

RUMANIA

BY

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The pessimistic New Year manifesto addressed to the Rumanian people by General Antonescu, the "Conducator" of the Rumanian State, admits that Rumania is in process of dissolution. In this manifesto the "Conducator" *inter alia* says that "it was at a most critical period that I undertook to carry the burdens of my country — a dynasty tottering to its fall, Rumanians driven from their homes who had been left on the highroad of hopelessness, no support forthcoming from without, an isolated country not understood by anyone and exposed to insults from all quarters, the State authority gone with the wind, moral disintegration, political interests eager for a clash, — such was the situation when I took over the reins of government. So far as lay in my power, during the past three months I have endeavoured to secure an amelioration of this situation, doing so particularly at the juncture when the State that has in any case forfeited so much of its strength has been endangered by anarchy, foreign occupation and revolution."

Rumania still refuses to understand the trend of today. In the Magyarphobe campaign of incitement carried on by the Rumanian Press and the Rumanian radio — a campaign which quite recently was continued without a break for a whole month — it is only during the current month of January that there has ensued an intermission. And, though the Hungarian Press refused to adopt the tone employed by the Rumanian Press, there has been a serious deterioration in the relations between the two States. In the meantime — at the end of 1940 — things assumed so grave an aspect that the Rumanians formed "free corps" of irregulars for the purpose of fighting against the Vienna Award; and in the vicinity of the Hungarian frontier — at Jósikafalva, a village left under Rumanian rule — Iron Guards on five occasions

demonstrated against the Vienna Award. This means that the Rumania living as a protectorate, though the formal title may be that of "instructorate", is quite prepared to bite the heels even of the Axis Powers. In a leader published in its New Year number "*Curentul*" — a daily appearing in Bucharest — encouraged the Rumanians and emphasised that the result achieved by this movement might well be a re-materialisation of the dream of "from the Tisza to the Dniester". We see, then, that "*Curentul*" has gone the length of inciting not only against Hungary, but also against Soviet Russia.

Foreign countries, which display a lively interest in the chaotic conditions prevailing in Rumania, have already tired of the work being done by Rumania in the way of incitement, threats, irresponsible calumny and unjustifiable hectoring in defiance of Hungary too. Three serious foreign warnings were addressed practically simultaneously to Rumania. The "*Relazioni Internazionali*" — the organ of the Italian Foreign Ministry — closed an article dealing with the relations between Hungary and Rumania and with the Vienna Award with the following words: "The attitude of Rumania towards Budapest must be changed." At the same time the German "Donau" broadcasting station established the manifest fact that "there is no doubt that the Rumania created by Trianon did not possess the indispensable intrinsic right to existence". And in the third place a Swiss paper, the "*Neue Zürcher Nachrichten*" pointed out that the Rumanian people misunderstood the situation today just as completely as it did in 1918, when it believed that the immeasurably aggrandised Rumania could remain an overgrown State for all time and could play the Great Power in the Balkans. At the same time Bucharest is apt to forget that Rumania's immediate neighbours today — as at the end of the Great War — are *Soviet Russia, Bulgaria and Hungary*. The Swiss paper in addition observed that the campaign of propaganda being carried on against Hungary by the Rumanians could not possibly be continued without grave danger. The Moscow radio too spoke of conditions in Rumania in terms of bitter opprobrium and disapproval. Indeed, not so long ago the Soviet Russian Minister in Bucharest handed the Rumanian

Government a Note protesting energetically against the anti-Soviet action taken by the Rumanian authorities on the pretext of retaliation for communistic agitation and demanded the immediate suspension of the "anti-Soviet persecution". And in the Balkans peculiarly great interest is being taken in the situation in Rumania.

Apart from the fact that economic conditions in Rumania are acutely critical, the internal political situation in Rumania too has again become very grave. The uncertainty in internal politics continues; and political murders are still the order of the day: quite recently the legionaries carried into effect a plot resulting in the death of M. Alexianu, a former Royal Governor. The antagonism between General Antonescu and the Iron Guard extremists has already reached such a pitch of bitterness that people in Bucharest fear fresh riots, and the wealthier sections of the population are removing their families from the Capital. During the first week in January for several days all telephonic communication between *Bucharest* and foreign countries was interrupted — a circumstance attributed by official Rumanian circles to blizzards, the same pretext being employed to explain the suspension of certain railway connections.

The extremist section of the *Iron Guard* demands a share in the political power and does not consider the rate of readjustment sufficiently rapid. There is a constant increase of the discontent of the Iron Guard which has not been given any part in the work of government and of its dissatisfaction with General Antonescu; these members of the Guard keep stressing that Antonescu is temporising with the radical ideas of the Party. There is great discontent also in the army; for in recent weeks the authorities have removed military officers — in particular generals — who enjoy great popularity also among the civilian elements.

The latent grave crisis through which the Rumania of the Iron Guard is passing is revealed also by the attacks levelled against the Rumanian *bourgeoisie* by the Iron Guard Press. Articles recently published in "*Curentul*" and "*Buna Vestire*" emphasised that the Legion must be anti-bourgeois. This shows that the Iron Guard movement is really an anti-

bourgeois insurrection of the peasant and semi-bourgeois elements. This explains the arrests being made daily of bourgeois elements. The constantly increasing chaos of the internal political situation in Rumania is shown also by the reports telling of clashes between the Iron Guard and the gendarmes. The uncertainty prevailing in respect of the internal political situation is due in part also to the role played by M. Maniu and his supporters. Not long ago M. Maniu addressed to the Rumanian Government a memorandum in which he complained that no trace had been found yet of the murderers of *M. Madgearu* or of *Professor Jorga* and that the promised retaliatory measures had not been carried into effect against them. A few days ago persons of unknown identity probably belonging to M. Maniu's party sent General Antonescu, the "Conducator", a manifesto in which the General is accused of lending a helping hand in the work of ruining and destroying Rumania. — Rumania's fate is being accomplished!

On January 19th. the internal political situation in Rumania became gravely critical. The antagonism between the Iron Guard Legion and General Antonescu which had long been fermenting beneath the surface broke out into full eruption as a result of the assassination of Major *Döring* of the German General Staff. Although Antonescu took the severest measures and forced General *Petrovicescu*, Minister of the Interior, to resign, appointing as his successor General *Dimitru Popescu*, who believes in the policy of the mailed fist, the situation did not quiet down; on the contrary, on January 20th. and 21st. the Iron Guard legionaries arranged monster demonstrations in support of M. *Horia Sima*, Deputy Prime Minister, — a circumstance proving that the revolt was headed by *Horia Sima*. In the feud that ensued the police actually sided with the Iron Guard legionaries; indeed, it became manifest that the insurgents had been armed by the retiring Minister of the Interior, General *Petrovicescu*. The army supported General *Antonescu*. On January 21st., during the forenoon, General Antonescu issued an order suspending the Commissioner of Police, *Giga*, who belonged to the extreme wing of the legionary party, appointing as his successor General *Leoveanu*. The police officials — who were

also suspended — locked themselves in the headquarters of the police and barricaded the building. General Antonescu ordered troops to the scene; and after serious fighting at close quarters these troops succeeded in seizing the police headquarters; the insurgents fired back; and *there was serious fighting in the streets of Bucharest and in all the town of Rumania. Nearly 2000 persons were killed. The revolution has been brought under control by the army, the task being an exceptionally difficult one; but the insurrection is not yet at an end*, the revolutionary spirit gaining headway continually in Rumania. There has been a clash between the army and the Iron Guard, between Antonescu and the Iron Guard legionaries; *the situation of the leaders has become absolutely precarious, and Rumania is on the brink of a precipice. It may be that Antonescu will temporarily become master of the situation.*

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