

March 15, 1967

**Minutes of Conversation between Nicolae Ceaușescu
and Soltan V.H. Sanandaji, Iran's New Ambassador
to Romania, Bucharest**

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Summary:

Ambassador Sanandaji explained to Ceaușescu in March 1967 that the economic growth of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would require increasing oil imports that could be met by Iran's growing crude production. The question was how this oil would reach the European market and how it would be distributed within the socialist bloc.

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

Minutes of conversation between Nicolae Ceaușescu and Soltan V.H. Sanandaji, Iran's newly appointed ambassador to Romania, Bucharest, 15 March 1967.

Soltan V.H. Sanandaji said that he was referring to the proposal made a few months ago by Iran to Romania to join other Eastern European countries in creating a consortium to exploit Iranian crude. Iran has not yet received an answer from the Romanian authorities on this issue.

Nicolae Ceaușescu pointed out that he only knew in general terms of this Iranian proposal to cooperate with Romania and other European socialist countries.

On this issue, the General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party said that although he was not a specialist on such matters, he would like to know the way in which the Iranian government thinks about the practical aspects of this cooperation.

Soltan V.H. Sanandaji said that Iran wanted to create, on the one hand, a reliable market in Eastern European countries for its crude, and on the other hand, to create opportunities for importing from these Eastern the industrial products which Iran needs for its economic development. According to the Iranian government, this is possible because the rapid economic development of countries like Romania, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, [and] Yugoslavia, means that their demand for crude will considerably grow, and their own crude, where available, will become totally insufficient. It is very likely that not even the USSR will be able to meet this increasing demand from its own production, and thus be forced to import crude. Moreover, given the continuous increase in Iranian crude production, Iran will have more crude to export, for which Iran needs markets and which it could sell to Eastern European countries.

Practically, this crude could be transported either by tanker from one of Iran's big ports to Black Sea or Adriatic Sea ports, or through the pipeline built jointly by the Iranian government and the Turkish government to Alexandrette, and from there on small or medium-sized tankers to the destination port.

The Iranian government believes that in these circumstances, there can be mutually advantageous cooperation with all parties interested.

Nicolae Ceaușescu pointed out that Romania understands the concern of the Iranian government to [have access to] a stable market and to ensure long-time cooperation, which would enable it to sell its crude, and at the same time, buy industrial products which it needs. Romania wants to and it agrees on principle to, take part into the sort of cooperation described by the Iranian ambassador, to the extent that such cooperation respects the legitimate interests of each party.

Since this matter is so important, involving a long-term cooperation project, with many aspects and implications, Romania would like to receive more details about how the Iranian government envisages the practical coming into force of this project. We would like to know the principles on which this cooperation would take place, the form in which Iran would cooperate with the other countries - bilateral or multilateral, what obligations and duties each participating country will have, what Romania's role will be in this cooperation framework, as well as other similar issues, so that on the basis of these details, the relevant Romanian authorities could rigorously analyze Iran's proposals and possibly make counter-proposals.

Soltan V.H. Sanandaji said that he found Romania's request for more details totally justified, and that to his mind, the presence in Teheran of Romania's Foreign Trade Minister, Gheorghe Cioara, would be an excellent occasion to discuss all aspects which concern the Romanian government with the Iranian authorities, at any level

possible. As far as he is concerned, he will immediately inform the Iranian government about this matter, so that the Romanian Minister receives the desired answer during his stay in Teheran.

Nicolae Ceaușescu said that Comrade Cioara did not have the mandate to discuss this matter with the Iranian authorities, but that he could receive the detailed clarifications from the relevant Iranian bodies, which he could then relay to the Romanian government. This matter will be examined by the party and state leadership in its entirety, and this leadership will take the appropriate decisions. In any case, the Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party added, Romania is interested in the collaboration project put forward by the Iranian government, and thinks it is possible that it is realized in the foreseeable future, in the spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding, which characterizes relations between the two countries.

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