

a nation of 140 million souls to ever increasing efforts will manifestly drive the Soviet towards expansion, conquest and the salvation of the world at the point of the sword; it will make Russia enter the path taken after a similar development by the French Revolution led by Napoleon. But to this comparison, to this vision of the furies of war let loose, we must add the stark spectre of Red Bolshevism attacking the nations and armies of Europe, not only with a frontal attack, but also in the rear and in their midst, with all the weapons of civil war than which no more terrible exist.

This would be the death struggle of European and Christian civilization; and in all probability Hungary would be the first station on the path of destruction. We shall do our level best to avert this calamity, but come what may, we shall do our duty. The full weight of responsibility will rest on those who from exaggerated egoism and wanton pride have brought about the present chaos in Europe and are still unwilling to acknowledge their mistake, even now when the eleventh hour is drawing to a close.

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## THE HUNGARIAN QUESTION FROM GEO- AND ETHNOPOLITICAL POINT OF VIEW

by

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(Continued.)

The general situation of Rumania is slightly more favourable than the situation of Czecho-Slovakia; but that all is not well here either, is proved by the following words written by another German geopolitician, Walter Vogel, who cannot under any circumstances be charged with being prepossessed in favour of Hungary.<sup>8</sup> The Greater Rumania created by the Great War, whose area is more than twice what it was previous to the War, looks on the political map — with its almost perfectly round shape — like a model well-rounded national State. But this appearance is peculiarly deceptive. An orographical map — and a map showing the density of population in particular — would at the first glance prove that the new State lacks unity in respect of communications and economically too, — a circumstance revealed at once by the exceptionally eccentric situation of the Capital. The Eastern Carpathians and more particularly the Transylvanian Alps, with their thinly populated mountain forests and their lack of passes serving for communication purposes, completely cut off the Rumanians of Transylvania from the Rumanians of Wallachia and Moldavia; and even if we presume that in these days of railways this circumstance is not of such importance as it would have been in earlier times, we must nevertheless reflect that — apart from the lines leading from the Banate through the Danube valley and from East Bukovina through the Szereth valley — there are only three railway lines (comprising a total length of roughly 600 kilometres) connecting Transylvania and West Bukovina. Political importance attaches also to the fact that Central, Western and North-Western Transylvania and the Banate belong in respect of communications in reality to the Hungarian Basin, whereas Wallachia, Moldavia and

Bessarabia gravitate in the opposite direction — towards the estuary of the Danube, where the most important highways of traffic meet at the lowest bend of that river, near Galatz. At the outset, naturally, ... in their intoxication of delight at having at last attained national unity, the Rumanians betrayed an inclination to forget old antagonism. But the latter very soon began to come again to the forefront and to make considerable headway, particularly owing to the divergences in social condition and in education being accentuated. There can be no doubt that on the average the Rumanian of Transylvania is far superior to his compatriots living in the Regat (Older Rumania).<sup>9</sup>

We might add that Rumania herself is today to a very considerable extent a "nationality State". The Rumanians (by race) constitute 73.1% of the total population; the respective quota of the Germans, who are far ahead of the Rumanians culturally and are very wealthy too, being 4.3%, that of the Magyars, who also possess a very high standard of culture, being 7.7%, and that of the Jews, who play a dominant part in the economic life of the country, being 4.6%. We must not forget, moreover, the delicate situation of the State in international politics. Rumania is practically surrounded on all sides and is directly adjacent to States (Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria) from which she has received large areas of territory the ethnical character of which is very open to dispute — States with which she has therefore a conflict that is not merely temporary, but is necessarily permanent in character.

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The third of the Succession States, Yugoslavia, is also by no means ideal from a geopolitical point of view. Its natural frontiers leave much to be desired; the State has no natural centre; and there can be no talk of the country being a

<sup>8</sup> Vogel, W.: „Das neue Europa und seine historisch-geographischen Grundlagen" (2nd Ed. Bonn—Leipzig, 1923. M. Schroeder), p. 220.

unit in respect of communications, if only because the new State was expanded by the addition of a number of territories originally belonging to other countries which in respect of communications has been parts of the respective blood circulations of several independent States. The distribution of population in quite desultory.<sup>9</sup> There are enormous difficulties also in ethnopolitical respects. According to Vogel, "the nationality question is of decisive importance for the future of Yugoslavia. Though it is true that about three-quarters of the total population of 11.6 million souls belong to the three leading peoples — Serbians, Croats and Slovenes — which have given the kingdom its name... All depends upon whether the three leading Slav peoples — and in particular the Serbians and Croats — will prove able to bring about mutually tolerable relations. A retrospective survey of history shows us that such an issue is barely probable, even were the Serbians really prepared to exercise moderation. We must not forget that the antagonism is primarily a religious one, — and that is a point on which peoples usually take confoundedly seriously: it is therefore very doubtful whether the attempts at fraternising being made by masses possessing a very low standard of intelligence will prove able to bridge over the great gulf fixed between Orthodoxy and Catholicism which is at the same time the chasm separating Balkan-Oriental and Central European culture?... Moreover, there is no unity even among the Serbians themselves. For the Serbians were also originally members of two different States — Serbia and Montenegro — before they were absorbed in the new Yugoslav Union. In the second half of the nineteenth century Montenegro was frequently found acting as a rival to Serbia in international politics... But in this case it is not a question merely of dynastic antagonisms; the Montenegrins themselves have a national consciousness of their own which refuses to allow them to submit unresistingly to the dictatorship of the Serbians — a national consciousness which until quite recently was reflected in bloody guerilla warfare..."<sup>10</sup>

It should be added that the situation of Yugoslavia — wedged in as she is between Bulgaria, Italy and Hungary — is also anything but ideal: and that completes the picture of the consequences brought about by the Treaty of Trianon.

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No wonder that the difficulties of the Succession States outlined above, combined with the struggles for existence of the Hungary and the Austria reduced to utter incapacity by the treaties, should have made the stronghold of the Danube Basin more and more the focus on international politics. But instead of admitting the outrages on nature and common sense committed in the Treaty of Trianon or in the consciousness of the mistakes committed taking energetic steps to restore order

in the Danube Valley, the West has restricted its activity to the invention of new catchwords or the revival of older ones — e. g. economic co-operation, Central European Pact, Danube Confederation, etc. — or (what is even worse) to the petrification in a specious form of the existing order. The attitude of Hungary towards these experiments has been expressed in classic terms by Count Stephen Bethlen as follows:

"... Until then we Hungarians will work and wait with patience-ready to create normal economic relation with all our neighbours even if we have to make sacrifices for that purpose. But till that moment we are unable to join any economic or political bloc beyond this scope, and all endeavours are in vain to construe schemes in this direction until by a just partition real peace and friendship shall be established in the Danube Basin. Co-operation is possible only between sincere friends. A scheme of co-operation in which all the interested parties join with mental reservations has no real basis and is doomed from the outset to disruption. The magyar people is much too outspoken and fair-minded to pass over this truth in silence or to join in such a game. If by a just partition sincere reconciliation can be attained, the co-operation of the peoples of the Danube Basin will be realised quite automatically because it is the necessary sequel of their natural evolution and because the various races will be able to trust each other, which to-day they are far from being able to do.

The Tardieu plan, the scheme of a Danube confederation, as well as a long line of other variations, are all suffering from a common disease: they are economic conceptions which, however, do not solve the economic problems, having been born in a bed of political mental reservations — or we may describe them also as political schemes appearing in the outer form of economic conceptions. Practically all of them have the sphere of interest of the Little Entente, by offering to this country superficial economic favours, without, however, previously satisfying her rightful demands of a fair and just revision of the Peace Treaty."<sup>11</sup>

This claim to revision on the part of Hungary has nothing of the imperialistic about it; the Hungarians have merely adopted the principles which are said to have been applied against their country in the Treaty of Trianon, — merely accepted the principle laid down in that Treaty that the peoples of the Danube Basin must be ensured the unrestricted right of self-determination. According to the attitude adopted by the Hungarian Frontier Re-adjustment League, the Hungarian social organisation best entitled to express an opinion on the subject, is that Hungary on the basis of the right of self-determination of the peoples demands the re-annexation to her of the territories in which the majority of the inhabitants are Magyars, at the same time desiring that in the territories with mixed populations a plebiscite

<sup>9</sup> For this question and the similar question in for Rumania, see Andrew Rónai's two instructive diagrams annexed to the work already referred to.

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 268—69.

<sup>11</sup> Bethlen, Count Stephen: *The Treaty of Trianon and European Peace*. Four lectures. London—New-York. 1934. Longmans, Green and Co. pp. 175—176.

should be held to decide to which State those territories wish to belong. The Hungarians expect the acceptance of these fundamental principles to result in the nationalities arbitrarily torn from Hungary without being consulted either returning to their former allegiance to Hungary or choosing independence and by living in peaceful co-operation and on terms of equality with the Hungarians (Magyars) restoring the peaceful conditions once ruling in the Danube Basin which have been destroyed by the peace treaties and thereby ensur-

ing, not only their own existence, but in all probability also the security and the tranquillity of Europe generally, one of the strongest pillars of which — a pillar which stood firm and unshakable for a thousand years — the Basin of the Carpathians — was thrown by the shortsightedness of the treaty-makers at the mercy of those miniature imperialisms which have replaced the "Pax Hungarica" that for a thousand years held its own in that territory with a state of "bellum omnium contra omnes" that they would fain make perpetual.

## ANGLO-SAXON PUBLIC OPINION AND THE HUNGARIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

by

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This year too — as every year — all Hungary, even the remotest villages, celebrated with due pomp the Idus of March, the Day of Liberty connected so closely in the grateful memory of posterity with the names of Louis Kossuth, the great statesman, and Alexander Petöfi, the world-famed poet. It is these two men and the figure of Francis Rákóczi II., Prince of Transylvania, that express most profoundly the Hungarian ideal of liberty, which — apart from inculcating respect for the ancient Hungarian Constitution, a Charter of liberty as old as the Magna Charta — comprises the totality of human rights and all the constructive substance created by a noble historical evolution.

The Hungarian idea — which to us Hungarians means at all times the political independence of our thousands-years-old Hungarian State — during the whole course of its stormy history probably came nearest to the almost inaccessible meridian of the understanding sympathy of the Anglo-Saxon peoples during the War of Independence of 1848/49 and the events that immediately followed that struggle. The generations of today probably do not realise what the name of Louis Kossuth meant in respect of liberty and democracy in the Great Britain and even in the United States of yore, — do not realise that the exiled Hungarian champion of freedom already represented — in his opinions and in the speeches which he then made in England and America — a world tendency which is still the lodestar of the countries living under the protection of a democratic constitution and still inspires the thought founded on the individual rights of man. We might have spoken of it as "view of life"; but we have deliberately avoided that term, knowing as we do the practical attitude towards life of Englishmen and Americans.

No one in the pre-War period represented the Hungarian idea so forcibly in foreign countries as did Louis Kossuth. Who was this marvellously strong man endowed with such divine gifts? Louis Kossuth was to Hungary what perhaps Cromwell was to England, — the inspirer and representative of popular forces springing from gigantic depths which had slumbered for centuries in the depths of history and were suddenly roused to life, consciousness and power by his genius and the irresistible pathos of his active spirit. Both these men entered the lists on behalf of liberties — in both cases with a rigid majesty of selflessness

that makes their respective nations still raise them to a lofty pedestal of worship and adoration.

The century and a half of Turkish occupation deprived Hungary of almost two-thirds of her population and thereby of the bulk of her vital energies; the Lowlands — formerly a veritable Canaan — were converted into a Sahara. And the losses in blood and force which Hungary had suffered were not in any way neutralised by the more than three centuries of Habsburg rule that followed — a rule that indeed aggravated and made more fatal in their ultimate effect those losses; for instead of using every effort to strengthen the Hungarian population still left in the country and to reinforce and re-construct the pure Hungarian territory liberated from the Turkish yoke, the lords of Vienna resorted to an incomprehensibly fatuous policy disastrous to the dynasty too and turned against the Hungarian nation which stood for the State and jealously guarded its ancient Constitution.

This tendency manifested itself in two directions. First of all it showed itself in an economic and political oppression of the Hungarian population left in the country; and secondly in the settlement in the country of foreign elements whose chief object in life was to be to oppose the historical development of Hungary and to defy the Hungarian cause. This was the policy initiated by Cardinal *Kollonitch*, the all-powerful Chancellor of the Monarchy. It was at this period that the most fertile and richest Hungarian territories were sequestered by hundreds of thousands of Swabian, Serbian and Rumanian settlers.

Louis Kossuth's War of Independence raised these masses of foreign race also into full possession of the Hungarian national rights achieved by him. On March 14th., 1848, the Pozsony Hungarian Diet of the Estates proclaimed the complete equality of all Hungarian nationals and within the short space of one hour renounced all its ancient privileges. There was no exception. All persons alike were given a share in the new Constitution — Magyars, Germans, Slovaks, Serbians, Rumanians and Ruthenians; and that the significance of the innovation was fully appreciated and grasped by the masses too is shown by the fact that when the new Constitution had to be defended by armed resistance against the resuscitated absolutism of Vienna, not only Magyars, but Swabians, Slovaks and Ruthenians too flocked to join the standards of Kossuth and Görgey. Apart from certain exceptions