

tween Felipe González and the Venezuelan Cisneros Group could come to light fairly soon (see articles, pp. 42-52). This relates to an old story, which *EIR* previously reported, concerning possible kickbacks to González from the purchase by Cisneros of Galerías Preciado, a chain of department stores, for the juicy sum of 20 billion pesetas. This could well cause the downfall of González, since the Cisneroses are currently under investigation for fraud in the case of the Venezuelan Banco Latino, of which the Cisneros Group was an important shareholder, and which has been accused, among other things, of being involved in drug-money laundering. Banco Latino director Ricardo Cisneros fled Venezuela after an arrest warrant was issued against him, and remains a fugitive from justice.

Another sore spot for González on the Venezuelan front is his intimate friendship with the disgraced former President, Carlos Andrés Pérez, who was deposed from the presidency last year for corruption, and has just been arrested. Pérez is also tight with the Cisneros clan.

The close tie between the Cisneros woes in Venezuela and the crisis of González in Spain was underscored when *El País* reported on May 13 that Roldán had been hiding out for two weeks on the Venezuelan island of Margarita, allegedly under protection of the political police, the DISIP. *El País* quoted Samuel Robinson, editor of *Hora Cero*, a Margarita newspaper, saying that he saw Roldán at the island on May 7, in the company of his associate Antonio Morán. *El País* quoted a DISIP bodyguard who claimed that "on Thursday the 4th he was asked to guard a heavyweight [a high-level personality], apparently of French nationality." The bodyguard later recognized Roldán from a photo.

Dirty tricks

The Spanish paper *El Mundo* published in the second week of May the story that González had run an investigation against Mario Conde, the head of the Banesto Bank, which was recently forced into bankruptcy by the government, through his own right-hand man and deputy prime minister, Narcis Serra.

González was looking for dirt to pin down his main potential political rival, whom he feared as a Spanish version of Italy's upstart politician Silvio Berlusconi, currently the prime minister.

According to *El Mundo*, Roldán did much of the footwork in this investigation, which cost some \$500,000, and was paid for with suitcases full of cash. By the end of 1992, when these dirty tricks took place, Conde's political career had come to a screeching halt, and his bank was later closed down by the state, accused of being heavily overextended in the derivatives markets. *El Mundo* also revealed that the company in charge of the Banesto investigation was none other than Kroll Associates, which ran similar investigations for the CIA and the FBI on such "difficult" matters as the assets of former Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos.

Book Reviews

The Romanian secret service's 'wilderness of mirrors'

by Daniel B. Platt

Red Horizons: Chronicles of a Communist Spy Chief

by Lt. Gen. Ion Mihai Pacepa
Regnery Gateway, Washington, D.C., 1987
446 pages, hardbound, \$19.95

Red Horizons is an exposé of the incredible machinations of Romanian Intelligence during the 1960s and '70s, told in the form of reminiscences by the man who was its top administrator. He reveals, in fascinating and appalling detail, the measures used to monitor and police millions of Romanians, the subterfuges used to manipulate foreign leaders, and the brutal reprisals against opponents, all driven by the diabolical stratagems and mad caprices of Romania's absolute rulers, Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu.

The individual who wrote this book no longer exists. When he defected to the United States in July 1978 he was given a new identity, which, as far as we know, was sufficient to protect him from reprisals. Before his defection, he was the head of Romania's *Departamentul de Informatii Externe* or DIE, the equivalent of the CIA in the United States. Subsequently, Romanian governments would attempt to entirely rewrite the history of his life in Romania.

Thus, we are dealing with a book written by a rather chimerical person. We can only hypothesize his motives for writing it; since his value to western intelligence services was staggering, we can probably discount the motive of monetary gain. He rose to prominence in his profession due to his facility in dealing with both information and disinformation; the world of intelligence is sometimes called the "wilderness of mirrors," because it is difficult to differentiate between what is real, and what is semblance. Pacepa says he defected because he had had "enough of life at the top of a society that I detested more every day." Elsewhere in the book, without



Nicolae Ceausescu's intelligence service was devoted to presenting Romania to the West as a new kind of democratic communist dictatorship—anticipating Gorbachov—while Romanians suffered bone-crushing poverty at the hands of the international financial institutions. Here, three months after he was executed, Romanians gratefully receive fresh fruit from one of the first aid shipments, organized in part by Sweden's Schiller Institute.

noting the apparent irony, he reports a conversation with the head of Romania's Disinformation Service, who says of key influence agents abroad, "Who would ever suspect these tough anti-Communists of being our men?"

In the mirror: Ceausescu and Gorbachov

Much of what is recounted in *Red Horizons* is true, and can be corroborated with material *EIR* has assembled over the years. Consequently, interesting questions are raised about U.S. policy, given that this information was in the hands of the CIA no later than 1978. The code name "Horizon" was given by Ceausescu to a vast deception and influence operation that began in 1972, designed to plant and nurture the idea in the West that Romania was a new kind of Communist nation, struggling to assert its independence from Moscow and to chart a more democratic course. The plan was to stir up the West's sympathy for Romania and to gain its political and economic assistance, and it was fabulously successful. Then, from the vantage point of 1987, Pacepa writes: "But the way Mikhail Gorbachov has gone about seizing absolute power in the Soviet Union today truly makes him look like Ceausescu's *alter ego*. . . . There is also a startling similarity in the way the two dictators have portrayed themselves to the West. Both Romanian 'Horizon' and Soviet *glasnost* depict a supposedly liberal and reasonable Communist dictator with whom the West should think it can do business."

Interestingly, Pacepa uses the exact formulation that Margaret Thatcher used in describing Gorbachov, as "a man

with whom we can do business." The question then becomes, given that the Thatcher-Bush gang undoubtedly had detailed knowledge of the predecessor "Horizon" operation, did they nonetheless fall for *glasnost*, or were they cynically pretending, for the benefit of the *hoi polloi*, in order to consummate a condominium deal? One suspects, given the ardor with which both Bush and Thatcher embraced Gorbachov, and the dismay they both evinced at the fall of the Iron Curtain, that it was the condominium they craved.

The 'war crimes' gambit

Another operation which Pacepa describes in detail was a favorite means of neutralizing opponents in the Romanian emigré community, by fabricating evidence that they were anti-Semitic former Nazi collaborators. He describes one such operation beginning in 1972 against Valerian Trifa, a naturalized American citizen who was the archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America. The DIE wished to take over his episcopate for the purpose of influence operations, as they had already taken over another, much smaller one, but Trifa was uncooperative. The DIE conducted two separate investigations, hoping to find evidence of Trifa's involvement in crimes during World War II, but came up empty-handed. What happened next was a precise anticipation of the John Demjanjuk case:

"At this point, Ceausescu personally stepped in and ordered [Gen. Gheorghe] Bolanu [in charge of DIE operations against emigrés] to mount an operation aimed at getting Trifa

denaturalized and deported from the United States as a Nazi war criminal. . . . The framing of Trifa as a war criminal was a long process that followed to the letter the guidelines received from the KGB on how to go about such an operation. First, the general horror scene of crimes actually committed by others should be set, to bring back heart-breaking memories in the minds of survivors. Next, one of the real butchers of that time and place should be selected—one now dead, whose style of killing had been peculiar to him so that it would be remembered by the survivors—and then his crimes should be attributed to the target.”

The scheme was very elaborate, with pains being taken to make it appear that the charge against Trifa emanated from American and British Jews, so as to conceal the Romanian origin of the operation. Word was also insinuated into Israel that damning documents and photographs existed in Romanian archives, so that the Romanian government could appear to be persuaded, with great reluctance, to release the fabricated “evidence.” Amazingly, after Pacea was given asylum in the United States and described this operation in detail, the newly created Justice Department Office of Special Investigations decided to *denaturalize and deport Trifa anyway*.

Pacea's angle

On the other hand, of course, there are aspects of Pacea's book which are clearly self-serving baloney. Pacea insists that, in his heart of hearts, he remained a devout Christian, all during the time he was heading up the DIE. No one ascends to such a position without being an amoral killer—any hint of compunction would have been enough to disqualify him. He tells a misty-eyed tale of how, on the night before his defection, he went to a hiding place in his apartment, removed a piece of parquet floor, and took out an envelope containing his 1945 membership card in the Association of Young Friends of the United States, which he gazed upon with nostalgia and then burned. It is obvious to the reader, after over 400 pages of description of the incredible, omnipresent surveillance that every Romanian was under, that if that membership card ever existed, it was burned long before 1978. Finally, he humbly describes what a magnanimous gesture it was for the United States to grant him asylum. One imagines the thunderous sound of champagne corks popping all over Foggy Bottom.

From the beginning of this book, the reader gets the impression that Pacea is not exactly laying all his cards on the table. He clearly has a highly trained, analytical mind—yet much of the book is devoted to grotesque, quasi-pornographic vignettes involving renowned political personalities. Admittedly, the well-known eccentricities of Mr. and Mrs. Ceausescu offer a mother lode of this sort of material, and years of close proximity to them must have filled Pacea with a loathing that is hard to get out of his system. He dwells on the foibles of other, non-Romanian personalities, however, with an intensity that either suggests he was rather thin-

skinned for a professional killer spy, or that he is aiming for propagandistic effect. He goes to great lengths to paint Yasser Arafat and other Arab leaders with a most repulsive palette: “‘I am very happy to receive my brother Ceausescu's messengers,’ [Arafat] began, speaking rapidly in his lilting English and occasionally spattering saliva around, after embracing me and leaving two gooey spots of mucus on Olcescu's cheeks.”

It is plausible that Pacea would retain such encounters in minute detail, but his book often reads like a pulp novel. Did he originally compose an erudite treatise on intelligence, only to have Regnery Gateway send it back, saying it needed more dirt? Or is Pacea still exercising his professional skills?

While it may be difficult to evaluate what Pacea says (let alone *how* and *why* he says it), it is a more straightforward matter to discuss what he does *not* say. We know from this book and numerous other accounts, that Ceausescu was cultivating very close relations with Arab leaders, for influence operations and commercial reasons. *Ipsa facto*, we know that this activity must needs have aroused the intense interest of the Israeli Mossad, yet discussion of this in Pacea's book is, as the saying goes, conspicuous by its absence. Pacea describes what he refers to as the “gentleman's agreement,” whereby Romanian intelligence would contract with the Israeli deputy director of intelligence for immigration, Yitzhak Yesahanu, to allow the emigration of Romanian Jews to Israel in exchange for cash and/or military hardware and intelligence stolen from the West. Ceausescu also aspired to be the mediator between Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, as part of the “Horizon” operation; he had played a similar role earlier with Golda Meir, including inviting her for talks in Romania, during which, according to Pacea, the DIE foiled a Palestine Liberation Organization attempt on her life. Nonetheless, Pacea paints Ceausescu as an anti-Semite who was clearly predisposed to favor the side of his contacts among Arab leaders (depicted by Pacea as bestial degenerates and pathological liars). If this were the case, it would surely not escape the attention of the Mossad. Thus, the absence of discussion of this as an intelligence problem is significant.

It is doubtful that, at the time this book was written, Pacea had “come in from the cold”—there is only one reliable exit from the wilderness of mirrors. This reviewer's suspicions were recently confirmed during a conversation with a Romanian emigré, who had known Pacea during his college days and later followed his career. He said simply that Pacea has reasons of his own for telling the truth, for lying, and for saying nothing. If the reader bears this in mind, he can nonetheless gain useful insights into the methods of Warsaw Pact intelligence agencies. The most striking feature of this book, however, is its vivid and intimate portrait of the peculiar reign of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu, by turns macabre, hilarious, chilling, and pathetic.