

COTIDIANUL, the 6th of April 2004

PROTEST. *APADOR-CH [Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Romania] considers that the authorities have seriously broken the human rights in the case of MISA and requires an investigation in this respect*

The Secret Services accused of harassment and abuse against Bivolaru's yogis

By Bogdan Perdivara

Since the beginning of the scandal concerning the Movement for Spiritual Integration in the Absolute (MISA) and its leader, Gregorian Bivolaru, the members of the organization have repeatedly protested against the abuses they have suffered. It's for the first time that an organization for the protection of the human rights has pointed to these abuses and asked for the guilty to be punished and also for the resignation of the Director of SRI [Romanian Secret Services], Radu Timofte and of the General Prosecutor of the Prosecutor's Office at the Court of Appeal of Bucharest, George Balan. By its protest APADOR-CH requests that the "the acts of harassment and intimidation of the MISA members and followers to be immediately stopped and also the urgent investigation of those who have ordered and performed this action."

The organization considers that "the Romanian Secret Services have been directly involved in the actions of surveillance and harassment claiming that MISA allegedly is a paramilitary organization, a danger for the national security"; but all the accusations that have been made public have nothing to do with that. The protest mentions that a series of human rights have been broken (the individual freedom, the presumption of innocence, the right to defense, the respect for one's private life, the right to public gatherings), as the SRI have put under surveillance some members of MISA, "which is seriously damaging the exercise of a basic human right, namely the right to private life".

Also, the protest is denouncing the abuses against the MISA members committed by the policemen, the prosecutors and the gendarmes doing the home searching; namely the lodgers have been hit, forced to give declarations under pressure and they suffered different degrading and humiliating treatments, such as the denial of the lawyers' assistance. APADOR-CH considers that these actions aimed "to manipulate the audience and trigger the general revolt against the MISA members and followers".

Also, the protest considers as "inhumane and degrading" the treatment that the 17 years old minor was inflicted in order to bring out accusing evidences against the spiritual leader of the Movement, Gregorian Bivolaru and also the later's privation of freedom. As a conclusion APADOR-CH requires that all those who have displayed abusive actions to be examined, including the Director of SRI and the General Prosecutor Balan, who have been directly involved in this case.

The Minister of the Internal Affairs and Administration, Ioan Rus, stated yesterday that in his opinion, there have been no human rights breaches in the investigation against the leader of MISA, Gregorian Bivolaru.