

Prime Minister Aristide Briand of France spoke about the Hungarian borders:

“Who doubts that the Hungarian borders were made arbitrarily? It is enough to look at the map and follow the borderlines which cannot be final because they do not serve the truth.”¹

Charles Tisseyre, a member of the French Parliament:

“The animosity of the one side joined with the other side’s ignorance of the facts caused Hungary’s miraculous geographical unity to be divided in the name of imagined oppression. They tore apart that nation which had kept her political and administrative unity for ten centuries, with the objection that she was made up of many nationalities. What did they do after that? They created three new states with a populace even more mixed than it had been in Hungary. They destroyed a strong, healthy nation’s political and economic unity and from its ruins they created new states who lag far behind the former united country. It is not without reason that Hungary holds France to be responsible for her mistakes and injustices. This situation cannot be a lasting one. Why did France do this or why did she allow this to happen? This agreement was our work. With this awkward political action we turned a nation away from us which should have become closer to France. . . . It is true that Hungary was a loyal ally to the Germans during the War. We do not dispute that. We do not want to forget that. But can we blame Hungary for becoming the ally of Germany? Didn’t we turn them in that direction when we supported the Pan-Slav movement in Austria-Hungary? With Trianon, again we pushed Hungary into the arms of the Germans. Was Hungary able to make a decision not to fight alongside Austria? Now we understand the behavior of Count István Tisza after the events of Sarajevo. The war from the point of view of the Hungarians was not directed against France but rather against Russia and the attacking Serbia. During the war, the French citizens of Hungary were able to live freely, without any hostility in Budapest. They were able to speak their language. The Hungarian theaters were able to continue to present French plays. We can say that Mihály Károly’s revolution sang the slogan “Vive la France!” It is understandable that we French wanted to punish Hungary because they took part in a war against us but why did we have to punish her more than we did Germany and Austria? Hungary did not receive from France a mite of justice. With time it will appear to the Hungarians that we are responsible for all those sufferings which the Hungarians have endured since Trianon . . . The French media especially has used very angry anti-Hungarian slogans . . . In Hungary, the impression is that all the misfortunes have come about because of the actions of France. . . We may ask what kind of idiotic motive was behind the senseless creation of the Trianon Peace Treaty?”²

David Lloyd George wrote, on March 25, 1919,

“There will never be peace in southeast Europe because the Hungarian irredentists are appearing in the territories of Serbia, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. I

¹ Raffay, Ernő: Magyar Tragédia, Trianon, 75 éve, p. 185

² Ibid. p. 179-180

wish that when the Peace terms are stated, we will stick to that plan that different nationalities should be connected to their own mother nations. This humane view has to come before every economical, strategical and financial consideration.”³

László Bárdossy, Hungarian Prime Minister, in his speech before the representatives on November 2, 1941:

“We have lived for a thousand years in the valley of the Danube, not only as a nation but as a state. We accepted its glory and its burdens. We stood here and defended Europe. We kept the balance among the peoples of the Carpathian Basin. We were the intermediary between East and West. We never considered solely our own interests; we always served the interests of the whole of Europe. Our duty was assigned from on high. This was the reason that God brought us to this land and made us strong and held His hands above us in blessing. Many times, the storm roared above us, tore at us but our back was never bent. Today, so deeply, so inseparably, we have grown together with this land which is ours, just like the mountains have grown into the depths of the earth. This land marks our calling and our duty. The duty which awaits us we can do well or not so well, depending on the kindness of fate or depending on what kind of obstacles appear before us. Be it as it may, this work, whatever form it takes, this duty which awaits us, only we Hungarians can fulfill and nobody else. The duty on this land is ours alone. Until now, every attempt to take this duty away from us has failed badly. Every attempt to organize the peoples of the Danube Valley without considering the strength and the situation of the Hungarians, was unsuccessful.”⁴

László Ottlik, Ph.D., University Professor:

“The Hungarian political organization was based not on ruling over another people but on a civilized concept: to place the Carpathian Basin, the unified geographical territory which was on the border of the Western cultures, into a western, Christian, royal political organization. . . . and fill this territory with the Hungarian concept of freedom, not one people ruling over other peoples. This is what we call the Hungarian state concept. We have to start out from the elementary fact that the peoples who live together in one geographical territory are, of necessity, interdependent. Peoples who are interdependent have the concept of freedom, the ancient Hungarian concept of rights. This materializes in the ancient federal, county system, in the state of the Holy Crown, within which there is the possibility of territorial division. It was called the ‘Una eademque libertas’.”⁵

Charles Danielou, in an article in *The Daily Mail* on June 21, 1927:

“Those who intended to apply the principle of self-determination made the biggest mistake when they excluded three million Hungarians. The ratio of the three million in the new states to the eight million who remained in Hungary is too great. Who would believe that these eight million Hungarians would accept a situation where they would be separated forever from the three million Hungarians in the new

³ Pozzi, Henri: A háború visszatér, Budapest, 1935, 1994, p. 188

⁴ Kollányi, Károly: A Kárpátmedence Európában, Budapest, 1991, p. 6; Orbók, Attila: Igy beszélt hazádról, Budapest, 1942

⁵ Ibid. p. 9; Ottlik, László: “Pax Hungarica”, *Magyar Szemle*, 1934

states? It is especially ironic that the Czech border was pushed 40 kilometers further toward Budapest so that the city would be within firing range of the Czechs. At the same time, Bácska was annexed to Yugoslavia so that Belgrade would be far from the firing range of the Hungarians.”⁶

Charles Danielou, reporting about the Trianon Conference, stated in 1921:

“The Little Entente came forward every day with new proposals. Every day they cut deeper and deeper into the flesh of the thousand-year-old Hungarian body. That border which Masaryk was demanding at the beginning in the name of the Czechs, was a totally ethnographic border. The pure Hungarian cities such as Pozsony, Léva, Ipolyság, Rimaszombat and Kassa, would have remained within the borders of Hungary. So the entire east Slovakia and Ruthenia would have remained with Hungary.”⁷

Gyula Zathurezky, a Hungarian journalist:

“In order for the Danubian Basin to fulfill its two functions, the first condition has to be a politically closed unity. Only in this way can it act in the service of the unity of Europe, as a bridge, or as a bastion. The sovereign and normal development of the Danubian Basin ceased when Hungary’s influence in this territory ceased to exist.”⁸

Harry Elemér Barnes, an American professor:

“In the course of my studies and research, I came to the conclusion that Austria and Hungary cannot be blamed for causing the War. I believe that Hungary, separate from Austria, is completely innocent of the outbreak of the War.”⁹

Edward Benes:

“The true Slav politics were unimaginable without their advocates accepting their final practical results because their demands were identical. They demanded the destruction of the territorial status quo, and at the same time, either the establishment of a Russian-ruled Great Pan-Slav Empire or the creation of unified Slav national states. They were to erase the old borders and achieve this in a democratic and progressive way. There was never any other solution for the Slav politics.”¹⁰

General Bliss, a member of the American Delegation sent to Hungary on March 27, 1919, reported to Wilson:

“Hungary’s present situation is a direct result of the February 28, 1919 decision of the highest council of the Entente. This decision was politically senseless. We cannot present this to the people of the United States. The demarcation line is

⁶ Raffay, Ernő: *Magyar Tragédia, Trianon 75 éve*, Budapest, 1996, p. 179

⁷ Pozzi, Henri: *Op. Cit.* p. 191

⁸ Kollányi Károly: *Op. Cit.* p. 10; Zathurezky, Gyula: *Uj Europa*, July 1963

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 12; Barnes, Harry Elemer: *Pesti Hirlap*, August 7, 1926

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 12; Benes, Edward: *Ou vont les Slaves?* Paris, 1948

completely unjust, and we should not continue to ruin the situation by forcing the Hungarians to accept this unjust agreement with armed force.”¹¹

William Bullit, a member of the United States delegation, resigned his position and wrote to President Wilson:

“I belong to those millions who completely trusted and believed you. We believed that we wanted nothing less than a lasting peace. We believed that we were to provide an unbiased, impartial service but our government contributed to further oppression and subordination of a suffering people and to the mutilation of their country. The danger of war will exist for another century. At the Peace Conference, the unjust decisions about Santung, Tyrol, Hungary, East Prussia, Danzig and the Saarland, and the freedom of the seas are no doubt going to result in another international conflict.”¹²

Archibald Cery Coolidge, an expert in Central European history and politics, stated that the United States Department of State, on November 16, 1918, sent him to study the situation in Eastern and Central Europe. He sent his report to President Wilson in January, 1919. His report stated:

“The Hungarian Kingdom is a perfect geographical and economical unit. Only Great Britain is superior in this respect . . . This unit demands a unified system of administration. The level of the Danube and its tributaries suddenly rises and falls. Therefore, it is necessary to create a system of reservoirs which necessitates a central administration . . . Most of the landowners are Hungarian who live in harmony with the peasants. Hungary, since most ancient times, compared to other nations, has been a completely self-supporting state. The plains provided food and the mountains provided wood and metals. The Danube and its tributaries bound the people together and the people has been united over a long period of time. In modern times, industry and industrial products have strengthened this unity . . . The administrative system of the Carpathian Basin was centered in Budapest which has grown from a small city to a major capital. It is the center of the railroad network. Transylvania which is quite far away is closely connected to the Great Plain toward which most of the rivers flow . . . We can understand what it would mean to the people, if this territory were broken up and parts given to the Czechs, Rumanians and Serbs. We can understand their anxiety when they have to face the reality that they have been stripped of their trees, railroads, industry and the only thing remaining to them is the Great Plain and a city which is sentenced to sure destruction.”¹³

Aldo Dami, a Swiss historian whose specialty is minority questions:

“If Hungary had intended to assimilate her minorities, she had plenty of time and power over the centuries. Hungary did not follow the example of the French kings, the Emperors, or the French Revolution. The French can thank their thousand-year centralized politics that in 1815 and 1871, they were easily able to survive their losses. Hungary was punished in 1920 because she had neglected the centralized politics and had given her minorities the possibility to progress in her territory. **If Hungary had really suppressed them, then they would have disappeared a long time ago and Hungary would never have been reduced to the**

¹¹ Ibid. p. 13; Miller, D.H.: My Diary at the Conference of Paris, with Documents, I. – XVII. New York, 1926

¹² Ibid. p. 13; Halmai, Elemér: A mai Magyarország, III., p. 7, 1925

¹³ Ibid. p. 15; United States Foreign Policy, 1919, Paris Peace Conference

Trianon borders. The history of suppression which the other nations are supposed to have suffered under Hungarian rule is a fairy-tale. On the contrary, the Hungarians became the victims of their own liberal Hungarian politics. The beneficiaries of the Trianon decision, do not give the same tolerance to the Hungarian populace who came under their rule, as they received under Hungarian rule.”¹⁴

Aldo Dami also states:

“The borders established at Trianon cut off large territories with large numbers of Hungarian population from Hungary and a whole line of such territories where the populace was mixed but the people were so firmly on the Hungarian side that, in the case of a plebiscite, there would have been no doubt of the results. Therefore, this decision was not based on ethnographic considerations nor on the desires of the different minorities, yet we know that they would have known their own interest.”¹⁵

Aldo Dami also states:

“The life of the minorities in Historic Hungary was unquestionably better when we compare it to the life of the minorities in the Successor States although for a long time these states pointed the finger at Hungary. Those Hungarians who now belong to the Successor States would be happy if they were to receive the same treatment as the other nationalities received in Hungary.”¹⁶

Pierre Delattre, a French historian, in 1931, at the Hungarian Academy of Science:

“Hungary bled for Christianity for four hundred years. England, France and Hungary had the same number of population in the Middle Ages. Today, England has 44 million, France 40 million and Hungary just 9 million, because the Hungarian populace was destroyed while defending civilization and culture. With her own body, Hungary opposed the Turkish rule. At that time, her population of 4 million decreased to 2 million and Serbs, Germans and other foreign peoples came and settled on the depopulated territories. This is why Hungary came under foreign influence.”¹⁷

The plan of the French Foreign Ministry, on November 20, 1918, stated:

“Slovakia is nothing more than a myth. The Slovak tribes in Northern Hungary never formed a state. The Slovak people is not unified. They are different from village to village. According to the French study, to the east of that territory, where the Slovaks live in considerable numbers, is the River Ung. The line of Slovaks goes from above Sátorajúhely to Rozsnyó and Rimaszombat. At Losonc, that line reaches the River Ipoly and goes to the north and then turns down to Nyitra and goes toward Pozsony. It reaches the suburbs of Pozsony but does not go into Pozsony. From here it goes to the north, to end

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 15; Dami, Aldo: La Hongrie de Demain, Paris, 1932, p. 97

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 15; Dami: Op. Cit. p. 133

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 15; Dami, Aldo: Les nouveaux Martyrs, Destin des Minorités, Paris, 1936

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 16; Delattre, Pierre: Keleti Figyelő, September 1961

at the River Morva. Only behind this line can we talk of Slovak land. Moreover, the true Slovak territory stretches to the River Garam. East of this territory, there were only minorities living in the past. The mountainous territories of Liptó, Zólyom and Trencsén, can be called Slovak territory. The territory just described never reaches the Danube which remains today a Hungarian and German river. The Slovak territory does not include Pozsony, but there are Slovaks working in the manufacturing companies. The markets of Pozsony attract the Slovak peasants. Here, for every 42 Germans and 40 Hungarians there are 14 Slovaks. Pozsony is not a Slovak capital. If there is such a capital, it is Túrócszentmárton.”¹⁸

According to André Doboscq, **the Hungarian Prime Minister, Khuen Héderváry told the French Ambassador, René Miller**, in 1910, that the reason for the Hungarian-German alliance was the following:

“The alliance between Hungary and Germany is like a dam against the Slavs whom the Hungarians have the most to fear.”¹⁹

Philippe Gaillant wrote in 1968:

“The Treaties of Trianon and St. Germain committed the first crimes against the geography and history of the Danube Valley. Everything went according the wishes of the victors who here, paradoxically broke their own principle of self determination. They carved up Hungary in the actual meaning of the word. It is enough to glance at the map and it is understandable why there is no longer a land which could defend the civilization of Western Europe from the Russians. **When the time comes, and it will come, to rebuild a strong Europe, there will have to be functionally regulated connections between the peoples of the Danube Valley, so that that territory would become the bastion of the West and would defend Europe against the remaining barbarians.**”²⁰

Gabriel Gobron, in his study which deals with the Hungarians, writes:

“We now know that it was Serbia, secretly supported by the Russians, who prepared the assassination at Sarajevo, which caused the outbreak of the First World War. The purpose of this assassination was to destroy Austria-Hungary with the war. Serbia was just a means in the Russian provocation of war.”²¹

Sir Robert Gower, Member of the British Parliament, wrote:

“The Entente powers acknowledged the Czechoslovak Republic in the summer of 1918. It is also known that on August 16, 1916, in the secret agreements, they promised Rumania the entire territory of Transylvania and a significant part of

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 17; Paix, Vol.69, ff. 28. 64.. Les Limites au Point de Vue Ethniques de l'Etat Tchecoslovaque, November 20, 1918

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 16; Doboscq, André: Budapest et les Hongrois, Paris, 1913

²⁰ Ibid. p. 17; Gaillant, Philippe: Fallait-il détruire l'Autriche-Hongrie? – *la Revue du Xxme. Siecle Fédération*, no. 395, decembre, 1968

²¹ Ibid. p. 18; Gobron, Gabriel: La Hongrie Mystérieuse, Paris, 1933

the Hungarian Plain. At the meeting of the highest council of the Entente in June 1918, they announced, as a military goal, the establishment of the State of Yugoslavia. That goal could only be achieved by the dismemberment of Hungary. They made a decision over a country without a hearing.”

“It is difficult to understand why the Hungarian request was rejected when it was based on the Wilsonian principles. That opinion that in the case of a plebiscite, the nationality negotiations would be unnecessary, cannot be accepted. That fact that three and a half million Hungarians were cut off from their motherland can in no way be justified.”²²

Francesco Nitti, Prime Minister of Italy, stated:

“In Trianon, the great intriguers of international politics met by appointment. Europe was pushed into the serious danger of decadence, not so much by the war as by the Peace Treaty. The right of self-determination, which the Entente echoed during the war, was just a lying formula which they advocated in the time of danger. They did that to win the trust of all those involved but they did not make the Peace Treaty as they had promised. Those who made the agreements betrayed the concept for which men sacrificed their lives. The conditions which were forced upon the defeated nations were humiliating. No Englishman, Frenchman or Italian would accept for his own country such conditions which were forced upon Hungary. From a Cardinal Primate to a simple peasant there is no Hungarian, who is worthy of the name, who could accept these conditions.”²³

Francesco Nitti also said:

“Russia, especially in the Balkans in Serbia, followed cynical and shameful corrupt politics, taking every opportunity to cause a rebellion against Austria and Hungary. The Russian and Serbian politics were really very sinful. Wilson did not know anything about the European problems. His first decisions convinced us that he had no idea about the problems in Europe.” . . . “It is a fact that the defeated nations suffered such a peace that they were never able to accept. There is no peace in Europe, only a temporary acceptance of force. There will be no peace in Europe until the continued injustices of the war will be corrected, until the different European nations settle their differences on a reciprocal basis.”²⁴

Keynes, Treasury Minister of England, stated:

“It is worth mentioning the mental slowness of the President. He was unable to comprehend quickly what others told him. There has hardly ever been such a powerful statesman who acted in such an ineffective way at the negotiation table. He was too slow and helpless to come up with any answers.”²⁵

²² Ibid. p. 18; Gower, Sir Robert: La Révision du Traité de Trianon, Paris, 1937

²³ Ibid. p. 21; Nitti, Francesco: La Paix et suivantes, Paris, 1925

²⁴ Lángi, Mária: Trianon, MET Publishing Corporation, Hungary, 1996, p. 8; Nitti, Francesco: Nincs Béke Európában, Pallas Irodalmi Nyomda, Rt. Budapest, 1925, p. 215

²⁵ Ibid. p.8; Vecsekloi, József: Nemzet gyilkossági kísérlet, Lakitelek, 1993, p. 112

Lord Weardale stated:

“It is my duty to object that the Foreign Ministry did not study more intensively those arguments which seem to prove that the principle of self-determination, which was the reason for which we went to war, was disregarded in countless cases, none of them so obviously as when the borders of Hungary were decided.”²⁶

Lord Bryce summed up the Millerand letter in the following way:

“Since we cannot leave Hungary in her former state, we can give her nothing which is due to her. Since we cannot make perfect order, we must simply cut off large territories from Hungary which, according to our own principles, we should return to Hungary.”²⁷

René Dupuis states:

“The Trianon Treaty’s most merciless wound was the annexation of Transylvania from Hungary. This territory was the homeland of Ferenc Rákóczi II and Gábor Bethlen, where the Hungarian language is the purest and the Hungarian folk art is in its most original and perfect form. Before 1914, France enjoyed in Hungary a great empathy which reflects an inherited friendship. The war made us forget that and today France may be no more misinformed about any country as it is about Hungary.” . . . “At the end of the war, everybody chose France to be the decision maker for Central Europe. Unfortunately, the government of France did not understand this outstanding but difficult position. She was weak. She accepted the emotional pleas of her local allies and gave them all they asked for. She did not care about justice and compromised the peace of Europe and her own good name.” . . . “It is a duty of France to make reparations to Hungary and in the future provide justice and help Hungary to a renewal.”²⁸

Maurice Pernot says:

“Hungary is located at the meeting-point of three great currents of thought, the western Pan-Germanism, the northeastern Pan-Slavism and the Balkan political pressure and perhaps she will be forced to join one of the three to defend herself against the other two.”²⁹

Theodore Roosevelt, U.S President, 1901-1909, said, on April 2, 1910, in the Hungarian parliament:

²⁶ Ibid. p. 11; same source p. 246

²⁷ Ibid. p. 16; Viscount Bryce: The Hungarian Peace, Budapest, 1922, Speeches of the Members of the British House of Lords on the Trianon Peace Treaty, pp. 24-30

²⁸ Ibid. p. 36-37; Dupuis, René: La Probleme Hongroise, Ed. Internationales, Paris, 1931, pp. 15, 18, 30

²⁹ Kollányi, Károly: Op. Cit. p. 21; Mousset: Le Monde des Slaves, 1945, IV.

“The entire civilized world is indebted to Hungary and her past. When America was in the womb of Europe, Hungary was that factor which stopped the spread of barbarism and which guarded the security of civilization. I know this history and I would not declare myself to be a cultured man if I did not know it.”³⁰

Georges Roux wrote in 1931, about the Peace Treaty:

“. . . The victory was completely un hoped for and unexpected. The sudden events did not give enough time to consider it logically. The Peace was made within months in the intoxication of victory. The new Europe was formed with full power. It was obvious that the Hungarians did not accept the forceful mutilation of their country and the decisions which were made without a plebiscite were contrary to the international law. There was only one plebiscite in Sopron which brought the Hungarians victory. This plebiscite was against Austria which was also a defeated nation. In the new states, which were supported by the victors, not a single plebiscite was allowed.”³¹

Tardieu, one of the creators of the Treaty, said:

“We had to choose between a plebiscite and the creation of Czechoslovakia.”
He was paid for the latter.³²

Pierre Sequeil stated, when he was studying the question of Transylvania:

“Before the war, the Rumanians were 53.8% of the population of Transylvania. The Hungarians, in Historic Hungary were 54.4%. In Transylvania, the Hungarians were 33%, the Saxons, 11% and there were 3% of others. This can be explained once more by the fact that for many centuries, Hungarians opened the borders to foreigners, and respected the traditions of the newcomers. Therefore, this should not give them the right to take away this territory from this nation which rightfully governed this territory for a thousand years.”³³

Lord Sydenham wrote:

“With the deepest sympathy, I am looking at this proud nation which is now closed within the ring of the Little Entente which is very well armed. The tyranny of these people threatens Hungary, although they are on a lower cultural level than the Hungarians.”³⁴

Sazonov writes:

³⁰ Ibid. p. 24; Olay, Ferenc: A Magyar művelődés kálváriája, Budapest, 1930

³¹ Ibid. p. 24; Roux, Georges: Reviser les Traités? Paris, 1931

³² Ibid. p. 24; Tardieu, La Paix

³³ Ibid. p. 24; Sequeil, Pierre: Le Dossier de la Transylvanie, Paris, 1967

³⁴ Ibid. p. 25; Lord Sydenham: My Working Life, 1928

“In Vienna, at the Assembly of the Council of Ministers, with a very fast decision, it was decided to break Serbia. **There was only one person, Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister, who opposed the plan of Berchtold.**”³⁵

Saint René Taillandier stated:

“The Hungarian nation cannot be destroyed. Even if they put her into the grave, sooner or later she will resurrect. Hungary is the nation of martyrs. Her amazing political maturity lifts her above the peoples of the Hapsburg Monarchy.”³⁶

Louis de Vienne wrote:

“Hungary of necessity should get into the situation in which, in the future, in any kind of reorganization of Central Europe, she could play that role which history and her own value and geographical location decides.”³⁷

Csáky reported the words of Montielle, Paleologue’s chief cabinet minister:

“... he (Montielle) said that we may rest assured that we could tear this treaty to pieces whenever we felt sufficiently strong to do so and when that time came, we could rely on the wholehearted support of France.”³⁸

³⁵ Ibid. p. 25; Sasanov: *Végzetes évek*, p. 239

³⁶ Ibid. p. 25; Dr. Olay, Ferenc. Op Cit

³⁷ Ibid p. 25; De Vienne, Louis: *Le Guepier de l’Europe Central*, Paris, 1937

³⁸ Csáky, P.D.H. doc. 368, pp. 371-372 quoted by Magda Ádám in her essay “France and Hungary at the Beginning of the 1920’s”, in *War and Society in East Central Europe*, Vol. VI. P. 161, *Essays on World War I: Total War and Peacemaking, A Case Study on Trianon.*, edited by Béla Király et al. Brooklyn College Press, 1982