

23RD OF AUGUST – NATIONAL DAY OF COMMUNIST ROMANIA

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Each and every communist anniversary follows the same pattern. The differences come from the details. The fact that the communist obtained the political power without the popular support and that the population remained loyal to their old political convictions (the historical parties and the monarchy) forced the communist leaders into finding new ways to control the population. Propaganda played an important role in frightening the masses. For instance, every communist manifestation came with a well-prepared plan where every participant played his rehearsed part. The free-will disappears when the speaker is told by the higher authorities what to say, what slogans he should chant, when to applaud or what portraits he should bring on meeting.

Following a basic principle of logic (though logic had never been a preferred subject for the communists) regarding the process of learning from simple to complex, from person to mass, the communist ideologist concocted a very simple plan to impose boundaries for the masses. The manifestations for an anniversary or certain commemoration didn't take place during one day. They started gradually by setting meetings in the factories, in public institutions, schools where the propagandist spoke to whatever audience about the importance of the event. Also, the press endorsed the event using inflammatory articles. The next step was to take meetings to a higher level, to the town or district's leaders, where the same things were rehearsed in order to be perfectly understood by the future participants at the manifestation.

The Party's thesis and slogans were processed, everyone's place was set and the event was planned frame by frame. Official rehearsals took place so there wouldn't be any surprises. Nevertheless, in spite of all these planning and preparations, during the early years of communist leadership (until the monarchy's abdication) there were a lot of situations when the event didn't play as it was rehearsed or even when the masses turned against the communists.

Starting from 1944, The Communist Party tried to assimilate the Declaration of the 23rd of August, taking merits that were not rightfully theirs. In June, at the meeting for the leaders of the district committees' "Agitation and Propaganda" resorts, Iosif Chişinevschi, already offered a mistified version of the 23rd of August Declaration, saying the events took place „due to the heroism and the liberating fight of the Red Army” and „the romanian democratic forces, lead by the Communist Party” and „in spite of Maniu's will”¹.

¹ A.N.R., *fond C.C. – Cancelarie*, dosar 61/ 1945, f. 130.

On the 29th of August 1944, Constantin Pârvulescu made public at a meeting the communist theory according to which “the communist party was the inspiration and the organizer of liberation of the Romanian people”². A year later, the role of the intern political forces, except P.M.R. (Romanian Communist Party), start to be minimized, and at the same time, a new player appears in the communists’ speeches – The Soviet Union and its tool: the Red Army. On the 24th of August 1947, in “Scântea” appears an editorial signed by Vasile Luca, where the leading part in the 23rd of August Declaration was given to the Communist Party helped by the “democratic forces” (without mentioning what the author understood by this phrase). Taking into consideration that the historical parties no longer existed and the monarch was to be forced to abdicate, the communists remained (for the propaganda) the main organizers of event that occurred in the summer of 1944.

Every year “Agitation and Propaganda” section of the Central Committee of R.C.P. issued new thesis which were the basis for all manifestations honoring an anniversary (meeting, conferences, challenges etc.). As soon as the last obstacle in assuming complete political power is removed (the monarchy), the thesis for the ultimate national communist celebration is based on the crucial role of the Red Army and P.M.R. in organizing the events on the 23rd of August. So, the metamorphosis is complete. The communists “the vanguard of the working class”, as they liked to call themselves, helped by the propaganda (the press, radio, in schools) assumed the entire merit for the events on the 23rd of August because “the leaders of the exploiting classes and monarchy fought hard against the plan”³.

Changing the perception about the events from 1944 didn’t occur only on reversing the forces ratio but also on the way they called the events on the 23rd of August. From “the national day of the Romanian People”, “the Act of the 23rd of August” or “the historical act”, the communist’ changed the name to “the day of liberation from the fascist oppression” (after the Mihai’s abdication) or “antifascist army insurrection” (after 1964) and “anti-imperialist” (after 1977)⁴. Changing the national day to the 23rd of August took place in 1949 and it was suggested by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

But what is even more absurd regarding the participants from the communist party, is that their role within the party vary based on the leaders’ sympathies. The first victim was Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, in fact the only party member that Iuliu Maniu and Dinu Brătianu totally accept as their collaborator.

Although the communists wanted a national celebration, the first 23rd of August didn’t achieve the impact or the proportion that they had wished. The monarch was found “guilty” of this half-failure because he refused to participate, being on the royal strike. “It was known that the monarch didn’t attend the

² „România Liberă”, nr. 16 din 31 august 1944, p. 2.

³ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 98/ 1948, f. 3.

⁴ Dinu Giurescu, *România în al doilea război mondial*, Editura All, București, 1999, p. 237-240.

festivities on the 23rd of August. What should be gained from the situation – said “comrade Ana” – is the mobilization of the entire population and general display of the support for the Groza government while the opposition is work minority. We did not get what we hoped for, and we will not get it until we mobilize our people”⁵. It is interesting that the communists used some specific elements of the royal protocol within their first 23rd of August celebration (the The-Deum, the 101 cannon strikes or the torches retreat)⁶.

In 1946 the meaning of the 23rd of August celebration grew even larger for the communists because it was an election year. That’s the reason why, Iosif Chișinevschi demanded a better coordination: main stream press articles, supporting meeting and patriotic challenges in the factories, all covered in “Scânteia” and “România Liberă”. Leonte Răutu supported this idea: “We want to transform this day into a high manifestation of the united forces and the achievements of Groza Government under the high patronage of the Block” because “it is a very important link in between the political manifestations for the election”⁷. They wished for grand manifestation and huge masses in the streets applauding their representatives’ speeches in order to create the impression that the recently formed coalition B.P.D. – which was, in fact, the Communist Party plus its satellites – had the masses support. The attempt of inoculation an ever growing endorsement from the people was completed by Eduard Mezincescu’s idea to use the cripples from the war and the widows in the manifestation⁸.

During the 9th of August meeting of the Central Committee of Communist Party, the activists and the propagandists received new “recommendations”. The anniversary was to be divided intuitive distinctive parts: the army and the workers parades were scheduled in the morning followed in the evening by the popular festivities and outdoors shows “with profound democratic meaning but educational and entertaining”. “The most important thing is not the marching parade, because our celebration is not the 1st of May or the 7th November meeting, but the atmosphere within the participants and on the entire length of the route”⁹. There are also mentioned the role of the Red Army, the way in which people are supposed to be marching, when and where they should applaud the speeches with a well-rehearsed detachment. But there also were some voices which tried to get the participants on solid ground reminding them that may be it wasn’t appropriate to built pageants while “half the country is starving to death” and that the public was less than enthusiastic of the previous anniversaries.

⁵ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 76/ 1945, f. 2.

⁶ *Programul comemorării actului istoric din 23 august și a primirii în capitală a trupelor care se întorc de pe front*, în „Scânteia”, an II, nr. 311 din 27 august 1945, p. 11.

⁷ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 43/ 1946, f. 63.

⁸ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 47/ 1946, f. 2.

⁹ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 45/ 1946, f. 60.

And, because nothing could have been left to chance, the meeting of the P.M.R.'s Central Committee's leaders stated the main directions from the festivities of 23rd of August and the issues to be approached in speeches, press articles or radio shows. All the attention should be drawn to the Groza Government's achievements, the unity and the perfect cooperation within B.P.D. and that between the Block and the monarch and the strong friendship with U.R.S.S.¹⁰, without omitting Chişinevschi's lines which, in the meantime, had become clichés "the historic parties are sell outs to any enemy of people", "the territories that hadn't been liberated by the Red Army are being controlled by the reactionary forces, the Monarchy took part at the 23rd of August Act, but the results is due mainly to the democratic forces"¹¹. The role and importance of the each political participant in signing, the 23rd of August Act will be changing annually. Starting from 1946, the Monarchy's role has been minimized. So have that of the historical parties.

The entire production of the manifestation for the 23rd of August was a success, stated Miron Constantinescu at the Political Bureau's meeting on the 23rd of August 1946, not necessary due to a massive participation (3 million people all over the country) but to the lack of provocations¹².

The celebration of the national day followed approximately the same steps every year: the initial preparations (press campaigns, the choice of thesis and slogans, meetings and different challenges among workers etc.) and the actual anniversary (the parades, demonstrations and speeches). Nevertheless, the leaders of the propaganda had new suggestions every year in order not to be accused of lack of interest. For example, in 1949 there were streets, houses and Mogoşoaia Swimming Place¹³ to be inaugurated and, on the 22nd of August, the leaders of the foreign delegations invited to celebrate the National Day of Romania, were expected to attend a special festivity. Ideologically speaking on the other hand, together with the U.R.S.S. and P.C.R.'s role in the 23rd of August Act, appears a new direction which should be overlooked by the propaganda: exposing Tito, the newest enemy of Moscow, hence of all popular democracies¹⁴.

The Political Bureau's decision regarding the celebration of the 23rd of August 1949 set the frame for the Romanian's National Day. These, the C.G.M. (General Council of Labor) were in charge with the competitions (inspired by the slogan: "Let's complete the annual production plan until the 23rd of August"), while the Artistic Unions (the writers, the composers) and the literary circles had the task to prepare create the supporting material for the celebration. The sequence of events were as follows: The Agitation and Propaganda Selection of the Central Committee of P.M.R. drew up the thesis, the Propagandist's Notebook and

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 57.

¹¹ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 43/ 1946, f. 9.

¹² A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 49/ 1945, f. 3.

¹³ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 71/ 1949, f. 5.

¹⁴ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 221/ 1949, *passim*.

“Scântea” spread the word and after words, starting on the 5th of August, came the speeches called „It has been five years since our country was liberated by the Soviet Army” (the propagandists used an unfortunate slogan which was leading to the conclusion that our country was liberated by Red Army, not that they only helped to liberate it). Like each time before the press were to play an important role in spreading the news, pieces of information, feature reports or interviews regarding the U.R.S.S.’s role in liberating Romania. Due to the fact that it was been only five years since the 1944’s events, an incisive champagne to intoxicate the population was much needed because the common folks remembered that Bucharest was liberated by the Romanian Army, not by the Russian troupes and that the P.C.R. played an important role in limiting citizens’ personal rights and freedom not liberating the country.

The decorations for the 23rd of August event should be placed all over the country on the 20th and consisted in slogans, portraits along a poster specially printed by the Arts Ministry for the occasion. The festive gathering was to take place on the 22nd of August at the Aro Hall or the P.M.R. Athenaeum in Bucharest, followed by a artistic programme performed by the Army Artistic Ensemble¹⁵. The actual National Day was dedicated to military parades (in Bucharest and other town where the Army had stations) and the workers parades in the morning, followed by the popular festivities in parks and public gardens in the afternoon.

The 23rd of August pompously celebrated outside Romanian’s borders by Romanian Embassies and diplomatic representations. Along with sumptuous dinner-parties for the diplomatic personnel, come a number of exhibitions, books’ release etc. These manifestations were also very meticulously planned. But many of these events failed due to the rigidity of the protocol. The numerous, boring speeches, the unfortunate table-arrangements (the people placed side by side could not communicate, each of them speaking only their mother tongue) and the sluggish way in which the events were carried on, are observed in an unsigned document, dated on the 19th of September 1950 regarding the celebration of the National Day in Pekin¹⁶. Along with the reception, the speeches, the dinner party and some filmed projections on the 23rd of August 1949 and Danube-Black Sea Channel, this anniversary was also celebrated with an exhibition brought from Romania. Even if the author of the document had stated that the exhibition achieved an unparalleled success, there were some deficiencies that could not have been overlooked. For instance, from this presentation the audience could understand that the “working class movement and the Party appeared in 1926”, “nothing was mentioned about the 13th of December, about the general strike, the Congress held in 1921 and also there were no portraits what so ever of Frimu, Ștefan Gheorghiu (...). That was the reason why some of us had been asked by the visitors when did the Communist Party appear in Romania, if we had a Communist Party in 1919 (like the chinnesse – here the

¹⁵ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 162/ 1949, f. 4.

¹⁶ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 108/ 1950, f. 1-8.

author of the document misspells the name of Chinese people) or what had been the Political Regime in Romania till 1926”¹⁷. And that wasn’t the only mistake: they used a series of maps from before the war where “P.R. Mongolia was part of China, alike a portion of Korea, the Russian Islands from the Eastern Orient were shown as belong to McArthur’s Japan and Vietnam’s realities were completely disregarded”¹⁸.

Probably, the most detailed plan for our National Day’s Anniversary in that from 1952. The documents from the archives notice, along with the general information, a lot of different aspects which complete the event. So, we find out that Bodnăraș’s protocol stated that, in order to be welcomed, the military attachés should have worn their military cloths and percentage of the guest (dignitaries, military officials, foreign attachés) should not have gone over 52% of the total member of participants. More than that, it was stipulated that “the military attachés should be placed together, surrounded by our people in order to see if and what the write down”¹⁹. It also established that the outfit for the anniversary should be black coat with military decorations for the festive gathering or jacket with decorations for the parade, but only Romanian or Russian military decorations were allowed and maybe some awarded by the popular democracies.

Chișinevschi was in charge with the visual arrangements of the event and he proposed two ideas both of them centered on the portraits of Dej and Stalin. But, there was a problem which generated a big debate within the Political Bureau namely the portrait of Petru Groza, to which everybody approved but they didn’t seem to find an appropriate place for. In the end the Bureau would go with Gh. Apostol’s proposal to give Groza a “separate poster” on the opposite side of Stalin’s statue²⁰.

There were also two projects for the reception following the parade, the first including 450 people and the second for eight hundred (Moghioroș underlining that 1951 there were eleven hundred people at the reception²¹ but only fifty workers). The guest lists were closely verified by the members of the Political Bureau, Miron Constantinescu even observing that “the composition for the reception is not good, the petty-bourgeoisie element is overwhelming” because “many of the men invited have married women belonging to the petty-bourgeoisie class”²². But, most of all, there is a very simple reason for reluctance to invite the workers: the pomp of the event, the food and drinks served could not be found or purchased from the socialist trade. Chișinevschi also endorsed the non-participation for the members of the working class because “however things would go, in the end it could still be bad”²³.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, f. 2.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, f. 2-3.

¹⁹ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 73/ 1952, f. 19.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 21.

²¹ *Ibidem*, f. 19.

²² *Ibidem*, f. 20.

²³ *Idem*.

The foreign delegations were expected from the 20th to the 22nd of August and they should be welcomed by the government's representatives at the borders. In order to enhance the festive atmosphere, the train station and airport were covered in flags, portraits and slogans and for each delegation was welcomed with Romanian and U.R.S.S. anthems and its' motive country. The Russian, Chinese, Korean and Mongolian representatives got a special treatment: in addition to the Party and Government's officials they were welcomed by 2000-2500 members of the working classes²⁴. On the 22nd of August was scheduled a solemn wreath lay down at the soviet heroes monuments (this festivity was taped and broadcast through the radio) and on the 23rd of August, the communist planned a demonstration and Festive Gathering with speeches and artistic programme.

Paying attention to every detail, the plan approved by the Political Bureau oversees every small inconvenience and gives sometimes hilarious advice: "the unjust difference among the sizes of the wreaths is to be avoided"; "the foreign delegation and diplomatic missions are to provide the ribbon for the wreaths"²⁵.

For the actual demonstration on the 23rd of August, the communists expected 4000 participants divided on the six platforms according to their rank and prestige. The entire progress of the military parade was timed to the second in order to avoid the unpredictable²⁶.

The parade:

- from 8³⁰-to 8³² – the report
- from 8³²-to 8⁴² – the troupes' inspection
- from 8⁴²-to 8⁴⁸ – the minister's speech
- from 8⁴⁸-to 8⁵⁴ – firing the cannons
- from 8⁵⁴-to 9¹⁴ – the marching of the pedestrian army
- from 9¹⁴-to 9²⁴ – the marching of equestrian army
- from 9²⁴-to 9⁵² – the marching of the motorized army
- from 9⁵²-to 10 o'clock – the marching of the shell-proof vehicles

The workers' demonstration:

- from 10 o'clock-to 10⁰⁷ – the marching of the 10 partisans' battalions
- from 10⁰⁷-to 10²⁷ – the marching of the pioneers
- from 10²⁷-to 10³⁷ – the marching of the four workers' brigades
- from 10³⁷-to 12³² – the marching of the workers
- from 12³²-to 13⁰² – the marching of the sportsmen
- from 13⁰²-to 13¹⁷ – the marching of the people in charge with keeping the order
- from 13¹⁷-to 13²⁰ – the brass-band play a retreat march

²⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 26.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, f. 37.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 53.

Due to the fact that the army was one of the 23rd of August Act, the military parade has always been punctilious prepared. On the other hand, their costs were high (there were 2-3 months of training) so the number of participants to the military parades grew smaller (in 1955 there were 6985 people; in 1956 there were 5155 militaries); the something happened to the military vehicle (36 Airplanes Mig in 1955, 30 in 1956)²⁷.

Every year, the communist found new ways to celebrate the event, sometimes even ignoring the historic meaning of the day (“gaining freedom from the fascist ruling”). The celebration of the 23rd of August soon became a tool to extol the Party and the Party’s leaders. On the day there were new members welcomed to the Party and literary productions were published (described the life and, struggles of the communist and the accomplishments of the government after the 6th of March 1945).

The 23rd of August celebration changed from a one-day event into a media champagne that took place over more than a month. The same thing happened to the celebration for the 1st of May or 7th of November. In fact, the entire year was divided into three distinctive parts: the 1st of May champagne, the 23rd of August and 7th of November campaigns. As soon as, the 1st of May champagne and celebration were over, the 23rd’s started. In June the communists organized challenges and mobilized the peasants for the seasonal works and started the embellishment of the cities. The Agitation and Propaganda Section of the Central Committees of the Romanian Works Party was in charge with the creation of the thesis for the event (until the 10th of August, in order that those from the territory and media to be able to acknowledge). The publishing houses edited twenty four-seven all kind of books with and about the 23rd of August, the autobiography of the working-class heroes and booklists to popularize the movement. In 1954, ten year after “the liberation of the country”, from the 13th to the 23rd of August we assist to a decade of culture” meaning books bazaars, shows, concerts, festivities and film-festivals and another representations etc. nobody could stay away. The Academy programmed an extraordinary session ant the artists created for the event, A.R.L.U.S. organized festivities to honor the friendship with the U.R.S.S. and the young climbed the mountains in order to hoist flags. All these culminate in the laying down of wreaths on 22nd of August, the parade, the demonstration and the reception on the 23rd.

“The icing on the cake” meaning the reception organized on the evening of the 23rd was available only for the chosen ones (P.M.R.’s members, their foreign guest, the embassies personnel, the communist leaders in general) and cost much more than the other events. While the simple citizen waited in line for hours to buy bread, the shops were mostly empty and the few existing produce were rationalized, this reception was a shameless display of welfare.

²⁷ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 53/ 1956, f. 6.

In 1955 there invited 600 people (120 diplomats) at the Ministers' Council Reception. They also organized an artistic programme and a festive dinner for the occasion. The artistic programme included traditional music concerts (played by Ionel Budişteanu's orchestra with soloists like Angela Moldovan, Damian Luca, Ion Cristorescu și Felicia Fărcașu), dancing recitals (both traditional dances and ballet), opera recitals and also a variety show with jugglers, acrobats and "singing clowns" (during intermission). Plus that on the flouting bridge built on the Snagov Lake took place different moments of artistic gymnastics, dancing and choir singing²⁸. Some people were in charged with organizing the whole event. Constantin Doncea took care of the lights, the water and the artesian fountain, the water means of transportation, the parking arrangements, building the tables, finding an alternative in case it would rained, the embellishment of the park, setting tents with food and drinks, placing the transmitting station, Șt. Mladin was in charge with transportation, Jack Podoleanu took care of the food section of the event and Grigore Preoteasa lead the protocol committee²⁹.

The menu for the Ministers' Council Reception in 1955 was a mixture of rafined products and traditional foods³⁰.

Food	Desert	Liquor
Caviar	Fruits	Filtered coffee
Small pies with goose liver filling	Cakes	Old plum brandy (traditional drink)
Sibiu salami	Fruits tarts	Vodka
Sardines	Apple pie	Vermouth
Hem	Fancy cokes	Shlibovitza
Chicken salad	Sweet biscuits	Mineral water
Eggs a la ruse with ham	Mixed parfait	Soda
Chicken breast	Langue de chat	Champagne
Duck with olives		Bucharest beer
Mushrooms filled with cream cheese		Segarcea cognac
Pig brain a la Greek		Liqueur
Hot-dogs with horse radish sauce		Orange and lemon juice
Carp brine		Riesling from Târnav
Fried carp		Fetească from Târnav
Mountain trout in Porto wine		Cotnari
		Murfatlar
		Cabernet

²⁸ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R. – Cancelarie*, dosar 63/ 1955, f. 86-87.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, f. 108-109.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 112.

Game (wild-goat, ducks and wild hog) Portuguese sturgeon Sturgeon boiled in remoulade sauce Fried sturgeon Smothered turkey Pheasants Fried chicken Roosted piglet Cold veal Mixed salad Mixed cheese Special meatloaf		
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At the same time a lot of money spent for the foreign delegations which were invited to celebrate the Romanian National day. The accommodation, means of transportation, the special telephone lines, the translations, the visits to industrial or tourist's sights and most of all the official gifts, all of this amount to a serious sum of money. The U.R.S.S. delegation leader only was expect to get upon his departure one traditional carpet from Oltenia, one bronze statue, one design silver tray, two traditional costumes, one table cloth with the additional napkins made by finest flax embroider with traditional motives, one leather briefcase with recordings one decorative object, two flaxen blouses, two wine cases, one case containing fruits and cigarettes while a simple member of the Russian Delegation was "honored" with: one traditional costume or a woolen bed cloth with traditional motives, one letter brief-case with recordings, one small silver object, one bureau lamp with Romanian motives, one Romanian blouse or a table-cloth, two cases of wine, one case with fruits and cigarettes³¹. Apart from all these there still were: an envelope with money (the sum varied between 3000 for a "simple" member of the delegation and 5000 for a leader of the delegation), art albums and literary works translated into their native languages³².

The costs for the communist anniversaries were extremely high. Although the documents from the Central Committee's archives had never emphasized the financial side of a manifestation, some information about the amount of spent money did get in. many of the communist leader's ideas were rejected mainly based on the high prices involved. But many were approved. Some communist leaders played with the idea to change the decoration granted in the Word Second War, in 1954, during the Political Bureau's meeting on the 4th of May. Dej

³¹ *Ibidem*, f. 101.

³² *Ibidem*, f. 102.

considered that “a very big political issue”³³, disregarding the unnecessary use of 16 tones of metal. Although, the Central Committee’s decision regarding the celebration on the 23rd of August 1954 mentioned that “the preparation for the celebration of the 10th anniversary since the national liberation would be provided from the usual budgets of the institutions without any other supplementary money”³⁴. From a close analyses of the development of the communist celebrations (for the 1st of May, the 7th of November, the Party’s day the Army’s Day, the communist leaders’ anniversaries and commemorations) we can draw some conclusions. They didn’t have the same importance and were not held annually. The “big” numbers (10, 25, 50 years from the historic event) were prepared to the last detail. More, we can talk about a pattern adapted to each celebration (preparing the public opinion, the actual development of the event and its popularization. For the three “big” anniversaries, the decorations were master identical, the difference coming from the number of specific flags and the places where the portraits were placed. The commemorations added some plate reveals and medals and insignia granting.

For a better intoxication of the masses, the communists created new events to celebrate like: “The month of friendship with... (U.R.S.S. or the countries where the popular democracy was the national doctrine), “The youth Month” etc. There were in fact pretexts for the communist propaganda to obsessively repeat the benefits which come along with the communist leadership, the government accomplishments, the importance of U.R.S.S in the human history and also a good opportunity to strike the western democracies.

And last but not the least, all these anniversaries were held in an all urban environment even if the communist ideology supported the union between the proletariat and the documents from that time obsessively repeat the phrase: “a day of celebration” which the peasants “will spend working in order to complete their agricultural tasks”.

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- Abstract -

Each and every communist anniversary follows the same pattern. The differences come from the details. The fact that the communist obtained the political power without the popular support and that the population remained loyal to their old political convictions (the historical parties and the monarchy) forced the communist leaders into finding new ways to control the population. Propaganda

³³ A.N.R., *fond C.C., P.C.R.* – *Cancelarie*, dosar 47/ 1954, f. 39.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 112.

played an important role in frightening the masses. For instance, every each communist manifestation came with a well-prepared plan where every participant played his rehearsed part. The free-will disappears when the speaker is told by the higher authorities what to say, what slogans he should chant, when to applaud or what portraits he should bring on meeting.

Starting from 1944, The Communist Party tried to assimilate the Declaration of the 23rd of August, taking merits that were not rightfully theirs. In June, at the meeting for the leaders of the district committees' "Agitation and Propaganda" resorts, Iosif Chişinevschi, already offered a mystified version of the 23rd of August Declaration, saying the events took place „due to the heroism and the liberating fight of the Red Army” and „the Romanian democracies forces, lead by the Communist Party” and „in spite of Maniu's will”.

Changing the perception about the events from 1944 didn't occur only on reversing the forces ratio but also on the way they called the events on the 23rd of August. From “the national day of the Romanian People”, “the Act of the 23rd of August” or “the historical act”, the communist' changed the name to “the day of liberation from the fascist oppression” (after the Mihai's abdication) or “antifascist army insurrection” (after 1964) and “anti-imperialist” (after 1977). Changing the national day to the 23rd of August took place in 1949 and it was suggested by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

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