

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT'S FILE

SUBJECT: President Ford's Meeting with Romanian Presidential Counselor Vasile Pungan

PARTICIPANTS: Vasile Pungan, Counselor to President Ceausescu of Romania
President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Lt. General Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, August 27, 1974
10:30 a. m.

PLACE: Oval Office - The White House

[The Press was admitted for photographs.]

Pungan: You got the Ceausescu invitation.

President: Yes. I want to visit Romania as soon as our mutual schedules can be worked out.

[The press is ushered out.]

President: I appreciate very much the invitation of President Ceausescu, and I will accept as soon as I can work it out.

Pungan: Perhaps when you come to Europe, you can do it. It is important for us to exchange views and maintain relations.

President: I want you to know Secretary Kissinger has my full confidence. I subscribe completely to President Nixon's foreign policy.

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E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.6

NSC MEMO, 11/24/74, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, State Review 3/19/04
BY WAL, NARA, DATE 3/25/04

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CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

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Pungan: I bring you the greetings and best wishes of President Ceausescu. He appreciated the message he received and he asked me to emphasize his desire and efforts to improve relations, and to have personal relations with you. Our relationship is important to us, and a visit from time to time is important in this regards.

President: The American people, the Congress and I treasure our friendship with the Romanians, and if we can get over all the problems here we can strengthen those ties.

Pungan: President Ceausescu asked me to bring a few matters to your attention.

First, Europe. He is pleased with the results of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, but there is some delay in the Conference and in having the final phase at the highest level by the end of the year. He asked your help to see the second stage finalized and preparations made for the third stage. We think this Conference can bring more cooperation and confidence.

President: I think we are eager to move it along, aren't we?

Kissinger: Yes, we are prepared to encourage the Europeans, but not to strain our relations with them in order to do it.

Pungan: We understand but we see some favorable benefits which would make desirable an early Conference at the highest level. It is especially important on Confidence-Building Measures and those measures leading to detente. We think the United States can help.

Kissinger: We support the Romanian position. But in the area of human contacts, the West Europeans are being extreme. In the areas of maneuvers and movement of forces, our views are similar to the Romanians!

Pungan: We want to see increased contacts, but it is a delicate matter.

Kissinger: Mr. President, I told him yesterday that the Communists have specialized in taking and holding power and aren't likely to be overthrown by accident through increased contacts. What the Romanians want is to prevent the large movement of forces to bring pressure.

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President: I know you are interested in the Trade Bill and MFN. We are working for a good bill and I think we are close to a good compromise.

Pungan: I think you will succeed by the end of the year.

President: We will be very disappointed if it doesn't happen.

Pungan: Another problem is Cyprus. It is close to us, and prolongation of the conflict increases the danger. At some time, we want to see the right solution--withdrawal of foreign troops, the independence of Cyprus, and both sides to live in peace on the island.

President: We are working to try to be helpful. We want withdrawal, a ceasefire until then, and a stable solution. We have been working with the Greeks, Turks and the Cypriots.

Pungan: I am sure the United States can help find a good solution.

Another problem is Korea. The North Korean leadership wants to have confidential contacts with the United States for discussions. They have suggested Romania. President Ceausescu has offered to help if you want to do it.

President: We are grateful for your offer. Secretary Kissinger and I will discuss it in detail. Certain things must precede such contacts. We don't want to go in without firm understandings. Secretary Kissinger will contact your Ambassador.

Kissinger: We will talk and then relay our ideas through your Ambassador.

Pungan: I will tell the North Koreans and hope you will have a good answer.

The last question is the Middle East. President Ceausescu thinks a delay in further progress is leading to new tensions and the possibility of war. We think the Geneva Conference should start again.

President: We are keeping the process moving. We have been meeting with Arab leaders, and we will meet soon with Saqqaf and Rabin. We agree that more movement is essential, and we are working toward that, but we may differ on whether the best way is Geneva or bilaterally.

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Pungan: But it is useful to have talks going on and some sense of progress. We need confidence that the next step will come.

Kissinger: Romania is the only country in Eastern Europe that did not break relations with Israel.

President: We have to keep things moving.

Pungan: You have done so much, but we hope you will do more. Any time there are mutual problems which you think we should discuss, please get in touch and we will cooperate closely for the best solution.

President: You have been extremely helpful. Our relationship with Romania is excellent and we want to make it better. We appreciate your offer on North Korea. We will be back to you.

Kissinger: Counselor Pungan is willing to come here from time to time when something is urgent.

[The meeting then ended.]