

October 11, 1968

**Stenogram of a Session of the Bureau of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia**

Citation:

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Summary:

Discussion in the Moldavian Communist Party Central Committee on the effects of Romanian mass media on the Moldavian population following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

TAKING PART:CC Bureau Members Cdes. Antosiak, Bodiul, Diordica, Il'yashchenko, Steshov, Voronin²¹CC Bureau Candidate Member Cde. Sidorenko²²Cde. VolosiukCde. KonstantinovCde. Stepanov — department heads of the CP CC^[23]Cde. SavochkoCde. PasikovskiiCde. MalakhovCde. Gorsa — deputy department heads of Cde. Kondrat'ev the CP CC^[24]⁵. On the Violation of Party Discipline by the Minister of Communications of the Moldavian SSR, Cde. V. P. RussuCde. BODIUL: The decision of the CPSU CC says that insofar as materials of an anti-Soviet character are being published in Romanian newspapers and journals, USSR Glavlit is ordered to monitor Romanian publications and, if anti-Soviet materials should appear, to remove them from circulation.^[25] As you know, we decided to limit the circulation of Romanian newspapers in which undesirable materials are published, but unfortunately the Ministry of Communications did not uphold this decision.(Report of Cde. Konstantinov)^[26]Cde. BODIUL: Up to that point, communications officials had both propagated and distributed Romanian literature. It was then brought to your attention, Cde. Russu, that too much Romanian literature was being circulated. And this year a huge number [of people] had begun subscribing to Romanian newspapers! You were given an instruction to halt the circulation of Romanian newspapers. There's a journalist law in Moscow, and do you really think the CC is not empowered?^[27] Are you somehow above it? Why are you not controlling the ministry?Cde. RUSSU: This was in fact done from the time of the first conversation in 1966, when the circulation of Romanian periodicals and publications was widespread. In 1967 the volume of subscriptions to Romanian newspapers and journals was sharply reduced. The greatest possible reduction was carried out. The circulation was coordinated with the CC department.^[28] We reduced the number of issues to a fifteenth of what it had been at the time of the first conversation.I traveled to the Ministry of Communications in Moscow. They did not want to apply this huge reduction. I linked up with the CPSU CC department, and, with the department of propaganda and agitation, I called the all-union Ministry of Communications.Cde. BODIUL: There's a USSR Minister [of Communications], Cde. Psurtsev, and you should have resolved all matters with him.^[29]How many issues of the newspapers are entering Moldavia?Cde. RUSSU: 388 copies for professional purposes— "Scînteia"—48 copies and by retail trade some 90 copies. 5 copies to Ungeny,^[30] 2-3 copies to a camping-site, and several copies to the Soyuzpechat kiosk in the CC.In August and September all issues of the newspapers were held back except for 20 copies designated for border points.Cde. KONSTANTINOV: But the newspapers showed up in our hotel and at the airport, and they were selling them at the kiosks and in the Intourist hotel.Cde. RUSSU: In connection with the long-anticipated events in Czechoslovakia, I was mobilized.^[31] We were in a difficult situation. We had no experience in this sort of thing. Since the end of the Great Patriotic War, we had never once conducted a training exercise. Several months before August, the designation of the battalion was changed. As a result, the battalion was deprived of its most important and vital asset. I was not in my office at the Ministry, since I conducted the work directly there. There was nowhere to deploy the equipment. I was in contact with Minsk, Moscow, and Kyiv. On 23 August the battalion was brought up to combat readiness. On the 24th, it was sent to Czechoslovakia to reestablish communications. I was preoccupied with the creation of this military formation.On the 22nd, the first department reported to me that there was an urgent instruction from Moscow. I rode over there and received a ciphered telegram, which said that all [Czechoslovak] newspapers must be held back for two days and all journals for four days until a directive is received from Moscow. This was brought on by the events in Czechoslovakia.On 22 August, when I was in my military unit, some soldiers said to me that a meeting was under way in Romania, and I listened in to a bit of the meeting where Ceausescu delivered his speech. I then told D. S. Cornovan^[32] that we must also hold back all Romanian newspapers. Events unfolded that way in the future. The deputy minister, Severinov, assumed leadership of the ministry.^[33] He reported that there was an instruction from the CC ordering newspapers and journals to be held back for two days.But Severinov and Kucia decided to act in accordance with the instructions from Moscow, in accordance with the instructions of the USSR Ministry of Communications, which are issued at the behest of the CPSU CC.^[34]During the first two to three days when the newspapers were held back, we accepted the participation of Glavlit. And then they said: "You have instructions from Moscow; you should act in accordance with these instructions."Cde. BODIUL: Who in the USSR Ministry of Communications reads Romanian newspapers? They issue their regulations on the basis of general

instructions. With regard to Czechoslovakia, they perhaps gave a directive from the CPSU CC. But in Moldavia itself it was clearer which newspapers must be held back. Cde. RUSSU: On 26 August, I received instructions to do the same with Romanian newspapers as I had been doing with Czechoslovak publications. Cde. BODIUL: You report to your ministry how their actions are in conformity with our actions, which must be in accordance with instructions from the CPSU CC. We received consent and even instructions from the CPSU CC not to distribute Romanian newspapers on the 21st. If the all-union Ministry is interested and is following the materials, let them consult with the CPSU CC and the CC of the Moldavian Communist Party. What happened was a lack of coordination. And this happened because in the [all-union] ministry they don't read Romanian newspapers. Cde. IL'YASHCHENKO: You received instructions from the [Moldavian] CC, and even if you did not agree with them, you can disregard them only if you check with the CPSU CC. You received instructions from the CC of the Moldavian Communist Party and did not fulfill them. You instead acted on your own. You did not come and say that this is not in accord with the instructions of the CC of the Moldavian Communist Party and the USSR Ministry of Communications. You say that people there also are well-versed in politics. This is a very dangerous approach. This is a very dangerous approach when you place party organs against one another. This did enormous political damage. Cde. RUSSU: I would like to say that I am very much guilty of this, but it was not through any design. Cde. IL'YASHCHENKO: You distributed counterrevolutionary propaganda against the will of the CC of the Moldavian Communist Party. You distributed harmful propaganda, even though you must realize that it is forbidden to distribute it. Irrespective of the fact that you did a lot on this matter, you committed a serious political mistake in the process. Cde. BODIUL: It is extremely easy to give a correct assessment of this matter. You disregarded the instructions you were given. The assessment by K. F. Il'yashchenko is completely correct. Cde. STESHOV: I would say that this is due not only to a lack of control, but to a lack of supervision over your employees. They began distributing things, but the minister did not know about it; it was done without his knowledge. Cde. BODIUL: You informed us about the penalties imposed against everyone, including the first deputy minister, and informed us about the sorts of measures you adopted. What's at issue here are the interests of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and our policy. The Romanian press features hostile items, but you approach it just as you would any old thing. Cde. RUSSU: There are more than 400,000 radio receivers in the republic and nearly half a million televisions. The broadcasts are in all the major languages: Ukrainian, Moldavian, and Russian.[35] We must take urgent measures for the accelerated creation of technical means to carry out counterpropaganda.[36] Construction of the radio relay station from Kishinev to Kagul is going very poorly.[37] It seems to me that help must be provided to the builders, who do not regard the project as an important matter. Cde. BODIUL: The main thing is not the builders, but the project planners. Everything possible must now be done so that these facilities can be built. We must consider and adopt measures to this end. We must act more quickly in creating a zone and beginning construction of the facility. Cde. RUSSU: We have to expedite the construction of the Kishinev-Kagul radio relay station. We need to have powerful means of communication. Cde. BODIUL: To do that, we'll have to come up with the money. The formulation should be left as "for violations of party discipline, either to reprimand or to give a stern warning." Cde. IL'YASHCHENKO: This isn't the first incident with Kucia. I've known him for many years. Cde. KONSTANTINOV: He behaved outrageously when they began to explain it to him. Cde. BODIUL: Kucia and others let Russu down. The proposal is to issue a stern warning to Russu.