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|--|---------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| SUBJECT OF DOCUMENT | | DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION | | | |
| Rumanian Miscellaenous - Foreign Internal Security - Rumanian | | 2. RI FILE NO. | 100 | 500 | 67 |
| | | 3. DISPATCH OR SOURCE DOC. SYMBOL NO. | DEC-16562 | | 4. DATE 10May68 |
| | | 7. SOURCE CRYPTONYM | 8. DATE OF INFO. | 9. EVALUATION | |
| | LNERGO source | mid-Apr 68 | Reliable | | |

Romanian Orthodox Church

Our source also advised of an incident relating to the autonomous Romanian Orthodox Church in the United States (ROCUS). He pointed out that the Bishop of the ROCUS is Valerian Trifa, who was the leader of the RIG Youth Movement up to January, 1941, and was forced to flee Romania when the RIG revolt failed.

About a year ago, Bishop Trifa's father visited his son in the United States. Subsequent to his return to Romania the January 7, 1968, edition of "Solia," the official ROCUS publication, carried a reprint of a letter from the elder Trifa which contained two significant passages which the source summarized as follows:

1. That he had realized the dream of his life of visiting his son through the goodwill of the Romanian authorities who are granting passports to those who desire to visit relatives abroad.

2. He stressed that no religious persecution of Church goers had occurred in Romania and in effect that although the churches of Romania are empty it cannot be imputed to the Romanian Police but to the lack of faith of his fellow Romanians.

The source speculated that such a letter in a religious publication appears to be most strange. He wondered if the Romanian Government had put pressure on Bishop Trifa and might be withholding documents which could cause him untold problems. In addition, there have been indications of attempts to lure priests under his jurisdiction to submit to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Bucharest under the pretext that they should never forget the roots of the Church.

According to the source, the Romanian Government would be happy to see a fusion of Bishop Trifa's autonomous Church with the Patriarchate even under Bishop Trifa's jurisdiction providing that Bishop Victorin, who heads the faction of the ROC in the United States which adheres to Bucharest, will get the second post of authority.

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