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**NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PITEȘTI RE-EDUCATION
EXPERIMENT FILE IN COMMUNIST ROMANIA (1949–1951). THE
CASE OF CONSTANTIN BOTEZ**

Abstract: Recently, I have edited the memoirs of Nicolae Stroescu-Sovarna, a former political prisoner, who also got acquainted with the Pitești re-education experiment. Apart from countless details, the author provides some surprising information, mainly about an obscure and almost unidentified figure, a so-called Chief Commissioner from the Securitate, named Constantin Botez. By conducting research in the C.N.S.A.S. archives, I managed to partly document the case, thus validating much of Stroescu's inkling and intuition. This refers to circumstances in which the topic of the re-education still holds grey areas, if not black spots, even though the topic has been extensively dealt with in memoirs and has been rigorously studied by historians. Some questions got clear answers, while others are even more complicated. What type of missions Botez had, how he accomplished them, the results of his activities and the role he played within this phenomenon – these are things that can only be guessed until future research bring further clarifications.

Keywords: communism, re-education, Pitești, Securitate

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The phenomenon of Pitesti Re-education during communist Romania – from 1949 to 1951 – has made a lot of ink to flow and shows no signs of stopping anytime soon. A rich list of reference books¹ has been assembled so far – having even started prior to 1990 with several volumes published in exile, completed with thorough studies of dedicated researchers². Thanks to them, details on this

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¹See the list compiled by Pitesti Prison Memorial, available at <https://pitestiprison.org/mip--resource.html>.

² See, firstly, the volumes by Mircea Stănescu, *Procesele Reeducării (1952-1960)* („Memoria” Cultural Foundation Publishing House: Bucharest, 2008); *Reeducarea în România comunistă (1945-1952). Aiud, Suceava, Pitești, Brașov* (Polirom Publishing House: Iași, 2010); *Reeducarea în România comunistă (1948-1955). Târgșor, Gherla* (Polirom: Publishing House, 2010); *Reeducarea în România comunistă (1948-1955): Târgu-Ocna, Ocele Mari, Canalul Dunăre-Marea Neagră* (Polirom Publishing House: Iași, 2012);

experiment are well supplied, leading to a good understanding of the stages, mechanisms and specifics, knowledge of the victims and the torturers – more so about the ones in the limelight and to a lesser extent about the ones in the shade. We know today the names of most detainees who had gone through what Alexandr Soljenitin called ‘the most terrible savagery of the contemporary world’, as well as in-depth information in their penal or surveillance files after their release from the political prison. Similarly, the main authors are now known, the retribution for their deeds – more or less – for the involvement in this memorable moment, the manner in which the regime orchestrated the withdrawal from this operation and organized the conspiracy of the mole hunt.

Nevertheless, even though this issue has been on our working agenda for a long time, there are still unanswered questions or unsatisfactorily handled. We are not going to dwell on it, however we will reiterate our belief that we are still far off from discovering and understanding all the sides and twists of this phenomenon so intricate and equally sensitive, convoluted and conniving.

Recently, I have edited Nicolae Stroescu’s memoirs, a former political prisoner who also experienced the Re-education phenomenon of Pitesti³. Arrested during the spring of 1948 – following an attempt to assassinate him – the investigation stalled due to his precarious health condition and he arrived in Pitesti as a precautionary action, without being sentenced. He was assigned a special status (not singular in this category), hence he was not made to run the gauntlet of violence but he was allowed instead to inquire himself, to examine, to try to understand. Along with many gladly received details (portraits of individuals, the prison and the political regime, etc), the author also provides us with original information, mainly on a mysterious and completely unknown of prior to the publication of this memoirist work, a someone named Constantin Botez, a quaestor in Securitate.

More specifically, Stroescu is calling attention to several issues. This person played the role of the investigator⁴ in the spring of 1948, while he was hospitalized in the Emergency Hospital, completely crushed by the vehicle that had deliberately run him over and he met him after a few weeks in Vacaresti prison, as a privileged prisoner⁵. Later on, Botez will also be incarcerated in Pitești prison⁶, only

Documentele Reeducării (I) (Vicovia Publishing House: Bacău, 2013); *Documentele Reeducării (II)* (Vicovia Publishing House: Bacău, 2018).

³ Nicolae Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas. Din crimele comunismului* (Vremea Publishing House: Bucharest, 2017).

⁴ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 94.

⁵ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 267. Botez claimed that his detention came as a result of a confusion, but he insisted that things would be clarified and he would be freed in a short time and reinstated as a quaestor.

this time with no favors from the guardians or the administration, but scorned and humiliated⁷, and sometimes beaten⁸. Even so, this character seemed more than questionable to Stroescu, as well as his activities. He was sometimes taken out of the cell, disappearing for more days at a time and explaining that he had been called to the clerk's office⁹. As a conclusion, the author insists through his memoirs on the fact that Botez held a key position in the re-education¹⁰, portraying him as a counselor of Eugen Țurcanu¹¹, the undisputed leader of the abominations taking place in Pitesti. It is worth mentioning that this Constantin Botez is not mentioned in any other memoirist work dedicated to this phenomenon or in the studies of the historians referring to this topic.

Stroescu's memories are outstanding on several levels – to start with, it is their authenticity. Since the Canal works ended, 1952 – 1953, he was stationed in a gatehouse alone, in the open field and was given pen and paper (a ra-ri-ssi-me event in the political prison) and asked to keep an inventory. He did his job but somehow he started writing down certain things – facts, people, events. By some miracle, he managed to smuggle them out on his release. Being sent in the house arrest to Vatra Dornei, he worked for many years as a woodsman, brigadier and similar jobs – by himself, on top of the mountain. He started writing...When he felt that the control was getting tighter, he gave the manuscript to his sister, to hide it. He went back to prison for another 2 – 3 years, and he got out of prison for good in the early '60s.

Prior to 1989, he kept writing and rewriting his memoirs, as they were found, confiscated and destroyed by Securitate. After 1990, he drafted the final version, right after he was able to get back the version from his sister and the one buried in the '50s. Most events described by Stroescu are incredible, original and sensitive. In our position of editors, we were compelled to verify his statements, hence starting an extensive research work in the archive of the National Council for

⁶ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 427.

⁷ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 438.

⁸ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 440-3.

⁹ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 448-9.

¹⁰ Stroescu-Șovarna, *Nuda Veritas*, vol. 1, 470: „Along with Iordache, Marica and other superior officers of Securitate, there were Eugen Țurcanu, Bogdanovici, Popa Țanu, as well as the 'arrested' policemen Botez Constantin and Mihalcea, who honed Eugen Țurcanu's skills in crime and heinous and detestable torturing“.

¹¹Eugen Țurcanu (1925-1954), the main character of the prisoners' re-education operation, whose biography still raises questions. Student of the Faculty of Law in Iasi, at the time of his arrest in 1948. He was sentenced in 1949, to 7 years of correctional prison, for plotting and legionary activity. He commutes between penitentiaries in Suceava, Jilava, Pitești and Gherla, from where he was taken in 1952 and questioned at Văcărești, for the activity during the disclosure. Following the trial for the torturers in Pitești and Gherla, he was sentenced to death and executed on 17.12.1954, according to the criminal record files at A.A.N.P.

the Study of the Securitate Archives. Now it is the time and place to stress upon the fact that all of his claims were fully confirmed. This is what has led us into documenting and case of Constantin Botez, the quaestor at Securitate.

Born on 17 of January 1918 in Piatra Neamt, he graduated two classes at the pedagogic school in his native town and qualified as a mechanical adjuster. In the second half of the '30s, he worked as an apprentice and then as a trainee at A.C.T.A. factory in Bucharest. Drafted in the Infantry Division 18 with the rank of sergeant, he was sent to the battlefield and he was decorated twice¹². Discharged in 1943, he went back to his old workplace. In the spring of 1945, he became a P.M.R. (Romanian Labor Party) member and was hired as an informant paid by day at the Prefect's Office. On August 21st of the same year, he was promoted to the position of a bureau chief; in June 1947 he was becoming a commissar chief of a surveillance brigade and in November he was promoted in an unparalleled manner to the rank of a commissar chief in charge with the Surveillance Bureau 1¹³.

Based on some information held by the secret police, he was arrested on 28 of September 1948. During a vast investigation, Constantin Botez confessed to having known a certain engineer Radu Dimitriu¹⁴ since 1937, from the A.C.T.A. factory – where he had been a director. At some point, the latter started getting in touch since 1947, after he had been removed from his job and was unable to find another one. Their relationship resembled friendship, but after a while Dumitriu started asking for some favors – small services, money loans – slowly turning into an alleged friendship – frequent home visits, formal dinners out and at the Securitate office. During these meetings, Dumitriu was able to draw out the commissar chief and reconstitute – among others – an entire organisational chart of the Securitate department and gave it to a certain Octavian Voinea¹⁵, member of the Intelligence of

¹² A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, File no. 413832, f. 3. Report of the Human Resources of the Securitate department, non-dated. On 1st of November 1942, he was awarded the 'bravery and faith' class II, and on 1st of January 1943, with the medal 'crusade against communism' with silvered ribbons.

¹³Ibid., f. 2.

¹⁴Radu Dumitriu (1914-?), engineer, arrested on 4.06.1948 and sentenced to 8 years of harsh imprisonment for plotting and participation in an illegal organization. Rearrested in 1959, he was sentenced to 25 years of forced labor for plotting. Detention at Jilava, Valea Neagră, Poarta Albă, Aiud and Ostrov colony. He was released through amnesty on 1.08.1964.

¹⁵Octavian Voinea (1922-1995), a Politehnica student at the moment of his arrest in 1948. The leader of the students who were members of the Intelligence Service of the Legionary Movement in Romania, was sentenced to 25 years of forced labor. According to the criminal record files at A.A.N.P., he commuted between prisons in Jilava, Pitești, Gherla, Râmnicu-Sărat and Aiud, from where he was released on 1.08.1964. For further details, see Octavian Voinea, *Masacrarea studențimii române în închisorile de la Pitești, Gherla și Aiud*,

the Legionary Movement. Dumitriu and Voinea were also questioned and confrontations among the three arose. Surprisingly, Securitate concluded that Botez was only guilty of *„lack of perseverance at work, lack of vigilance, levity and shallowness, self-bragging and conceit in regards to the job-related tasks.”*¹⁶. We cannot help but noticing the discrepancy between the facts – disclosure of trade secrets, information leakage from Securitate to the Legionary Intelligence Service, so much the more in the context of the ample operation of arresting the members of the Legionary Movement in the spring of 1948 – and their classification. We are therefore raising a big question! It is very likely that certain superior decisions had already been made in the case of Botez, even though he was still on the prosecution track¹⁷.

Nevertheless, his path was changed. Even though the prior document includes two handwritten notes, illegibly signed, which recommends his prosecution, the third prevails: *„8/XII/945. Comrade Col. Dulgheru¹⁸. Botez Ctin. will be sent to prison with the political prisoners, for six months. To be transferred to ...[illegible in the text]“.*¹⁹On the back, there is more: *„Comrade Col. Birtaş²⁰. Botez should be instructed to be of profitable service in the penitentiaries. It should be made clearly that a good behavior will bring him a shorter detention. Contact²¹“.*

testimonies compiled by Gheorghe Andreica (Majadahonda Publishing House: Bucharest, 1996).

¹⁶ A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, File no. 7844, ff. 37-41. Report drawn up by Securitate lieutenant Siegler Simion, on 1.12.1948.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Mihail (Mișu) Dulgheru (1909-2002), real name Dulberger, clerk, communist with illegal activity during the inter-war period, N.K.V.D agent. He joined P.C.R. after 23rd of August 1944, member of the Patriotic Combat Forces, being responsible for the identification of the party opponents. Since April 1945 he was employed by the Internal Affairs, in charge with the criminal research department, between 1948 and 1952. He was arrested in October 1952, investigated for 2 years for various abuses. Released in 1954, he emigrated to Israel in the early '80s.

¹⁹ A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, File no. 7844, ff. 37-41.

²⁰Gavrilă Birtaş (1905-?), carpenter trainee, ucenic tâmplar, communist with illegal activity since 1922, sentenced during the inter-war period. Between 1932 and 1933, he attends the course of the Lenin School in Moscow, comes back to Romania and he is recruited by the Secretariat of the Central Committee of P.C.d.R. He joins the Internal Affairs in 1946, leading the Securitate Regional Inspectorate in Oradea Mare, employed by D.G.S.P. in 1948, in the position of director. After 1952, he is sidelined and goes back to Securitate Oradea, later being assigned the position of Director of Control Department at the Ministry of Property Management. For further details, also see Mircea Stănescu, *Destine în nomenclatura comunistă: Gavrilă și Eva Birtaş*, text available at <http://mircea-stanescu.blogspot.com/2010/11/destine-in-nomenclatura-comunista.html>.

²¹Mihail Nedelcu (1906-1982). Employed at Internal Affairs on 20 April 1945, he was the chief of the labor Camps department, general police inspector at Securitate department and

The person signing this note, this time very legible, was the notorious Nicolschi²². Another question is being raised, what was the interest of the one considered the supreme coordinator of the Pitesti re-education to use such individual? So much more that the same thing could have happened had Botez been convicted. It may have been an even convincing argument – namely the illusion of a quick release to the detriment of a sentence that would have been put him behind bars for more years – that would have provided the puppet masters additional guarantees, at least theoretically. Moreover, Securitate had enough informers in prisons and had the methods to attract as many needed.

Botez's prison course was short, also summarized in a Securitate document: „[...] After investigations, according to the decision made by Comrade General Major Nicolschi, on 27th of December 1948, Constantin Botez was sent to Pitesti Penitentiary, at the disposal of the General Division. In Pitesti Penitentiary, Botez was used as an informer, from 27th of December 1948 to 17th of May 1949, when he was brought to D.G.S.P. Since 29th of June 1949, he was sent to Suceava Penitentiary, where he also worked as an informer among the detainees, until 18th of August 1949. On 18th of August 1949, he was brought back to D.G.S.P. and, on 21st of August 1949, he was released, according to the approval from the Comrade General director. While he was an informer among detainees, he did not provide too valuable information, but it was proved that he had worked in all honesty (by comparing his information with the one held by D.G.S.P.). [...] On 21st of August, he was released and a request was addressed to Comrade General director of D.G.S.P., a request to make a decision on his status as a party member and into work. [...]“²³.

general inspector at the Regional Inspectorate of Pitesti (October 1947 – August 1948). Between August 1948 and February 1951, he led the Regional Securitate department of Pitesti, later moving to Cluj and Bucharest, until his discharge in 1967, with the rank of General-Lieutenant.

²² Alexandru Nicolschi (1915-1992), real name Boris Grünberg, N.K.V.D. spy, arrested multiple times in the inter-war period for espionage and communist activity. Deputy of a political head of the „Patriotic Combat Forces“ in 1944, chief of the Detective Corps with the General Police Division between 1945 and 1946, general inspector after 1946. General-major at Securitate, general deputy director, deputy of the internal minister between 1953 and 1961. One of the main individuals in charge and organizers of the re-education operation in Pitesti. Subpoenaed for questioning in 1992, he died before coming to the Prosecutor General's Office. For further details, also see Mihai Burcea, Marius Stan, *Alexandru Nicolschi, ilegalist comunist, spion sovietic, deținut și general de securitate*, text available at http://www.iiccr.ro/pdf/ro/alexandru_nicolschi.pdf.

²³ A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, File no. 7844, ff. 22-24., Report drawn up by Securitate 2nd lieutenant Gheromohos I., on 15.09.1949.

Here is a major contradiction, even a fracture in the logical thinking. Even though there is no official document for Botez's detention for a certain time (the only reference is Nicolschi's note – 6 months), he was actually released in less than a year. We could actually corroborate this finding with the idea that he actually was of a great help for Securitate, a statement contradicted by the document above. Either way, the final action is surprising for both scenarios.

Had he been a valuable informer, the continuation of his work in penitentiaries would have been a natural step. Had he failed in his missions – irrespective of his reasons – it is even more surprising he was forgiven of his previous misdoings that almost sent him before the court. What is certain is that, at least based on the documents in the C.N.S.A.S.A archive, he was released and left completely alone.

There is a third scenario, well sensed by Stroescu, which we cannot help but agree with. Botez was not a simple informer, his role at Pitesti and Suceava was probably much more important, with the entire mission being conspired in terms of his incarceration and also from the perspective of the archive documents. The idea of conspiracy is also supported by the treatment he was subjected to, also noticed by Stroescu and admitted by Botez himself who had pointed to the fact that he was cuffed, tied up and sometimes beaten by the guardians²⁴. Similarly, and with just a few exceptions not helping with this issue, there are missing statements or reports drawn up by Botez in the file available for research studies. Some fragments and a few tones are still interesting – one of the notes is detailed below:

„[...] On the day of 28th of December 1948, after talking with Mr. Col. Nedelcu, he took me to the penitentiary himself but, in the absence of the director, he left me in charge of a certain clerk, named Cristescu, with the indication that the moment the director comes back, I should be taken to him - until then, I was placed in one of the rooms for the people being wrong. [...] Every other two weeks, I was called to the office, where I was giving Mr. Lt. Iordache notes in which I was showing them what they were discussing, their attitude, the state of mind, who are the worst opponents – namely the ones that are still keeping the legionary flame alive in the prison, how they are acting, how they are organizing themselves and, finally, everything that is going on in this room. The mistake was from the administration, who did not understand my role there and was trying to use me for small jobs that would have blown my cover, in which case I declined many times – anyway, I was known by both primary guardians – guardian head of section and the office clerks. Nevertheless, I always knew how to pull it out so that the legionaries had the least idea of who I was.

²⁴ Ibid., ff. 8-10. Note signed by Constantin Botez, non-dated.

As a reward for my work, I was waiting for Mr. Major Negreanu's promise be kept, when on 17th of May 1949, Mr. Captain Cârnu at Securitate in Pitești, after taking me out of the penitentiary, he gave his word that D.G.S.P. has sent an order for me to be sent to Bucharest, to be released. On the same day, I arrived in Bucharest where, without speaking to anyone, I was placed in cell no. 2, with a former Militia major. After a few days, I was moved to cell no. 12, with two convicts and, in a few hours, I was taken and moved to cell no. 19 by Mr. Lt. Brânzaru²⁵, who told me that someone would come I should handle, on the order given by Mr. Colonel Dulgheru.

After a few days, I was taken to meet Mr. Lt. Colonel Dincă, who told me that my work was not being done, that my activity in Pitesti was not good. I told him how affairs stand and then he told me that I had been brought here to go on with my work, considering that there were people to help me with that. Also, he told me that he knew once this work was done I would still be part of Securitate, where I am still employed. While sending me to the cell, he instructed the guardians to put me downstairs, in a room and given paper and ink for my last report. [...] Downstairs, I was told I was going to be taken out at 4 p.m. to write, which never happened. [...] This is my current state of matters. Today, when I am being sent again to another penitentiary, with other promises to be released, and where I was asked to do exactly what I had done in Pitesti with no instructions like now, I really believe that my previous activity is not zero, as they told me. [...] Thanks to the experience I have gained, I think that the time to spend in the penitentiary is too long, no matter how many are there, I think that the work can be finished in 4 weeks the most. Also, it is impossible that, after 7 weeks, to remember all the details so that I can write a complete report here, on 18th of August 1949. You cannot take notes in prison and, after 9 months living in secrecy (not 6 months as I was promised), my memory is not helping me anymore like when I was a free man, bearing in mind my present physical condition.

I would not want to be told this time, too, that my activity was zero. I have been and still am in consent to do this work to rehabilitate myself, but I am asking to be helped. I think that it would be the best to be kept in touch with every other week.²⁶

As said earlier, several important elements that can be inferred from this note-report, probably written before arriving in Suceave penitentiary. Firstly, Botez's reproach only reveals the need of Securitate to document its decision to

²⁵Emil Brânzaru (?-?), investigator at the Internal Affairs, formed heavyweight boxer, chief of the beaters team at the Criminal Investigation department at Securitate.

²⁶ A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, File no. 7844, ff. 15-19. Report of Constantin Botez, handwritten, non-dated.

keep using him instead of releasing, as he had been promised. This means that his activity was actually of a high interest, hence the reason of his uninterrupted activity. Secondly, we notice the direct contact with the director of Securitate in Pitesti and the fact that the prison administration was not informed about the real mission of the former commissar. Moreover, Botez avoids to refer to specific information, thus somehow narrowing down his activity to a classical status, of an ordinary informer, a sign of an imposed conspiracy. Another argument in this regard is the presence of Octavian Voinea in the same prison, whose sight Botez had to be kept out of, otherwise his mission would have been compromised.

Last but not least, going back to our initial statement that there are still many unknown aspects of this complex phenomenon called Re-education, we do insist upon the nebula hovering upon the onset of this action and its organization. While the violent development of the action is associated with the events on 6th of December 1949, the actions leading to Pitesti are still blurry.

As a consequence, we are pointing out to the fact that Nicolae Stroescu – whose memoirs triggered the investigation of the case of Constantin Botez – insists on certain initial stages (late 1948 and during 1949), both to inform and to provide a good knowledge on the ones who would later meet the re-educated young people from Suceava – Turcanu's tough group and also their tenderizing, by implementing cruel punishment on a group²⁷. The statements made by the former commissar seem to validate what Nicolae Stroescu-Şovarna asserted.

One single document is also completing the information on Botez's prison stay, a small note signed in June 1949, probably written following his request to be assigned concrete tasks and support. „*1. Comrade Dulgheru. To be sent to Suceava prison until 21st of August and on 21st of August, Botez Constantin to be released. 2. Comrade Birtaş. Will talk with Botez Constantin and assign tasks that he will have to carry out in the midst of the detainees after which, on 18th of August, to be*

²⁷Nicolae Stroescu-Şovarna, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 469. „*I am in this darkness strongly smelling of mold and open latrina. [...] In the ray of light coming through this crypt, an unimaginable reality is right in front of my eyes – a puddle as big as the ten by six meters – this is exactly the size of my room – piles of human faeces over which maggots and flies are swarming. An impressive number of rats is hiding from my sight, all disappearing through the cracks of the wall. [...] I cannot explain to myself these human excrements that I have been noticing during the time smiling Zabulica takes to pour over twenty buckets of water – as a job task – and the answer to this question I would find much later – here had been brought tens and tens of convicted students who had opposed and criticised the ,re-education' initiated by the superior ranks of the communist party and Securitate, implemented by director Dumitrescu Alexandru, the Securitate chief in Pitesti, the notorious lieutenant Iordache and later by Marica – and on the convicted's side – the vile snitch and criminal Turcanu Eugen, whom Mihai Vlad pointed at from a cell window on the second floor.*’

*brought to D.G.S.P. for a report on the tasks given by you. 21.06.1949. Pintilie G.*²⁸.

The hypothesis of the consistent role played by Botez – intuited, yet not definitively proven, also relies on the presence of so many important names – whose involvement at the highest level in Re-education is now known, albeit not in depth – in the few pages of his file at C.N.S.A.S.

It is far-fetched that individuals like Gheorghe Pintilie²⁹ – deputy of the minister of internal affairs and director of the DGSP, Alexandru Nicolschi – deputy director of D.G.S.P., Gavrilă Birtaş – head of the Division I of Internal Information at Securitate, Mișu Dulgheru – head of the criminal investigations and maybe Mihail Nedelcu – head of Securitate in Pitesti, to abase themselves and waste time with directing an average informer in the communist political prisons.

As said earlier, the information notes and reports drawn up by Botez are not to be found in the file we had access to. An organization file – a collaborator recruited in compliance with all the applicable rules – is missing altogether. We were also able to identify a surveillance file of him but the documents included are not helping with the case, either. Along with other minor issues, in the absence of a report to describe the reasons for initiating the information file, the onset date of the action, the resources to be used and the conclusions reached, we only found the resolution to close the file – a decision that would naturally follow a decision to close the file, which is also missing. According to this, Botez was in 1961 a director of the Division of State Reserves – Agricultural Products, with the materials to be closed to access, as he had become again a party member³⁰. Consequently, we have not identified information regarding Botez in the C.N.S.A.S. archive for the 1950 – 1960 decade or his fate and activity after 1961.

To sum up, the original information provided by Nicolae Stroescu – Sovarna is validated from multiple viewpoints. We ascertain that the chief-commissary of Securitate was a real person who was indeed arrested and assigned informer missions in Pitesti and Suceva during the preparation and initiation stage of Re-education. Some questions have been answered, others are even more prominent. What missions did he have, how he accomplished them, what were the results of his

²⁸A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, File no. 7844, f. 5.

²⁹ Gheorghe Pintilie (1902-1985), real name Timofei Bodnarenko, soviet spy, arrested and convicted during the inter-war period. After the war, he was the Chief of the Economic department of the party (1945-1948) and deputy for the securitate issues of the Foreign Affairs of NKVD in Bucharest. Since 1948, he was director at DGSP and deputy of the internal affairs minister, with the rank of general-lieutenant at Securitate. Very likely he is responsible for the Re-education phenomenon in the communist political prisons.

³⁰ A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative Fund, File no. 413832, f. 1. Decision of file closing on 1.12.1961.

activity and the role played within the phenomenon can be only slightly guessed, with further research to clear them up. It is worth mentioning that after more than 30 years since the communist regime collapsed, in spite of a consistent list of references on this topic, new information and even thought-provoking is coming forth.

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