

CHANGE OF TREND IN RUMANIA'S INTERNAL AND FOREIGN POLICY

BY

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Surprising changes of policy have been frequent in the Great Rumania created by the Paris Peace Treaties of 1919. The reason lies in the fact that *Rumania is an artificially constructed State*. On the side of the Entente Rumania emerged from the World War of 1914—1918 as a victor surrounded by all sides by hostile neighbours. Her foreign policy until recent years was based on the so-called Little Entente. Her situation in international politics, thanks to the revisionist aims of the adjacent countries, is anything but auspicious, for any upheaval in Central Europe or the Balkans may set the most diverse factors in action against her. Since 1936 Rumania has been vacillating between a French and a German orientation, according to which best suited her interests at the moment. After the downfall of her apparently permanent Foreign Minister, the pro-French Titulescu, Antonescu became Minister of Foreign Affairs in the reconstructed Tatarescu Cabinet. At the time the French Press wrote that the new Tatarescu Government was the greatest victory Germany had ever won in the Balkans ("Ouvre", September 1. 1936). On 10th February 1938, following Goga's short-lived Government (44 days, from 28th December 1937 to 10th February 1938) Christea Miron formed a Cabinet under a Royal Dictatorship, in which, when, after a short period in office, Tatarescu fell, the expressly pro-German Commen Petrescu became Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Paris Press established the fact that a change in Germany's favour had again taken place in Rumania's foreign policy. In Christea Miron's third Cabinet (1939) the Francophile Gregor Gafencu was appointed Foreign Minister, and during his term of office Rumania

pursued a pro-French policy. Gafencu has French blood in his veins; as an officer of the Air Force he fought on the side of France in the Great War; and his wife is a Frenchwoman. On 1st June the King appointed Ion Gigurtu (Minister of Communications and Public Works) to succeed Gafencu, since it was necessary that Rumania's foreign policy should turn towards Germany, or rather the Axis Powers. It was not bad health that made Gafencu's retirement imperative; he had to go because as the fanatic advocate of a pro-French and pro-British policy he would not have been the proper man to make a victorious Germany understand what Rumania's interests were. This is why the portfolio of Foreign Affairs was given to Ion Gigurtu, Germany's most loyal supporter, who is also a personal friend of Marshal Göring. Besides this, Gigurtu was one of Goga's most intimate associates, Goga himself being also an ardent supporter of a German orientation. In Goga's 44 days' Cabinet Gigurtu held the portfolio of National Economy and was Minister of Communications in the 1939 Tatarescu Government. Ion Gigurtu's appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the immediate recall of Rumania's Ministers from Paris and London at the beginning of the month and the substitution of mere *chargés d'affaires*, are in themselves evidence that Rumania — as soon as Germany's victory was sure — at once hastened to turn her foreign policy towards a German orientation. After the events in Bessarabia the Rumanian Government was once more re-constructed, M. Vajda-Voivoda being appointed State Minister and M. Argetaianu Minister for Foreign Affairs.

There has also been a *change of front in Rumania's internal policy*. A reconciliation between King Carol and the Iron Guards is in process. This would appear certain from the fact that the King has received in audience Zelea Codreanu's successor as leader of the Iron Guards, Simia Horia, a former university professor, and has proclaimed a further amnesty to the members of that organization. It even seems probable that King Carol will appoint a representative of the Iron Guards to a seat in the Government. On 23rd June the King broadcast a speech to his people in which he announced that he had established a new organization, the

"National Party", to replace the "National Renaissance Front", the only existing Rumanian political party, and that he himself had agreed to accept the office of Supreme President. According to the "Porunca Vremii", a Bucharest daily, this had become imperative because today the whole world stood in need of a totalitarian system of government, now that the totalitarian Powers had seized control in Europe. Rumania — writes this newspaper — must also show her acceptance of this political creed by organizing the whole nation in one political party. By 1st August next every public employee must apply for admission to this party on pain of dismissal. No undertaking may tolerate on its board of directors men who are not members of the National Party. Although so far no mention has been made of the national minorities, who constitute about a quarter of Rumania's inhabitants, it is quite indubitable that they will not be allowed to re-form their dissolved political organizations, but will be forced to join the only authorised political party, the Rumanian National Party.