic that in the course of the past few years, Rumania signed contracts with many foreign firms and banks amounting to about one and a half billion dollars. Most of these contracts are credits. "This is the result of our independent foreign policy." On the other hand, "all responsible Rumanian Communists consider it to be a provocation when certain people claim that the Rumanian foreign policy includes some anti-Soviet elements. Our policy is above all a Rumanian policy," they told Milic. They anticipate that by 1970 the proportion between Rumania's trade with socialist and capitalistic countries will be equalized.

Slobodan Stankovic