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OPENING OF THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR IN ROMANIA

The new Academic year 1970-1971 was inaugurated in Romania on October 1.

In keeping with the tradition established a few years ago, festivities were organised in the 18 university centres of country.

The inaugural festivity in Bucharest was attended by Party and State leaders, at head with Nicolae Ceaușescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, President of the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania as well as by representatives of the Ministry of Education and of local Party and State bodies, numerous men of science and culture, teachers and students.

After visiting several faculties and higher learning institutes, Nicolae Ceaușescu took part in a festive meeting when he made a speech.

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SPEECH BY NICOLAE CEAUSESCU AT THE OPENING
OF THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

Dear comrade professors,
Dear student friends,

Today, more than one hundred and fifty thousand young people in our country are making their way to the halls and laboratories of the higher learning institutes. Indeed, only by thinking about this figure we realise what a wonderful and huge army of men of science and culture we shall have tomorrow in the work of building communism in our homeland. Therefore, I have special pleasure - just as the other comrades of the Party and State leadership - in taking part in the festive opening of this year of higher education and convey on this occasion to you, to the didactic corps and students of the higher learning institutes of the Capital as well as in all the university centres of the country, a warm salute on behalf of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, of the State Council and Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania.

The inauguration of the university courses this year takes place in the conditions when the working people throughout the country carry on an intensive activity for the successful implementation of the 1966-1970 Five-Year Plan provisions and for preparing in the best conditions the transition to the next Five-Year Plan, worked out on the basis of the Directives of the Tenth Congress of our Party.

We can say, comrades, that already now many counties and branches of our economy have fulfilled their

Five-Year Plan. Thus, we have every condition at hand for the Five-Year Plan to be not only fulfilled but also topped by the end of this year.

As for the next five-year plan, it has already been made final; we must mention the gladdening fact that its provisions are higher than those established by the Directives of the Tenth Party Congress and this will ensure a higher rate of development to the economy, to the living standard of our whole people.

As is known, this year Romania experienced great difficulties caused by the catastrophic floods of last spring, which affected many counties, causing great damages to the national economy and the population.

We have, however, the satisfaction that most of these difficulties have been overcome now. As a result of the heroic work done by our working class which stood in the first ranks - by the peasantry, the intelligentsia and by the contribution of our whole people led by the Party, economic and social activity in this country has resumed its previous tempo in a short time.

I take this opportunity to extend again heartfelt thanks to the working people - Romanians, Magyars, Germans and of other nationality - to our whole people, who spared nothing for safeguarding the national wealth in those circumstances, giving once again proof of ardent patriotism, attachment to the cause of building socialism in our homeland. I would also like to especially express heartfelt thanks to the young people of our homeland, to the students, who worked alongside of the whole people, in order to halt the onrushing waters and to contribute to overcoming the difficulties, for the whole activity to resume its normal course.

We can say that in these difficult circumstances the granite-like force of our socialist society was once again

reasserted just as the unity of the whole people around the Party, its determination to unswervingly implement the home and foreign policy of the Party - policy that corresponds to the interests and aspirations of our entire socialist nation.

Our whole people is engaged with energy and enthusiasm in the efforts of continuously developing and perfecting the technical-material base of our socialist society, of implementing the programme established by the Party; large-scale activity is proceeding for the steady perfection and improvement of the management, organisation and planning of economic and social life, for increasing the efficiency of the national economy and of the whole social activity.

Following the successes obtained in economic construction and in the fulfilment of the State Plan, new conditions have been created for raising the population's living standard, for satisfying to a greater extent its material and spiritual demands.

An eloquent expression of the concerns for raising the living standard of the people is the conclusion this year of the action of generalising the measures for increasing the wages and salaries.

An important place is held by the development of education, by the ensuring of conditions for training the necessary cadres for the economy, science and culture, by the education and shaping of the younger generation for work and life as part of the Party and State concerns for ensuring the country's many-sided progress, for raising Romania to the level of the advanced countries. The wage-earning population has thus received in addition, this year, some 12 thousand million lei.

To raise the living standard of the people is a central preoccupation of our Party and State, the supreme aim of the whole activity of building socialism and communism in our homeland. We shall do every thing, so that

year after year, month after month, our people's material and spiritual welfare should rise steadily.

Founded on the dialectical-materialist outlook on nature and society, developing the brilliant progressive traditions of the Romanian school, education at all levels in this country witnesses today an unprecedented advance and blossoming, recording fresh successes year after year.

In our educational system, higher learning holds a specially important place. The higher learning institutes have trained and supplied the country with specialised cadres for all domains of activity. We should stress also on the occasion of this start of the Academic year that the Party and Government of our country highly appreciate the work full of responsibility and nobility of the university teaching staff, their most valuable contribution to the instruction and training of the students, to the moulding of the new man of our socialist society.

The Party, the whole people appreciate that the students of Romania are training seriously and diligently, proving that they are aware of their high responsibilities in society.

Dear comrades,

The Tenth Party Congress has established the programme of a powerful development of the country in the ensuing period, of raising the whole activity of socialist construction in Romania onto higher stages. We are on the eve of starting work for the implementation of this vast programme, of the transition to the new Five-Year Plan 1971-1975.

The successful fulfilment of the tasks envisaged for this important stage of the multilateral development of the socialist society in Romania calls for a higher qualitative level of our whole activity. In this respect, an important role is played by man, cadres, called upon to ensure the materialisation of this vast programme. That is why the question of training and moulding the new contingent of

experts, armed with thorough knowledge, capable of answering, in good conditions the steadily higher exigencies of organizing and managing production, of the whole social activity, becomes, a key question of the very progress of our socialist society.

There is no doubt that the formation of cadres is a complex and multilateral problem; it starts today at the age of six, and finishes, so to say, at 60, retiring age, but in fact it never finishes throughout one's lifetime. We view the training and improvement of the cadres - builders of socialism - as a constant process and not as something that is limited to a certain period. It is only to the extent to which we will be able to ensure a smooth progress of this process, a constant replenishing of the acquired information, acquainting the citizens of the homeland with the latest gains of science and technology, that we will be in a position to fulfil under good conditions the tasks incumbent on us in the work of building socialism and communism.

In connection with the formation and training of cadres, our higher learning has particularly big responsibilities. As you know, the State is making most serious efforts for ensuring the development and modernization of the material groundwork of the education system, for improving the living and working conditions of the teaching staff and students. Further educational space has been made available under the current Five-Year Plan, as well as laboratories, clinics and many student hostels and restaurants. During the last Academic year, about 63 per cent of the students attending day-courses were granted scholarships, over 64 per cent of them were living in hostels and over 54 per cent had their meals at student restaurants.

Concomitantly with the development of the material base, with the ensuring of steadily better living and working conditions for the students and for the professorial corps, the Party and Government have attached and are attaching spe-

cial importance to the multilateral perfection of the whole educational process. It is known that to this end, the new Law on Education has been passed during the current Five-Year Plan. On the basis of the Directives of the Central Committee and the provisions of the Law on Education a series of important measures have been applied on the line of developing and modernising education, of raising its efficiency in the social life of the whole country.

I have visited today the Institute of Constructions, the Children's Clinic of the Institute of Medicine as well as the Polytechnical Institute. I can say that our impressions of these three institutes visited are particularly good. I was especially able to note the preoccupation that exists for the practical realisation of the Directives of the Central Committee of the Party concerning the equipping and development of the laboratories, the closer link of education with practice, with production. There is no doubt that a series of good results have been obtained on this line. A series of measures have been adopted - to which several comrades who spoke here today also referred - with regard to the improvement of running activity at universities and higher learning establishments, such as the foundation of the professorial senates and boards, the inauguration of the principle of collective work, the recruitment of students for running these units of higher learning.

There is no doubt that the steps made are important but I consider that in this respect we are still at the beginning. It is necessary that these bodies should get greater independence, more autonomy in the organisation of the educational process, of tuition. We must not be afraid of a greater diversity in the system of organisation and tuition of different courses in one or another of our learning institutes! I believe that we must do away with cliché methods, rigidity, still existing today in our educational system and which in fact is a brake on its more rapid advance.

I believe that the Ministry of Education too will be able to work

better if, instead of guiding from Bucharest the activity in Jassy, in Cluj, Tîrgu Mureş, Timişoara, Craiova and in the other university centres, will leave them, the boards of the respective institutes, to solve their problems according to the general directives, and for the Ministry to ensure a prospective orientation, to truly concern itself with the big problems that have to be solved on a central plane in the educational activity. In this way both society and students stand to gain - the cadres of tomorrow of our socialist society. We must not be afraid that by granting more university autonomy the management of education would get out of hand in any way. On the contrary, by creating this autonomy, by giving the centres and institutes broader attributions in organising the educational process and the students' activity, we shall ensure a more efficient management of our whole education, at a higher level.

A problem to which the Party and State pay special attention is that of linking education more closely to practice, to life. As I have said, in this respect we have a series of results, but they cannot satisfy us; what we have done is in fact only the beginning. We still have a long way to go for our higher education to be really linked closely to practice, to production, for the university or any other higher learning institute graduate to be able to take part, on entering the factory of starting research work, from the very day in the production activity, to fit correspondingly in the work collective. We all know that a graduate of our higher learning needs two or three years to adapt himself to the work conditions in the enterprise, to be truly able to fit in the work process. This is a big deficiency in education and we must rapidly liquidate it because it hinders us from obtaining better results in our activity.

In our whole thinking we rely on the dialectical-materialist outlook on the world. We know that in the end, work has been the essential element in the very formation

of man, in the advancement of his thinking. In spite of all this, we sometimes meet outlooks in some institutes and with some young people according to which work is looked upon as something beneath them, something of a nature to belittle them. It is true, there are few such young people; but we must see to it that there should be no young person in our country, in the universities of Romania, who think that way. In order to create such conditions we must start with the very improvement of our educational process, to go ahead with the translation into life of the Directives of the Central Committee of the Party.

It is necessary that more receptivness should be shown, prompter reaction to everything that is new in the practice of economic and technico-scientific activity, that education should get faster adapted to the changes occurring in the domain of material production, in thinking, in all social activity.

I have discussed today - during the visits - about the share held by practice and tuition activity in our higher learning institutes. I was able to note with pleasure that steps ahead have been made on the line of increasing the share of practice - but only steps. You all know that with us the tuition at courses holds an important place in the activity of both the professor and of the student. Although we have printed courses - at the Institute of Constructions I was told that there is one copy for two students for the first years, and one copy for each student of the fourth and fifth year - the professor, during his hours, only repeats the course, which in fact the student can read very well alone, without having to stay for hours listening to things that he finds in the text book.

It is necessary that we adapt ourselves more rapidly to the modern demands and practices of advanced countries, where the tuition of courses by the professor is limited to what has appeared new or to the explanation of phenomena that

must be better understood, leaving the student to read for himself the text book, to get used to selecting from the course what is useful to him. Only in this way shall we teach the student to work and study with good results. Yet, it must be said that today we are teaching the student how to take down notes quicker. You know very well that many students answer at the exams not so much upon what they have read but more upon the notes they took during the hours; in fact some professors ask the students not what is essential in the course - I do not want to say that all of them do this - but whether they remember a certain formula they did when the respective subject was taught. Then the student gets the mark of ten. I do not know how to take your applause; as an agreement with the professors who do this or as an approval of the criticism of such professors.

I believe that it is necessary for our higher education to start with more courage to improve, to re-build the instructional-didactic process. Of course, we might have some difficulties at the beginning, but we shall have to concern ourselves more that the student should have more time to read, that we create for him conditions so that he can study within the faculty to be able to work more in the laboratory, to be better assisted and guided by the professor. I have spoken on other occasions too about the necessity for each professor to answer for a group of students, to know how they behave during the education process and how they act in their whole personal life. By studying in this domain too world experience, by applying it into practice, we shall create premisses for the student to really be able to study in good conditions. The professor must not consider that he has finished his activity once he finished the course, but should assist and guide the whole work of study, of laboratory and production of the student, taking active part together with him in all this activity.

It is along this line that we must re-build and organise our educational process.

We consider that the laboratory activity, the practical activity and work in production of the students must hold key place during education. Of course, this can be achieved easier in agronomy, in construction, in the polytechnical and technical institutes. Naturally, we must look in the first place to these branches of education. We consider that some radical re-constructions will have to be started this very year. The student must set himself to assimilate in the five years of polytechnical learning also professional knowledge at the level of a skilled worker. If he wants to guide tomorrow, when he will be an engineer, the worker, he will have to have at least his level of practical knowledge and in addition the theoretical knowledge of an engineer. Therefore, it is necessary that practice should be organised in such a way that the student should work several months just like the factory apprentice does, then as a worker, as a foreman and also practice as an engineer in these five years. Only in this way will he know well, when he finishes studies, the problems of practice in production, will he be able to fit immediately in the process of work.

Probably we shall have to find new forms concerning practice too; let us organise this practice either for a longer period of six to eight months consecutively - as is done in a number of countries - or per years of study, also concentrated, with the actual participation during this whole period in the production process.

At the same time, we shall have to better organise the laboratories and even some production workshops under the learning institutes. In fact, this problem is posed for our whole educational system, secondary one included, which in a few years will have to have their own workshops, so that all the young people, not only in technical schools but also in

general lyceums should learn a trade. The young people must understand that it is necessary for them to get used to work, to practical work, so that when they finish school they should not merely become people who have learned about everything but cannot lay hand on a needle.

This is valid also for the so called humanistics faculties and institutes. Referring to the faculties of philosophy, is sufficient to learn there only the history of philosophy and to study different current philosophical concepts? It is known that philosophy and our philosophical outlook is the outcome of what mankind has best created in all domains. Dialectical materialism is precisely a synthesis of all the sciences; without physics, without chemistry, without biology, without mathematics one cannot conceive dialectical materialism. Look, however, at the curricula of our faculties of philosophy. You will see that it does not stipulate the study of physics, chemistry, biology or mathematics. Therefore, at these faculties there are 15 candidates for one place, considering that it is enough for them to study some general theories, divorced from life, learned exclusively from books, and to become philosophers. The philosopher must be able to understand the world of today, contemporary science and rely on the latest data of science in order to advance our outlook on the world. A good philosopher cannot be formed without knowing physics, chemistry, biology and mathematics just as we cannot have well-educated people without these knowledges. Literature must be the expression of everything man has created best, his thought and work, and not the expression of abstract things, of the theory that "I have my ego in my conscience". Where does this conscience come from? In fact, abstractionism in the arts, literature, philosophy - there too are many abstractionists - is precisely the outcome of an isolation from practice, from life, of the enthronement of idealistic concepts which we combat and which in fact slips through under this form the idea of the existence in the world, in society, of certain super-natural

forces or of some supermen able to do wonders. We must truly find the philosophical education just as our whole humanistic education on dialectical materialist basis. Therefore, we must link it to practice, to life and the students of these faculties must actually pass through the process of the production practice. Only in this way will they be good students and good philosophers.

Hence, it will be necessary that in the spirit of the Directives of the Central Committee we take more radical measures to truly make the whole education in our country - and of course higher education - to be closely linked to practice. Every young person of our homeland should know what a factory is, what an agricultural cooperative or State farm is, to be able to work in any sphere of activity. Only in this way will he become a good builder of socialism and communism.

This of course calls also for the obligation of the professors to revise their methods of tuition and their whole didactic activity. They must understand that they have the duty to take effective part in the life of the university, that they themselves must be closely linked to production. In such conditions also their courses, everything they teach will be permanently linked to the demands of practice, of life.

Education is, as is known, also an important factor of scientific research. I was very pleased to see some laboratories at the Institute of Constructions. There, the professors were able to show me graphs which indicate that they work with tens of enterprises, that they have solved many of their problems. But to do research work, in good conditions, you cannot at the same time give lessons outside university obligations, you cannot concern yourself with other things too. Anyone working in higher education has embarked, by the very profession chosen, on the road of science; one cannot conceive higher education without all those working within its frame-

work to be permanently preoccupied with the advancement of knowledge in their sphere of activity. The concern of the lecturer, of the assistant must be to investigate, to make his contribution to the general progress of science and culture.

These, comrades, are some of the problems I wanted to put to you on the opening of this educational year. By thinking about these problems, about the multilateral improvement of our education, let us permanently bear in mind that the society we are building, mankind generally, will not be able to advance, will not be able to obtain good results on the path of its material and spiritual progress, without it being founded on everything science has created best, on the latest gains of technique. Let us do everything that the citizens of the homeland be armed with thorough knowledge, with everything mankind creates most valuable, most advanced.

We have organised ten-year education. Our youth of tomorrow - hence, the worker of tomorrow, the generation of tomorrow - will have very advanced knowledge. For this, however, we have the obligation to teach them this knowledge in such a way so that it be thoroughly assimilated by the youth of our homeland; that we can truly say that the Romanian people - builder of socialism - assimilating everything that is most advanced, makes at the same time its own contribution to the advancement of universal science and culture.

We consider it necessary to make bigger efforts in order to ensure the organisation of our education in this spirit, because only in this way shall we be able to fulfil our obligations! The Government, the Central Committee of the Party are determined to do everything to improve the whole educational process along the line I have mentioned here.

We know, comrades, that in our whole education, higher one included, we have able didactic cadres, with vast knowledge, and who enjoy world fame. Hence, we have a strong army of teachers - from second lieutenants to generals

and marshals, so to speak, - capable of materialising these measures. We are convinced that the whole university corps will work with its whole capacity to raise the general level of education in our homeland and to make its contribution to the multilateral development of the socialist society.

We also have a wonderful youth, desirous of assimilating everything that is newest in science and technique, in human thinking. As a matter of fact the Romanian people enjoys in the world the fame of an intelligent people, able to assimilate everything that is new. We know that our young people who learn abroad are appreciated for the way they study. Therefore, we are convinced that the youth, the students of our homeland will contribute, alongside of the professors, to the implementation of the Party Directives for raising the level of education, will work thoroughly in order to train to be able to further the cause of building socialism and communism, the cause of our socialist nation's welfare.

Dear comrades,

By concerning ourselves with the problems of the advancement of our socialist society, of raising the welfare of the masses, we know that we fulfil in the first place a lofty duty to our people to which we belong. It is the duty of communists to be one with the interests of the working people, to act for a constant advancement of the general welfare of the people. It is only in this way that the Communist Party fulfils its obligation of representative of everything that is more advanced in society. Our party is determined to most firmly fulfil this essential obligation to the people, to the people the Party is rallying - because in fact the Party is not something abstract but the result of the rallying of the best forces of the people which want to militate for ensuring the development of the entire society, on a new, higher basis. On this basis, our Party, in its capacity of representative and binder of everything that is more progressive in this country, is determined to fulfil its obligations, to act in close union with the entire people.

Of course, we do not forget for a moment that we live in a community of nations and peoples, that socialist construction in our homeland is not proceeding in an isolated way, but in cooperation with the other socialist countries, in close unity with all the revolutionary and progressive forces in the world. The successful socialist and communist construction in Romania is directly linked to the strengthening of the multilateral cooperation with all the socialist countries, with the strengthening of the solidarity and unity with the revolutionary and progressive, anti-imperialist forces throughout the world.

We develop multilateral relations of cooperation and friendship with all the socialist countries, campaign for the constant strengthening of the unity of the socialist countries. I wish to mention on this occasion too, that the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Romania and the Soviet Union, which we ratified yesterday, is outstandingly important for the development of the relations between our peoples, for the cause of socialism and peace. Actually, we can say with satisfaction that Romania's relations with all the socialist countries are good, that they are continuously developing to the interest of our people, of the socialist countries, of socialism in general.

We are concerning ourselves - with strengthening our links with the communist and workers' parties, with the socialist parties, with the national liberation movements with all the anti-imperialist forces, convinced as we are that this is a demand of social development, of the successful struggle against imperialism, for progress and world peace.

It is precisely by setting out from such concerns that we are worried by the situation in Vietnam and in Indochina in general, by developments in the Near East. We actively campaign for an end to the war in Indochina, for the withdrawal of the troops of the United States and of their allies from that area, so that the Vietnamese people and the other

peoples of the Indochina peninsula be allowed to solve their problems without any outside interference. We also consider it in the interest of the peoples of the Near East that the existing conflict be settled peacefully, the independent development be ensured to each nation, to each state in that region, and in this way conditions be created for their economic and social progress. It is precisely in our capacity of good friends of the Arab people that we believe that everything should be done to ensure conditions of peace, as only in such conditions will the Arab peoples be able to develop, to improve their living standards and cultural level.

We act in support of new inter-state relationships to get more firmly entrenched in Europe, for the achievement of European security which presupposes the full equality of the European nations, mutual observance of independence and sovereignty, cooperation in all spheres of activity, presupposes an end to the policy of strength and dictate promoted by imperialism, so that Europe should turn into a continent of peace and cooperation. We believe that conditions exist for such desiderata to come true and shall do our utmost to this end.

Setting out from the interdependence of the policy of socialist construction and foreign policy, we are acting in support of the triumph of new-type relationship in international life, in support of the assertion and observance of the rules of international law. We are concerning ourselves with the United Nations Organization to play a more important part in the settlement of international problems, with its membership to include all the peoples. In this context, I would like to lay particular stress on the necessity that the lawful rights be restored to the People's Republic of China in the U.N; this will be in the interest of the settlement of international questions, of the cause of peace and progress of the world progress in the world.

We are convinced that acting in this way, by stead-

fastly militating for the union of all the anti-imperialist forces, by contributing to the implementation of a policy of international cooperation and peace, we are fulfilling both our national and international duty, we shall act in the future, too, firmly and consistently in this spirit!

Dear comrades,

In conclusion, I would like to express once again my conviction, that of the Party and State leadership, that the Academic year you are starting today will be for all of you - teachers and students - a year of fresh progress in the advancement and blossoming of education and science, in raising your contribution to the general progress of the socialist homeland.

With this conviction, I wish all the teachers in higher learning steadily bigger achievements in the activity dedicated to the education of the younger generation. I also address to our students heartfelt wishes to obtain fresh successes in the assimilation of science and culture, in its thorough training for work and life, to be able to make its contribution tomorrow in enterprises, in research institutes, in education, in the cooperative organisations, in all bodies of our socialist society to the general progress and to carry further the torch of progress and civilization, to raise Romania, our socialist nation onto fresh peaks.

I wish you success in work and study, good health and much happiness to you all.

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