

The Transition from Communism to Capitalism *In Romania*

Communism idea has the origins in the Marxist teachings and it is interpreted differently by some leaders in the world. Stalin was the first one who modified these ideas. The ideal social life as the communists thought, was a social system in which every citizen of the country is seen as equal with other citizens, doesn't matter how smart, or what he can do. In communist system nobody can own properties, and everything is controlled by the state. All the power was concentrate in the hands of the Communist Party and all other parties were banned.

Romania was one of the first countries who introduced Communism system in their social-political life, after the World War II. Nicolae Ceausescu, the Romanian leader, transforms the system into a heavy dictatorship, with many severe rules for the people.

In 1989, people from Romania passed a crucial time; it was a year when they opened the eyes for freedom, peace and human rights.

After the Revolution, Romania crosses few hard years, with economic problems and strict reforms transited to a capitalism system. The people, disappointed by their leader went out in started to protest for all their problems. The life was very hard in that time and people couldn't understand that it's only one way for a better life, and this one was with many sacrifices for everybody.

Nicolae Ceausescu, the Romanian leader between 1965 and 1989, was one of the cruelest dictators in the world. After 1970, he transformed Romania into a Stalinist State with the worst Human Right record in the Warsaw Pact. At the beginning, he started visiting some country from the west, and he made new important friends all over the world; even USA gave the title for Romania: Most Favored Nation.

1970 was a crucial year for Romania, a year when the big transforms started to be applied. The Communist Party tried to build Agro-industrial zone as center with apartments, and some old villages were transformed in industrialization center with more agricultural land. Erasing old and historical villages were motivated by being decrepit. After they started those big projects, Romania owed billion of dollars to the west countries, so the Party took some severity measures for their nation. In 1980 they started to ration food, oil, and energy and started to export all the goods, to cover the Romanian's debt.

“Ceausescu embarked on massive industrialization, greater austerity and social engineering measures aimed at the blending of the town and country into a soulless, agro-industrial community”

(“CEAUSESCU'S “ERA OF LIGHT” “: <http://www.enzia.com/Pages/Rev4.html>)

Ceausescu dreamed for a big nation, so he decided to increase the populations by abolishing the abortion and contraception. Women with no kids were overloaded with big taxes, and women with many children were declared as “Heroine Mothers”. All this measures were hard accepted by the people, and Ceausescu introduced a terror atmosphere between the nation and spread rumor about the secret police informers. The mass-media was under the party's control, one newspaper and one Television show only the glory of the Ceausescu's family. This severity measures transformed the entire nation, people started loosing the personality, because they had to suppress their thought and couldn't speak up what they want.

Ceausescu ordered to be confiscated all the goods that people own; he took the land and create a big collectivization. This collectivization means that all the peasants have to work in big farms (“Cooperative”), and the land is owned by the communist party. Everybody has to be member in the Communist Party, and being present in big conference about how prosper is the nation with this new configuration. In fact the result of this collectivization was falling agricultural production. In production was more important quantity than quality. The communist idea wanted to transform social classes in one big and equal class.

One of the worst experiences in this life could be living in a communist regime; a system developed by the people with short view and for freedom people means to live in a “cage”. The “cage” is the symbol of total control above the nation, because the borders were closed in that time; nobody could see what was going on outside the country. In that time the Communist Party increase the power of the country paying with the people’s freedom and life.

Today, North Korea leaded by oppressive ideas under the communism regime, control millions of people. The leader support uncontrolled increment if the population, and let them working very cheap for other countries. The people work as slaves in their country, only for minimum food to survive. They don’t know what really happen out of their country, mass-media being under the regime control. To be a big army power in the world is the biggest dream of their leader.

In the recent history of Romanian, we can mark the Revolution from 1989 like a big victory for democracy against the Eastern Communist blockade. The Revolution in Romania was one of the bloodiest revolts for freedom and human right in the Communist Block.

December 1989 look like a sunny brilliance after the shadows of the communism for more that 45 years. Everything started in Timisoara, the second largest city in the country, where Laszlo Tokes, a Hungarian minister, gave a spark for the real revolt. The Romanian Secret Services ordered to be deported, but many peoples gathered around Tokes’s house and started to protest. The Secret Services shows the cruel measures how they treated a situation and in the next day they surrounded the crowd with tanks and helicopters and opened fire. After few days of panic, Ceausescu declared state of emergency in Timisoara and tried to destroy the city and to kill the protestants.

“Ceausescu declared a national state of emergency and ordered the army to use force to disperse the demonstrators.”

(“THE ROMANIAN REVOLUTION”: <http://phoenixcommand.com/hell4.htm>)

The Romanian Revolution was a result of many years of cruel oppressions of the Romanian population, measures who took all the freedoms and nobody was allowed to talk about the president and his way of ruling. After the revolt started in Timisoara, in two days people from many cities went out in the streets and started to demonstrate against Ceausescu. A important role in spreading the rumor about what happened in Timisoara, was played by Romanian Radio Broadcast from London:” Free Europe”. In that situation, Ceausescu tried to stop the protests promising wage increases and more money for pregnant women, but it was too late.

The Revolution in Romania was the last revolution in the Eastern Communist Block, and it was the hardest one. The price of that revolt was few thousands of lives and many prejudices. It's sad because so many people paid with their lives for something what they supposed to have: "Freedom".

Same thing happened in Iraq where so many innocent people died for somebody who didn't care about them. Political fights affect very bad poor people, creating confusion between people, who don't know what is wrong and what is good.

After the revolution, the Revolutionary Government tried to reform Communism and to transform the social economy in a capitalist one. Romania passed a transition time with many social and economic reforms.

Since 1990, many protests were held against its ex-communist leadership. Students found freedoms of speech and expression and went out in the street and started protests for every problem they had. They tried to change the leader, but other part of the population coal miners for example were happy because the new government gave them many privileges especially when they came to Bucharest to protect the leadership. The police was in a total disorganization, they tried to act like in other democratic countries, and the demonstrators took control of most situations. After one year, the coal miners came back into the capital to protest and forced the resignation of Prime Minister Petre Roman who wanted to start a big reform. Most of the population was in a big state of confusion because they didn't know what to expect in the new system of transition to capitalism. The prices went up very fast because of inflation and the salaries stayed the same.

"Rampant inflation, unemployment and allegation
of government corruption"

("ROMANIA" <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/europe/romania/history.htm>)

The freedom of speech brought nationalist issues, which have traditionally been an important part of Romanian politics. After the Revolution, Romania was a parliamentary democracy, but the minorities were low organized in its social policy. In 1996, Romanian citizens tried to change the wrong way for their country and voted out in favor of Emil Constantinescu, the leader of the reform-minded Democratic Convention of Romania. The reforms continued to show the bad part of transitions and people started to lose their trust in the new democratic system.

The Revolution was a good thing in our history, but the time after 1989 was very confusing. The corruption started on the big levels of industry and politics. All the businesses were directly influenced by the Party who led the Government. The reforms were manipulated by influenced people with power and politicians in their favor and in a few years Romania appeared to have very rich people and a lot more poor people. The middle social class had disappeared and money and corrupt government officials were running the country now.

In Europe, many ex-communist countries have crossed into the transition to capitalism, but they were helped by West countries which already had that democratic system. The strategic position of Romania, between Democratic countries and Russia, stopped the western investors from putting large amounts of capital into Romania because the territory didn't show enough security and economic stabilization.