



Propaganda Activities and British Special Operations Executive's Political Influence Actions in Romania between 1941-1944

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Abstract

Propaganda represents a powerful war weapon. In this respect, its goal was to dehumanize and to produce hatred against a supposed enemy. The technique used was to create a false image in the target groups. This can be done by using some special words or avoiding some other words on purpose or asserting that the enemy is responsible for some negative facts. The war propaganda implies the fact that the population perceives the enemy as making something unjust, this assertion being based on real facts or on the fiction created by the propaganda specialists. The sophisticated propaganda from the war against some supposed atrocities caused by the enemy represents an effective psychological weapon usually used to enflame soldiers' mind, making them believe they would fight for a just cause. The enemy becomes some sort of monster by inoculating them with all sorts of supposed atrocities. Mass media repeats endlessly how cruel and demonic the enemy can be. During the Second World War, the allied powers propaganda had an important role to make people believe in the Axis' victory, from which Romania was a part. The British ran their propaganda programs through a special organism "British Political Warfare Executive". The moment the war started, in Romania there was a public opinion oriented exclusively towards Great Britain and France. In spite of the interdictions, the BBC went on to be listened. The British propaganda urged Romania to mobilise against Germany, asking insistently to leave the war, turning the weapons, forming an effective opposition, abolishing the regime, a sabotage of the German machine war. How much success those operations had, we are going to analyse further on. In special the political influence of this action in Romania between 1941-1944.

Key Words: Propaganda, British Special influence, Romanian, WWII, Political influence

Introduction

Britain re-created the World War I Ministry of Information for the duration of World War II to generate propaganda to influence the population towards support for the war effort to defeat the enemy faithfully. British propaganda, like American propaganda, presented the war as an issue of good versus evil, a factor that allowed them to rouse the population to fight a just war, and use themes of resistance and liberation to occupied countries.

The British propaganda urged Romania to mobilise against Germany, asking insistently to leave the war, turning the weapons, forming an effective opposition, abolishing the regime, a sabotage of the German machine war. The main goal of propaganda was to contribute to the defeat of the enemy. Below we will try to

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present and analyze the main propaganda action done by British Political Warfare Executive in Romania between 1941-1944 and their contribution to the war economy.

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Ivor Porter asserts that at the beginning of the war „the British propaganda was practically inexistent. One of the men close to Lord Beaverbrook was appointed press attache and he was not given a proper office. The German delegation had an answer to any question that was addressed to, while the British seemed always poorly informed, to be capable to face the most absurd assertions concerning the German military successes. Even the Romanians that knew the English well enough to understand their attitude towards the propaganda, were angry upon our ignorance in this respect. It's true that we were broadcasting some news, but being in English, it was accessible only for a few. We were counting on the BBC to talk to the Romanians in their own language”.¹

Moreover, in April 1940, the English minister in Bucharest was saying about the English: „do not have to make propaganda because the Germans do it for them”.² Yet, the British American services used to spread all over the country all sorts of materials informing the public opinion from Romania about the official British point of view upon the war with Germany. So, on June 3rd 1940 a SSI note made known that the British propaganda services were spreading a new propaganda material „ The Latest News of London” printed in Romania on the printing machine.³ Some propaganda actions used to relate to Italy. On February 8th 1941, Le Rougetel some propaganda actions against Italy describing the terrible disaster suffered by the Italians in North Africa and the critical situation of Italy.⁴ The Germans were also involved in these actions. On November 25th 1942, they have promoted in Bucharest the propaganda work „Rommel-The Desert Battle”, edited by Ofar printing house in 4000 copies, after a translation from German of a work printed by the Steinger Editorial House from Berlin.⁵ In the summer of 1940 there have been taken some organisatoric measures. Thus, the colonel Bruce Lockhart from the British secret services contacted the ex-members of the Romanian Legation from London, proposing them to work for an illegal radio station in Romania. Tilea and Danielopol tried to avoid this situation, but the radio station started to broadcast on

¹Ivor Porter, *Operațiunea Autonomă*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1991, p. 64.

² Arhiva S.R.I., fond „d”, Dosar 8573, *Sinteză informativă a SSI din mai 1940*, f. 169.

³ AMAE,, fond 71 România, dosar 365,. *Notă SSI din 3 iunie 1940*, f. 380.

⁴Arhiva S.R.I., fond „d”, Dosar 8573 , f. 83.

⁵ Arhivele Naționale ale României-Arhiva Istorică Centrală, fond microfilme Italia, Rola 61, cadru 85

October 12th 1940, TV speaker being Dimitrie Dimancescu.⁶ Carol II's positive attitude towards this radio station made the Romanians suspect something. This radio station also had some bad influence upon BBC broadcastings. Such broadcastings were so untrue and exaggerated that the American legation used to report the fact that „the English had a lot to lose and not to win among the Romanians. Most Romanians, whose pro-British feelings are undoubtful, do not know if listening to the Romanian broadcastings in London as they are astounded by assertions like: „The Romanians turned against the Germans or the city of Ploiesti has been destroyed”.⁷

On November 11, professor Goerge Beza helped by Archie Gibson managed to reach Turkey. Here he was contacted by the British secret services in Istanbul in order to take part to some propaganda activities against Germany”.⁸ In Istanbul he printed a brochure: „The Legionary State- an instrument of the German supremacy in Romania”. In march 1941, Beza left for Jerusalem where he opened The propaganda and Free Press Romanian Office, being supported in this activity by the journalists: George Horia, Henri Marcus, the lawyer Solomon and the student Gheorghe Berer.⁹

Later on, he was in charge of the radio stations Z 1 and Z 2, being helped by another Romanian immigrant, Petre Vulpescu. Still in Jerusalem, there were other Romanians having different propaganda activities: the engineer Grossu, Ion Rubișteanu, Victor Constantinescu, Constantin Gheorghe Beruand many more.¹⁰

There have been some new repeated reorganisations of the radio station and starting with 1941 it started to broadcast under the name *Independența României* and then turning into“ *Independența României*”.¹¹

On December 1st 1941 as a consequence of the requirements expressed on the competitional radio station from London, under the managing of Dimancescu and under the intervention of some British politicians, the activity of the radio station and of the Romanian Free Office has stopped. In July 1942, supported by the colonel Anthony Kendall, who was directing the war propaganda at the General Headquarters, Beza formed a new radio station: „ the Station of the Liberation Fight”, where he was trying to instigate the Romanian population to fight against the Germans. In 1943, he was moved

⁶ V. Fl. Dobrinescu, Emigrația română din lumea anglo-saxonă 1939-1945, Institutul European, Iași, 1993., p. 92, see also H. Brestoiu, O istorie mai puțin obișnuită, Editura Politică, București, 1987, p. 141.

⁷ Apud Ivor Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁸ V. Fl. Dobrinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 94

⁹ Paul Quinlan, Ciocnire deasupra României: politica anglo-americană față de România, 1938-1947, Centrul de Studii Românești, Fundația Culturală Română, Iași, 1995, p. 67.

¹⁰ H. Brestoiu, O istorie mai puțin obișnuită, p. 145.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 147

to P.W. E.(Political Warfare Executive)¹², as a specialist on the Romanians' problems and radio commentator.¹³

In this period, BBC had thousands of broadcastings about Romania, where there was shown the interest with which Great Britain watched the events happening in this country. The used press sources were quite different: the Romanian press, ex-ambassadors or Romanian politicians from abroad, parachuted agents in Romania, opposant parties politicians. Radio London made known the Romanian listeners British government points of view, but also the comments of some journalists, Romanian and foreigner politicians.

Thus, in a special BBC program expressed his hope that North Transylvania will not be under the Hungarian domination for too long and instigate the romanians to fight against Antonescu's regime. R. Seton Watson, in his turn, had a lecture at „Somerville” College about Transylvania's situation, extremely commented on Radio London. The great British historian, who during the First World War had been a defender of the Romanians's fight to reunite the country, has shown understanding for the hard situation of Romania and has expressed his hope for a reunited Romania.¹⁴

The British have founded another two radio stations in 1943, one apparently pro-Antonescu and pro-German, and the second one instigating to sabbotage in the petrol area that functioned until the summer of 1944.¹⁵

At the beginnings of 1942 reports of SSI were signaling an intense anti-Antonescu propaganda activity of the free Romanians from Istanbul. This propaganda was directed by the secret services and had the purpose to attract new adepts and provoquing disorder within the intern order of the country, through different discontentments towards the country. In this respect, there have been some anonymous documents spread, as letters sent to the Romanians abroad asking them to multiply them and then to send them to other five Romanians.¹⁶ In such letters Carol II, Antonescu and the Iron Guard were cricized as "being agents in the service of a foreign imperialism". It was an appeal to the Romanians to join Great Britain and US „whose gigantic fight will ensure the freedom for all the peoples under the German domination". In conclusion, the governments of these two states were begged to „protect us from other unjust act in this war, we are not responsible for".¹⁷

¹² Biroul pentru războiul politic-organism care se ocupa cu propaganda de război.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 147

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 152.

¹⁵ V. Fl. Dobrinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

¹⁶ Arhiva SRI, fond d, dosar 8180, vol 5, *Notă informativă SSI din 21 ianuarie 1942*, f. 69.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, *Anexă la nota informativă din 21 ianuarie 1942*, f. 60-62.

The most important activities of propaganda and political influence have been undergone within the political opposition from Romania. The land raptures from the summer of 1940 have directed the antigerman propaganda towards the national problems of the Romanians. The opposant parties, mostly P.N.T. and P.N.L. have formed associations like Pro-Transylvania or The Ardeal, whose main purpose was to fight for the territories that Hungary had taken through the Viena Treaty. Outstanding opposant leaders, members of these organisations have sent numberless memoirs for these Romanian requirements to the British government in the autumn of 1940, through the Great Britain legation from Bucharest.

So, on November 25, 1940, Ghita Pop a representative member of P.N.T. has returned personally to this legation the document „ The Ardeal”, printed in English.¹⁸ On November 25, the professor Virgil Madgearu has returned to the minister Reginald Hoare a memoire upon the Romanian situation from the occupied Ardeal. The notes from that document were to be used in the making of the English Blue Chart for the Balkans”.¹⁹ The English noted the importance of these organisations, and Chastelain came into contact with Iosif Pasatoiu from the association: „The Ardeal”. Together, they have established the theses of these organisations that could be spread out of Romania, while in Romania the organisation would make a pro-England propaganda and send information to the British secret services in Istanbul. After Chastelain’s leaving, Pasatoiu received 10 millions lei from engineer Popovici to use for printing propaganda documents.²⁰

On February 14 1944, SSI was coming into the possession of some dates concerning the topics of the British propaganda England’s mission in Romania had left Bucharest. These were:

- A reunited and independent Romania will not be possible without England’s help
- The hostility cause by the invasion of Romania by the German troupes
- The political attitudes of P.N.L. and P.N.T.
- The promotion of the idea that England will not be vanquished
- The promotion of the idea that a German victory will turn Romania into a protectorate

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, Notă informativă SSI din 25 octombrie 1940, f. 116

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, Notă informativă SSI din 25 noiembrie 1940, f. 115.

²⁰ Arhiva S.R.I., Fond „D”, Dosar 7920. *Sinteză informativă SSI din noiembrie 1940*, f. 83.

- Eventual bomb attacks and fatalities were caused by the German troops in Romania²¹

By this time, the British were trying to force Iuliu Maniu to leave the country, with the purpose to use him out of the country as a propaganda image. In September 1940, Chastelain met the P.N.L. leader in Rică Georgescu's house. Maniu, in his turn accepted to leave for London, to form A Free Romanian Committee and to direct the antigerman propaganda. He was in charge to cause an antigerman riot in Transylvania when the situation will make this available. In turn he, personally, asked Winston Churchill to guarantee Romania's integrity and its reunion to north west of Transylvania.²²

But the British government did not want Iuliu Maniu to settle in London, but in Istanbul or Cairo. London did not want to receive Iuliu Maniu as some sort of exiled leader party, and Chastelain was stopped from having such initiatives in future.²³ In its turn, P.N.L. must have understood these aspects, as a consequence we could explain „its indecision”. As a matter of fact, on October 24, at a meeting in Conta street, in Bucharest, Iuliu Maniu shared with Madgearu the idea of forming a an Antigerman Resistance Democratic Romanian Committee abroad. He showed that the representatives of S.O.E., Chastelain and Burland were supporting this idea and proposed Madgearu to leave abroad and run this committee. The P.N.T. leader said he could not leave due to his age.²⁴ Madgearu's leaving was arranged for the beginning of december 1940, implying a study travel to Bulgaria, from he could go into a country which was not controlled by the Germans. His assassination November 27, 1940 ended this project.²⁵ Some critics consider that the failure of the project was due to Maniu's indecision. In this respect, Ivor Porter notes: “Within a week since Madgearu's death, we went to the restaurant where Iuliu Maniu used to dine, by hasard. Even if the place was full of Germans, this one sent us a message in which he expressed his contentment towards our good-humour; we should not believe that the actual government was representing the country. When the restaurant got almost empty, we raised and we cheered in his honour and he with his company also cheered. We had nothing to lose, but after only a week since one of his closest friends had been killed by the Iron Guard, Maniu showed his solidarity with us, in public. In such situations, he was terribly courageous, but there were situations where he was extremely confuse”.²⁶ In his turn, Elisabeth Barker writes:”

²¹ *Ibidem*, Notă informativă a SSI din 14 februarie 1941, f. 57

²² H. Brestoiu, O Istorie mai puțin obișnuită, p. 140.

²³ Brestoiu, Memoria Frontului secret. Tranșee ale luptei secrete din România în anii celui de-al doilea Război Mondial, Editura Globus, București, 1991, Vol. I, pp. 98-99.

²⁴ C. Coposu, „Pagini de jurnal, 1940, Asasinarea profesorului Virgil Madgearu”, în Magazin Istoric nr. 9/1993, p. 3.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

²⁶ Ivor Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

His prestige could some how diminish his negative attitudes, but he had a natural incapacity that did not permit him to take the right decision in time".²⁷ Yet, we go on believing that Iuliu Maniu refused to leave the country because he did not want to be a simple S.O.E. member, but he wanted to be accepted by the British government as the leader of an exiled Romanian Committee. The reason for which Foreign Office refused to admit his position was that in autumn of 1940, London had initiated, by sending Sir Stafford Cripps as ambassador in Moscow, a political approaching process to USSR and did not want to raise any suspicion to the Russians. Even though, London went on with the project „ Maniu or anyone at all”.

At a meeting, S.O.E. -Foreign Office on February 1941, the members of S.O.E. informed that after the legation members' leaving from Bucharest, their program in Romania depended upon their collaboration with Maniu".²⁸ A SSI note informed about the fact that on February 12, Corneliu Coposu visited Great Britain legation where he remained for the whole day. According to the note, Coposu was the connecting agent between Maniu and Hoare. At the legation place, Coposu discussed with Albert Krolk and John Leigh Reed different aspects regarding the connections between the British and P.N.T. leadership after the leaving of the British legation being established „a perfect agreement".²⁹ When leaving, Hoare left the PNT leader a transmitting machine. This way, he had access to two machines, this one and that belonging to Georgescu-Popovici team left by Chastelain.³⁰ On February 13, Hoare was visited by the chief rabbin Alexandru Safran, who wished him nice trip hoping that Great Britain would be victorious. He asked him to make some lobby for sending the immigration certificates to Palestina and sending the transit visas to Turkey.³¹ The English hoped that Maniu could be in charge of running the subversive actions from Romania. But the PNT leader rejected any hasardous offer. Thus, even though under the pressure of the English in 1941-1942 to arrange sabotages, he communicated S.O.E. that all these are unuseful, because it would attract German repression and would harden the german control. As far as the appeals to a riot against the Antonescu regime, he used to inform London that these would cause a Hungarian attack upon Romania.³²

Maniu chose to write some memoirs to Antonescu or to his Anglo-American allies. Through his memoirs towards London and Washington he tried to get Romania's

²⁷ E. Barker, *British Policy in South-East Europe in the Second World War*, London, Macmillan, 1975, p. 72.

²⁸ I. Porter, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

²⁹ AMAE, fond 71 România, dosar 66, f 187, *Notă informativă a SSI din ziua de 13 februarie*

³⁰ Dobrinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 89

³¹ AMAE, fond 71 România, dosar 66, f. 188, *notă informativă a SSI din 13 februarie*.

³² P. Quinlan, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

recognition as an ally of the Axe and his right to be examined objectively by the English and American governments.³³

Moreover, Maniu's closest collaborators edited and spread illegal documents, like the one called „The rebirth of Romania”, on May 20th 1941, where Germany was denigrated and it was expressed the belief in England's victory. In the same period, it was spread a „national catechism” with a powerful „democratic and pro-England” contents.³⁴ Maniu's team expressed so much their eagerness that the PNT leader had to interfere to temper them. So, on April 15 1941, the PNT president recommended Ilie Lazăr, Ion Hudiță and doctor Nicolae Lupu to stop any pro-England propaganda as „the actual circumstances do not allow this thing”.³⁵

Maniu kept on transmitting dates to Cairo until August 1941, when the Georgescu-Popovici team was out of use. SOE send him a new machine, in March 1942, through a Turkish man employed at the Finnish Embassy. Through the Legation of Switzerland in Bucharest, Maniu got a transmitting message that was used even by the English Navy.³⁶ Maniu's activities could not be avoided by the German services from Romania. The German Minister at Bucharest, Von Killinger attacked in his speech from „Aro” on January 30 1942 those who were considering that “it is no use to fight across the Nister” and asked Antonescu to destroy „these bumbling men”.³⁷

The country's president refused to arrest Maniu, even if he had been asked repeatedly by Hitler and Ribbentrop. Having Antonescu's agreement, SSI executed a complex operation of protecting the PNT leader that had been registered on the black list by the Gestapo.³⁸ Eugen Cristescu addressed a protest to Colonel Rodler, the chief of Abwehr-ului from România concerning the survey of Maniu, warning about some possible consequences of a violent act against the PNT leader.³⁹ Concerning the opposition's actions, Cristescu used to declare: „My theory was that the government took this line with the Germans, but the country should not sink, must be left as national reserve that make the state go on”.⁴⁰ From Maniu's deposition at Antonescu's process

³³ Brestoiu, Memoria Frontului Secret, Vol. I, p. 101.

³⁴ Mihail, E. Ionescu, Puterea Cuvântului. Propaganda mișcării de rezistență din România (1940-1944), Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1984, p. 168.

³⁵ Arhiva S.R.I., Fond „d”, Dosar 8180, *Notă SSI din 15 aprilie 1941*, Vol. II, f. 268.

³⁶ Andrei Șiperco, *Ministrul Elveției la București transmite*, în *Magazin Istoric* nr. 11, 1990, p. 41.

³⁷ Universul, 1 februarie 1942.

³⁸ Jița Rotaru, Octavian Burcin, Octavian Zodian, Mareșalul Ion Antonescu, Am făcut războiul sfânt împotriva Bolșevismului, Editura Cogito, Oradea, 1994, p. 217.

³⁹ G. Troncotă, „Din Istoria S.S.I., Eugen Cristescu despre Eugen Cristescu” în *Magazin Istoric* nr. 7/1992, pp. 38-39.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 40.

and of his main collaborators, it results that Cristescu had warned him that" the German security is where my radio transistor is".⁴¹

This way, the machine has been spared and the exchange of information with the British Secret Services could go on. The fact that the Antonescu government tolerated the opposition's activity and it even encouraged it, was noticed by the British Services. Thus, in a report of the Press Office from Stockholm, that cited a Hungarian source from Stockholm which had access to the Hungarian minister reports, it was shown that: "...In the PNT, representing the mass of the people, but also in PNL representing the Romanian industrialists put in the government service the most important employees from Romania".⁴² The Germans, in their turn showed their concern for the legations from Romania where had been sent important people whose task was to observe carefully the mood and to prepare Romania to be on the Allies' side. According to a note from the Secret Service addressed to the German Foreign Ministry „in Romania they are expecting for the moment to show that the battlefields situation is getting worse for the Axis's members, just to get in contact with the Allies immediately". The note was also signaling the press activity of the counsellor Seinescu sent to Stockholm to get in touch with the Anglo-Americans. Even he was playing the pro-German he had got in contact with the Anglo-Americans. Şeinescu was considered a professional by the Germans because he had worked for the Romanian legation from Cairo as secret agent.⁴³ Towards the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, the British Secret Services intensify the pressure on the PNT leader to pass to action. So, he receives a note from the British headquarters from Cairo, that says Romania's situation could be taken into consideration only if it turned against Germany. To this note, Maniu answered that his party cannot take the initiative for any action in England's service, but one according to Romania's interests; He considers that Romania can become free with the help of the Anglo-Saxon powers, but the suggested means would lead to a replacement of the Antonescu's government with a government subordinated to Germany. Before taking action, PNT must know the attitude of the allied powers towards the territorial problems of Romania, because without any assurance, no political person would engage the public opinion in a pro-allies movement". London's response was disappointing, as the east frontiers there had been showed to be treated according to the Chart of the Atlantic and the Anglo-Russian treaty that takes into account the soviet security interests.⁴⁴ In the summer of 1943, SOE makes new pressures to determine Maniu to come into action. At Rustom Building from Cairo (the place of the unit Force 133 from SOE) was taken into

⁴¹ Marcel Dumitru Ciucă, Procesul Maresalului Antonescu, Documente, Editura Saeculum I.O., Bucureşti, 1998, Vol. II, p. 88.

⁴² Arhivele Statului din România, România – Marele sacrificat al celui de-al doilea Război Mondial, Bucureşti, pp. 127-131.

⁴³ 23 August. Documente, doc 323, p. 420.

⁴⁴ Brestoiu, Memoria frontului secret, Vol I, pp. 142-143.

consideration that even if Romania was completely exhausted after the war, Maniu's preparations did not seem to go anywhere. As a consequence, it was decided the sending of a mission „Ranji”, led by major David Russell, in Iugoslavia that was supposed to reach Romania and contact Maniu.⁴⁵ On the night of June 15, Russell accompanied by Nicolae Turcanu have been parachuted in Iugoslavia. They had to enter Romania „to open a discussion channel by, to establish the contact with Maniu's organisation and to prepare a parachuting area in the Carpathians”.⁴⁶ On August 2nd the members of „Ranji” crossed the Danube accompanied by a Serbian and contacted Maniu's representative at Vârciorova. They have transmitted the first message at Cairo on August 12. On September 4, Russell got killed, by the Serbian guide for the golden coins that every British agent had with him on a mission. After Russell's death, Alecu Ionescu brought Turcanu at Bucharest and arranged him in an apartment from Protopopescu Street. Turcanu represented Maniu's main connection with Cairo.⁴⁷ Antonescu knew all the armistice trials made by the opposants. Concerning these trials, Eugen Cristescu shows: „ There was a report made by myself for Antonescu, regarding all these propositions made to the Tchecks, Polish, English, Americans, Portuguese, in Switzerland, in Spain. I made a report of all these to the Secret Service even if I was not in the position to give any political response. Antonescu authorized me to go on with these connections but strictly infomatively.”⁴⁸

For accelerating the negotiations it was sent in Romania the mission „Autonomous” made up from Gardyne de Chastelain, Ivor Porter and Silviu Mețianu. From a letter addressed on May 9 1944 by the colonel Talbot Rice from SOE to Howard, from Foreign Office, results that even though this mission was to be a sabotage, the final result turned into a mission to transmit recommendations to Maniu.⁴⁹ This mission failed being captured a few hours after parachuting. The three of them were imprisoned in a three room apartment from the General Headquarters of the Police where they were treated extremely well, being given wages according to their military ranks and had food and medical treatment.⁵⁰ In agreement with Vasiliu, Cristescu and with Mihai Antonescu's approval the three were arranged a perfect story to be told to the Germans in case they would have wanted to participate at the enquiry. From their enquiry, Cristescu did not manage to find out the real purpose of the „Autonomous” mission that probably not even the British officers were aware of. Today, it is well-known that the

⁴⁵ Eugen Preda, Săritura de piscică, Editura Militară, București, 1976, p. 109.

⁴⁶ Ivor Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 114.

⁴⁸ Troncotă, Eugen Cristescu Asul serviciilor secrete românești, Memorii, Mărturii, Documente., Editura Roza Vânturilor, București, 1994,, p. 308.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, vol II, doc. 572, p. 260.

⁵⁰ Troncotă, Istoria serviciilor secrete române de la Cuza la Ceaușescu, Editura Ion Cristoiu S.A., București, 1999, p. 243.

British used contacts with the opposition and the Romanian government to distract the Germans. The operation was encoded as „Bodyguard” to determine the Germans to maintain troops in the Balkans to allow the allies to disembark in Normandy.”⁵¹ Concerning the „Bodyguard” plan, Anthony Cave Brown noted: „ one of the objectives of the Bodyguard plan was to instigate misunderstandings between Romania and the Third Reich, to cause riots, to gather the German troops and to spread them on the Eastern and western battlefields.”⁵² On April 2 1944, Chastelain was allowed to meet Maniu in the Andronache forest, near Bucharest. Here the British officer tried to convince the PNT leader to act and told him the purpose of the mission that according to Porter was: „to inform Maniu, the Romania opposant leader, that his country had turned into a debate for the Russians and the only way was the capitulation in front of the Red Army”.⁵³ Maniu’s answer was evasive and unconvincing for Chastelain.⁵⁴ On July 14 1944, Turcanu was capture. This was the ending of the last free connection with Cairo..⁵⁵

Since then, Maniu depended on Niculescu-Buzești to ensure the external connections. He decided that the general Aldea to cross the battlefield line and to deal with the Russians the conditions of the armistice. It was proposed that he were accompanied by the colonel Chastelain, but the British wanted him out of Romania because they were afraid that the Romanians would not be able to face the German pressures and would give him to the Gestapo. Mihai Antonescu sent information through Cretzianu that de Chastelain was safe and would resist the German pressures. The Romanians had real reasons not to give the British officer that could reveal compromising information to the Germans for instance, Antonescu’s correspondence with the British general Wilson, but most of all with Maniu.⁵⁶ Crossing the battlefield frontiers was supposed to take place on the night of august 8 towards 9, 1944. This mission was cancelled because the fights started once again.⁵⁷ In their turn, the members of the Romanian government were in intense negotiations in Stockholm with the Soviet ambassador, Mrs. Kolontai. A document belonging to Wehrmacht from July 22 1944 informed that a Romanian delegation had arrived in Switzerland to mediate reaching the British and talk to the Soviets the peace problems. The British refused the mediation.⁵⁸ At the beginning of August professor Constantin Giurescu arrived in Istanbul. Together with colonel Teodorescu they contacted the representatives of an

⁵¹ Idem, *Eugen Cristescu*, p. 98.

⁵² Apud Nicolae Baci, *Agonia României, 1944-1948, Dosarele Secrete acuză*, Editura Dacia, Cluj Napoca, 1992, pp. 72-73.

⁵³ I. Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ *23 August*, Doc 889, p. 818

⁵⁵ Ivor Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

⁵⁶ *23 August*, vol II, doc. 626, p. 346.

⁵⁷ C. Troncotă, *Traian Borcescu, Riscurile jocului dublu, în Magazin Istoric nr. 7/1993*, p. 31.

⁵⁸ *23 August*, vol. II ,doc 640 ,p.374

American agency letting them know they were authorized by Antonescu to communicate the Romanian government desire to send another person in Cairo as they considered that Știrbei and Vișoianu had failed in their mission. If they accepted a new person, this one was to be authorized to make any concession to the British and American governments in any field..in exchange of assuming the losses sufered by the Soviets.. If the allied help arrived in Romania as troupes by plane, by ship or parachuted, the Romanian army was ready to oppose the Germans. They added that the Romanian government had gathered in capital and in the surrounding areas important forces that could be put at the Anglo-Americans forces. A Romanian source informed that Antonescu had left at Wolfsschanze to convince Hitler to retire the troupes out of Romania, while the colonel Teodorescu had been called once again to participate at the headquarters' discussions concerning the plans of an active resistance towards the Germans. Analysing these pieces of information the American state vicesecretary Stettinus reached to the conclusion that Giurescu's visit was just another try of the Roamnians to sympathize with the allies, but also to find out what was in store for them. Stettinus instructed the American ambassador at Moscow to inform Molotov that he is not conviced that the Romanians would want to initiate a determined action to retrieve Romania from the german alliance, but if the Romanian government was eager to make peace with the United Nations and wanted to send a person with complete power in Cairo in this respect, then the allied representatives wanted to accept him and listen to what he had to say.⁵⁹ In his turn, Chastelain asserts in the report concerning the Autonomous mission that on august 11, Tobescu told him that before Antonescu's leaving at Berlin there had been a meeting where they had established the armistice conditions.⁶⁰ On august 20, when the soviet pressure on the battlefield has raised, Maniu transmitted in Cairo that he had decided to act without waiting for an answer from the allies.⁶¹ Moreover, Mihai Antonescu asked Turkey to act as mediator between Romania and the Allies to close the armistice, having the king's agreement, but also Antonescu's and other opposition members. He wanted to know which of the three was the best alternative for the Anglo-Americans: sending a Romanian representative at Moscow to sign the armistice, entering simultaneously in contact with the British, the Americans and the soviets to establish the conditions of an armistice; or discussing the conditions of the Cairo armistice with the Soviets.⁶²

According to Chastelain, Antonescu invited dr. Fielderman and asked him to use his influential powers upon the Anglo-Americans in order to send in Romania some missions concerning a Soviet domination.⁶³ On august 22, Chastelain was called by the

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, doc 662, p. 408 – 409.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, doc 889, p. 824.

⁶¹ I. Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁶² *23 August*, vol. II, doc. 666, p. 413 – 414.

⁶³ *Ibidem*, doc 720, p. 492.

gen. Vasiliu who asked him if he had agreed to leave for Cairo with Antonescu. The British agent accepted, but said that next morning he would put down some conditions.⁶⁴ The conditions written down by Chastelain were:

- to see Maniu
- to be allowed to establish a radio contact with Cairo and to exchange some personal messages whose content would not be revealed
- to take with them some military specialist, capable to give dates about the German military machinery from.⁶⁵

But he did not have to handle these conditions as in the afternoon of August 23, Antonescu and his collaborators have been arrested.

Conclusion

If in 1941 the war in Romania was a popular war because the Romania Army Forces tried to liberate Bessarabia (an old Romanian region lost in 1940 through Soviet occupation) in 1944 it become unpopular as a result of a lot of factors. Inside of them an important role was played by British war propaganda. In conclusion we think than all propaganda activities done by Allies in Romania in 1941-1944 had as result to defeat steep by steep the willing of faith near Axa forces have an important contribution to change the decision of Romanian Government in August 1944. The Coup d'Etat from 23rd August 1944 had strong consequences over the development of the military operations on the Estern front and the defeat of the Axis Forces.

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⁶⁴ I. Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

⁶⁵ F. Constantiniu, „Însemnările unui agent britanic din ajunul insurecției române din August 1994”, în *Revista de Istorie* nr. 5-6/1982., p. 737.

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