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## A Guest Commentary

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# Ceaușescu's crimes affect us all

by Antal Dorati

*The orchestra director Antal Dorati, who in the course of his career has conducted every one of the world's great orchestras, is without a doubt one of the leading artistic figures of this century. In the United States, he was for a number of years the director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. In the Federal Republic of Germany, his name is especially associated with the founding and continued existence of the Philharmonia Hungarica. It was with this "refugee orchestra," which since 1959 has permanently resided in Marl, that Dorati completed a unique artistic project—a recording of all 104 of Joseph Haydn's symphonies. So when now, at the age of 82, the "non-political" Mr. Dorati takes up his pen in defense of the threatened minorities in Romania, he does not do so merely as a Hungarian, but rather out of his "deeply felt interest for peace among men."*

In recent weeks, the international press has been raising the pitch and the quantity of its reports on the destruction of 7,000-8,000 Romanian villages, and its attitude has been one of unanimous condemnation. This continued interest, and the negative attitude on the part of these organs of public opinion, is a positive sign that humanity's conscience is still alive around the world. But far more painful pricks will have to be applied to that conscience, if we are to prevent a new crime against humanity from being committed during this century—or at the very least, so that we can reduce the extent of that crime.

My purpose in writing this, is to expose the true nature of this hideous act—comparable to the "Holocaust" and to China's "Cultural Revolution"—to extricate it from the realm of one state's "internal affairs," and to characterize it as a general crime against humanity which deeply affects all of us, wherever we happen to live.

It affects us, because, just like the "Holocaust" and the "Cultural Revolution," it does irreparable harm to all of humanity. This statement also explains the qualification I made above, namely, that it is already too late to *prevent* the outrage from occurring. We can only act to lessen its effects.

For, these crimes have already been committed once the very first action is taken, with the despotic destruction of the very first house, just as it was under Hitler, with the gassing of the very first concentration camp victim.

It might be asked: How it is possible to equate the destruction of houses with the extermination of human beings? My answer is, that in this case it is not merely a question of dwellings, but of the homesteads of people with deep roots in the region and its soil. The destruction of these ancestral homes not only makes the population homeless, it cripples them spiritually—and not only those immediately affected, but their children and grandchildren as well.

In order to understand this, we must examine the ethnic structure and the history of the affected people a little more closely.

### **Southeastern Europe**

The part of Europe we are discussing includes, roughly speaking, the following area along the Danube River: starting just a few kilometers to the west of Vienna—which is the boundary of the greater German-language area—and stretching all the way to the Black Sea.

This region is inhabited by various peoples, with various languages and cultures. A large proportion of these ethnic groups live in their own delimited areas, but in addition, up to 2 million of them live in settlements which are scattered about like islands in the midst of regions with a different language and culture. The ethnic map of this region therefore resembles a great "irregular checkerboard," with smaller and larger subdivisions.

(This arrangement is hard to imagine for those of us who live in countries which are firmly anchored in a single language and culture. To give you some idea, imagine that the area between Nuremberg and Würzburg in Germany were inhabited by 4 million Frenchmen, while about 3 million Italians lived in the area between Bremen and Kiel—all of them wanting to maintain their own regional idiosyncrasies.)

This great, variegated community of peoples mostly be-

longed to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, which was broken up in 1918 following World War I. Eastern Europe's new map, created by the postwar "peace treaties," carved out new autonomous states, in which the empire's former minorities became majorities, giving rise, in turn, to new minorities within them.

The deliberately thoughtless, and often downright shabby treatment meted out to these national minorities was one of the triggers for World War I, and was one of the major reasons for the subsequent breakup of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy.

In some respects, the new geographic and political structuring of Danubian Eastern Europe was an improvement, but in other respects the situation became even worse. The Czechs and the Slovaks got accustomed to living with each other, in Czechoslovakia. The Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, and even some Albanians, all found their way into the Nation of the Southern Slavs—Yugoslavia—and the "new" minorities within these nations have gotten along, so it is said, in a tolerably humane fashion. The much-reduced remainder of former Greater Hungary today has virtually no minorities. On the other hand, Hungarian "islands" form the greatest minority populations in neighboring countries.

Remarkably, the ideological and political transformations which these countries have undergone, have had little influence on relations among their various ethnic peoples.

## Romania

The minorities problem is the worst in Romania, which lies to the east of Hungary and Yugoslavia. Ever since 1918, when Romania's territory was doubled in size, this country has been replete with numerous "minority islands." The old, originally Hungarian "Erdely" (Siebenbürgen), which is the home of 2 million pure-blooded Hungarians called "Székelys" (Szekler), now belongs to Romania; the same goes for the smaller minority islands of Germans, Serbs, and other cultural extractions.

These "newly arrived," strong minorities gave the Romanian state a new set of problems which it did not have to confront earlier when the country was smaller, but more "well-tailored." Romania's various successive governments have tackled this problem with varying degrees of adeptness—or rather, lack thereof—since none of the attempted solutions has led to acceptable results. That is, until the current regime of the "Conducator" Ceausescu took on the question in his own peculiar way. On top of the injustices he has already heaped upon minorities who ought to be citizens with equal rights, he now intends to commit genocide against them, wiping them completely off the map. Now he is poised to commit this act, thereby erecting yet another shameful monument to the senseless, insane, and destructive rages of our century.

But to return to the minorities: Don't think for a minute that these ethnic groups *per se* are recalcitrant, or even revolutionary. They could be forced to be that way, but this is not their "mentality of choice," nor has it ever been in the past. For example, at the start of the 20th century, it was only the insensitivity of the regimes of the Austro-Hungarian empire which put the southern Slavs into a mood of revolt, which resulted in the tragic "July 1914" [i.e., the aftermath of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo, which triggered World War I—ed.].

It is the same today: The Hungarians, Germans, and Serbs living in Romania have been flexible and have wanted to be useful Romanian citizens—citizens who speak their own language and live according to their own customs, in no way disrupting those of the Romanian majority, if only the latter would permit them those freedoms. But Ceausescu got it into his head to assimilate them—to make these Hungarians, Germans, and Serbs, all into *Romanians*.

What he does not know—or does not care to know—is that he can never succeed. The Ceausescu regime has ignored the countless examples from history demonstrating the toughness and durability of many peoples' sense of ancestral identity. Whereas the regime could have peacefully incorporated the minorities *as such*, it took another route which was foredoomed to failure, that of assimilation.

## Cultural destruction

With each successive failure, the pressures on the minorities became ever greater. Little by little, their schools, the use of their languages in public, their equal rights at work, and then in their daily life, were taken away. And finally, the devilish plan to rob them of their own homesteads was set into motion.

Words are scarcely adequate to describe the reality of this gruesome tragedy. The 7,000 to 8,000 villages of Romania's Hungarian, German, Serbian, and other minorities are many centuries old, well-preserved, and filled with long-held traditions as well as personal and general cultural values which would be impossible to transplant, even if there were an effort to do so—which there is not. They are simply destroyed—nothing more.

In the middle of each of these villages there stands a church—in some, two churches, most of them old and valuable cultural monuments. They serve as reliquaries for the local artistic treasures. Many of the houses which are to be razed (some of them already have been) were built centuries ago and contain (or contained) countless products of local handicrafts: valuable crockery, embroidery, woodcuts, hand-woven cloth, jewelry, and more, which show their varying traditions from town to town. It is impossible to make a complete list of what is to be destroyed, and of what has already been destroyed. It would have to include plants, plant products, pets, sheep, cattle, and poultry—not to speak of

purely spiritual cultural artifacts such as folksongs and folk poetry.

And above all, not to speak of the *people* who were born in these villages, and of their ancestors, who belong there just as do the trees whose fruits nourished them. To tear these people away from their land, means to make them into cripples, to castrate them spiritually—nothing less.

And on top of this, these traumatized people are supposed to be “assimilated” and utilized by the dictatorial system—even though the loss of their native soil has utterly destroyed them and has rendered them completely “useless.”

### **‘Gaining land’ through ‘agrarian reform’?**

But let us examine the obverse side of this filthy coin. What is the goal of Ceausescu’s ethnocidal murder of entire towns? And what kind of life does he offer to those whom he has driven from house and home? He announces that the villages must be destroyed in order to facilitate agrarian reform, since this will free up additional land for cultivation. This “gaining of land” is an illusion; it is practically zero: The 8,000 villages represent only 3% of the tracts in question—tracts in which much more than 3% lies fallow each year!

Just what is to become of the homeless people, is not so clear from the official statements. There is talk of putting them in the cities in rental apartments—most of which have yet to be built—or else in new labor settlements yet to be established. It was reported that two such houses have already been “consecrated” by the “Conducator” and his wife. Beyond that, little is known, save that the residents of these settlements are allotted a ridiculously small living-space per person; very saddening reports are circulating about the inadequacy of these dwellings.

And then, there are the questions which have not even been asked yet: If the occupants of the land are transported into the cities, who will take care of the “gained” land? If new settlements are set up in rural areas, how much of the “gained” 3% will be taken back again? And, the biggest question of all: Does Ceausescu even have enough money to carry out his mad plan? The destruction of the villages—apparently driven by the sheer perverse pleasure of destroying things—is already a very expensive joke. But the reconstruction will cost a thousand times more than this destruction will. Where will the money come from?

Romania has been hopelessly ruined by bad management. The work of destruction occurs at the low point in the country’s long, progressively worsening economic collapse. Romania’s bad economic situation today, in itself, cannot be regarded as an exceptional case; what merits our attention, is the fact that today’s Romanian government is the most rigid and ruthless dictatorship since that of King Karol, or those of Bratianu, Atonescu, etc. Not only has this dictatorship thrown this country—in which Romanians themselves suffer no less than the minorities—into a serious crisis; but even among

today’s communist governments, it has assumed an especially embarrassing position on all counts.

We have already discussed how these Danubian countries have committed atrocities against each other from time immemorial. However, no government, no head of state has ever conceived of a more senseless, pointless, hopeless, and purely destructive crime than this ethnocidal maniac. It simply defies all common sense; in fact, it’s probably not being carried out by people who have any common sense. And nothing is happening to stop it.

### **Is there a solution?**

Indeed, who ought to stop it? And who has the means to do so? The governments of other countries? The most plausible solution would be, that the Russian government would intervene. But the Russians most likely have other things to worry about. The governments of neighboring states, greatly concerned over their countrymen, are protesting, appealing, pleading; but they aren’t being listened to, and they are too weak to intervene themselves. The governments of the West are caught in the chains of international diplomacy; similarly, the United Nations.

It might be possible to *buy* these people from Ceausescu. He’s already offered them to us. Germans go for 8,000 deutschmarks “apiece.” Such deals could hardly be made through official channels; but perhaps the Federal Republic of Germany has 240,000 people—the size of the German minority in Romania—who would be willing to contribute 8,000 deutschmarks each in order to save a soul. But if that were the only solution, Romania’s 2 million Hungarians would be out of luck, since their countrymen in Hungary certainly don’t have 16 billion deutschmarks. The Serbian minority is much smaller, but their “ransom money” is an astronomical sum, for Yugoslavia. No, even Ceausescu’s confused and obsessive brain can’t hope for this “solution.”

Is there nothing, then, which could prevent, or lessen such an outrageous act? Yes, there does exist a latent, as yet undeveloped power in the world, which could do it.

And who has this power?

We have it.

We, the people of the Earth—

“We the people.”

And what can we do?

Much.

First, we can talk about it. Let our small, individual voices be heard, ceaselessly. Never let up.

Then, according to our profession and possibilities, the following, for example, could be done: The press could gather more and more information, and send its reporters there. It would already be a revelation, to see if they could even get access to the scene of the crime.

Private industries could reconsider whether they should do any business with Ceausescu at this particular time. Artists

## Philharmonia Hungarica wins funds—for now

Late September saw both a growing support for the German-based Hungarian expatriate orchestra Philharmonia Hungarica, whose existence is threatened by a lack of government funding (See *EIR*, Sept. 17, 1988, p. 47), and a decision by the budget committee of the German Parliament in Bonn which “secured” the financing of this famous orchestra for just another year.

Rafael Kubelik, world-renowned conductor from Prague who has lived in the West for a long time, recently endorsed the call that Helga Zepp-LaRouche, president of the Schiller Institute, issued to save this famous orchestra. Kubelik worked with these Hungarian musicians for the first time in 1958, when he conducted one of their most crucial concerts in Vienna. That concert contributed a great deal to finally convincing sponsors and music critics in the West to save the orchestra and firmly establish it as a musical institution, despite many political maneuvers to shut it down shortly after it had been created.

Kubelik has also signed the call of the Schiller Institute to lower the musical tuning to C-256 Hz (A-432 Hz),

becoming the first top-ranking conductor outside Italy to support the world-famous singers—above all the Italian and Spanish sopranos Renata Tebaldi and Monserrat Caballé, the Spanish-Mexican tenor Plácido Domingo, the Italian baritone Piero Cappuccilli, and the West German bass Kurt Moll—who, together with the Schiller Institute, have led the international fight to lower the tuning.

Support for the Philharmonia Hungarica was forthcoming also from the entire Orlando Quartet, the leading Dutch string quartet, and from a board member of Gelsenkirchen’s symphony orchestra. Gelsenkirchen is a city in Germany’s Ruhr area near the little town of Marl, where the exile Hungarian orchestra has made its home since 1959. The Hungarian musicians themselves distributed the call of the Schiller Institute at all their recent concerts, winning a high level of response.

The public campaign in support of the Philharmonia Hungarica, which the Schiller Institute has mounted over the late summer and early autumn, has showed the first sign of success. During a late September session, the budget committee of the German Parliament in Bonn reversed its earlier intention to cut the funding of this orchestra—thereby saving it for the time being. But so far, only for one more year.

That means the real fight has just started.—*Hartmut Cramer.*

could avoid Romania’s cities, tourists could boycott Romania’s bathing-areas on the Black Sea, and so forth.

It could be—yes, it *could* be, if we human beings, the well-meaning people of this Earth that we are, might sacrifice our comfort, our thirst for money, our quest for pleasure, etc., and might truly stand up for truth and justice, so that our voices might resound so loudly, and our will radiate such power, that the vanquishing of evil can no longer be turned aside.

A utopia?

For the moment—unfortunately—yes.

But everything good was a utopia before it became reality. And this transformation has already happened a few times before on this Earth.

### Unity among brothers

Is there any solution to this Eastern European problem?

Certainly there is: the same solution which exists for the future of all humanity—unity among brothers.

And in this corner of the world, the various kinds of groupings are already a step closer to this solution than elsewhere, precisely because for so long, they have lived, ill at ease, but nevertheless *with* each other.

Now is the time to forget the old mistakes, to forgive the

old sins committed against each other, to make a new start.

In practice (economically, ethnically, politically, culturally), this solution would involve the creation of an “FD”—a *Federatio Danubiensis*, a great republic, administered by a single central government, which would be chosen by all those living within its borders. Similar to today’s Switzerland, its common interests would have to be represented and promoted as a single entity; but each language and ethnic group should freely maintain and develop its culture alongside the others—with only a few frictions, which would exist for a long time to come—and would live in harmony and general prosperity.

As long as Ceausescu exists, such a unity among brothers cannot come about. But we must not permit people such as him to exist, ever again.

And indeed, they *shall* not exist ever again, provided that *we*—the world’s human beings—do not desire this, and do not permit it. There is one thing we must know: “Humanity” exists within *us*, within individual human beings.

Our power as a community consists in the powers of each of us individually.

And the peaceful, constant, irresistible development of these many individual forces, each small in itself, is what our future depends on.