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News Background

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RUMANIAN SPORTS ORGANIZATION CHIEF RELIEVED OF
POST -- BROTHER OF BODNARAS

MUNICH, February 6, (Rumanian Evaluation and Research) -- Less than a month after Rumania was dropped from the list of competing nations at Squaw Valley (CNR S-1 January 13) because of its failure to meet the December 24 preparations dateline Radio Bucharest has announced on February 6, that the plenum of the Organizational Committee of the Union of Physical Culture and Sports has relieved Manole Bodnaras from the post of president of the Association. Bodnaras, who according to the announcement will be assigned other duties is replaced by Aurel Duma.

Manole Bodnaras, the brother of General of the Army, Vice-Premier and Politburo member Emil Bodnaras, was appointed Vice-Chairman of the then Committee for Physical Culture and Sports on 31 October 1950 and became President of that committee in 1953 (his appointment was first mentioned in "Scinteia" of 26 September 1953. He was re-elected by Decree No.35 of 9 January 1957 -- "Sportul Popular" of 22 January 1957). Manole Bodnaras was awarded the "Labor Order", first class, on the occasion of his 50th birthday, (according to "Scinteia" of 5 July 1959). "Scinteia" of 6 August 1959 published Bodnaras' report on the activity of the Association in the period from August 1958 to August 1959. (For details see RFE Item Nos.597/59, 732/59 and 56/60.)

The possibility of Bodnaras' replacement has been rumored many times in the past, particularly in connection with the defection to the West of well known Rumanian sportsmen.

Aurel Duma, a former secretary of the Association for Soviet-Rumanian Relations, (ARLUS) and a University Professor, was elected at the Second Party Congress (December 1955) to the Central Party Revision (Auditing) Commission. Moreover, "Scinteia" of 19 April 1957 listed him as Assistant Chief of the Propaganda Section of the Central Committee. In this capacity he spoke at several regional meetings on the occasion of Lenin's birth anniversary. "Scinteia" of 3 November 1959 reported his election to the Central Council of ARLUS. Duma was active in the preparation of several International Youth Festivals.

It appears also that Duma as a trained intellectual with an outstanding propaganda experience was chosen to replace a simple protégé of the regime (the brother of General Emil Bodnaras) in view of the intensified efforts for the indoctrination of youth, in this case of sportsmen who have frequently been

criticized for political laxity and breaches of "discipline", as, for example by "Romania Libera" 26 October 1958 and "Munca" 15 February 1959. These intensified efforts are, of course, in the general context of the march to Communism. One further reason for Duma's appointment may be that, because of his experience, he may be considered more useful in preparations for the Rome Olympics and the next International Youth Festival. At any rate, it seems that experience with ARLUS seems to be a good stepping stone to higher things (cf. Ilie Murgulescu, who after many years of ARLUS activity was reappointed Minister of Education and Culture in December.)

This case of Manole Bodnaras bears some similarity with that of Marcel Popescu, the son-in-law of Gheorghiu-Dej, who was dismissed as Minister of Trade last August. The difference is that the latter was not transferred to "other tasks".

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