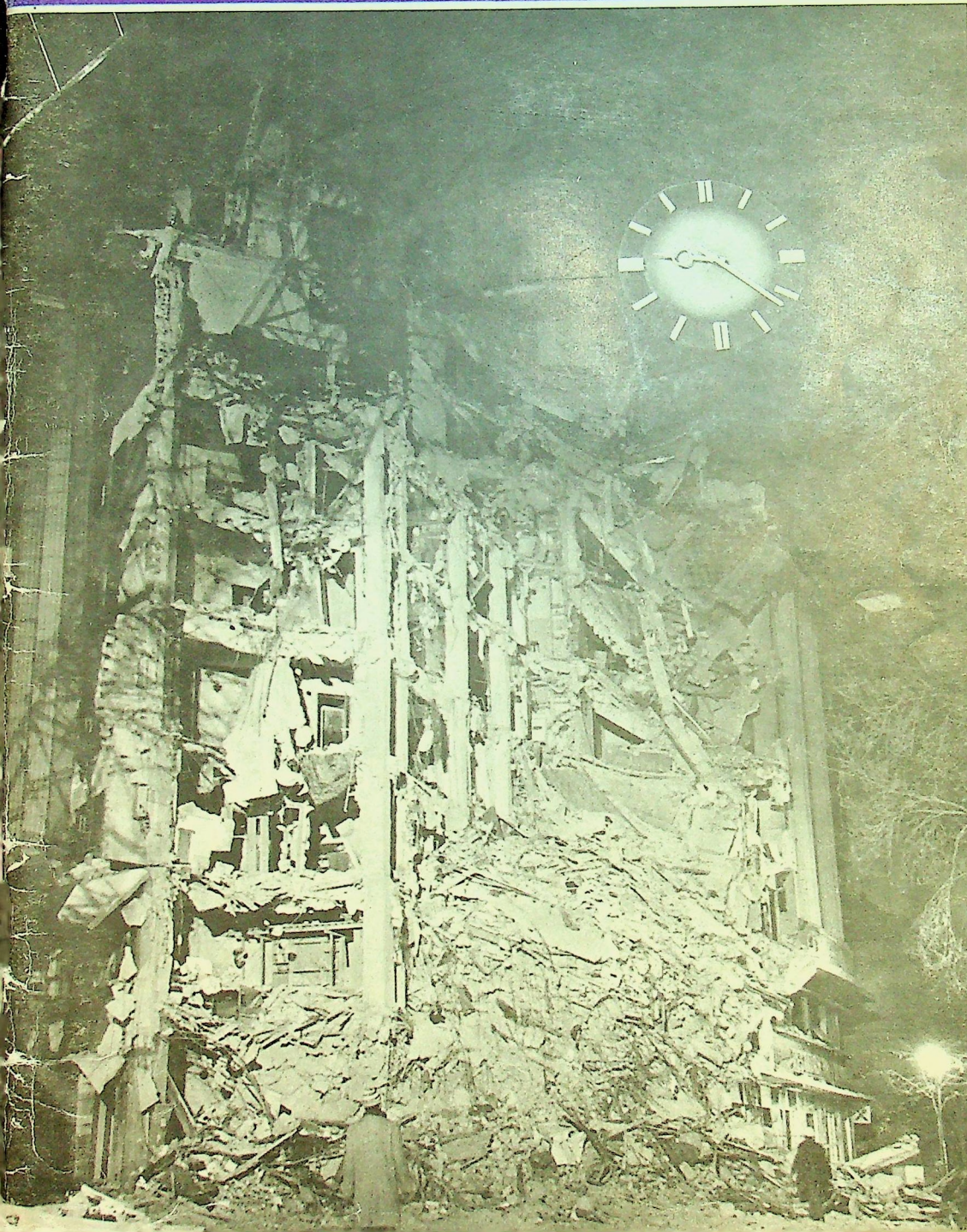


ROMANIA

today



Bucharest, March 4, 1977. The country is struck by the strongest earthquake recorded in Europe in the last 100 years. 1,541 persons are killed, 11,275 injured. Nearly 33,000 homes are wrecked or seriously damaged. The Romanians are now courageously healing the wounds of the disaster, determined to fully implement the national development plan.



BUCHAREST. MARCH 4, 1977, 9:22 p. m.

The clocks stopped at the fatal hour.

Deep wounds in homes and hearts.



THE PEOPLE, A SOLID WALL AGAINST THE QUAKE

Imagine a town in the evening, at the time of shows in the theatres and of friends paying visits, at the time when children have fallen asleep and lovers linger in the streets while the linotype operators are composing the news for the next day's papers. Imagine a city, at the loveliest time of the evening, suddenly, unjustly and cruelly hit by a force "equal to that of ten atom bombs of the Hiroshima type" (*France Presse*), a force violently shaking its buildings, cutting off its lights, turning thousands of homes into heaps of smoking rubble which crushes hundreds of lives. Such a city was Bucharest on the evening of March 4, 1977. Seismologists and the public now know all the data of the earthquake as they were transmitted on that night by news agencies and radio stations: it measured 7.2 degrees on the Richter scale; its epicentre was in the Vrancea region, and its

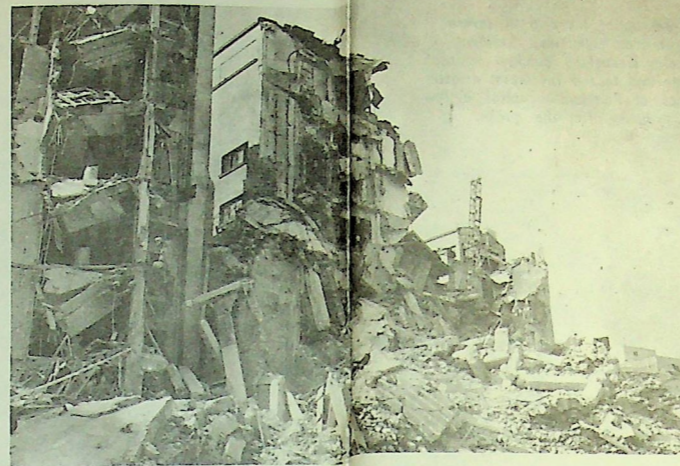
focus lay some 110 km below the earth's surface; the quake was felt in much of Europe, from Moscow to Italy; it is considered the strongest earthquake recorded in Europe since the beginning of written history; the shock wave felt in Bucharest and other localities of Romania lasted almost a minute.

The tremor which shook the earth for approximately the time it took you to read the preceding lines had tragic consequences. According to the data collected up to March 15, the number of dead was 1,541 and more than 11,000 persons were injured in Bucharest and the other disaster areas. About 33,000 dwellings were destroyed or badly damaged. Several tens of thousands of buildings suffered damage. Almost 35,000 families have remained homeless. To everybody's satisfaction, the new

blocks of flats which house several hundred thousand inhabitants in Bucharest's residential districts withstood the shock, demonstrating that they had been carefully and solidly built. Numerous buildings housing public institutions, shops, schools, cultural establishments and hospitals were seriously damaged. As for the economic sector, 763 industrial units suffered damage especially in the chemical, machine-building, food, light, building materials, metallurgical, and construction industries and in transport. Tens of thousands of cattle died in the ruins of stables in agricultural units. Mechanical shops, silos, grain storehouses and greenhouses were damaged. The preliminary survey shows that the losses amount to between 9,000 and 10,000 million lei, being several times bigger than those caused by the big floods which swept Romania in 1970 and 1975.

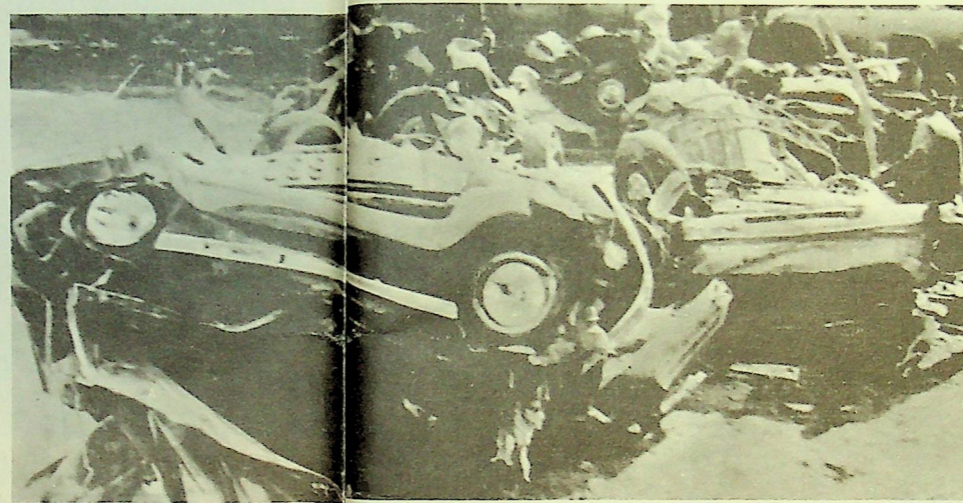


This block had a name and address. For many of its inhabitants it became their grave.

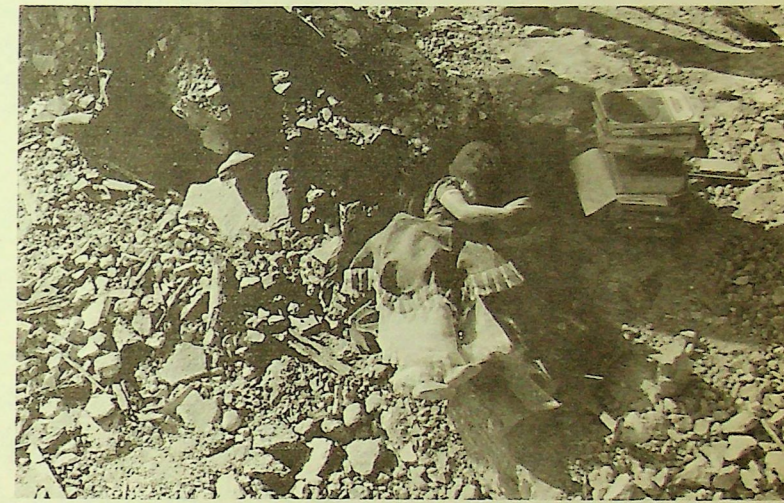


Tragedy.

The day before, this huge heap of rubble was the fine 11-floor block Scala, Bucharest.



They used to be cars.



The doll escaped. What about its owner?

THE PEOPLE, A SOLID WALL AGAINST THE QUAKE

A Great Lesson of Civic Virtue

Losses have been and will be assessed. Some of them will never be compensated. All of them will sadden, but not defeat the hearts of the Romanians. Those hearts continued to beat bravely during the hardest instants when the terrifying earthquake was over and the Romanians worked in unison on the dramatic front of the catastrophe. "The first thing that strikes one is the people's dignified attitude," reported the correspondent of the Italian paper *La Stampa* from Bucharest. "The heart of the city has suffered a terrible blow. And yet, less than two hours after the earthquake, electricity supply was restored and work started by searchlight

to remove the debris. The Bucharester' behaviour is impressive: no lament, only silent general sorrow, a great lesson of civic virtue." At the time, civic virtue was tantamount to life.

People who felt more than ever before that the lives of others depended on them reported immediately at their jobs. Physicians and nurses gave first aid to the wounded brought to hospitals. Damaged hospitals were evacuated and reorganized in tents erected on stadiums. The drivers of public transport vehicles connected the people from various districts who were anxious to know their how families and friends were.

Food was plentifully supplied early in the morning.

The fact that the President of Romania and General Secretary of the Romanian Communist

Party, Nicolae Ceaușescu, was in command of the battle against the consequences of the earthquake from the very start will be recorded in the chronicle of those hours and days in which the flow of time seemed to have changed. As soon as he heard about the catastrophe that had hit Romania, the President, who was on a visit of friendship to several African countries, himself transmitted to Bucharest the *Presidential Decree Declaring an Emergency Throughout the Country*, which was broadcast on radio and printed on the front page of all papers a few hours later. The decree was not only the first call to unity, responsibility and dedication of the whole nation to do away with the consequence of the catastrophe, but also the first affirmation, voiced by the Head of the State, of the belief that the dismaying, overwhelming circumstances could be defeated: "It lies in the power of the entire people, led by the Party," said the Presidential Decree, "to live through these difficult moments, as it has done so many times in the course of years, to secure the firm advance of our entire society on the road of socialism, well-being and progress."

Everything that happened in the following hours and days, everything that is happening now in Romania demonstrates that the Romanian people responded like one man to President Nicolae Ceaușescu's call. Countering his envisaged stop-over in Spain, the Head of State landed in Bucharest less than twelve hours after the earthquake. The time of his arrival almost coincided with the time of his presence, together with other Party and State leaders, in the most heavily hit areas of Bucharest and later on in other towns of Romania. The correspondent of the French paper *Le Figaro*, who was on the spot, wrote that President Nicolae Ceaușescu was seen in the centre of Bucharest, close to smoking ruins, personally coordinating the efforts of the rescue teams and asking about the condition of the victims.

In the spirit of the deep humanitarianism typical of the Romanian people, of the ideals which it professes, the first watchword was "Everything in our power to save the survivors!" Machines were stopped and work went on carefully and cautiously wherever there was the slightest chance that people trapped in the ruins might still

be alive. The first survivors — children, women, men — were dug out from the ruins as a result of heroic efforts. Soldiers, experts, miners who had come to Bucharest to help, stuntmen, students and young people who had voluntarily joined in the rescue actions, felt encouraged.

Once more, President Nicolae Ceaușescu set an example. Reuter's correspondent saw that he "went into the narrow corridors in a basement in the centre of Bucharest, leading the rescue team himself in order to remove a woman from under the ruins."


Humanism in Action

The social system which millions of people are building with their own hands has not failed them. In the days immediately following the catastrophe, the Party and State leadership carried out an intensive activity. The Political Executive Committee of the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee became the high command which directly led the battle to normalize life throughout the country. All the

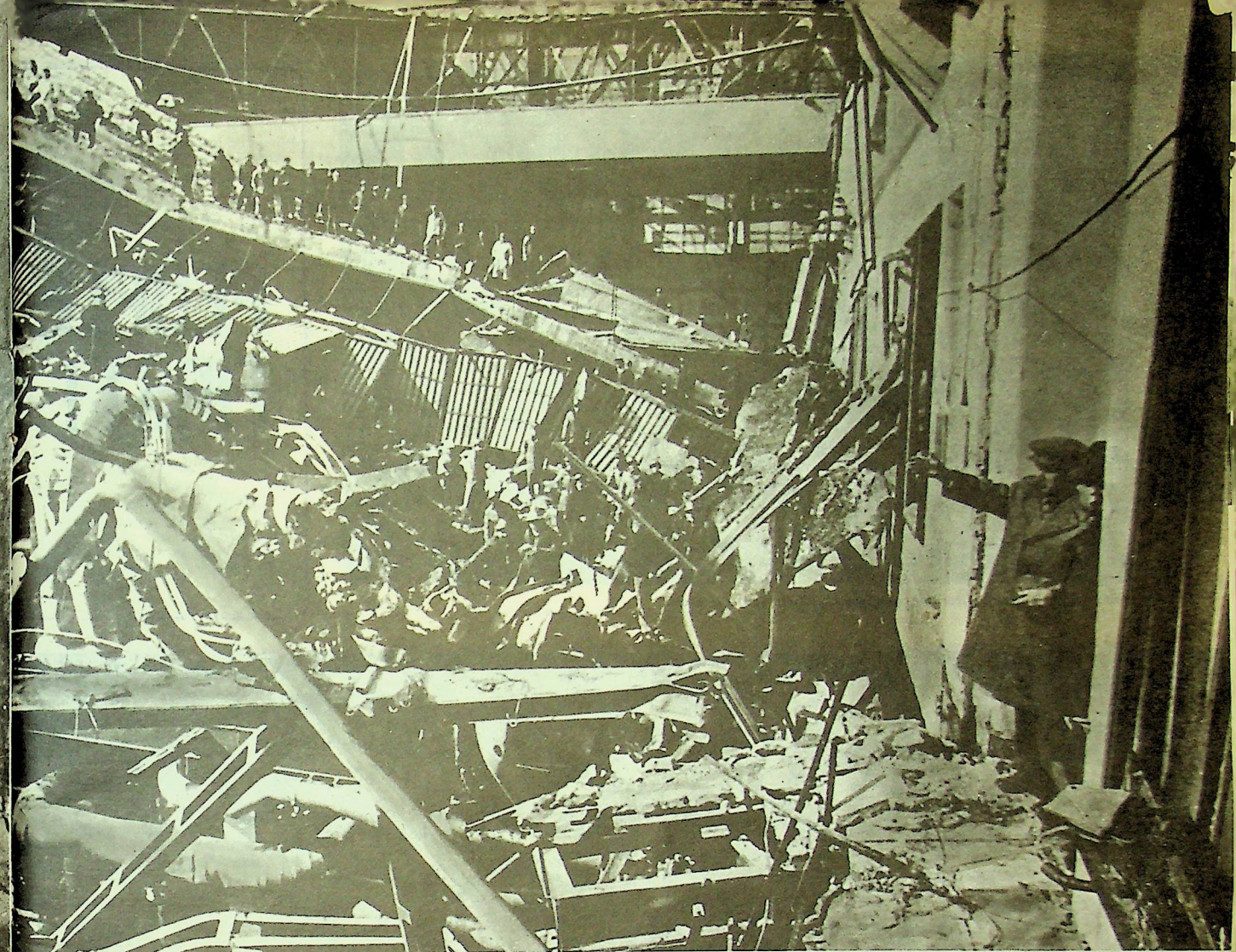
measures gradually taken with calm and determination once again demonstrated that this country's destiny is in competent and strong hands. The rescue of survivors from the ruins was organized. Everything was done in order that the damaged economic units should resume operation and food and commodities be supplied to the population.

All those who dramatically found themselves homeless and without the elementary belongings needed in everyday life received homes in new, almost finished blocks of flats. The flats were assigned for permanent occupation and were provided free of charge with furniture, gas stoves, TV and radio sets, bed linen, table-ware and refrigerators. Every man and every woman of the homeless families were given two suits and two dresses respectively, underwear and other objects of everyday use. Each member of those families received from the state a sum of money equal to half of an average monthly remuneration. People suffering from shock were given a paid leave for rehabilitation.

All this once again demonstrated that care for man in Romania is not a more or less abstract



Interrupting his trip to several African countries, President Nicolae Ceaușescu quickly returned home and toured the worst disaster zones of Romania's capital a few hours after the quake.



President Nicolae Ceaușescu in one of the most badly hit units, the Termocentrala-Vest power station in Bucharest. The first measures are taken to restart operation.

THE PEOPLE, A SOLID WALL AGAINST THE QUAKE

topic of discussion, but a concrete concern of society.

In quickly setting affected factories, mills, building sites, railway lines into operation, the Romanians have once more proved that they are a people whose determination to work grows when the going is hardest. It has always relied on its own labour and now, more than ever before, its free, conscious work for lofty ideals has become a point of honour and pride, a guarantee of the future to which it aspires.

People who have never met before — workers, peasants and intellectuals in Romanian towns and villages — deposit sums of money in a special account, the account of humaneness, to help heal the wounds and meet the needs of the entire people.

The 21 million Romanians also appreciate the international solidarity manifest in the aid that arrives from abroad. The National Assistance Committee, headed by Elena Ceaușescu,

wife of Romania's President and a member of the Political Executive Committee of the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee, was set up to receive and judiciously coordinate foreign aid and to coordinate all initiatives taken by the working people of Romania who have expressed their wish to assist the earthquake victims.

Foreign assistance — medicines, medical apparatus, blankets, baby food a.o. — which arrived in Romania with the gratefulness due to the first aid given by and to people of the same restless planet in their struggle with the blind and as yet uncontrolled forces of nature.

The earthquake damaged many enterprises, destroyed machines, equipment, instruments, affecting industrial production. Hence, aid for Romania means especially the priority supply of equipment to replace destroyed plant and machinery and loans on advantageous terms to develop basic economic sectors. All Romanians will welcome such aid as a vivid, concrete instance

of the solidarity with the Romanian people which has always asserted itself in the world by its work and its struggle for progress. The Romanians are a people that have not been pampered by history, and they have thoroughly learnt its lessons. Centuries of struggle for liberty and the right to live have steeled the heart of the Romanians, who have always firmly coped with vicissitudes and found the strength to face the future with confidence. This strength feeds on new sources today, when the socialist system, the conscious and enthusiastic work of an entire people has laid the foundations of an equitable, prosperous and humane future. Now that the earthquake of March 1977 has added yet another trial to the history of the Romanians, everyone can see that the disaster wrecked many walls, but not the wall which all the hearts have raised to defend the future.

Emil Țilenschi



Romania's President gives the watchword: "First save the people!"

PEOPLE FIRST!

"Everything to save those who are still alive!" Again and again I jotted down these words in my reporter's notebook standing in front of the mounds of rubble into which many buildings had been turned by a spasm of the earth in a region the maps call Romania and our hearts call homeland.

Covered by the same white dust that had settled on the faces and clothes of the rescue teams and of those who had relatives buried in the ruins, President Nicolae Ceausescu was the supreme coordinator and a direct participant in the relief work.

In the light of pocket lamps he walked into the basement of the ruined block situated in Calea Victoriei opposite the new wing of the Athénée Palace hotel. The shattered concrete structure could collapse any minute and the army engineers had hesitated to enter it. He tested the resistance of the fallen panels.

"Make a breach here! And here! There must be people there!"

After he left, the rescue team squeezed inside. For several hours they worked strenuously under the threat of the broken concrete beams which stood in unsteady equilibrium. Four persons stumbled out through a hole made in a panel, dazzled by the daylight.

Knocking was heard from a cavity under the ruins of the former Scala confectionery. A heart was still beating there.

"Start clearing from several directions. Be careful! Dig with your hands if necessary!" The order was carried out and a man's head was soon unearthed.

Above ground, a great spirit was concerned about every flicker of human life in the wreckage.

"Start work in as many places as possible! Right now. Take all available machinery! Attack on a wide front. You must rescue those who can be rescued. You are answerable for their lives. This is an order!"

With eyes full of tears, the man was raising the efforts of a few people overwhelmed with grief to the power of a whole people.

The President of Romania, who has taught us to capitalize the word MAN in our consciousness, advanced tirelessly on the pathetic route of disaster from dawn into the depth of night.

He gave firmness from his firmness, resolve from his resolve, humaneness from his humaneness.

In this ordeal, the man whose shoulders support the country, the First Citizen of Romania, sets the loftiest example of communist humaneness, and he shows us that we are people who measure up to the trial we are undergoing.



President Ceausescu passes by torchlight, through the ruins in the basement of a wrecked building: "Break through here! And here! There must be people there!"



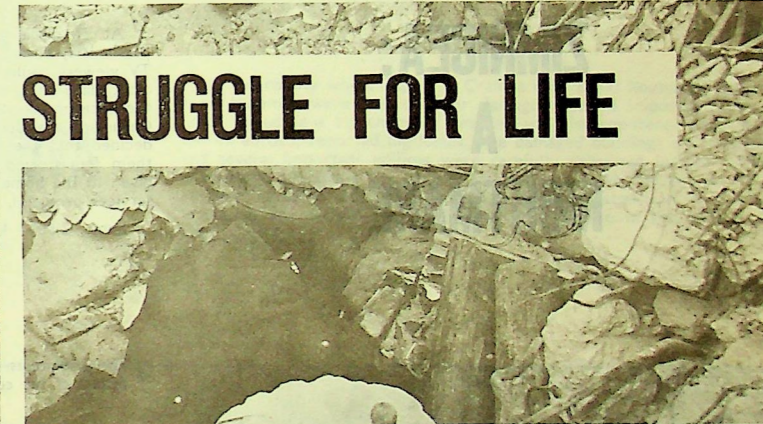
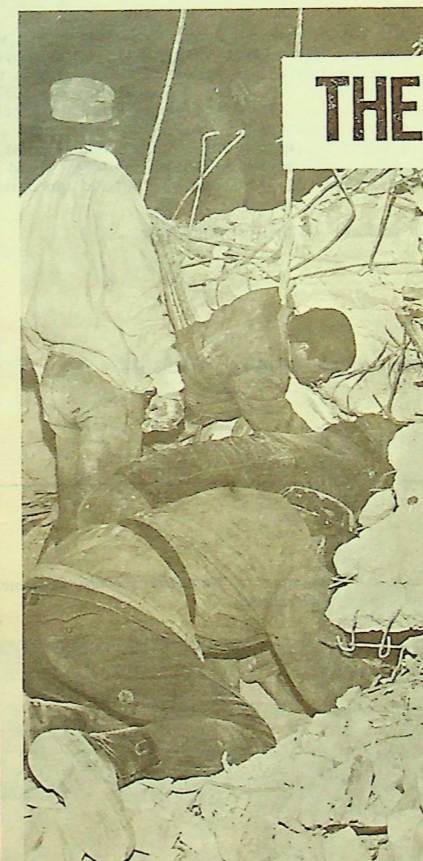
In the midst of smoking ruins.

A CHILD'S SECOND BIRTH

Boulevard Magheru 26, Bucharest, was a block of flats called Casata. The earthquake turned it into a huge heap of debris and twisted iron bars. The following day, heavy machines were rummaging in the ruins, but there were moments when the search for survivors had to be made with the hands, with fingers, until they bled. Machine operator D. Marosec suddenly saw a child's hand moving. Complete silence set in. The excavator bucket was stopped. Mechanic Ion Ardeleanu cautiously and courageously climbed the ruins. The blind motion of that little hand looked like a symbol of despair. But it was also a flicker of life in the

wreckage. All those present, soldiers and civilians, felt their hearts beating madly. Would it be possible to save that life? Ion Ardeleanu carefully made his way through concrete slabs. He dug the rubble with his fingers, trembling at the thought that the broken floors could collapse at any moment. Eventually, at the risk of his own life, he saved a less than five-month-old baby. Tears rose to his eyes. And not only to his. A glimpse of hope and courage warmed the hearts which the catastrophe had plunged into deep sadness. Life had once again been victorious. A child was born for the second time on smoking ruins.

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE



Snapshots from a sector of the rescue front. Vigorous action, supreme humanism, and the will to live. Floarea Iordache was dug out from the wreckage after three days and nights of tireless work.



About 80 per cent of the town of Zimnicea was destroyed.

ZIMNICEA: A NIGHTMARE

At Zimnicea, a small town in southern Romania, the earthquake was particularly devastating. Almost 80 per cent of the town was destroyed. TV viewers could see that the situation there was similar to that in the most hard-hit areas of Bucharest. Less than two days after the quake, the decision was taken to completely rebuild Zimnicea. President Nicolae Ceaușescu analysed the consequences of the catastrophe on the spot and decided that the town would be reconstructed. Solid buildings, most of them four-storied blocks, would be erected, long-term loans would be given to the homeless, and industrial units would be built and appropriate services provided.

Some, 3,500–4,000 flats will be built at Zimnicea.

◀ The inhabitants of Zimnicea join efforts to eliminate the results of the calamity.



In the agricultural production cooperative of Năsturelu, county Teleorman, the sheep were saved from the wrecked sheds.



DISASTER AREAS



Birlad was also badly hit by the quake.

AT CRAIOVA

In the county whose capital is Craiova over 8,300 houses in urban and rural localities were destroyed or damaged and 18 important industrial units, including a big chemical combine and Electroputere, which is also known abroad, reported big losses. The damaged buildings and enterprises and several important edifices were carefully examined by the President of Romania during the visit he paid to the city shortly after the earthquake. He gave detailed indications regarding the reconstruction of the zones struck by the calamity, among them Unirii Square in the centre of the city.



One of the disaster areas is Plopeni, county Prahova.

DETERMINED, COURAGEOUS ACTION



The Head of State was permanently with the people.



Finding oneself again after the tragedy.



All belongings must be saved.



President Ceaușescu's example of fortitude and tireless energy encouraged everybody.



SOLDIERS, BRAVE SOLDIERS

On the night of March 4-5 the members of the military units stationed in Bucharest took up fighting positions which they left only when they were replaced by their comrades, after almost 24 hours of continuous struggle for life, during which they were in the heart of the 122 "fire zones," i.e. wrecked or badly damaged buildings in Bucharest.

One of these zones was at Calea Moșilor 135. The men there were under the command of Colonel Constantin Perianu, of the army engineers, and Lieutenant Dumitru Mihăiș. 72 hours after the catastrophe operations continued to rescue a third person. They worked ardently, hopefully, heroically. Sergeant Cadet Vasile Sas entered the tunnel leading to the survivors. After several minutes in the narrow pit dug in the wreckage, Vasile Sas came out.

"I rummaged in the debris and broken glass. A wooden beam prevents us from taking the victim out. I talked to her. She asks for some hot tea."

A brief council was held. Sergeant Cadet Ion Dordea crawled in the pit and the struggle was resumed. He returned and it was again the turn of Vasile Sas. The efforts continued. Another step towards victory. More rummaging in the pit, with crushed, bleeding fingers. It is 1.20 a.m. The rescue workers count the seconds. How long will the woman resist? The struggle starts again. It is 2.30 a.m. Under the light of the reflector, Private Gheorghe Acașandrei takes out slowly and carefully the woman who had been trapped in the wreckage for almost 80 hours. She is Maria Cartal from the fine mechanics enterprise. The ambulance car drives her to the hospital.

The struggle is resumed. An officer orders: "Silence! Down!" All the soldiers are in a prone position, their bodies covering the heap of ruins.

"Each of you, shout 'Is anyone there?'" orders commander Gheorghe Eftimie.

The next moment, the call of hope comes from the chests of the soldiers: "Is anyone there?," "Is anyone there?," "Is anyone there?" Then, silence.

"Once again! Once again!" the commander orders.

◀ Blood transfusion. Every drop counts.



The supreme rule of humaneness. ▲

◀ No effort is too great.

Specially trained dogs were sent from Switzerland to help discover survivors. ▶



DETERMINED, COURAGEOUS ACTION



During the days and nights of the frightful trial. Everything is done to save what can be saved. The catastrophe has destroyed buildings. It cannot break the men unflinchingly doing their duty.

"GREEN LIGHT" ON THE NIGHT OF THE QUAKE

When the entire city was plunged in darkness and people were still horrified by the disaster, somewhere in Bucharest a handful of men at their post and ready for action achieved a remarkable feat: they prevented the public transport network from being paralyzed. Theirs was an emergency action, possibly as important as giving first aid to the victims of the earthquake. The watchword of the workers of the radio station of the Bucharest Transport Enterprise ITB was to secure, by all possible means, the running of the public transport network on the night after the earthquake. Almost 1,000 ITB vehicles were driving through the city at a time when tens of thousands of people needed rapid means of transport. In the morning the number of vehicles had doubled. Some 50 to 60 minutes after the quake, 35,000 ITB workers were at their posts. Unseen traffic lights seemed to operate in the dark city, "green lights" for the crowded buses. Dozens of buses and taxi cabs became ambulances at the service of hospitals, polyclinics, first-aid stations, helping to transport the wounded.



Searching for human beings whose heart it still beating below ruins.



AN UNEXPECTED GREETING: "MANY HAPPY RETURNS, LIVIA!"

It was the fifth day since the address Strada Tudor Arghezi 1-3, Bucharest, no longer existed. The calamity had only left ruins. Suddenly, a low groan came from a niche between a floor and a ceiling, now in vertical position. Young workers Ioan Mărăcine and Sile Avechi from the electronic computer factory bent to the opening of the niche and spoke with the victim, a young woman. Their colleague Dan Iosif started to dig another niche, beside the existing one. When it was ready, his colleagues tied him with ropes and lowered him beneath. A first signal: a request for tea, then for glucose. Dan Iosif was pulled up. He was exhausted. He reported that the victim was lucid, but the distance to the spot where she lay was three metres. And the opening was extremely small. Time passed and the only solution left was to have a stuntman crawl through the opening. The task was assumed by stuntmen Tudor Stavru and Paul Fister. They went in carefully and removed the rubble with the kitbag of their gas-mask. Finally, the long awaited moment came. In the light of reflectors pushing away the darkness of night Livia Negoescu was saved after 130 hours under the ruins. On the day of the calamity she had celebrated her 22nd birthday. Her rescuers wished her many happy returns of the day.

RESCUED AFTER EIGHT DAYS

Saturday, March 12, 1977. Almost eight days have passed. At Alexandru Sahia street 58 the bucket of the excavator operated by Constantin Pistol removes debris and iron bars.

"Stop!" shouts mechanic Ion Cojocaru. "There is an arm moving at the bottom of the rubble."

Film stuntman Dan Steinhardt goes there. There is a hollow below the ruins. A word comes from the darkness: "Water!" Military physicians Bărboi and Dascălu go into action. At 5 p.m. Elena Enache, 58, a former teacher living on the fourth floor of the now wrecked building, is taken from the ruins. She is holding a transistor set and is perfectly lucid:

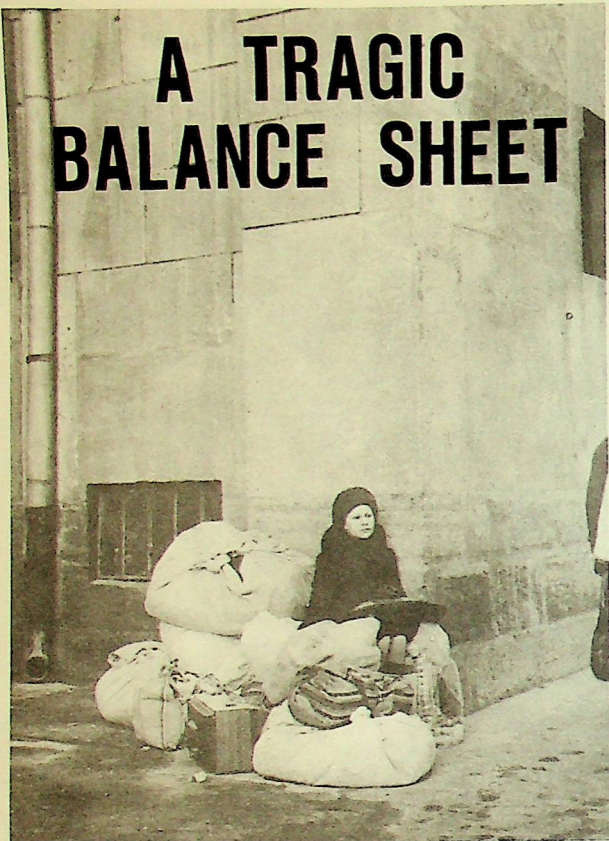
"Trapped under the ruins I heard the reports of the battle to rescue people. I was expecting you. You were with me and I was with you. Thank you."

Fifteen minutes later, after almost 190 hours under the ruins, Elena Enache is at the military hospital in an intensive care unit. Two women who have watched the rescue operation since the night of the quake, remain silent, completely stunned. They are the sisters of the survivor.

"Let's buy her some flowers," Colonel Engineer Ștefan Munteanu tells them, his face covered by the dust in which he has battled for eight days.



A TRAGIC BALANCE SHEET



A wall of tears and hope.

The only thing we can restore to the dead: their name.



Crushed hearts.

REQUIEM FOR A RESCUER

Film stuntman Tudor Stavru died at the emergency hospital. For eight days after the earthquake he had helped relief teams to rescue survivors and recover their belongings. Tudor Stavru fell from a concrete beam on the eighth floor of the wrecked Nestor block.

I remembered his tired and anxious face, framed by a tousled beard whitened by debris. I first met him on the morning of the day after the quake in front of the Scala block of flats, which had collapsed. I saw him on TV, his picture appeared in the newspapers. I knew that on the night of the earthquake he was at Rimnicu Vilcea with a film team. A few minutes after the quake he and other stuntmen got into a car and made for Bucharest, saying: "They need us there now, we must go there!" On the following days and nights, this simple and modest man and his colleagues helped to rescue ten people, including three children. A terrible and uplifting record of victories scored by life over death.



Rummaging in hell. ▶



THE BATTLE FOR NORMALIZATION



Men and machines in a supreme effort.

The wreckage of a ten-floor building.

Looking for survivors day and night.



Barracks are built for numerous disaster victims at Zimnicea.



A cup of warm milk. We had one yesterday in the kitchen at home, which has disappeared.

EVERYTHING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

● Day and night, millions of people make growing efforts for the fulfilment and overfulfilment of plan provisions.

● Resolved to do everything in their power for the full implementation of the five-year plan, the productive units of Suceava county pledged to increase output. Working overtime, the employees of the county's industry produced an additional 20,000,000 lei of goods in only seven days after the quake.

● The tractor works of Braşov made 100 extra tractors in only four days. In the same interval, the lorry works assembled 35 lorries, tractor trucks and truck chassis above plan.

● The iron-and-steel workers of the Hunedoara combine decided to produce 500 tons of concrete iron above plan and to export products worth 10,000,000 lei foreign currency, thus overfulfilling the initial plan.

● The wire and wire products factory of Buzău retrieved the losses caused by the interruption of production after the quake, and turned out 200 tons of welded wire mesh for the rein-

forcement of prefabricated panels, 600 tons of welding electrodes and 600 tons of constructional wire above plan in March.

● Repairs were made at the sodium products combine of Govora and an additional 1,300 tons of soda ash and over 1,000 tons of caustic soda were produced and supplied to clients at home and abroad.

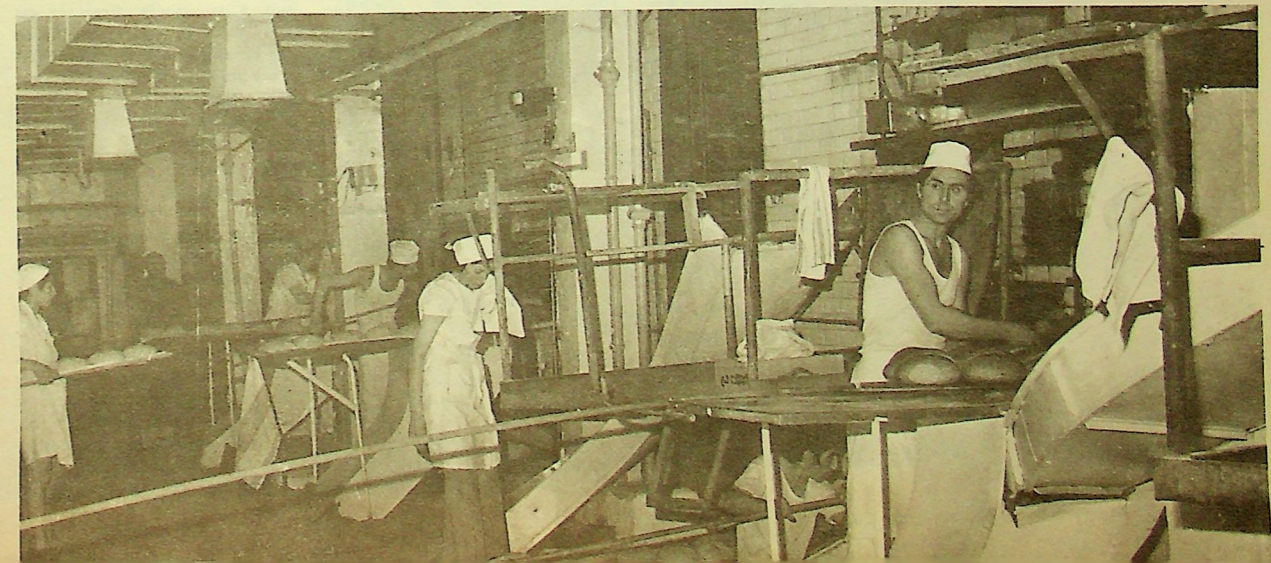
● The Progresul prefab factory of Bucharest, whose production losses following the quake amounted to 4 million lei, not only succeeded in retrieving losses by the end of March but also pledged to manufacture extra products worth some 800,000 lei. The employees of the factory decided to make, above plan provisions, the prefabs required to build at least 200 flats.

● At the building site group IV of Timişoara every shift makes above plan the parts required for one flat. After the quake, the workers, technicians and engineers pledged to supply the parts for 600 flats above plan by the end of this year.

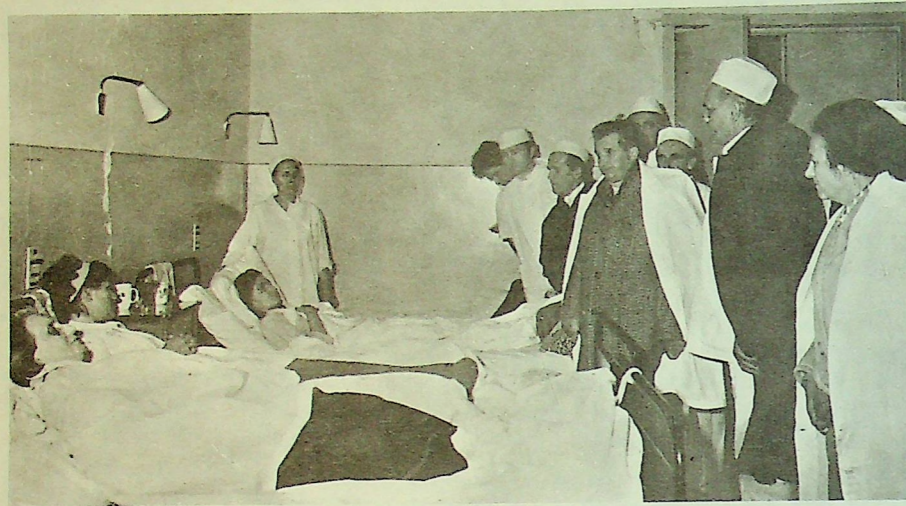


The gas supply system is functioning.

Everybody had bread. Every day.



THE BATTLE FOR NORMALIZATION



The President visited hospitals.

THE PHYSICIANS

The medical staff worked with a devotion fully vindicating the Hippocratic oath. Wherever first aid had to be given, in the midst of the disaster, in improvised hospitals, in schools and tents, and

in well-equipped hospitals which the calamity had not severely damaged, a fierce struggle against death was waged by them. In the first five days after the quake, over 3,500 injured and badly wounded persons, some of whom survived desperate situations, received treatment at Colentina hospital in Bucharest.

Feverish work to save human lives proceeded 24 hours a day at the Central Military Hospital,

Brâncovenesc hospital, and the other hospitals of the city. Physicians and surgeons did their duty. They provided not just medical treatment, they took brotherly care of the wounded. At their posts all the time and like the soldiers, firemen and the rescue teams in the forefront of the fight against tragedy, these dedicated men and women once again earned the esteem of their fellow citizens.

Calm, dedicated work to overfulfil the plan targets.



● Thanks to the uninterrupted work of builders in the first week after the disaster, the Construction and Assembly Centre provided over 1,100 flats.

● On March 11, Titan of Bucharest was again operating normally, at full capacity, producing its entire range of baked products.

● Day after day, tens of thousands of citizens are doing voluntary work to repair damaged roofs and remove rubble and debris. By March 12, the rubble of over 2,700 Bucharest buildings was cleared away.

● By night, the vehicles of the salubrity service clean the big thoroughfares. In the morning, citizens sweep the pavements.

● Twenty-five centres organized in Bucharest to sell building materials to the population are permanently supplied with scores of tons of cement, lime, timber, bitumen, a.o.

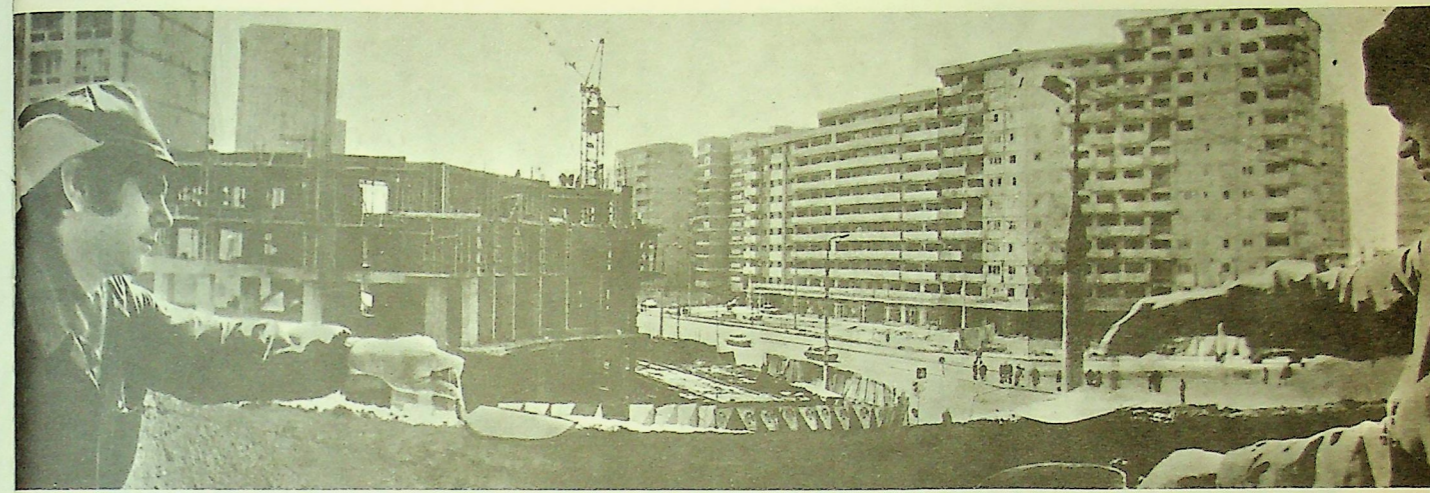
● Nicolae Cristian of Bucharest, Str. Toamnei 48 A, and his four neighbours decided to repair their homes and those of their neighbours. Similar small building sites have appeared in many quiet streets with one-storeyed houses. The city is dressing its wounds.

● Responding to the call of the youth organizations, hundreds of thousands of young people from enterprises, schools and faculties are working Sundays to repair damaged educational establishments, salvage building materials, plant trees and bushes, and arrange green spaces along the main streets of Bucharest.

● The Telephone Exchange Palace resisted the shock and resumed its activity. Great efforts were made to secure the normal functioning of the telephone network in less than 24 hours after the disaster. The number of internal and international calls grew considerably.

● The health condition of children and adults is good due to the permanent actions of the medical staff which promptly responds to all the needs of the population and actively controls the sanitary and hygienic condition in all the localities struck by the calamity.

● At Zimnicea, the town which, after Bucharest, was most badly hit by the disaster, aid caravans from all over the country arrived, as well as architects and designers from Alexandria and Sibiu,



Durable walls for the future.

Food supplies continued without any interruption.

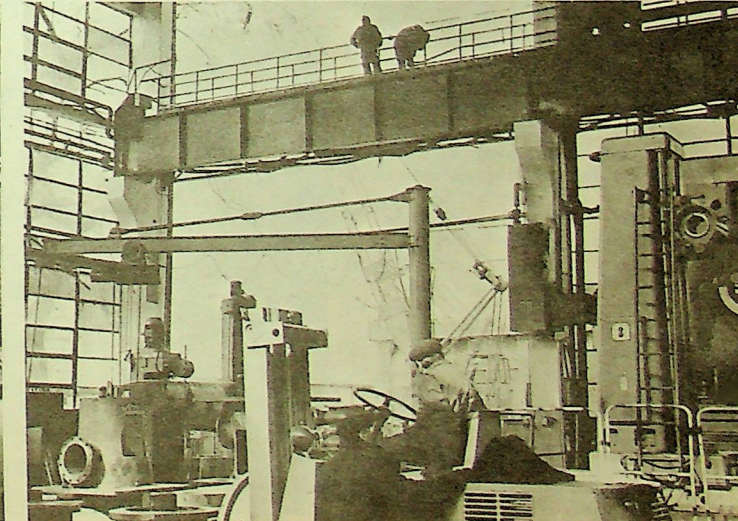
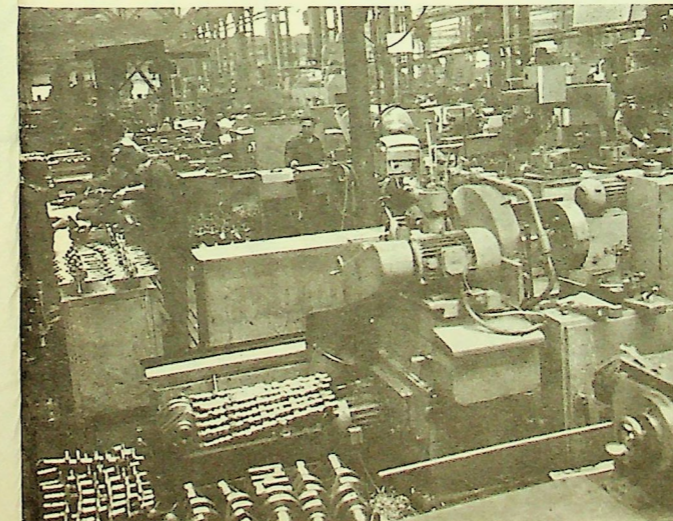
The prefab factory of Buzău pledged to supply big above-plan quantities of parts for solid, pleasant and comfortable homes.



The men of the Bucharest Heavy Machinery Enterprise kept the plant going.



The earthquake also damaged the Pump Factory, but production continued.



THE BATTLE FOR NORMALIZATION

teams of skilled workers from Buzău and Cimpina, and builders from Tirgoviște, Bacău and Constanța.

- Some 4,000 craftsmen of the construction, repair and house administration enterprise are working from dawn till night alongside residents to repair damaged chimneys and fire walls.

- Five days after the quake, trains arrived in and departed from Bucharest's North Railway Station according to the usual time-table.

- Over 1,000 valuable volumes, which belonged to passionate book lovers, were recovered from the wreckage. After treatment in special laboratories, they will be re-introduced in the cultural circuit.

- On Sunday, March 13, some 22,000 persons worked on the repair of houses in the town of Giurgiu.

- On Wednesday, March 9, one hundred employees of the Grivița Roșie works of Bucharest, 360 workers of Săvinești enterprises and many others donated blood at special collecting centres.

- Electricians Agop Gugioiu and Matei Olaru and chief machinist Constantin Porumb remained for six days in the building of the Ion Vasilescu Theatre and made all necessary repairs. Thanks to their work, the theatre sheltered eight homeless families in the first days after the calamity.

- 70,000 people worked on the second Sunday after the quake for the reconstruction of the town of Vaslui.

- On March 8, Women's Day, the shops selling cosmetics were crowded by men even in these extraordinary circumstances: numerous women received presents.

- March 13 was a normal work day from the viewpoint of energy production and consumption. Thanks to the prompt intervention of specialists, power stations were again meeting the demands of industrial and domestic consumers and exporting energy to the countries in inter-connected systems.

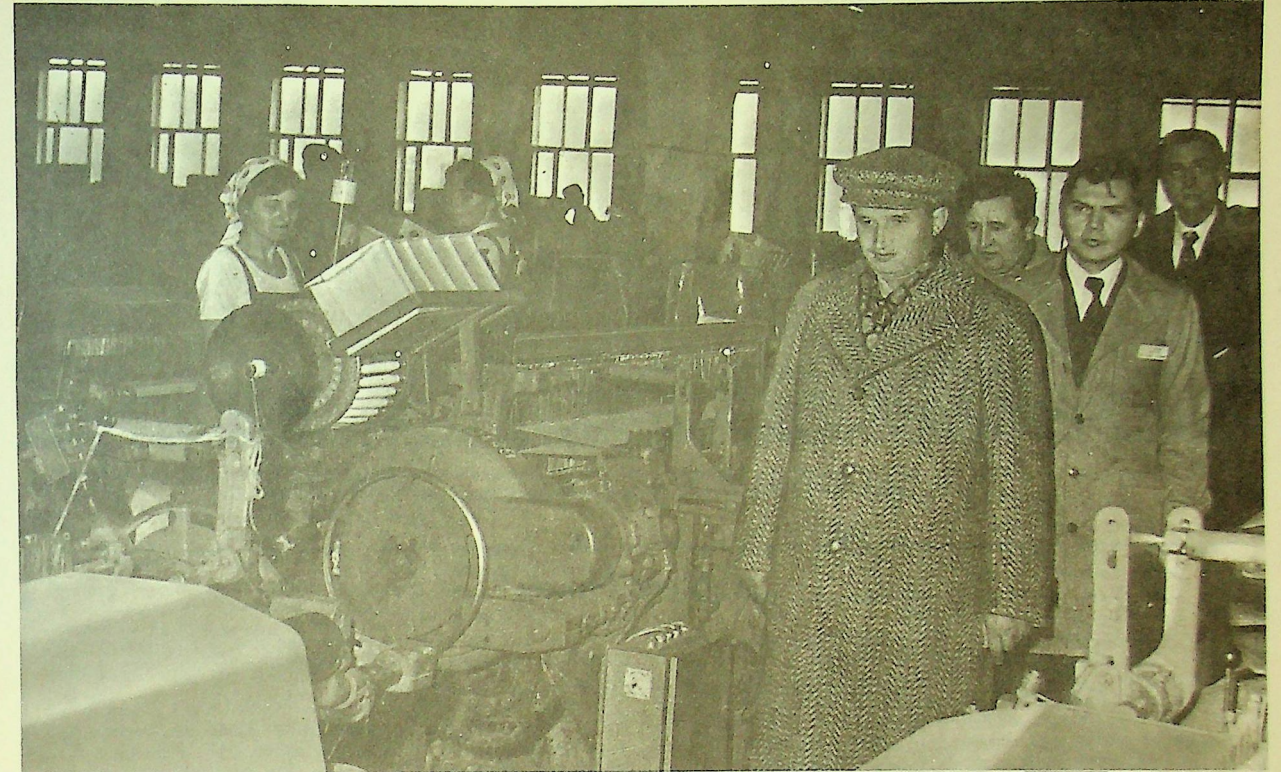
- Since March 9, the markets and flower shops in Bucharest are again selling flowers.

- 100 babies were born in one Bucharest maternity hospital during the seven days after the quake.



A working Sunday.

Life continues. The rubble is cleared. Our photo pictures students of the Bucharest Medical and Pharmaceutical Institute.



President Ceaușescu at the textile mill of Buzău.

The bell is again ringing at school.

**"YOU HELPED
US. NOW
IT'S OUR TURN"**

Lorry driver Vasile Munteanu had brought goods from Jassy to Bucharest, unloaded them and, together with other drivers, helped move the belongings of victims of the disaster. He was one of the many men who had driven immediately from the provinces to bring supplies to the capital city. Big amounts of food and staple goods were transported to Bucharest from various counties during the days following the disaster. In the first two or three days alone, Harghita and Covasna sent 1.5 million bottles of mineral water, Brașov county dispatched cheese, Tulcea sent fish, and large quantities of meat products came from Constanța, Galați and Argeș. In those days this solidarity was one of the most impressive aspects. "You helped us in 1970. Now it is our turn to help the Bucharesters," said those who came from the counties which had suffered from the floods in 1970.



THE BATTLE FOR NORMALIZATION



The President and his wife are the first callers at a new flat assigned to a homeless family which lost everything, a family which now has everything, given by the state free of charge: a home, furniture, clothing, linen, radio, TV and refrigerator.

A New Home

If we did not know what had happened six days before, if people's faces were not still marked by tragedy, there would be nothing unusual about moving to a new house. But this is no ordinary moving house. Those who are moving in lived in blocks which collapsed and who saved only their lives. Their new address is block 6 in Ziduri Moși street, situated in the Bucharest residential district of Colentina. It is a block of 44 flats which was to be commissioned in two weeks but which, thanks to the efforts of the builders and of the working people in the neighbouring enterprises, especially women, was completed in a few days. Everything is new, the air still smells of lime and paint. Through the new curtains one sees light in the flats, the sign of peaceful life in a home. Lamps, TV and radio sets, refrigerators, gas stoves, everything needed in everyday life, carnations in vases, make for an atmosphere which tries to tell the residents that all that has happened is a change of address.

The first guests in the new homes of the victims of the disaster are President Nicolae Ceaușescu and Elena Ceaușescu. The President

has time for everything in this country and, first of all, for its people, whom he encourages with words and, especially, with humane actions.

"I knew the word kindness, but it is only now that I understand its true meaning!" This is how Aurelia Hristea and her two children, welcome President Nicolae Ceaușescu. She now lives in flat number 3 — on whose door someone has put a plate with the name of the head of the family, Dr. Dan Hristea. As she says with tears in her eyes, she considers herself "the richest human being in the world."

In flat no. 10, Emilia Dănescu, with husband Marcel and daughter Diana, meet the guests at the door:

"I am overwhelmed. Looking around, I begin to believe that we shall get well again. Thinking of the losses our country has suffered, I am even more grateful for the noble concern to give us a fully equipped home. When they filled in the forms for my new home and asked me how old I was, I answered that in fact I was six days old. This is the second time I was born."

Pupils of the Autobuzul industrial high school help to arrange flats whose residents will be disaster victims.



ACCOUNT 1977, THE ACCOUNT OF HUMANENESS

While actions to remove the consequences of the earthquake were in full progress, a public fund to help the victims and assist in reconstruction was set up on the initiative of the mass of citizens. The creation of this fund, registered as Account 1977, and the creation of the National Assistance Committee, which will coordinate all initiatives taken by the masses throughout the country and take over and direct the judicious use of assistance from abroad, were met with satisfaction by Romanian public opinion. Ever since the opening of Account 1977, surnamed the account of humaneness in the spirit of the traditional humaneness of Romanians, an impressive number of citizens from all walks of life, enterprises, institutions and public organizations paid in sums of money and announced how they intended to further increase the public fund to finance the elimination of the earthquake effects. Substantial sums of money were deposited in the savings banks branches, the scope of the donations acquiring the significance of a large-scale action under the sign of solidarity and unity of all citizens. In brief meetings, hundreds of thousands of workers, technicians, engineers, clerks and intellectuals pledged to contribute part of their monthly remuneration or of other income. Some collectives offered to work overtime and give the resulting benefits to Account 1977. Many theatres announced that they would contribute their takings from special performances. Gate money from dozens of sports competitions organized for the purpose will be paid into the humaneness account. Particularly moving were the moments when thousands of citizens, including many pensioners, came to the offices of savings banks and deposited part of their savings to help the victims.

With every passing day, more and more people make their contribution to this impressive citizen's action of humane assistance.

- The integrated wool works of Constanța county contributed 7,250,000 lei to the Account of Humaneness.

- Many physicians and nurses of Bucharest's medical units donated a total of almost 8,000,000 lei.

- The workers and technicians of the petrochemical combine at Borzești pledged to pay more than 10,000,000 lei into Account 1977 by the end of this year.

- In one day alone, more than 2,000,000 lei were paid into Account 1977 at the county branch of the savings bank in Arad.

- The drivers of the International Road Transport Company donated 20,000 dollars from their daily allowance.

- The employees of the garment industrial corporation paid into Account of Humaneness the entire sum of money due to them as a bonus for 1976. This sum is 3,000,000 lei.

- At an office of the savings bank a citizen, who wanted to

- remain anonymous, deposited 800 lei.

- 23 pensioners in the municipality of Craiova offered to shelter homeless families.

- Several families of Constanța informed the authorities that they wanted to adopt

MILLIONS OF HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS

- The pupils of the Sighișoara agro-industrial high school offered 70,000 lei for their colleagues in the disaster zones, the equivalent of the operations carried out by them during their voluntary work actions.

- Well-known artists, among them sculptor Ion Vlasiu and painter Constantin Piliuță, donated two works each for an exhibition which will be organized to raise funds for the victims of the quake.

- Members of the Fine Arts Union have set up a fund to which they donate works of art to decorate the flats given by the state free of charge to the families of disaster victims.

- children who had remained orphans after the earthquake.

- The inhabitants of the commune of Ciprian Porumbescu, Suceava county, gave 2,000 kg of meat to the homeless.

- The pupils of the Sighișoara agro-industrial high school offered 70,000 lei for their colleagues in the disaster zones, the equivalent of the operations carried out by them during their voluntary work actions.

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Account 1977 to Help Disaster Victims was opened by the Savings Bank. People deposit part of their income, pension or savings in this Account of Humaneness in solidarity with the country's suffering.



THE SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK

Looking for the reasons of human actions can be a most exciting undertaking. Why did the workers and engineers fearlessly stay under the caved in ceilings of the București-Vest thermo-electric power station the night of the earthquake in order to evacuate from the generators the 25 tons of cooling oil and hydrogen that could have exploded at any instant? There are many similar examples.

What motivated the workers of the regions that were not hit by the earthquake — steel workers and miners, chemists and power engineers, producers of building materials and employees of the light industry — to voluntarily increase their production tasks?

After the night of the earthquake, everybody saw that this country has enough heavy machinery, lorries and other machines for the rapid clearing away of the ruins and for reconstruction; everybody saw that this country can smoothly and unrestrictedly supply food and every commodity; that the homeless received free of charge new flats, furnished and equipped with every facility; moreover, everybody saw that each and all reported to work immediately, in conditions that were not always easy, in the institutions, enterprises, on the building sites, in the mills where they are employed.

This means that a solid foundation, which enables everybody to withstand the hardest trials, has been built in socialist Romania in the course of years. We all know that this foundation is the national economy.

Obviously, all Romanians are grieved by the destruction and losses incurred by the economy. In reporting immediately to their jobs, people knew that above all they were fulfilling their duty to their most valuable possession: the country's national wealth which they have created with their own hands and which they fully own. The factories, mills, enterprises, building sites have been and are the places where people have the opportunity of working directly and efficiently, selflessly, with enthusiasm and creative élan not only for reconstruction and the compensation of losses, but also for the imple-

mentation of all future plans, which they do not consider jeopardized by the calamity which so heavily struck their country. Every day that has passed since the earthquake of March 4, 1977 conspicuously bears out the fact that the rapid retrieval of losses is considered everywhere both necessary and possible for the fulfilment and overfulfilment of the tasks set by the current five-year plan. Working overtime, hundreds of enterprises have succeeded in exceeding their production plans by 20–30 per cent on the days following the earthquake. The country needs more machines and plants, more building materials and fuels, a wide range of outfit and consumer goods. As always, the Romanian people demonstrates that it has a deep understanding of historical logic. If the foundation built so far has proved to be sound and reliable, the future can and must rely on the even more solid foundation which millions of people are building with their hands. Commentators abroad who believed that the earthquake of March 4, 1977 had jeopardized Romania's capacity of implementing its creative plans were certainly wrong in jumping to hasty conclusions. At a press conference held in Bucharest during those hard days, President Nicolae Ceaușescu said: "We are firmly resolved not to change in the least the development programme and the programme for the improvement of the people's living standard whose implementation will start this year. The only field where we consider we must postpone the implementation of our programme is the reduction of the work-week. This is fully understood by the people, and many working people have asked to work overtime to help rapidly make up for the losses suffered by the economy. That is why the Political Executive Committee, the Government and the people are convinced that, in spite of the difficulties, we shall succeed in adequately implementing the plan for the country's economic and social development. I mention this because I have read comments in the foreign press according to which, under the new circumstances, Romania's development plan has become a mere piece of

INTERNATIONAL SYMPATHY AND SOLIDARITY

The terrible earthquake, which was the greatest disaster that befell this country since the second world war, aroused emotion, grief and pity throughout the world. Messages of solidarity with and encouragement to the Romanian people in its ordeal began to arrive shortly after the catastrophe. Heads of states and governments, leaders of political parties, prominent officials from almost all the countries of the world sent telegrams to Romania's President Nicolae Ceaușescu expressing their deep sorrow for the immense human and material losses caused by the natural calamity in Romania.

★

A few scores of minutes after the reception of the first news about the earthquake, the international press agencies, radio and television stations, and papers in most countries of the world were intently following the dramatic situation of Romania and supplying data, comments, reports designed to inform the public about the devastation. Some 200 special correspondents from Europe, the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and other countries arrived in Romania to witness the consequences of the quake and the rescue and the clearing operations. Their reports and the comments published by the world's press spoke of the dimensions of the disaster, of the losses it caused, and especially of the promptness with which the entire population of Romania, led by the Head of the State, President Nicolae Ceaușescu, rose as one man to action against the effects of the quake of March 4. All the special correspondents emphasized the selflessness, manliness, courage and dignity demonstrated by the Romanians in those hard circumstances.

Solidarity with our hard-stricken nation was also expressed in the form of public manifestations of sympathy and direct assistance from many states, parliaments, international organizations and meetings that were being held in Geneva, such as the UN Conference on the Negotiation of a Common Fund, the Commission on Human Rights, the Committee on Disarmament, the Expert Group for the European Social Development Programme. The severe losses caused by the earthquake in Romania were mentioned and sympathy was expressed with our country and people.

★

In the meanwhile, aid began to arrive from various countries. The German Democratic Republic gave 10 million marks, and Czechoslovakia 25,000,000 crowns. As part of an aid of 30,000,000 dinars, Yugoslavia sent sanitary materials, baby food, beds, etc. The Soviet Union offered to equip a factory of big concrete prefabs for housing construction, and an unredeemable emergency aid including materials, equipment, cables and other products, 200 lorries, 100 tractors, 50 shop-vans, 20 medical buses, 30 self-propelled bulldozers, machinery and drugs. Money was received from many states and prominent persons: Austria (3 million schillings), the People's Republic of China (500,000 yuans), France (1,000,000 francs), Japan (62,200 West-German marks). Australia gave 30,000 Australian dollars. Prince Hassan Ibn Talal sent a check of 10,000 Jordanian dinars as personal contribution. Medicines, medical materials, food, linen, ambulance cars, medical apparatus, tents, blankets, gas cylinders, beds were supplied to Romania from various sources. Hungary sent medicines. The government of the

paper. I do not know whether the correspondents of the paper who wrote this are present here, but I invite them to come back after a few months and visit the damaged enterprises to see for themselves that already this year those enterprises will compensate for the lag and fulfil their plans."

Expressed by the Head of State, this belief relies on everything Romania has built in the past decades and on a powerful collective awareness. The firm belief in the unimpaired and steady development of the economy springs from all the deeds we have witnessed wherever we are: workers

who came to their mill on the night of the quake in order to clean the machines of rubble and who remained there to work; work teams who launched the slogan: "A normal output now is definitely higher than in ordinary circumstances." Being of vital importance to the nation, the economy now catalyses and harnesses all initiatives, the activities of millions of people.

Our hopes for the future are based mainly on the finding that the Romanian economy, a true supporting framework of society, played the decisive role in the country's capacity to withstand the shock.

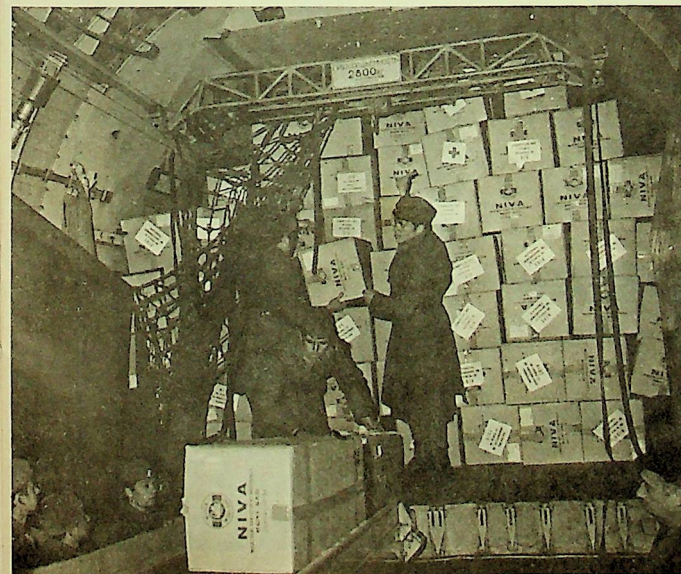
Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that it offered 1,000 tons of concrete iron. Ambulance cars, medical material and food were sent from Belgium; pharmaceuticals, medical instruments and powder milk from Great Britain. Bulgaria supplied linen, food, medicines, etc. Switzerland — sera, bandages, drugs. Denmark sent intensive care and operating units, anaesthetics, sera, etc. The Federal Republic of Germany sent ambulance cars, operating tables, plasma, tents, a fully-equipped mobile hospital with 105 beds, tents, medical apparatus, etc. Ambulance cars, invalid wheelchairs, powder milk, drugs arrived from Poland. The Norwegian Red Cross sent 10 tipping trucks, tents, medicines, etc., the Swedish Red Cross 100,000 crowns, and the US Red Cross 125,000 dollars. Goods worth 25,000 dollars were received from the US Embassy in Bucharest. Medicines were sent from the US. Mrs. Maria Pia Fanfani, wife of the chairman of the Italian Senate, supplied 700 kg of medicine. The Aid of the Danish Church donated 2.5 million crowns. Aid was also received from the South Convention of the Baptist Churches of the USA (30,000 dollars) and from the Adventist Organization (50,000 dollars). Numerous foreign companies and businessmen that have relations with Romanian economic and trade enterprises offered aid under various forms. The Austrian building society offered to build a settlement for 200 homeless, and Switzerland will build under an already signed protocol social establishments and dwellings in one of the most devastated localities. Krog-Jensen Ambr International of Denmark offered ten emergency sets for ambulance cars, including intensive care units.

These aids began to arrive immediately after the catastrophic earthquake in Romania.

At the press conference with Romanian and foreign journalists, held in Bucharest a few days after the disaster, President Nicolae Ceaușescu voiced the gratitude of our country and people for these first acts of solidarity, for the humanitarian help given to Romania in these difficult circumstances. On that occasion he emphasized that we mainly rely on the work of the Romanian people to reconstruct everything that was destroyed. Obviously, the friendly countries with which we have relations of economic collaboration could help us by giving us priority in the supply of equipment to replace damaged machinery and quickly reset the factories into operation. In this respect, certain aids or loans on advantageous terms would be useful.

Thanks to the measures taken to normalize the situation after the earthquake, the plan for the economic and social development of Romania, the country's industrial development and the programme for the improvement of the people's living standard will not be affected. Answering a question about the prospects of Romanian foreign trade relations, the Head of the Romanian State declared: "If economic and social development is not affected, it goes without saying that neither will foreign trade. On the contrary, we will see to it that our international economic exchanges are adequately carried out precisely in order to be able to cope, in this way too, with the difficulties brought about by the earthquake."

The first consignments of aid from abroad arrive at the international airport București-Otopeni. Our photo shows a consignment from Yugoslavia.



- The concern Gutehoffnungshütte of the Federal Republic of Germany offered to make a donation amounting to 100,000 West-German marks and two tipping lorries of 320 HP each, and to supply equipment from its manufacturing programme if such equipment working in Romania was damaged.

- Voest Alpine of Austria gave 500,000 schillings and Gellertozsy Comp. KG — 250,000 schillings.

- Schenker of the Federal Republic of Germany — 4,000 dollars.

- The Japanese company Nihon Hoso — 1,700 dollars.

- The British Fund — 5,000 pound sterling.

- The Anglo-Romanian Bank of London — 2,500 pound sterling.

- Banque Nationale of Paris — 50,000 French francs.

- The Canadian firm Gradek — 2,500 dollars.

- Sixteen Austrian firms donated a sum totalling 1,152,000 schillings.

- Hidromito Española gave a check of one million pesetas.

- The general manager of Deltex International, Gabon, offered 20,000 dollars.

- Fiat of Italy donated two ambulance cars and a tipping lorry.

- The Spanish government decided to give an aid amounting to 50,000 dollars.

- The premier of the Zurich canton, A. Mossdrof, informed that the authorities of that canton had decided to offer 100,000 Swiss francs through the Swiss Red Cross.

- The inhabitants of the Yugoslav town of Skoplje, which was hit by an earthquake in 1963 and helped by the working people of Romania at the time, sent several lorries with food and medicines to Bucharest.

- The town council of Köln offered assistance amounting to 20,000 marks.

- Three tons of drugs and food were received from citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany.

- Citizens' committees and other forms of association for the collection of gifts to the quake victims of Romania were set up in various countries, such as Austria, Ecuador, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Poland, the United States, etc.

- The working people of many Czechoslovak enterprises took the initiative of organizing special shifts; the resulting cash will be transferred to the assistance fund for the disaster victims of Romania.

- Several international organizations announced their assistance. A first aid of 20,000 dollars was offered by the United Nations Development Programme for machines and equipment needed by Romania.

- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees gave 10,000 dollars. The UN Calamity Assistance Office offered a first aid of 20,000 dollars.

- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) announced that it would send food and medicines for children.

- People from various countries of the world have paid money into Account 1000 opened at the Romanian Foreign Trade Bank of Bucharest for assistance to the victims of the March 4 quake. Mrs. Ileana Tadros of Vienna sent 10,000 West-German marks; Mr. Adolf Huber of Vienna — 1,000 Austrian schillings; Mrs. Silvia Neagoe Overem of Brussels — 50,000 Belgian francs; Mrs. Ștefana Luca, Forest Hill, USA — 100 dollars; Mr. Richard Foster Jr. and family of Detroit — 500 dollars; the Greek shipowner G. Vardinoyannis — 30,000 dollars; the Greek businessman L. Hadzivasiliou — 10,000 dollars; Nistor Răileanu, a US citizen of Romanian origin, sent 200 kg of drugs; Paul Kohlen, Federal Republic of Germany, sent pharmaceutical products; young engineer Maung Than Htun, who studied in Bucharest, went to the Romanian Embassy in Libya and offered 500 dollars for the disaster victims of Romania; the Greek scientist Thomaidi Alexandropoulis gave 100,000 drachms; the Mexican painter Andres Solgo, who visited this country in 1976, wrote a letter in which he said that he would offer to the Romanian victims all the returns from his one-man show entitled Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary Seen by a Painter, which is to open shortly.

- The organizations, companies, firms and individuals wishing to help quake victims or contribute to make up the losses incurred by Romania as a result of the terrible earthquake of March 4, 1977, can pay the sum they intend for this purpose into Account 1000, Romanian Foreign Trade Bank, Bucharest, Calea Victoriei, or at the Romanian embassy or consulate in their country.

THE RED CRESCENT OF LIBYA: 250,000 Dollars



A delegation of the Libyan Red Crescent, led by Dr. Abdel Rauf Burkhis, health director and chairman of the Tripoli organization, called at the headquarters of the Romanian Red Cross.

"Our aid," Dr. Abdel Rauf Burkhis said, "is accompanied by the profound compassion of Libya's President and

of the entire people of my country. The shock which we, Romania's friends, felt was almost as powerful as that which the Romanian people, struck by the quake, courageously came through. Our aid springs from our sincere friendly feelings for Romania. We came to Bucharest to express our sympathy and hand over the 250,000 dollar-check and also to see what else we can do to help the victims. The Red Crescent is a relatively young organization, but it is strong enough to help the victims of the seism. Relations between our two peoples are very close and they intensified following the meeting between the Heads of our States Muammar Gaddafi and Nicolae Ceaușescu. Many Romanian physicians, auxiliary medical staff and specialists in various technical fields are working in Libya. This activity helps to strengthen our relations. The Libyan people is grateful for the assistance of the Romanian people."

"TO HELP THE ROMANIAN PEOPLE"

Ray Rabenold, delegate of the United Nations Development Programme

First I was shocked by what I saw during a rapid tour of the city. Even now, many days after the quake, I am impressed and, at the same time, filled with admiration for the sustained work to remove the ruins, for the swift actions to clear away the traces of the disaster. I realize that all this had a stimulating psychological effect on people. Such an effort required the participation of everybody and this solidarity is a remarkable thing.

I came here to examine with the UNDP permanent representative in Bucharest the way we can assist in reconstruction. The United Nations Development Programme is ready to help along this line with its specific means. I have known your country for a long time. I first came here in 1968, so my links with Romania already are quite old. That is why I was shocked when I heard the first news. This terrible ordeal which brought suffering to so many people and destroyed beautiful buildings of a beautiful city, filled me with sadness and made me offer whatever help I can give. That is why I was glad to come back to Romania to help my colleagues, to help the Romanian people in its ample reconstruction action.

ALL THAT IS HUMAN IS OURS

Immediately after the earthquake of March 4, the well-known human solidarity organization Secours Populaire Français sent its first aids to Bucharest. In a talk we had, SPF representatives Mauritiuș Gérard, secretary of the Val de Marne federation of the organization, and Garcia Antonio, national youth officer of SPF, spoke about the profound emotion caused in France by the quake in Romania.

"When did you learn about the quake?"

"On the night of March 4. Our magazine *La Défense* (circulation 360,000) was already in the press. We stopped the machines, changed the cover and replaced it with a first message: 'S.O.S. Roumanie.' In the morning, our teams were already completing subscription lists to help the victims in Romania. Many people signed these lists which carried the appeal 'S.O.S. Roumanie. Les sinistrés attendent votre solidarité.'"

"How would you assess the first results?"

"They were beyond expectation. In a very short time, great quantities of goods were collected at the SPF offices and a first transport worth 140,670 francs was dispatched to Bucharest. We sent two tons of garment, 1,000 blankets, 3,500 kg of powder milk,

960 gas cylinders, 300 camp beds, antibiotics, etc."

"Did you also raise money?"

"Yes. We shall soon send to the Romanian Red Cross a cheque for 20,000 dollars. But our help will not stop there."

On their return to France, the SPF representatives will inform French public opinion about what they saw in Romania.



MISSION FULFILLED

Dr. Rudolf Köttner, representative of the Bavarian Red Cross, Federal Republic of Germany, accompanied an aid transport worth 250,000 West German marks to Bucharest. "We travelled via Munich, Vienna and Budapest and were warmly welcomed at the Romanian border. We met with signs of sympathy everywhere. I am deeply impressed by what I saw in Bucharest, not so much by the ruins as by the people's behaviour under the circumstances. I have been to many countries hit by earthquakes. Rescue and construction operations were conducted very rapidly here. I also was in Romania after the floods of 1970 and brought aid from the Bavarian Red Cross. This country is so beautiful! I would like to come



here not under such sad circumstances, but in normal conditions and spend a holiday on the Black Sea coast.

"Before leaving Romania, I inquired about further possible aid on our part."

"AN EXTRAORDINARY COLLECTIVE EFFORT"

"The way you have succeeded to raise huge human forces in such a short time is extraordinary." This is what Jean-Michel Goudstikker, representative of the League of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, said in Bucharest immediately after he saw what had happened in the disaster zones.

"Various aids have already begun to come in."

"Up to now some 20 national societies affiliated to the League have offered aid including medical apparatus, beds a.o. The initial value of this aid was 2,600,000 Swiss francs."

"Further assistance has been announced."

"We admire the Romanians' capacity to work for reconstruction, but we cannot overlook the dimensions of the disaster. And this requires additional aid."

"What is the significance of this aid?"

"This is not charity. What we do is an act of human solidarity. We all admire and appreciate the pride of the Romanian people, but we all realize that prompt international aid is absolutely necessary. As soon as I return to Geneva, where the headquarters of the League are located, I shall report on the situation after the earthquake in Romania."

"What impressions did you gather in the zones struck by the calamity?"

"I witnessed an extraordinary collective effort to eliminate the effects of the earthquake. I have seen many countries hit by quakes and there is no room for comparison. The actions taken here were prompt and efficient. Your advantage is that the social system in Romania makes it possible to solve such vital problems as the immediate provision of decent shelter, food and medicines for quake victims."

"I SAW A FIERCE STRUGGLE"



Italian writer Maria Pia Fanfani, author of the volume *Romania — mondo latino*, was among the first messengers of international sympathy for and solidarity with the Romanian people. She came to Bucharest with a transport of aid sent by the Italian

people and had the opportunity to witness the sustained actions to rescue survivors and remove the effects of the earthquake. Impressed by what she had seen, Maria Pia Fanfani told us at the headquarters of the Romanian Red Cross, where she met members of the National Council: "I very much wanted to revisit Romania which I love passionately and where I have many friends. Business detained me and I had to postpone my trip, but when I heard about the tragedy which befell this wonderful people, I did everything I could to join my friends. I saw the results of the disaster and your fierce struggle for reconstruction.

EXPERT OPINIONS

Bruce A. Bolt, professor of seismology at California University, emphasized the great importance of the data recorded by the Romanian scientists and specialists, who measured the major parameters of the earthquake. He congratulated the Romanian seismologists for their accurate study of the principal seismic wave and of the manifold effects of the tremor. The instruments set up in Vrancea and other places of seismic and geological interest will permit a close watch of seismic activities in the Vrancea zone over a long period of time — 20 years or more — and the findings made will be highly useful to Romanian and foreign specialists.

Glen V. Berg, professor of civil engineering at Michigan University, declared that he was deeply impressed by the immense and rapid effort for normalization organized and made by the Romanian authorities; the results of that effort may be seen everywhere. He said that he had followed up the strongest quakes

in various countries in recent years, but nowhere had he seen such a large-scale and efficient mobilization of the population for mending the consequences of the disaster and for rapidly resuming economic activities. In his view, the actions taken after the quake by the Romanian administration and people were of "impressive perfection."

James Lefter, director of the civil engineering department, Washington Hospital Building Office, said that the new hospitals of Bucharest and other stricken places had withstood the tremor well, and that he was impressed by the competence and efficiency with which the medical staff had succeeded in evacuating and looking after the patients or in continuing treatment.

The American experts underlined that the new constructions of Romania did well under the shock, thus confirming that they had been correctly designed and built, and made of quality materials.

Alongside the Romanians

Romanian-born Dr. Ion Gerota, who now lives in France, came to Bucharest driving his own car, to help the victims of the earthquake of March 4. This is what he said on his arrival: "Right after the quake I phoned the Bucharest Ministry of Public Health and asked whether I and my French colleagues in Paris could be of any help, particularly in emergency cases in which I specialize. I immediately sent quite an important amount of surgical material for emergency cases, blood transfusion apparatus and medicines. I myself brought another 500 kg of medicines and emergency transfusion kits. I want to emphasize that in this action I have been joined by many French-born and Romanian-born French citizens. I visited the Fundeni hospital in Bucharest. What impressed me was that no one is discouraged, that everybody is thinking about the rapid reconstruction of this beautiful hospital, a pride of Romanian medicine."

How Much Grief and Courage!

Lazăr Kitzis, special correspondent of the Israeli newspaper *Al Hamishmar* in Bucharest, is a native of the city. He was born and studied in Bucharest. He left Romania almost 30 years ago and returned for the first time on March 11, 1977. "We were shocked at the news of the calamity," he said. "Some 200,000 persons born in Romania are now living in Israel and it is only natural that we should all want to do our best and help our native country which received such an absurd blow. The damage is distressing, but I was impressed by the unity of the Romanian people under extremely difficult circumstances. . . . It is really amazing how quickly those who suffered from the disaster were provided with everything they need. If there still are people who wonder about the solution of the national question in Romania, I can assure them that all people in Romania are treated alike, irrespective of their nationality. . . . So much suffering and so much courage! I greatly admire the determination of all Romania's citizens!"

AN EYEWITNESS: THE WORLD PRESS

After the first reports focusing on the magnitude of the earthquake and the scope of the damage, the world press published daily reports about the evolution of the situation in this country and highlighted the calm, discipline and unity with which people worked to rescue the survivors, help the victims, remove the worst traces of the disaster, normalize economic and social life and retrieve the losses suffered by the economy as the result of the calamity of March 4. The correspondents of the international press who arrived here in the first days after the quake, sent reports from the spot which highlighted the efficiency of the tireless activity conducted by the Romanian Communist Party's leadership, by the Political Executive Committee, a veritable political and organizational high command, by President Nicolae Ceaușescu, and the civic heroism evinced by the entire people in its efforts to overcome the disaster which had hit this country. The chronicle of the dramatic days in early March is considerably enriched by eyewitness testimonies which we reproduce in the following lines.

"Relief operations were rapidly organized in Bucharest," noted the special correspondent of France Presse, "Work to rescue the people trapped under ruins started less than one hour after the quake. Bucharest is fighting back to heal its wounds," continued the correspondent, who emphasized that the quake had hit Romania with a force equal to that of ten atom bombs of the Hiroshima type. "Relief work is organized with great calm and discipline. The rubble is removed quickly. Whoever crosses the city is surprised by the calm and discipline of its inhabitants, by the methodical organization of relief. There is no crowding, no panic, no nervousness."

"All the forces of socialist Romania are concentrated on the elimination of the consequences of the earthquake and aid to the victims," wrote the daily *Pravda* in a report from Bucharest. "The population of Bucharest shows much courage and discipline. The city is calm and disciplined in spite of the serious material and human losses caused by the devastating calamity. All institutions and enterprises are working normally."

In an article entitled *Heroic Romania* after the Earthquake, the New China news agency said: "Courage, calm and unflinching dedication make the rescue and relief activities following the devastating earthquake an impressive sight. Together with other Party and State leaders, Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu visited the zones affected by the disaster in Bucharest and gave valuable indications regarding the way to rescue injured people, evacuate the inhabitants of unsafe buildings and shelter the homeless as soon as possible. The Party organizations firmly apply the Presidential Decree and mobilize the masses to secure the required assistance. Several damaged industrial units have resumed their activity."

"There is no panic in Bucharest," Tanjug reported. "People go to work. All Party and State activists, all responsible factors of social life in Romania directly participate in the actions to remove the consequences of the earthquake. All military units, the units of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the patriotic guards are on the alert. Prompt measures were taken to rescue people trapped under ruins. Damage is repaired in enterprises, the normal process of production is ensured. Efficient measures are taken everywhere to supply the population with water, electricity and staple food."

United Press International reported that President Nicolae Ceaușescu visited the stricken areas of Bucharest and the provinces and gave minute indications for the operations required to retrieve losses caused by the disaster and normalize conditions and that his presence in the disaster areas encouraged the population.

"The working people of Romania continue their selfless endeavours to rescue the survivors, retrieve the serious losses and secure the flow of production, transport and supply," wrote the correspondents of ADN, German Democratic Republic, in an ample eyewitness report from Bucharest. "Emergency teams composed of soldiers, members of the patriotic guards and other persons help to rescue the men, women and children buried under mounds of rubble. The prevailing mood is one of human solidarity and full dedication in the spirit of the call addressed to the entire Romanian people by the Party and State leadership."

"Bucharest is displaying exceptional self-control and makes sustained efforts to restore the normal course of life," said the Belgrade daily *Borba*. *Trybuna Ludu* of Warsaw printed a report from Bucharest according to which "the people, fully aware of the tragedy they experienced, have set to work to remove the consequences of the earthquake. The discipline of the population is remarkable."

Associated Press reported about the rescue operations conducted in the first days after the quake and emphasized the abnegation of the first relief teams. Engineers, physicians and Party activists worked together and the entire activity was carried out in a disciplined way, it said. Up-to-date equipment was used and despite the danger of explosions and fires, no accident occurred.

The special correspondent of the Italian paper *La Stampa* wrote that "the first thing that strikes one is the people's dignified attitude. The heart of the city has suffered a terrible blow. And yet, less than two hours after the earthquake, electricity supply was restored and work started by searchlight to remove the debris. Buses ran throughout the night. The Bucharesters are remarkably self-controlled: no lament, only silent general sorrow, a great lesson of civic virtue." The same Italian paper described the ample operations to help the quake victims and restore the national economy, emphasizing their efficiency and reasonableness. "President Ceausescu has once again demonstrated his ability to rally the entire nation. President Ceausescu called for general mobilization and the people responded enthusiastically, lending relief activities a sustained rhythm. The patriotic guards joined the army and gave considerable, often decisive and invaluable, assistance. For hours on end they dug in the rubble, reaching the limit of human endurance. They also worked by night to rescue survivors."

"It is obvious that in this terrible ordeal the Romanian system unmistakably demonstrated its efficient organization and capacity to rally the people," wrote *Le Monde*. In an article entitled Exceptional Coolness the Swiss paper *Tribune-Le Matin* said that "the calm of Bucharesters is indeed remarkable, if we think of the shock usually manifest in towns hit by an earthquake. These people have fully retained their self-control." The Athens paper *To Nea* wrote: "Life in Bucharest is gradually returning to normal. The authorities and people make huge efforts to restore the city's normal vital pulse. Now that the dust of wrecked houses begins to clear away and we recover from what we lived through in Bucharest, we can describe our impressions more calmly. The day after the quake people moved in the streets with unprecedented self-control, unity and pride. There was no panic, no cowardice, no desertion."

The Czechoslovak paper *Svobodne Slovo* wrote: "Notwithstanding their grief and affliction, the Romanian people and its leaders are masters of the situation. They face the disaster with a remarkable spirit of sacrifice and an organizational ability which fill the whole of Europe with admiration." In an article entitled Bucharest Resumes its Vital Pulse the West-German paper *Die Welt* wrote that "for one week the Romanians have been working day and night. Last evening Bucharest was again a clean city. Bucharest is a living city. Life continues its course in Bucharest." The paper *Izvestia* wrote: "In these difficult days for Romania, the medical staff in Bucharest and in the other towns hit by the quake, was always on duty in the first line of the battle." The same paper reported that "scores of homeless families were assigned new, comfortable flats which are provided with everything needed for a decent living."

In a commentary entitled Stronger than the Quake, the Yugoslav weekly *Komunist* said that Romania has to cope with complex and difficult tasks. Superhuman efforts will have to be made and huge material means will have to be invested to remove the consequences of the earthquake and restore the normal course of life, the author says. "Measures are taken every day to make up for the big losses caused by the disaster. Bravely and selflessly, the working people of Romania are making huge efforts, in a spirit of discipline, dignity and abnegation, so that the economy may be restored to normal production as soon as possible. All this demonstrates that the people and government of this socialist and friendly country can overcome the tragic consequences of the disaster and create the necessary conditions for resuming normal life and activity."

The Finnish paper *Helsingin Sanomat* wrote: "The tireless activity of Romania's President was a must and it yielded results. He called for assiduity and the Romanians proved assiduous, the heaps of rubble have diminished, hospitals were functioning again immediately, and thousands of quake victims were given shelter. Romania carried the battle." The Cairo television mentioned "the heroism with which the population of Bucharest and the other Romanian localities hit by the quake are working to eliminate the consequences of the powerful tremor." *Politika Ekspres* of Warsaw printed an article entitled Life Defeats the Blind Elements which noted that "the wreckage is cleared away at a sustained rhythm. All Bucharesters worked Sunday to remove the traces of the disaster."

STOP PRESS NEWS

RESCUED AFTER 251 HOURS MORE THAN A MIRACLE



A woman stood by the ruins of the former Continental building ever since the night of the catastrophe. She desperately begged everybody: "My son is under the ruins. He is alive. My mother's heart does not deceive me. Save him!" As time and work progressed, the probability of finding him decreased, but she remained firm. She implored everybody: "Save him!" Several days passed. The men whose eyes had grown red with sleeplessness and exhaustion and who were risking their own lives to save other lives, looked sadly at her; they had no sign of survivors in the wreckage.

After eight days, they had cleared away the ruins almost to the ground. President Nicolae Ceausescu, who was present there, too, saw the woman and listened to her. He ordered that the search should be continued at any cost. New machinery was brought. New tunnels were dug in the wreckage.

On the ninth day, President Nicolae Ceausescu, accompanied by Elena Ceausescu, came to see how the rescue operations were proceeding. They encouraged the woman and told her that everything was being done to save possible survivors. Work continued.

After eleven days, more exactly after 251 hours, another man was rescued from the wreckage of Continental. It was the woman's son, Sorin Crainic, who will be 19 in August. He is a worker at the Electromagnetica factory and has broken all records of survival in a ruined building. Reality is stranger than a miracle.

"Thanks to an unprecedented mobilization of united energies and available technical means, thanks to a tremendous joint effort made by all organizations and the entire people and which was perfectly coordinated and guided, life is gradually regaining its former rhythm which, for several hours, had been disrupted," reported the Athens paper *Avghi*. The daily *Magyar Hirlap* wrote that the watchword in Romania was to mobilize all forces. Great efforts were being made in the enterprises of Bucharest and other localities, the paper said, to restore economic life to normal, to repair damaged machinery and equipment. The paper also mentioned the dedicated work of the medical staff which was permanently ready to give assistance to all those who needed it.

Under the headline Hit by Disaster, They Deserve Admiration, the West-German paper *Frankfurter Allgemeine* pointed out that what was striking about Bucharest in those difficult days was "not only the calm and precise organization of activities to rescue the survivors and remove the rubble, but also the unity and the direct, spontaneous dialogue between the country's leaders and the people — an instance of real and not artificial patriotism." The focus was on man, said the paper, citing the decisions taken by the Political Executive Committee to help homeless families. The paper also mentioned the good supply of the localities affected by the quake and noted the conviction of the population that the decisions taken would be implemented. The article concluded by saying that in those days of the disaster the Romanians were worthy of admiration.

The facts and figures relating to the earthquake mentioned in this issue are those available to us up to March 15, 1977, when the magazine went to press.



Special rescue teams were in action in Bucharest on the morning after the night of horror. Top: at the Dunărea block. Bottom: at the blocks near Piața C.A. Rosetti.





- ① Work to save survivors from the ruins started immediately.
- ② A field hospital on Dinamo stadium, Bucharest.
- ③ They escaped.
- ④ A child is rescued.
- ⑤ Saving life at the risk of one's own life.
- ⑥ Identity papers in the wreckage.
- ⑦ Furniture and personal belongings from damaged buildings.