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FROM: Bucharest

TO: Secretary of State

NO 652, May 29, 11 a.m.



29, 1958

SENT DEPARTMENT 652, REPEATED INFORMATION MOSCOW 39.

DEPARTMENT POUCH OTHER EE POSTS, LONDON, VIENNA AND PARIS

Although local implications of withdrawal Soviet Warsaw treaty troops from Rumania will become fully clear only as and if withdrawal implemented, following preliminary comments may be of interest.

1. There has been no observable enthusiasm among Bucharest citizenry over May 24 communique on Moscow conference and private reaction non-official Rumanians, on basis limited sampling, reveals skepticism as to both scope and timing of withdrawal. One source doubted withdrawal "would change anything," asserting in this regard that regime recently took precautionary step of arming "worker guards" in factories. Another source doubted all Soviet troops would be removed and noted Soviet frontier not far away. Not surprisingly, press to date has not made special play of proposed withdrawal and has treated it exclusively in international context as "new evidence of Soviet policy of peace".

2. Legation sees considerable justification for popular cynicism at this stage on significance of withdrawal, which even if fully implemented will not basically alter Rumanian dependence on USSR. In separate message air attache expressed view withdrawal would be gradual and that Soviet technical personnel likely be retained in some strength in "advisory" positions, as at airfields. Also, announcements specifically restricted withdrawal to "troops in Rumania in connection with Warsaw Treaty," leading to speculation that USSR might retain certain forces Rumania as LOC troops in support division remaining Hungary or under other designations.

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3. However, even if certain Soviet forces remain in country, general implementation of withdrawal could have important local consequences. It would be vastly popular move among majority of population, (1) holding forth prospect of improved housing for townspeople in Timisoara, Arad, Constanta, Galati, Braila, et cetera, (2) presumably increasing amount of food available for Rumanian consumption, and (3) possibly nourishing hope that regime might have greater latitude to liberalize policies and orient them more in national interest than in past.

4. It seems certain that regime, which on credit side should realize substantial economic benefits as well as some possible increase in prestige internally (see 3 above) and externally, must nevertheless realize progress of withdrawal will be delicate period requiring vigilance against possible anti-regime activity. Extent its concern in this respect has not yet become apparent, and we doubt that any specific plan of action has been developed at this juncture. Cautious leadership of Gheorghiu-Dej, however, almost certainly sought and received general assurances of Soviet support in event internal crisis.

5. Description of "proposal" in communique as Soviet rather than joint Soviet-Rumanian, as well as character of Soviet-Rumanian relationship, suggests initiative on withdrawal was Soviet rather than Rumanian. We have no evidence indicating how long proposal was under consideration, but no hint thereof reached Legation from local sources.

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