

THE TRAGIC FATE  
OF HUNGARY

A Country Carved-up Alive at Trianon

YVES DE DARUVAR

NEMZETOR

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## EXTRACTS FROM THE PREFACE TO THE FRENCH EDITION

By General Ingold  
Former Grand Chancellor of the Order of Liberation

This book was written by a man dedicated to the upholding of noble causes - the more seemingly hopeless the better.

Thus, at the age of 20, he fought from the Fezzan to Tripolitania and from Tunisia to Normandy under General Leclerc's orders. At its darkest hour he elected France his mother country for she seemed mortally wounded, humiliated and beaten. He shed his blood in the desert so that France may rise from the dead in victory; gravely injured he was suffering agonies for years.

Today the youngster of 1940, his willpower and intellect forged by the exercise of high functions overseas in the meantime, is going to war once more. But this time he is carrying no arms. It is this book with which he proposes to fight for the honour of "mutilated" Hungary and, faithful to Leclerc's tradition, he attacks.

Yves de Daruvar is a knight in shining armour of our days.

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It is not for me to pronounce a comprehensive verdict on this brave, profoundly human and solidly documented book. I will therefore confine myself to the following brief remarks:

The passages referring to the mutilation of Hungary (owing to the Treaty of Trianon) are deeply disturbing. They make us think.

As a veteran of World War I, I feel in duty bound to quote the words of George Roux whose name will turn up frequently on the pages of this book. "Having staked their liberty, if not their existence, fought for 4-5 years to the very limits of their endurance, and made enormous sacrifices. the victors did not feel inclined to show mercy", he wrote. No wonder that such resentment hit thousand-year-old Hungary with its full weight. That this should have happened was no doubt an error and a crime. However, victors have rarely practiced clemency throughout the centuries. . .

May this book mark the beginning of a new era of understanding and forgiveness on the eve of inevitable conflicts.. .

Lyautey, Marshal of France, branded 1914-1918 "a fratricidal war". Enacted fifty years ago, Trianon remains to this day "a fratricidal peace".

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Persons more knowledgeable than myself as concerns Central European affairs could have written a preface of greater historic authority.

Yet it was to me that Yves de Daruvar had turned, and I felt it my duty to grant him his request. For our friendship, born while we were campaigning together in the deserts of Africa, still unites us to this very day.

There we had enchanting moments, driving hell-for-leather, always northbound - towards France. .. But there had been sad moments also, like that morning on Easter Sunday 1943, when amidst the roar of guns the news spread along our armoured column: "Daruvar badly wounded".

## FOREWORD

As the son of a Hungarian army officer and a French mother, transplanted to and educated in France, in an oblique way owing to the Treaty of Trianon, I had of course heard of the latter early in my life. Subsequently I found the opportunity of studying, and reflecting upon, its consequences.

Moreover, as World War II offered me the chance to show my affection for France and my dedication to her cause when her fortunes, in turn, were at their lowest ebb, I now feel both authorized and qualified to reveal to my compatriots - with a heavy heart but none the less firmly - ,an ugly act committed by the victors of the first world war. For much the same as individuals, nations also can perform good actions and sometimes, alas, bad ones too.

I have long felt that one day somebody must make a clean breast of it - someone at least morally and emotionally qualified to do so.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon, this was the purpose I had in mind in writing this book. Since, on the one hand, I am no professional historian while, on the other hand, I was striving for accuracy and objectivity, my work is almost exclusively based on the notes I made of my copious reading. Hence the numerous quotations for which I beg the reader's indulgence.

Yves de DARUVAR

Knight Commander of the Legion of Honour Companion of the Order of Liberation

Paris, June 1970

## TRIANON OR THE PARTITION OF HUNGARY

More than one century ago the great French ecclesiastical orator, Father Gratry sounded this solemn warning from the pulpit of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris: "Every nation's homeland is sacred. If you destroy one of them you mutilate the entire human race. He who wants to kill a people, takes up arms against God himself by attacking the living providential design of history. Our conscience tells us, it is a crime. And history adds, it is a futile crime. Thanks to God, our crimes are not only futile: they are also an unbearable burden, bringing ruin and punishment upon the evildoer" (1)

### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Yves de Daruvar's book is a dialogue between his two halves Hungarian and French. It is the expression of grief felt by someone profoundly French at the crime which France, in a true sense his "mother country", has committed against Hungary, the country of his paternal forebears.

This book is therefore an intimately personal affair. But as it happens also to be concerned with the mutilation of a nation which has played an honourable part in European history, it is of concern to the whole of that which Arnold Toynbee has called "Western Christianity"

When I was asked to translate Yves de Daruvar's "Tragic Fate of Hungary" for an English-language readership, suggestions were also made, in varying degrees, that my translation be more or less radically adapted to the tastes and idiosyncrasies of that new and potentially much larger circle of readers to which an English edition would address itself. What it all added up to would have hardly fallen short of an "operation rewrite".

This in all humbleness I refused to do. For two reasons. Firstly, I would have risked to adulterate the essential character of this book which is - I repeat - a Frenchman's profoundly felt bitterness at the guilt of a great European nation in viciously maltreating a smaller one. Secondly, by bringing the British and American allies of World War I more to the fore than Yves de Daruvar had intended, one might create the wrong impression that France had after all not been the principal culprit of Hungary's hypocritical vivisection, perpetrated in stark violation of the ethnic principle proclaimed by the Allied and Associated Powers. Therefore this translation incorporates adjustments to the original most sparingly and only in cases where the interests of clarity so required.

VICTOR STANKOVICH

## CHAPTER I

### MILLENNARY HUNGARY ITS GEOGRAPHIC UNITY AND ETHNIC DISPARATENESS

Hungary within its contemporary boundaries is the product of the peace treaty dictated to it by the Allied and Associated Powers 50 years ago. It had been signed by the Hungarians, at Trianon in the Park of Versailles under utter duress, on June 4, 1920, and its validity was extended, with a few minor changes, by the Paris Peace Treaty, on February 10, 1947. The Trianon Treaty deprived Hungary of territories which had belonged to it without interruption ever since the Magyars had taken possession of that country, well over a thousand years ago. Thus, with one stroke of the pen, an end had been put to the national and historic, as well as physical and economic unity of Hungary which for the preceding ten centuries had occupied the entire Carpathian basin.

Those who wonder what enabled Hungary to hold its own behind the ramparts of its ancient frontiers for so long, what indeed had been the mysterious force which enabled it to reconstitute itself whenever its unity was broken. can only arrive at one conclusion. The answer must be that exceptional geographic unity to which no parallel can be found in any other country of the continent of Europe.

Over and above of having represented a historic unity, ten centuries old, the Hungary of yore had been the most perfect geographical entity in Europe. As wrote Elisee Reclus, way back in 1878: "Hungary presents at the centre of our continent an oval of lowlands of almost regular shape surrounded by a mountain enclosure. . . Whatever the future grouping of its populations, the nation established within the immense arena encircled by the Carpathians will always have the greatest influence upon the territory conquered and defended by it. . . From north-west to east

and south. the Hungarian basin is everywhere clearly circumscribed by hills and mountains." (2) To which Payot added: "Hungary is a marvellous geographic entity. All its component parts are so mutually complementary that neither of them could be severed without doing harm to the rest." Finally, Louis Eisenmann himself wrote in 1904: "Hungary's territory is endowed with a powerful geographical unity. . . indeed a geographical framework which conveys the impression of solidity, precision, abundance and unity. It explains how that natural region lent itself to becoming at once the territory of a State and how its central plain had been destined to be its centre of gravity." (3)

The physical map of Central Europe alone demonstrates more convincingly than words could do that essential unity of the ancient kingdom of Hungary which hits the eye at first glance. In fact, the massive range of the Carpathian mountains surrounds with its protective bulwark a vast, oval-shaped central plain, wondrously enched in that majestic arch from which all waterways, bar one, converge toward the centre. In the West and South-West the Carpathian perimeter is supplemented by the foothills of the Austrian Alps and the Croatian mountains, while in the South the area is bordered by the Lower Danube and the Save.

Perfect geographical unity was matched by economic unity none the less admirable. For within those natural frontiers there were available all raw materials indispensable to a prosperous economy. The great central plain and the mountains which surrounded it were mutually complementary. While the one provided the cereals the other furnished its timber, mineral ores and pastures. Historic Hungary's perfect physical equilibrium stands revealed in its statistical figures - 50 % of arable lowlands, 25 % of forests, 20 % of pastures and grazings, with hardly 5 % of barren soil. This was indeed an astonishingly rich and harmonious distribution of wealth. For that very reason, the Hungarian writer Tamas Falu felt justified in exclaiming: "it's not man's hand that traced the fron-

tiers of Hungary but the Lord himself." The gapless range of the Carpathians seemed preordained by nature to constitute an ideal border-line. Indeed, there is in the history of European frontiers not one to outdo in longevity the millenary stronghold of the Carpathian mountains.

Such geographical unity was inevitably calling for political unity as well as for a people capable of organizing the former. It was the Hungarian people which filled that role - a people so proud of being singular, as has been said, that it must needs become exceptional in matters of originality and courage. They were the first nation, and the only one to this day, which succeeded where others - notably the Avars (567-796) - had failed before them, in occupying from 896 A. D. onwards and holding on to the basin of the Danube and Tisza rivers. To quote Elysee Reclus once more: "It is a good thing for the future of humanity that in a vital part of the European continent the principal role should be played by a non-Aryan nation which is, however, closely related to other Europeans by cross-breeding. To the arrogant pretensions of the Indo-Europeans the Hungarians retort with their history. They may suffer from great weaknesses; yet which one of their neighbours would dare claim to be their superior in intelligence, gallantry or love of freedom?" (4)

Once settled and organized by the Hungarians, the Middle-Danubian region stood out for centuries as the toughest core, political and human, of East-Central Europe. Despite the unceasing covetousness of its neighbours, the devastating Tartar invasion of 1240-1241, and a long Turkish occupation during the XVIth and XVIIth centuries, the Hungarian nation proved capable of maintaining itself in its geographical setting, pursuing sound and viable policies and coordinating with wisdom and firmness all its economic, ethnic, administrative and cultural components, right up to the time, in 1920, when it was to be mutilated by an ill-considered Treaty of Trianon.

For in spite of its long historical cohesion and its outstandingly

harmonious geographic and economic unity, that exceptional geopolitical entity was in fact totally carved up at Trianon, while Hungary was reduced to the central part of the Danubian basin. It is thus that today the Hungarian lowlands, artificially separated from their mountain perimeter and the Transylvanian highlands survive as but a shapeless torso whose limbs have been severed; and we shall see, presently, how those limbs separated at Trianon from Hungary's millenary body have also cruelly suffered ever since from that monstrous dissection.

It cannot be sufficiently underlined that it is above all that marvellous unity of historic Hungary, of which the Magyars had so justly been proud, that was mercilessly smashed to pieces at Trianon. There can be little doubt, however, that in spite of the half-century which has elapsed and all the events which have taken place since, in the eyes of all Hungarians the image of the mother country will for ever remain that of ancient, millenary Hungary.

That being said, it is equally true that the Hungarian nation, like most European nations, is a product of history, even if its principal component has remained, throughout, that initial element of conquering Finno-Ugrian Magyars of the IXth century. At any rate there hardly exists a pure-bred race in anyone country of the world. All peoples today, to begin with those of Europe, are the product of mergers, brought about voluntarily or by coercion in the wake of innumerable contacts or invasions enacted in the course of their respective histories. In Hungary that kind of merger and ensuing symbiosis was worked out by a centuries-long process within that geographically exceptional "national crucible" which we have just described and which in many respects is not unlike and not less admirable than the one to which the historian Michelet refers when writing about France.

Such Bulgaro-Slavonic populations as had inhabited, pretty sparsely it would appear, the Basin of the Middle-Danube and the Tisza rivers at the time of the Magyar conquest were fast



absorbed by the latter. There followed a number of Turanian immigrants from the East - Petchenegs, Cumans, Yazygs seeking refuge in Hungary from Tartar expansion. In the course of the ensuing 2-3 centuries they merged gradually with the Hungarian people. Thereafter, and up to the Treaty of Trianon, all the races inhabiting Hungary - with the exception of the Slovaks in the North-West and the Croats in the South-West - were made up of ethnic elements who had also sought asylum in Hungary. Such was the case of the Ruthenians in the North during the XIIIth, XIVth and XVth centuries, as well as that of the first Wallachian settlers of Transylvania and the first Serbs in the South, both fleeing the Balkans from Ottoman onslaught. At the same period and for the same reasons the Croats pushed up to the Drave river. The Transylvanian Saxons had arrived in that country as early as the XIIth century, invited as craftsmen and farming settlers by Geza II, King of Hungary. The Svabians proper only came in the XVIIIth century after the Turks had been evicted.

At this juncture the fact must be emphasized that the initial unity and expansion of the Hungarian people, which had so miraculously survived the dreadful Tartar invasion of 1240-1241, was all but annihilated by the Turkish invasion and occupation of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries. These brought in their wake warfare, famine, epidemics, looting and mass deportations which jointly resulted in a fearful depopulation of the countryside, particularly in the lowland areas where the Hungarians were most numerous. Towards the end of the XVth century the population of Hungary was estimated at some 4 million souls: at the beginning of the XVIIth only some 2 million were left, whereas during the same period the population of Western Europe had increased by an average of 100 %. In order to repopulate the country devastated by the Ottomans, the Habsburgs of Austria denationalized it methodically. The chequered ethnic pattern which had characterized pre-Trianon Hungary was due to their hapha-

zard colonizing policies pursued throughout the realm after the departure of the Turks. Thus in the Banat, which was governed directly from Vienna from 1718 to 1779. they settled Serbs. Rou-manians. Germans and even French people, Spaniards and Italians. with the result that this province which had been purely Hungarian in the XVth century became one of Europe's ethnically most heterogeneous regions. It is estimated that in the course of the XVIIIth century the Habsburgs installed or introduced in Hungary some 400.000 Serbs, 1,200.000 Germans and 1,500.000 Roumanians and thus lowered the proportion of Magyars in the historic Kingdom, that had totalled 80 per cent before the Turkish conquest, to less than 40 % by 1780. In Transylvania alone the number of Roumanians rose from 200,000 to 800,000 during the XVIIIth century thus exceeding the total of the Hungarian population of the Principality, although in the XVIth century the latter had still been twice as numerous as the former. Thus after the Treaty of Trianon it was rightly said that Transylvania had been made a gift to its guests. Essentially all the non-Magyar races had established themselves in Hungary in two main installments. Their slow infiltration in the country's mountainous perimeter, which had begun in the XIIth century, became more accentuated in the XIVth and XVth centuries when many of them were fleeing from the advancing Turks. No sooner had the latter been driven out again than the Habsburgs started their colonizing policy of the XVIIIth century, settling masses of those aliens in the adjoining valleys and on the great plain as well. So it came about that Hungary, after having been for centuries Europe's rampart against the Ottoman Turks and saved it at the cost of its own blood from a disaster which would most likely have engulfed the whole of western civilisation. had to see Serbs and Roumanians take the place of its dead and finally be given by Europe at Trianon the self-same territories in which those dead had once laid down their lives for Europe's survival.

Let us add all the same that, as from the end of the XVIIIth century, the percentages of the non-Magyar elements were diminishing gradually while the proportion of Hungarians grew from 40 to 50 % during the XIXth century. As the trend continued unabated into the XXth century the latter would no doubt have seen a substantial Magyar majority restored in the Kingdom, had it not been for its dismemberment at Trianon. Even so at the 1910 census the proportion of Hungarians had already reached 54,4 % (not counting autonomous Croatia) while more than 64 % of the inhabitants of the Kingdom spoke Hungarian at any rate.

It is equally important to note the geographical location of the Hungarians and the other races, habitually termed 'nationalities', as well as their respective shares in the total population of the historic Kingdom. The Hungarians, being mainly concentrated in the great central plain, had come to hold once more the absolute majority, facing 12 different, more or less numerous racial minorities fanned out all round the country's perimeter and having little or no racial or linguistic ties between them. The Roumanians' share in the total population amounted to 16 %, the Germans' 10.4 %, the Slovaks' 10,7 %, while all the slavonic 'nationalities' put together did not represent a total of more than 18,3 % all told. It is above all the extreme diversity of the country's racial minorities which explains the strength of the Hungarian component owing to which, in view of its central location, it had in spite of its slight overall majority been able to preserve its political hegemony in the Carpathian basin for so long without any apparent difficulty. Another reason - secondary yet by no means negligible - had been the fact that the Hungarians constituted the majority in nearly all of the country's economic and cultural centres, where they were having mostly Germans for their neighbours. The powerful demographic preponderance of the Hungarian race within the Carpathian basin found its eloquent visual expression in the coloured ethnographical map established after the 1910 census and tabled by the Hungarian Delegation at the

1920 Peace Conference, which the reader will find annexed to this book. Bearing in mind the statistical data enumerated above, it should also be pointed out that the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy had been considerably more homogeneous than its Austrian half. For while in their half the Hungarians had held a 54 per cent majority facing their racial minorities, in Austria the German element had represented merely 36 % of the total population.

To sum up, let it be stated that on the eve of World War I the Kingdom of Hungary had constituted an entity which owing to the natural attractive power of the compact and centrally located Hungarian mass tended to become once more as homogeneous as it had been before its normal evolution towards complete unity was reversed, first, by the irruption of the Turks and, second, by the helter-skelter resettlement policy of the Habsburgs. Moreover, the latter were to encourage subsequently antagonistic national strivings among the racial minorities in order to be able to apply all the more easily the time-honoured precept of "divide et impera" .

As regards the liberal attitude adopted for so long by the Hungarians in respect of their country's racial minorities, that attitude had persevered throughout the centuries in obedience to the famous recommendations which their first king St. Stephen had addressed to 51. Emeric, his son and heir. Those admonitions established the principle that each population ought to preserve its language and customs. "Guests and strangers", wrote the holy king to his son, "must occupy a place of their own in your kingdom. Make them welcome and let them keep their languages and customs, for weak and fragile is the realm where a unique language and a unique set of customs hold sway (*unius linguae uniusque moris regnum imbecille et fragile est*). Do not ever fail to be equitable and kind to those who have come to settle here; treat them with benevolence so that they may feel more at home with you than anywhere else" (5). Hence the Hungarian Middle Ages

have been rightly described by the historian Gyula Szekfű as the golden age of racial minorities. However, the holy king's famous axiom held good only so long as Latin remained the sole official language of the kingdom, attenuating the racial minorities' mutual antagonisms and thereby contributing to their coexistence to develop both peaceably and fruitfully.

Historians are very nearly unanimous in expressing the opinion that the decisive change in the underlying mood of the Habsburg Empire was brought about towards the end of the XVIIIth century under the impact of two influences as different from one another as they were powerful. One was the "enlightened despotism" exercised by the Emperor Joseph II (1780-1790) who wanted to cover all his possessions with a uniform coat of paint, imposing upon all of them the use of the German language, causing thereby a sudden awakening of national particularisms, in the first place that of the Magyars. The other influence was that of the French Revolution which infused a new idea into the old concept of the nation - as being a body of citizens and no longer of mere subjects - whose torch was carried all over Europe by the armies, first of the Republic and subsequently the Empire, with the resulting flames turning against Napoleon before they set fire to most of our world, beginning with Central Europe and the Balkans.

In Hungary the Germanizing endeavours of the Emperor Joseph II gave rise to a particularly vigorous reaction - subsequently baptized "Magyarism" - in favour of the Hungarian language and clamouring for the abolition of Latin as the official language of the realm. However, that abolition did not become a reality in law until an act to that effect was passed by the Diet in 1844, calling forth vigorous protests from all racial minorities with the Croats in the van. That measure may therefore be regarded as the very beginning of the conflict of languages and nationalities and of the struggle for equality within the framework of historic Hungary. In other words it represented the break be

tween modern and medieval Hungary. The substitution of Hungarian for Latin as the language of State, which was rightly considered fatal by many a Hungarian patriot, bore enclosed within it the germs of all vicissitudes with which Hungary had subsequently to contend. The first of those was the tragic misunderstanding which by splitting the Magyars from their fellow races became the root cause of the failure of Kossuth's national and Jacobinic uprising of 1848-1849, during which for the first time all racial minorities turned against the Magyars and joined the Austrian cause.

It is only fair to add, however, that in order to neutralize the Hungarians the men in power in Vienna had for quite some time been busy inciting the racial minorities against the Magyars by holding out hopes of territorial autonomy but essentially with the intention of laying low the strongest and most turbulent of all of them with the assistance of the weaker ones. If it had not been for Vienna's ceaseless instigations and intrigues, Kossuth's basically liberal ideas would most likely have led to some kind of a sensible "modus vivendi" between the Hungarians and their racial minorities by 1848.

"Up till 1830", admitted one of the Magyars' most rabid adversaries, "Hungary had been the El Dorado of national equality." (6) And indeed prior to that point in time, in itself only a rough indication, the linguistic and literary rebirth of Hungary's racial minorities, had been enacted within the boundaries of the historic kingdom, not among their racial brethren living outside those frontiers. This did not, however, prevent the neighbouring countries from benefiting by the generosity of Hungarian liberalism. Thus the culture of the various ethnic groups which over the centuries had come to Hungary as settlers or refugees was found to be flourishing more vigourously under the so-called "Hungarian yoke" than it did in its countries of origin, such as Roumania or Serbia. The best Slavonic and Roumanian philologists taught at the University of Buda where there were also

printed and published the first literary and scientific works of Serb, Croat and Slovak authors. As for the first book ever to be printed in the Roumanian language it was published in 1544 under the patronage of a Hungarian prince - a remarkable achievement when one considers that the first Hungarian book was only printed in 1527. This random collection of a few facts suffices to refute the alleged oppression of historic Hungary's national minorities.

One should also note that even though the Kingdom had been exposed on several occasions to foreign conquest as well as to other violent upheavals of political or religious nature, no serious conflict ever opposed its component nationalities to one another before 1848. The peasant uprisings which broke out in 1437-1438, and again in 1514, were social, not political phenomena in which Hungarian and Roumanian serfs joined forces against their landlords, much in the same way as those things also happened in most other parts of Europe at that time. Let it also be emphasized here that if the Hungarian peasants were not emancipated from serfdom until 1848, nor were the non-Magyar serfs of the kingdom either.

In fact practically up to the beginning of the XIXth century, Hungarians and non-Hungarians had lived together in perfect harmony. Moreover, their joint struggle against the Turks had for a long time constituted a powerful tie uniting them under the threat of a common danger, to which, incidentally, the racial brethren of the non-Magyar minorities were even more acutely exposed, seeing that they had to live under direct Ottoman domination. It was the end of that long subjection to the Turks, the sudden blossoming of freedom among their racial brethren in the Balkans, and more particularly the setting-up of the new kingdoms of Serbia and Roumania, once the territories that constituted them had ceased to be parts of the Ottoman Empire, that turned them into poles of attraction for the Serbs and Roumanians of Hungary. Hence the problem of racial relations soon

became much aggravated, giving birth to a number of irredentist movements which had before been extremely limited in scope and hardly virulent in nature. The events 'Of the Hungarians' fight for freedom, 1848-1849, had, alas, contributed greatly to the chasm which from then on began to separate the Magyars from the other nationalities 'Of the realm. The violent resentments born at that time were unfortunately never entirely overcome thereafter on either side, no matter how sincere the efforts which were undertaken, particularly after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. The Hungarians, for their part, felt bitter at the sight 'of the Serb and Roumanian peasants turning 'overtly against them although, by abolishing serfdom in 1848, the Magyar revolutionaries had liberated them, too, along with their own peasant masses. They did not realize that the war of independence they had fought against Austria must necessarily lead to the total emancipation 'Of the other nationalities by force 'of example and a simple effect 'of contamination. On the other hand, 'One cannot help recognizing, at that early period, the first signs of those feelings 'of jealous hatred which the national minorities were to nurture against the Hungarians, probably because at the sight 'of the magnificent uprising 'of the latter an inferiority complex hitherto repressed in the subconscious suddenly surfaced to the level 'of awareness, together with profound envy in respect 'of those qualities 'of intelligence, dash, and heroism which the Hungarians had so spectacularly and dangerously displayed far all the world to see, in 1848-1849. The same deplorable reaction 'of jealous envy reared its head 'once again in the successor states during Hungary's glorious insurrection in October-November 1956. As for the Habsburg, 'once the Hungarians had been "dealt with", in 1849, with the help 'of the national minorities and the Russian army having rushed to their assistance "in extremis", they probably missed a unique 'Opportunity to stabilize conditions in their Kingdom 'of Hungary and the Empire as a whole. It was



then or never that from the summit of their victory they could have given satisfaction, still within a traditional framework, to all those ethnic or linguistic group; of population whose claims at that time were not yet separatist, nor even federalist and whose basic aspirations were still confined to programmes of a wide administrative and cultural autonomy. From then on they might have pursued to its full completion by easy stages the transformation of their Monarchy into a mighty supra-national Confederation which would certainly have answered the profound wishes of its constituent peoples and met with the unanimous approval of all the nationalities of both Kingdom and Empire.

Let us remember, however, that as kings of Hungary the Habsburgs had to swear in their coronation oath that they would respect and defend the territorial integrity of the Kingdom. Succeeding Hungarian diets had always unanimously protested against any attempt to erect within the Kingdom, let alone to detach from it, autonomous territories, thereby severely restricting the Habsburgs' scope of initiative in that field. Such at any rate had been the situation up to the fight for freedom of 1848-1849. Thereafter, once the Hungarians had been crushed by the Russian army, a southern province was established temporarily, somewhat on the pattern of the Banat in the previous century, governed by an Austrian general and inhabited, according to the 1857 census, by 340,000 Svabians, 333,000 Serbs, 308,000 Roumanians and 241,000 Magyars. As for the Croats and the Roumanians of Transylvania, who at Vienna's instigation had risen against the Hungarians, not only were they bitterly disappointed in their national aspirations: the fate meted out to them hardly differed from what the Hungarians received as their punishment. Which goes to show how history sometimes repeats itself, without teaching much of a lesson to its victims.

Extremist nationalism, unconditionally hostile to the survival of the Kingdom as ultimately to that of the entire Monarchy, had up to World War I been confined to a minute fraction of the

THE TRAGIC FATE OF  
HUNGARY

28

\*\*\*\*\*2013-01-08

middle classes among the national minorities. They were a handful of more or less embittered intellectuals, spurred more often than not by purely personal ambitions. Their agitation was mostly motivated by the desire to gain access to positions of power, posts in the civil service or other kinds of lucrative employment, for the humbler people in their overwhelming majority knew yet next to nothing about true national rivalries, their way of life being much the same throughout the Empire at that time. Of course the traditional administrative and political organization of the historic Kingdom of Hungary, with its autonomous districts, free royal boroughs (in existence since early medieval times), and subsequent real territorial, political, and cultural autonomies, such as those of the Szekelys and Saxons of Transylvania, stymied the advance of nationalism among the racial minorities. The more so as they were enjoying what seemed most important at that time - complete religious freedom as well as the free use of their respective languages, customs and civil rights, without restriction all over the Kingdom. Hence, those nationalities had in fact attained higher cultural levels than their racial brethren living in their own national areas. Such was notably the case of the Roumanians who in Transylvania had a greater number of schools of their own, prior to World War I, than there were Roumanian schools in the old Kingdom of Roumania proper. In the Roumanian schools of Transylvania Hungarian was only taught as a second language. Notwithstanding that most of them were subsidized by the Hungarian Treasury, witness the budgets of all the governments of the pre-1914 kingdom. Under the same regime there were primary schools functioning in every Slovak village. As a matter of fact all allegations according to which in traditional Hungary the national minorities were left to stagnate in ignorance are contrary to the truth. All along its history traditional Hungary faithfully carried out the precepts of its first holy king in assuring the free development and prosperity of its national minorities.

As opposed to the often disappointing attitude adopted by the non-Hungarian ethnic elements during the 1848-1849 insurrection, much could be said about innumerable examples 'Of profound loyalty, affection and devotion 'Of which all along its history its non-Hungarian inhabitants would time and again give proof to the mother country. After the catastrophic defeat at Mohács (1526) and the subsequent occupation 'Of the Danubian plain by the Turks, it was amidst the national minorities in Transylvania and the Slovak uplands that Hungarian national feelings and traditions could continue to thrive. The Slovaks and Ruthenians in particular, who in times past would proudly declare themselves to be Hungarians, as distinct from the racial "Magyars" proper, had lived for centuries in perfect harmony with the latter, often fighting in their ranks against both Ottoman Turks and Austrian Habsburgs. Prince Rákóczi's first insurgent soldiers had indeed been Slovak and Ruthenian peasants, while a century and a half later, in the 1848-1849 fights for freedom; the same two nationalities provided masses 'Of recruits for Kossuth's armies. In that respect the remarkable "Memorandum of the Slovak Nation to the Hungarian Parliament" (cr. Annex No. 1) provides instructive reading in virtue both 'Of its most moderate tenor and cordiality 'of language in addressing the Magyars. The Memorandum laid claim to no more than the recognition of an autonomous "Slovak Region" within the Kingdom 'Of Hungary to be proportionally represented in the Hungarian Parliament, as were the Croats. Not until the unfortunate incident 'Of Cernava, which in 1907 resulted in a casualty list 'Of 14 killed and 60 wounded, did Slovak-Hungarian relations become really envenomed, although it must also be said on this score that in more than a thousand years of joint history it was the 'Only instance which opposed the Hungarian authorities to the Slovak populace in a bloody clash. On the other hand, we have simply last count of the number of incidents, which have occurred between Czechs and Slovaks over the last 50 years, ever since Slovakia was against its wishes attached to Bohemia.

In fact, the Slovak autonomist movement in pre-1914 Hungary could hardly be compared with the intensity 'of, say, the Scottish or Breton nationalist movements of our days. The First World War brought stunning proof of their loyalty to Hungary of a great many Slovak regiments, an example, which was very largely followed by other national minorities. Right up to the bitter end a kind of almost visceral solidarity with traditional Hungary as the mother country remained astonishingly alive, despite the trials and tribulations caused by that long-drawn-out, terrible war which, if anything, should have enabled the racial minorities to foment separatist movements. They did nothing of the kind until the full impact of allied propaganda hit them when disintegration set in towards the end of 1918. As a matter 'of fact, the racial minorities of the Kingdom did, up to 1914-1918, accept the paramountcy of the Hungarian authorities, if not enthusiastically, without feelings 'of revolt. Their sense of "inferiority" was a subjective figment of the mind rather than the reaction to hard facts and tyrannical pressures. Aldo Dami, the great Swiss expert of minority problems 'Of the period between the two world wars, maintained, not without good reason, that where Hungary was concerned the language factor may have been 'Of decisive influence in determining the attitudes and policies eventually adopted by its national minorities. In that respect Slovaks and Croats certainly felt more comfortable in their new countries, and the same applied aalsoto the Roumanians of Transylvania. For in their former Kingdom of Hungary they needed to be bilingual to be able to rise in the political and social hierarchy. Such obstacles - and they are by no means negligible - obviously no longer stand in their way, although they may have other and even graver difficulties to contend with in their new environment. According to Aldo Dami it is language, which nearly always creates national consciousness, at any rate in the long run. If Hungary had wished to pursue a policy of forcible assimilation in respect of its national minorities - "such as

Had been the policy of the kings of France" he remarks between brackets (7) - it had had all the leisure to do so for a number of centuries. Rightly or wrongly, however, this was not done. Today's France, he adds, being a product of Napoleon's centralism, finds Swiss federalism as difficult to understand as the existence and symbiosis of the national minorities in Central and Eastern Europe. However, Hungary neither pursued policies similar neither to those of the Kings of France nor to the ones conducted by its Revolution or Empire. Yet, by a curious historic contrast while France was spared in defeat, in 1815 as well as in 1871, thanks to its millenary policy, Hungary was punished, in 1920, for having neglected its unification and allowed its national minorities to develop freely on its soil. If Hungary had really oppressed the latter they would have disappeared long ago and there would be no frontiers traced at Trianon today. The oppression suffered by the minorities in the old Kingdom of Hungary is therefore no more than a myth. On the contrary, the Hungarians became eventually the victims of a perhaps excessive liberalism shown in treating their national minorities throughout the centuries. The beneficiaries of the Treaty of Trianon, on the other hand, have come nowhere near the tolerance, let alone generosity, formerly exercised by the Hungarians, in the treatment of their newly acquired Hungarian subjects, now themselves of minority status.

How right was Lajos Kossuth when in his memorable speech pronounced on November 18, 1858, at the City Hall in Glasgow he said, he dared anyone to find another example in the world's history of a nation having, from times immemorial up to the present, shown itself as tolerant, just, and liberal the Magyars had been to the other nationalities. Accordingly, when in exile. Kossuth drew up plans for a vast "Confederation of Danubian Peoples" to take the place of the Austrian Empire. Once all causes of dissension had been eliminated, a new federal grouping of free nations, excluding Austria and having Hungary for its core, would be brought into being. "Let the Magyar be contented with being

'Primus inter pares"', he wisely enjoined his compatriots. In order to clinch his project he addressed the following profoundly moving appeal to the ethnic groups of the Kingdom - appeal that nearly 120 years later has lost none of its topicality. "Let us bury in the grave of the past", wrote Lajos Kossuth, "the memory of offences bygone. Let our companions of misfortune - Croats, Slovaks, Wallachians - bury in the same grave the offences of which we may have been guilty in respect of them . . . We, all of us, have something to forget and something to learn."

By the way, Kossuth never ceased to warn his compatriots against a compromise with Austria, for apart from everything else such a move could not prevent the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire. He felt that a clash between the Great Powers of the day was unavoidable and that it would entail the collapse of Austria. "The only glory to be gained by such a move", wrote Kossuth with great perspicacity, "would be to assign to us the role of the stake on which the Austrian eagle will be burnt." With exceptional clear-sightedness Kossuth feared that a compromise with Austria would maneuver Hungary into a position in which it could never gain mastery over its future. He feared above all, without being able to prevent it, "that the world at large should regard Hungary as Austria's accomplice." As a matter of fact, after the Compromise of 1867, the whole world got used to viewing Hungary through Austrian windowpanes. It has been said that even the Treaty of Trianon was to some extent the consequence of that equivocal situation and the resulting confusion in the minds of ill-informed and superficial diplomatists and statesmen. In reality, Hungary was found guilty and victimized as a result of the unspoken reproach: "Why, in 1867, did you thrust yourselves into the arms of the Habsburgs and pan-Germanism?" (8)

Paradoxically enough, as opposed to Kossuth, the Hungarian revolutionary statesman, dreaming of a Danubian Union centered on Hungary and conditioned on the destruction of Austria, the

Czech historian Palacky published, in 1865, a booklet entitled "The Idea of an Austrian State" in which he advocated a new federal structure for the Danubian Monarchy, based on "the absolute respect of the rights of its several ethnic groups" and subdivided into 8 new states according to nationality only, irrespective of any ties woven by history. There was only one justification for the existence of Austria. Wrote Palacky - to provide protection to all the nationalities of the Empire, neither of which was strong enough to survive isolated in the dangerous area where history had placed them, but which could become strong if bound together by federal ties. The Austrian State was indispensable to the security of Europe and mankind. Hence his oft-quoted thesis: "If Austria did not exist, it would have to be invented." It should be added, for the sake of historic truth, that Thomas Masaryk himself had originally and for a long time been a moderate Czech nationalist, sharing Palacky's views. In 1908 he still considered the idea of an independent Czech state a utopia. His nationalism became uncompromising only immediately prior to and during the years of World War I. A similar plan for the reconstruction of the Monarchy was also proposed, in 1906, by the Transylvanian Roumanian Aurel Popovici, in a voluminous treatise published in Leipzig. Being equally convinced of the need for a close union of the small Danubian peoples, facing German and Russian strivings for hegemony, he advocated the setting-up of a "United States of Greater Austria", to be organized along ethnic, not historic lines. Popovici's project attracted the attention of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne, and the interest he showed for it won him, curiously enough, the combined hostility of both Hungarians and Serbs. For while the former regarded the plan as a deadly threat to the millenary unity of Greater Hungary, the latter feared it would prevent from coming true their dream of a Greater Serbia. The above projects, with the exception of Kossuth's Danubian

Confederation, presupposed the reduction of Hungary's territory to the area inhabited by the Magyar people. That was no doubt a more equitable proposal than the vivisection carried out by the Treaty of Trianon, which cut mercilessly into the flesh of compact Hungarian populations. As for the ruling circles of Austria, they largely regarded dualism as a transient formula and aspired to an eventual reorganization of the Monarchy along ethnic lines, secretly hoping, as some did, that the new structure would lend itself more easily to overall Germanization. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand himself was reported, in 1895, to have said to Baron Margutti: "Only federalism can be the salvation of the Monarchy. For that purpose I will divide up Hungary into four separate entities and the others into as many as will prove necessary. Each unit will be very largely self-governing where its internal affairs are concerned, but their official common language will be German as the vehicle of their common civilization." According to Count Ottokar Czernin, the Archduke, in 1913, went as far as mooted the idea of offering Hungarian Transylvania to Roumania on condition that the resulting Greater Roumania join the Habsburg Empire, while Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the South would coalesce in an Illyrian State, ultimately to attract Serbia's adhesion, always within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. (9) It was this latter project, which so aroused Serb apprehensions that it may be said to have led to the fateful murder at Sarajevo.

It may be useful to recall at this point that Transylvania had formed an integral part of the Kingdom of Hungary up till 1572; subsequently it existed as an independent principality till 1711; thereafter it was governed directly from Vienna as a Grand Principality, entirely separate from the Kingdom of Hungary, with which it was re-united only after the 1867 Compromise. It is important to note that during the 150 years of Turkish occupation, while Hungary was sliced into 3 different parts, it had been little, independent Transylvania which, first and foremost, ensured the



Survival of Hungarian thought and culture. The Roumanian inhabitants of Transylvania, although ceaselessly growing in numbers, did not, prior to 1848, play any notable part in the historic, political or cultural evolution of the Principality. In that respect it must be admitted that a mistake was made - not so much by the Hungarians than rather by the Austrians who were directly responsible for the government of Transylvania right up to the 1867 Compromise - in granting the Roumanians equal rights too late. For during the best part of 250 years if not more, Transylvania as a separate entity had truly been a little federation based on the equality of its "three nations", namely the Hungarians, Szekelys and Saxons. Only in 1848, during the fight for freedom, did the Hungarian Parliament abolish the system of the "three nations" and grant with one stroke of the pen equal rights to the Roumanians who at that time were already constituting one half of Transylvania's population. In fact, however, centuries of coexistence had by then greatly contributed to bringing about a practical *modus vivendi* which, where stability and equilibrium were concerned, was not unlike life in the Swiss cantons; and that included the Roumanians even before they grew so numerous, for in Transylvania numerical superiority never constituted a valid claim to domination - at least not before Trianon. Another facet of the liberal character of Transylvania was the freedom of religion, declared by the Diet of Torda as early as 1555. It was the first such declaration ever to be made in Europe, indeed at a time when wars of religion were raging almost everywhere else. (10)

As for Croatia-Slavonia, it "enjoyed in the historic Kingdom of Hungary complete linguistic autonomy; Hungarian was the official language only in the rest of the country. In Croatia-Slavonia Croat was the official language even for the civil service . . . moreover all official correspondence between the Kingdom of Hungary proper and Croatia-Slavonia was conducted in Croat, not Hungarian . . . There has probably never been a country before to



grant such favors to an ethnic group. Those, therefore, who claim that the Croat language had been oppressed in Croatia-Slavonia and that the local population had been subjected to forcible Magyarization, either did not know the true situation or knowingly distorted it. The Croats separated from Hungary because in their majority they felt Slavs and wanted to be Slavs, not because they were oppressed" (11). The relationship between Croatians and Hungarians, which had been friendly for centuries, began to turn sour at the time 'Of Hungary's war for freedom, 1848-1849, when the Croats sided wholeheartedly with the Austrians. It was a relatively recent development, which, nevertheless, put an end to a friendship of long-standing, nay, even a comradeship-in-arms, forged during their common struggle against the Turks. Next, came the so-called Illyrian movement, striving for the union of all Southern Slavs within the Habsburg Empire. It rendered sincere reconciliation with the Hungarians practically impossible, although the latter were quite prepared to make numerous concessions for its sake. The Croat-Hungarian Compromise of 1868 proved this clearly, moreover it was even further extended in 1873. There is no getting away from the fact that Hungary bore no responsibility whatever for the deterioration of Croat-Hungarian relations, the latter being due solely to the Austrian government's South-Slav policies, as well as to the writings of a lunatic fringe of Croat utopians. As far as the great mass of the Croat people, they never listened to anti-Hungarian agitators. But however that may be the fact remains that Croatia proved unable to take advantage of Hungary's good intentions. On the other hand, the Croats misinterpreted the intentions of the Serbs, as we shall see presently. So they joined the latter, tired of the tug-of-war between Austria and Hungary in which they were torn between the two until they abandoned both - after 800 years of a joint existence. They needed the Yugoslav experience, as the Slovaks needed the Czecho-Slovak experience, to have their eyes opened. Dazzled by daydreams of "Slavonic fraternity" they

turned away from Hungary, which alone could guarantee their real autonomy. Let it be added that the Croat-Hungarian Compromise, so frequently decried before World War I, created prosperity without precedent in Croatia-Slavonia, largely due to Hungarian material and financial aid (12).

Thus, on the eve of world war one, deadly threats to Hungary's territorial integrity began to emerge, within the Empire and right up to its ruling circles, and this paradoxically enough at a time when, thanks to the Compromise with Austria and an astonishing demographic upward swing, the country was about to recuperate its ancient vigor and become the geopolitical corner-stone of the Empire. Admittedly, the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 reserved the levers of power almost exclusively for two nationalities only - the Germans and Magyars. It represented none the less a considerable progress when compared with Habsburg centralism which had previously been holding sway, provided it remained but a stage on the road to the indispensable and inevitable transformation of the Monarchy. If it had not been for the catastrophe of 1918, the dualistic system would most likely have fanned out gradually until it embraced the 25 million Slavs of the Empire, in one form of a union or another with its 12 million Germans and 11 million Hungarians. The further evolution would probably have begun with the Czechs whose historic claim to self-government was as ancient and of a similar nature as that of the Magyars. In that respect let us add, however, two facts, which are only too often glossed over. First, even Bohemia, which laid claim to a privileged place within the Empire as a compact historic entity did include on its territory non-Czech populations such as the Sudeten Germans. Second, the Czechs had been for a long time the principal beneficiaries of the system in force which provided for 60% of the Empire's industry to be concentrated on Czech soil (while 65 % of its foreign trade was based on the export of Czech industrial goods). Also, the Empire's civil service had since times immemorial been invaded by Czechs who were conse-

quently accused, particularly by Hungarians and Poles, to be the most zealous servants of Habsburg absolutism.

If Hungary has undoubtedly benefited by the dualist system set up between herself and Austria, in 1867, insofar as the Austro-Hungarian Compromise restored to Hungary untrammelled self-government within its historic boundaries, as they had existed before the Turkish conquest, it is also true that the Hungarians gave proof, at any rate by an initial move, of their best intentions as regards the non-Magyar nationalities. Notably, under the influence of Ferenc Deak, "the sage of the fatherland", and the equally wise and honorable Baron József Eötvös - described as being two of the most impressive figures of the highest moral stature of their time - the Hungarian Parliament, in 1868, reenacted while improving upon the renowned Nationalities Act, passed at Szeged on July 27, 1848, by Kossuth's Revolutionary Government, thereby accomplishing the great legislative reform begun in April of that year. That Act of Parliament made the equality before the law of all nationalities a fundamental tenet of Hungarian constitutional law. It was the first of its kind in the whole world to ensure the free development of racial minorities in anyone country. It was said to have been so liberal in both its inspirational provisions that half a century later Hungarian as well as Western lawyers and politicians came bitterly to deplore the fact that it had not served as a model for those international agreements and national legislative measures which were supposed to provide protection for the newly created Hungarian minorities in the successor states. Let us add that, with the exception of Switzerland, Belgium and, to some extent, the United Kingdom, linguistic minorities are still waiting for recognition almost everywhere in Europe, despite the wish expressed by the League of Nations during the inter-war period. In France in particular, as is well known, no legal provision exists to this day to guarantee the cultural autonomy of the Breton, Basque or Flemish people, to mention only those three.

However, the political passivity of the national minorities, who were either unable or unwilling to make full use of the considerable possibilities offered them by the 1868 Nationalities Act, coupled with the subversive activities of some of their leaders who just would not disarm, eventually arrived at discouraging the Hungarian State and prevented it from pursuing further and expanding that minorities policy which had been so generously liberal in its inception. As a result that excellent law was applied hesitatingly and incompletely before it was allowed to grind to a halt altogether, by 1880. From then onwards it was a short step only which led to the fatal U-turn towards a centralized, unitary "national state" - a reversal as poor in wisdom as it was dangerous. For although pardonable, it had been that capital error committed by the leaders of Hungary of the day which 40 years later served as a pretext enabling Hungary's enemies to inflict upon her the catastrophic Treaty of Trianon decreeing the destruction of the millenary frontiers of the Kingdom. Only the reverse, the liberal policy embarked upon in 1868, if obstinately pursued, could have in our view saved the unity and integrity of the lands of St. Stephen's Holy Crown.

Baron József Eötvös, for his part, saw the solution of Hungary's nationalities problem in an expansion of the national self-governing rights of the country's time-honored territorial subdivisions, the counties (called *comitatus*, 63 of them had been established by King St. Stephen on the territory of Hungary proper), more or less on the pattern of the Swiss cantons. For the rest, universal suffrage would ensure for each nationality the chance of having it represented in Parliament, proportionally to its numerical strength. Tribute should also be paid on this score to a little known political personality of the immediate post-Compromise era, by the name of Mocsary. Having written a number of remarkable studies on the nationalities problem, in which he attempted an evaluation of the events of 1848-1849, Mr. Mocsary frequently took the floor in Parliament during the late 'sixties in order to

venom and the slanderous allegations it heaped on the Hungarians that made the Memorandum unacceptable to the latter. All in all it would seem that, by the turn of the century, the antagonistic attitude of the national minorities had not hardened yet into an irreducible and insurmountable opposition. A flexible government policy, persistent while full of understanding, could still have, in the long run, overcome that opposition at the most of a number of concessions of such nature as would not have jeopardized the fundamental unity of the realm: they may even have safeguarded, if not reinforced, that unity in the long run. The centrifugal trends in Hungary were mainly exacerbated by the war and the defeat putting an end to it. These transformed the claim to self-government into downright separatist aspirations, not leaving Hungary either the time or the opportunity to settle the problems of the national minorities, in a spirit of fairness and to the greatest benefit of all concerned. Subsequently some of those nationalities were made to suffer equally, sometimes even atrociously, from the new fate that had fallen to their lot. Such was the case, as we shall see presently, of the Croats, to a lesser extent that of the Slovaks and Ruthenians, and even that of the Transylvania Roumanians. In spite of a certain number of political errors which, as we have just pointed out, were committed during a very brief period of Hungarian history, the affirmation may be made that Hungary has never really oppressed its national minorities not even neglected their cultural promotion. At any rate, even if her attitude toward them had not always been above reproach, today it compares most favorably with the policies pursued over the last 50 years by most European countries, and particularly the so-called successor states, in respect of their minorities – Hungarian or other – whom the Treaty of Trianon has subjected to their domination. To this very day those minorities would feel more than satisfied if in those countries they were able to avail themselves of the rights that the various ethnic groups enjoyed in the

traditional Kingdom of Hungary. As concerns those "millenary injustices" to which some western statesmen and diplomats referred when drafting the Treaty of Trianon, it is precisely its millenary past, which pleads in Hungary's favor. Hungary has nothing to fear from a comparison with its former or present-day neighbors, nor indeed with some of the most advanced countries of the Western World. Indeed it was with the latter's assent and complicity that the Czechs turned out, in 1945, the Sudeten Germans from their ancestral homeland, while the Slovaks expelled, pure and simple, great masses of Hungarians from regions where their forebears had dwelt for centuries.

In fact, as recalled by M. Jerzy Lukaszewski in his remarkable "Historiography of Austria-Hungary" (13) that caricature of the Dual Monarchy, represented now as the "incurably sick state" now as the "prison of peoples", which had been so current at the beginning of our century and also between the two world wars, was essentially the handiwork of a handful of politicians originating from what were to become the successor states. They literally inundated the West with the products of their evil literary genius, but of them all pride of place must be reserved for Messrs Masaryk and Benes who at that time achieved fabulous circulation. At the very height of their agitation the lot of the "oppressed" Czechs within the Monarchy was curiously enough superior to that of the Hungarian "oppressors", while living standards in the neighboring "national states", such as Roumania or Serbia for example, did not at all compare favourably with that of their racial brethren living under Habsburg rule. It should also be noted that all those propagandists who never ceased to write or talk of the peoples' natural right to self-determination, did not mention with one single word, during the whole of World War I, the fate they were preparing for their future national minorities. For in their blind egoism it never occurred to them that they ought to grant others the same rights they were claiming for themselves. The sum total of their complaints did, however, succeed in depicting the



Hungarians to western public opinion as oppressive, barbarian, Asiatic despots. That was all the more unfair as today it may already be stated in full impartiality that compared with the 50 years that have gone by since the Peace Treaties of St. Germain and Trianon, the previous half century, elapsed between the 1867 Compromise and the outbreak of World War I, had been an era of peace, tranquility, intense economic and cultural activity and prosperity for all the peoples concerned without a single exception. There was no fault or flaw in that Monarchy to which time could not have provided a remedy. Its last few years had already been clearly marked by a development of the provinces and the attenuation of disputes between the national minorities. "The State was law-abiding, tolerant and liberal, its administration efficient and honest . . . That very civil service, even if it could be accused at times of being an instrument of national oppression and Germanization, had the merit of having brought progress even to the most distant and backward provinces" (14). More particularly "the pre-war Hungarian administration may have been somewhat harsh and no doubt too severe, but it was also correct and of a scrupulous integrity" (15). General opinion will bear us out that the same could not be said for a long time to come of the civil service of the successor states, notably those of Roumania and Yugoslavia.

"The war brought about the collapse of the Dual Monarchy whereas time could have achieved its transformation without causing destruction and suffering. Whatever else may be said, on the eve of the great conflict the impression one had was that of a flourishing, prosperous big country. Well-being was on the upgrade. Public services functioned impeccably. People's private lives were full of loveliness. And in spite of all hierarchical appearances one felt the slow yet sure advance of progress and social justice" (16).

## CHAPTER II

### THE GREAT WAR: ITS ORIGINS, ITS EVOLUTION, AND THE CLIMATE OF 1918

As for the major, if not exclusive, guilt of the Central Powers and particularly of Austria-Hungary in bringing about the 1914-1918 war, that version of history must certainly appear today as a piece of fiction, studiously created and entertained, during and after the war, by a certain number of historians who were either biased or whose documentation had been willfully expurgated or incomplete at the time. For our part, we wish to contribute to the refutation of that piece of fiction by referring to a few authors carefully selected from the camp of the victors or from among those who had remained neutral.

Firstly it is a generally accepted thesis at the present time, as was recalled recently by the great French lawyer, Maitre Jacques Isorni in the Introduction to his "Truthful History of the Great War" (17), that in 1914, at the time of "armed peace", Europe had been divided into two camps, eager to come to clashes at the first opportunity, and that therefore it was condemned to war, so that even if Sarajevo had not taken place peace could not have been maintained for a long time. In 1925, the former Italian Prime Minister Nitti wrote as follows: "Owing to the political situation which had evolved in Europe, war became inevitable: it might be delayed but it could not be avoided. In fact everyone busied themselves with preparing the most favorable conditions possible for touching off the conflict. Hence in all honesty no one can be singled out as being responsible for it" (18). The former French Senator Henri Pozzi, on the other hand, in his particularly instructive book entitled "The Guilty Ones" had this to say: "That sooner or later a war had to set at loggerheads the two great blocs of alliances and interests, which at that time ruled Europe be

tween them, was a certainty. However if war was unavoidable, in July 1914 it seemed possible still to put it off" (19). Also, let us remember that at least, twice before in the course of our century, in 1909 and 1913 more particularly, war had very nearly broken out. The truth is that by dreading it, all prepared for it feverishly and it was very largely due to the psychosis thus created that in the end war did in fact break out. Moreover, since most of the secret diplomatic archives of the Chancelleries of Europe have largely been opened to research, the responsibility of the Central Powers for bringing about World War I has been called in question again by all trustworthy historians, most of whom have come to be inclined by now, to envisage a largely divided, collective responsibility. There are some, like Alfred Fabre-Luce, who since the publication in 1924 of his book entitled "Victory" have not shied away from going further by stating courageously and clearly that the catastrophe had well and truly been provoked by Serbo-Russian machinations. That thesis emerges even more forcefully in Fireplace's other book "History without Make-up" (1914: who was the assassin?), in the Preface to which he wrote as follows: "The lengthy story of contradictory versions concerning the history of July 1914 finds its explanation above all in the forging of documents... The public gets attached to myths and legends which have been dished up to it . . . The spread of truth has been shackled by a discrete censorship emanating from certain pressure groups. . . Statesmen who have disappeared from the scene are still trying to lead us up the garden path . . . They have succeeded in mystifying not only their contemporaries but also those who came after them. Because of them many citizens have shut their eyes facing an imaginary past . . . Still, history will have the last word to say . . ." (20) In 1914, the Serbs had in fact served as the battering ram for much mightier interests than their own, notably for the designs of Russia in Central Europe and the Balkans. "The murder committed

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

At Sarajevo, which touched off the First World War, had been engineered - as we now know for certain - by Serbia, encouraged under cover by Russia, with the view of bringing about the carving up to Austria-Hungary by means of a generalized war. Serbia had been Russia's tool for inciting to war" (21). For Serbia, on the other hand, the underlying motive in having the assassination prepared by the Narodna Obrana, a Para governmental organization, was to do away with the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, regarded as the only and very last obstacle in the way of Serb irredentism. "The Archduke's future reign, the trialism which he proposed to institute. would have been tantamount to the autonomy of the Southern Slavs within a federalized Monarchy in which they would have played their part. With that pan-Slavism would have lost its justification and the Serbs their chance of bringing about Greater Serbia" (22). Also "if Russia had been victorious and had not collapsed in 1917, she would have gained immense territorial advantages. Amongst other things the absolute dominion of Poland, the Black Sea and Constantinople. The European War, examined on its own, had above all been Russia's war, deliberately contrived by its military caste to obliterate the memories of the defeat suffered at Japan's hands in 1905" (23). In Europe Russia was looking for compensation for the rebuffs it had suffered in the Orient. In his book quoted above Henri Pozzi justly emphasizes, over and above the ambitions the Russians may have entertained in Central Europe and the Balkans. "The frightful internal difficulties, which pushed them to war in 1914. On three previous occasions - February 1909, December 1912 and August 1913 - war against Austria had already been envisaged . . . PanSlavilsm had never forgotten nor forgiven the defeat meted out to it by Austria-Hungary when at the Congress of Berlin, in 1878, the Great Powers at Vienna's instigation had deprived Russia of the fruits of its victory over the Turks.. ". And with the relevant telegrams at his fingertips Henri Pozzi formulates his principal, and indeed irrefutable, accusation: "Without Russian's

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

secret mobilization of July 24, which she had kept hidden from us (i. e. the French) for 48 hours so as to make it impossible for us to stay her hands, the efforts attempted right and left at saving the peace during the last week of July, 1914, would have succeeded. There would not have been a war . . . And when at the last moment Austria seemed prepared to give in, it was Russia, not Germany, who rejected the idea of an International Conference proposed by Great Britain. . . Austria-Hungary was cornered in a life-or-death war against Russia." Pozzi recognizes too the French Government let Russia have its own way. There is no disputing it, continues Henri Pozzi, that our Government, or at any rate its leaders, knew at the time war was declared that Europe owed that war exclusively to the order of mobilization, issued without our knowledge by Russia on July 24 . . . Furthermore, the evidence proving Russia's guilt was so blatantly obvious that Maurice Palologue's dispatch reporting the news of that mobilization was excluded from the Yellow Paper issued by the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the origin of the Great War, for its editors did not foresee that one day not only Maurice Palologue (French Ambassador to the Court of St. Petersburg) but even Sazonov (the Russian Imperial Foreign Minister) would reveal the truth. "Russia's mobilizing, on July 24, 1914, the 4 principal military districts of Moscow, Kiev, Kazan and Odessa as well as the Baltic and Black Sea fleets, involving two-thirds of her front-line forces", writes Henri Pozzi, "was the first war-like gesture made in Europe which entailed all the others, the German counter-mobilization in particular" (24). After all, the real aggressor is at all events he who is bent on changing an existing situation by means of war, no matter what diplomatic or military pretexts are being ingeniously proffered or referred to after the event. As regards France's responsibility, this is what the American Harry Elmer Barnes wrote as early as 1924, in an article entitled "Poincares Share in the Responsibility for the Late War": "In 1914 France put herself in the wrong by not opposing the tsarist

government's ambitions in the Orient, by generally giving Russia her head and by shutting both eyes to her criminal machinations in the Balkans which ended in the double murder of Sarajevo, thus participating in the pursuit of policies which led to catastrophe. Such is the gospel truth, Poincare's subsequent attempts notwithstanding, to justify his policy by pretending that he had never sympathized 'with Russia's fancy ambitions'. As a matter of fact, Raymond Poincare (President of the French Republic in 1914), a native of Lorraine and a man of notoriously bellicose temperament, had only one idea at the back of his mind - to retrieve Alsace-Lorraine from Germany, for which purpose he exercised, with persistent tenacity, pressure on Russia (e. g. by granting her loans in order to build strategic railway lines right up to Germany's frontier). With that purpose in mind", concludes the author somewhat naively, "Poincare did not hesitate, convinced republican though he was, to serve the least justifiable imperialist ambitions of the Russian autocracy with the help of France's genius and democratic aspirations." (25) One thing is as certain as it was symptomatic that in 1912 Poincare brushed off a German attempt at rapprochement, offering the possibility of self-government for Alsace-Lorraine.

To put things in a nutshell, the great trick in 1914 was to corner Austria-Hungary and Germany so as to make them declare the war that Russia and France were secretly longing for, thus keeping both appearances and diplomatic advantage on their side. Hence Serbia, with secret Russia backing, was assigned the task of defying Austria beyond the limits her patience could endure. As wrote Robert Vallery-Radot: "No exceptional perspicacity was needed to guess that Poincare's visit to Petrograd (51. Petersburg) with a host of experts in his retinue was not accomplished in order to consolidate peace." And Aldo Dami: "For a thousand reasons, the problem of Alsace-Lorraine, which had haunted Boulanger and Deroulede as well as Delcasse and Poincare, was the source of the late war." And to quote once more Alfred Fabre-Luce, the

greatest expert of them all in this respect: "Was it really necessary to have 1,500.000 Frenchmen killed in order to recuperate 1,500.000 inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine? Autonomy could have been achieved for them by means of a Franco-German agreement which Germany was striving for on that basis, and further amplified within the framework of a European Federation" (26).

It was quite clear that Austria-Hungary and Germany only wanted a limited war with Serbia, while France and Russia, as well as Serbia herself, were pushing for a generalized war, which alone, in their view, could serve their interests and satisfy their ambitions. Hence, Russia and France alone had, from the very beginning, envisaged and prepared for a general European war. Nothing could be more lapidary than Fabre-Luce's conclusion: "Austria's and Germany's acts made the war possible, those of the Entente rendered it unavoidable." Let it be added that although by now everyone agrees on regarding Hitler as a direct consequence of the first world war (Monseigneur Kaas, Archbishop of Trier, used to say that Hitler was not born in Braunau but at Versailles) certain responsibilities for that war were much more far-reaching than is generally appreciated. Fortunately, myths woven entirely of falsehoods do not prove to be an enduring fabric, nor can truths be engineered and decreed as such merely by right of victory over the vanquished. A fact of the gravest significance was, as Henri Pozzi so rightly reminds us, that "when the victors drew up the conditions of peace at Versailles, St. Germain and Trianon, it was the axiom of Germany's guilt, and that of its ally, Austria-Hungary, - the axiom of their sole and exclusive war-guilt which served as moral justification for the victors' implacable decisions. . ." (27).

France has believed "and still believes that the European balance of power can be ensured by playing pan-Slavism against pan-Germanism, whereas neither is preferable to the other from the viewpoint of Europe's, if not France's immediate, interests. The real tragedy of France, going back to her defeat in 1871, was to

have been convinced that 'Only Russia could save her from panGermanism. That is where France's relations went wrong, if only indirectly, with Hungary, and to a lesser extent with Poland, those two bulwarks of Latin culture and Catholicism, which France had formerly always viewed as the only effective dam in Eastern and Central Europe to hold back pan-Germanism. In fact, it is quite obvious that ever since Russia has become France's indispensable (or supposedly indispensable) ally for stemming the German tide in Eastern and Southern Europe, Hungary - albeit directly menaced by the same tide - had to see its relations with France deteriorate badly. There lies undoubtedly the root-cause of the rapid decline of a once traditional friendship of long standing. Similarly, from 1871 till the collapse of tsarist Russia in 1917, the French were keeping very much in the background their ancestral sympathy for the unhappy Poles. The worst sin, however, which France laid at Hungary's doorstep, was that the latter had pushed the Dual Monarchy into Germany's arms, after 1867, and that it had been the Monarchy's Foreign Minister, Count Julius Andrassy who prevented her intervention 'On France's side in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871. Without a shred of doubt that was true, although Count Andrassy's stand was justifiable from the Hungarian viewpoint in more than one way. As 'one of Kossuth's companions in the 1848-1849 war for freedom against Austria, Andrassy could hardly forget that Hungary's cause had been defeated thanks to Russia's intervention, against which no help had been forthcoming from any European power, while 'On the other hand the Compromise with Austria had finally become possible owing to the defeat which the latter had suffered at the hands of Prussia in 1866. Also, Andrassy was set against Austria's resuming the struggle for hegemony among the German powers, the 'Outcome of which, he felt, whatever the result, could 'Only be harmful to Hungary's newly won position within the Dual Monarchy. Finally and above everything else, Andrassy did at that time already, and very rightly, view Bismarck's Germany as a potential



ally against Russia's designs on the Balkans. Therefore, as the Dual Monarchy's Minister for Foreign Affairs he did not hesitate to impart a clearly anti-Russian character to the Austro-German alliance of 1879, which was, in fact, an agreement directed exclusively against Russia and in no way against France. Moreover Andrassy, who had never lost sight of the partition of Poland, was fearful that Germany and Russia might come to terms to the detriment of Austria-Hungary. But it was first and foremost the need to protect herself against Russia that compelled Austria-Hungary to conclude an alliance with Germany. Association was, so to say, forced upon the two Central Empires at the turn of the last century in the face of the danger of Russian pan-Slavism, which threatened them both. To Frenchmen who may be ignorant of the fact or may have forgotten it, let it be recalled that in 1871, alone in whole of Europe. the Hungarian Parliament and the Bohemian Diet had raised their voices in protest against the injustice, which was the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. In Annex II we reproduce some of the Hungarian protests recorded at that time. An emissary of the then Provisional Government of France reported: "The Hungarians would rise to help us if their government did not prevent them." Let us also quote Andre de Hevesy's opinion to the effect that over and above Andrassy's influence it had been the threat of a Russian intervention, which prevented the Emperor King Francis Joseph from getting back his own from Prussia on France's side. The proof of it is the new German Emperor's telegram to the Tsar Alexander II: "Prussia shall never forget what it owes to the Tsar who prevented the war with France from assuming much greater dimensions" (28).

As for the 1914-1918 war, whatever Hungary's influence at the decisive moment upon the foreign policy of the Dual Monarchy (due to the presence of its representatives in the several joint committees and the common corps diplomatique), it stands historically proven today that Hungary may in no way be blamed for its

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

outbreak. There is no truth in the historian Ernest Denis' accusation that it had been the Hungarian Premier, Count Stephen Tisza who, in July 1914, gratuitously unleashed the hurricane. Naturally, a notoriously mendacious forger of history, such as the late Edward Benes, took great pleasure in hypocritically presenting Count Tisza as one of the great war criminals (for the first time in his ill-famed pamphlet, published in 1915 under the title "Let Austria-Hungary be Destroyed"). Professor Louis Eisenmann went even one better in attributing to Hungary "crushing responsibility for the European massacre".

The contrary was to be established very soon, during and after the great war, to the effect that not one European statesman had done at the time as much as Count Tisza did in trying to prevent that war, and that once it had broken out he alone in Europe declined for his country all territorial aggrandizement that might result from it. All along the course of the war, Count Tisza kept calling ceaselessly for a "white peace" for the benefit of all belligerents, opposing moreover in 1917 the German decision in favor of unlimited submarine warfare. In the footsteps of the Tharaud brothers, and a number of other chroniclers and historians respectful of factual truth, Gabriel Gobron has pronounced the best concise assessment of the man: "There was one single man in Central Europe who wanted peace desperately: honest Tisza..." (29). In fact, Tisza had been the only member of the Austro-Hungarian Joint Ministerial Council for Common Affairs who from the first day of the crisis had consistently opposed the war. In his endeavor to prevent its outbreak Tisza went as far as offering his resignation if counsels of moderation should not prevail and submitted a memorandum to the sovereign to that effect. All these facts were largely borne out by council minutes and other diplomatic documents when the contents of the secret archives of Vienna, Berlin and Petrograd were published after the war. As from July 7, Tisza spoke up against the handing to Serbia of too harsh an ultimatum. He only gave in reluctantly on July 14

After receiving sure knowledge of the Russian mobilization having already begun. "As by the morning of July 14, nay, as early as July 8", confirms Henri Pozzi, "the Austro-Hungarian Government had been forewarned of the recall to Europe of the Russian troops stationed in Asia, as well as other troop movements in the Kiev region" (30). At any me, Tisza was perfectly aware, as all his writings prove it, that the future of Hungary, its very existence was at stake, in the war about to break out. That war, whatever its outcome, was to be "bad business" for Hungary and a "dreadful calamity" for the whole of Europe. Alas, Hungary could not extricate itself from it, given its close association with Austria owing to the 1867 Compromise, the dangerous nature of which had been so clearly predicted by Kossuth, as we have seen earlier on.

This having been stated, it is also true that as from October 1913 Serbia had, after its crushing victories won in two Balkan wars which gave it a tremendous military and political uplift, undoubtedly become a threat to the integrity of the Kingdom of Hungary. Hence, the undeniably sincere enthusiasm aroused in Hungary by the declaration of war on Serbia. Also, to enable it to break an iron Slavonic encirclement there was no one to count on but Germany. Even so there were moments in the course of the war when it seemed that the German alliance might be as ruinous to Hungary's vital interests as were the designs of its declared enemies. Thus, for instance, there had been circles in Berlin which, in 1915, adopted the idea of the defunct Archduke Franz Ferdinand by suggesting that in order to bring Roumania into the war on the Central Powers' side one might offer Bucharest part of Hungarian Transylvania. Hence, the possibility cannot be excluded that a victory by the Central Powers might perhaps equally have entailed for Hungary subjection and dismemberment. However that may have been, in 1914 the German threat seemed the lesser evil, although the Hungarians did not have too many illusions on that score. Their mood was reflected in the witticism which went the rounds of Budapest in those days: "If Germany loses, we lose: if she wins,

we are lost." However, about Russia's intentions practically no doubt was felt. It was known that the Tsar Nicholas II had already acquiesced in his General Staff's and diplomacy's principal aim, to wit, the dismemberment of the lands of St. Stephen's Holy Crown. Anyway, neither Russia nor even Serbia - the latter inebriated by its Balkan victories - bothered to conceal their objective, namely to destroy Austria-Hungary and share its spoils. Already in 1910 the then Hungarian Prime Minister, Count Kuen-Hedervary, said to the Ambassador of France, Rene Millet: "The German alliance is for Hungary a rampart against the Slavs whom the Hungarians believe to have to fear most" (31).

Indeed, "there can be no doubt that Hungary - or at any rate the overwhelming majority of Hungarians - went to war in 1914 in the conviction of fighting for their just cause and with the only aim of preserving what had for a thousand years been recognized as their own. For years the Hungarians had been living in the full knowledge of Serbia's intention to destroy the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, especially since the latter had annexed Bosnia Herzegovina. It was also generally known that Russia supported Serbia's aspirations to establishing a Greater Serbia based on the South-Slavonic areas of Austria-Hungary. Once it became evident that Russia had been privy to the Serb conspiracy, which contrived the double murder at Sarajevo, their common purpose being to unleash a generalized war in the course of which they might conquer the Slav-inhabited territories of the Monarchy, Hungary resolved to go to war against Russia. Also, the Magyars had never been able to forget that Russia had been the cause of the failure of their war for freedom of 1848-1849, directed against the Habsburgs, and that the Russians had delivered their country to the vengeance of Austrian absolutism." (32)

Contrary to both its allies and enemies, who dreamed of conquests, Hungary merely thought of preserving its national patrimony. Possessing a privileged geographical situation encompassing an ideal entity there was no earthly reason why the Hungarians

should have wanted to seek happiness beyond their borders. What's more, they feared any territorial aggrandizement such as might reduce Hungary's specific role within the Monarchy, especially in favor of the numerically preponderant Slavs. Hence Tisza's absolute refusal of a war of conquest. Hence also the prewar refusal of "trialism" on Hungary's part, unless ill: had been brought about with the Poles, the Hungarians' oldest friends. Accordingly, Hungary was the first country to clamor for the restoration of Poland, which became a fact in November 1916 when the Central Powers set up a "Polish State" whose independence, theoretical while the war lasted, was to become factual once peace was restored. In 1908 already, the annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina had been viewed very unfavorably in Hungary. "We have enough land and too many Slavs", people would say in Hungary, remembering Count Andrassy's dictum: "Hungary's boat is already carrying too much cargo; a little more will make it capsize."

Even prior to World War I the ambitions of its neighbors to carve up Hungary between them had become manifest. The Treaty of Trianon is best proof that Hungarian apprehensiveness in that respect was not unfounded. Hence, a sense of legitimate self-defense for which no one should bear the Hungarians a grudge. It is a well known fact that at the end of 1915, after the great victory at Gorlice, which dealt a decisive blow to Russia, and with the whole of Serbia occupied, Hungary regarded the war that she had entered for a strictly defensive purpose, as terminated. She therefore insisted with her Austrian and German allies that negotiations must be opened with the Entente powers in order to restore peace "without any annexation or payment of damages", on the basis of the "status quo ante", except for the Polish territories liberated from Russian rule, which were to be reunited with Austrian Galicia so as to constitute a new, independent Polish State. In December 1915, the heads of all political parties in Parliament made declarations to that effect. At the same time, the

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs Sazonov rebuked the French Ambassador Maurice Paleologue, who had come to talk to him about those peace feelers, with these words: "No! There can be no question of a separate peace . . . Austria and Hungary must be dismembered and annihilated." Whereupon Paleologue: "So long as Germany and Italy exist (and he may have added: Russia) it will be in our interest to keep Austria-Hungary in existence." (33)

When in spite of Prime Minister Count Stephen Tisza's efforts to the contrary Hungary had been dragged into the war, once that war was declared, the Hungarian people, always faithful to its allies, as well as to its given word, fought valiantly but without the slightest trace of hatred toward its adversaries. All available evidence goes to prove that, as it has also become generally known, nowhere else were prisoners of war, refugees and civilian internees better treated, during both world wars, than they were in Hungary. Hence, it was legitimate for Count Tisza to declare in Parliament, on October 17, 1918: "Yes, we have lost this war. But while the dreadful struggle was on, the Hungarian nation was doing all it could to win the esteem and respect of its enemies. The entire world is witness of the care with which we have treated our wounded enemies and of the consideration we have shown for the aliens who chose to stay in our country. Which nation has fought with more heroism and sense of chivalry than ours? Where are the people to have struggled for their survival more nobly and with less hatred in their hearts?" (34)

When the German General Staff demanded that Hungarian regiments be sent to the front-line in France, Hungarian members of Parliament loudly protested saying: "We are not at war with France! We do not want our soldiers to be sent there!" Shortly thereafter an end was put to Hungarian troop transports to the western front. At the same time a pamphlet was published in Paris, above the signature of one Andre Dubosq, entitled "Hungary Today and Tomorrow". Its concluding sentence leaves no doubt about the feelings and projects nurtured in the opposite

camp: "Hungary will suffer the punishment she deserves for having sided with Germany in war as well as in peace."

One should not lose from sight the astonishing fact that at no time during the war did Austria-Hungary show signs of breaking up from inside, as its enemies had hoped: on the contrary, its various ethnic groups remained on the whole perfectly loyal, a large majority fighting gallantly under the common flag, despite all allied, and particularly Russian, appeals to desertion. Only the Czechs went over to the enemy in substantial numbers, and there again deserters mostly came from the p.o.w. Camps in Russia. In the end the Czech Legion succeeded in recruiting 42,000 members out of 360,000 Czech prisoners of war in Russia, i.e. barely 12 per cent of their total number. As an organized unit, only the 28th regiment of infantry - the Prague regiment went over to the Russians, in 1915. Only towards the very end of the war, when defeat was already looming large, did the various national minorities of Kingdom and Empire show signs - in a very humane fashion let it be stated - of preferring to share the fruits of victory rather than the fate of the vanquished. However, the fact must also be recalled that up till the beginning of 1918, neither President Wilson, nor the Allied and Associated Powers as such had yet officially proclaimed their intention to carve up Austria-Hungary, for Wilson's famous 14 points demanded no more than autonomy for the Monarchy's nationalities. The concept of absolute national independence for the minorities began to prevail officially only towards the end of 1918, which explains, partly at least, why those minorities had been persevering almost throughout the entire duration of the conflict in a disciplined wait-and-see attitude. In the end, of course, the 14 points and the ethnic principle became a more than precious tool in the hands of the Allied and Associated Powers with which to obtain the moral disarmament of the Central Empires.

In that respect one cannot do better than refer back once more to Jerzy Lukaszewski's study, quoted above, which offers an

admirable analysis of that tapestry of developments that had come to pass inside the Dual Monarchy during the first world war (36): "If 4 years of a murderous war were needed to break up the multinational Monarchy", says the author in substance, "then obviously that Monarchy must have been more solid than a house built of cards or a worm-eaten structure predestined to fall to pieces at the slightest blow . . . Previously held opinions as to the unavailability of the Monarchy's collapse are becoming rarer as time goes on. . . But even in the countries which in 1914 found themselves at war with Austria-Hungary the idea of dismembering the latter only began to make headway during the last few months of the conflict. . In his speech to the Trades Union Congress, on January 25, 1918, Britain's Prime Minister Lloyd George still insisted that a partition of the Dual Monarchy was not one of the Allies' war aims; that they only demanded the granting of authentic self-government and the application of true democratic principles to those national minorities of Austria-Hungary who had been for a long time past desirous of those benefits. When Wilson's 14 points were proclaimed three days later they did not demand the liquidation of Austria-Hungary either. The 10th point merely required autonomous development for the peoples of the Dual Monarchy . . . The about-turn of Allied policy in favor of breaking up the entire pattern of Danubian Europe took place only in the spring of 1918, when the French Premier Georges Clemenceau revealed his secret negotiations with Vienna; a fact which compelled Austria-Hungary to sever all contacts with the Allies and the Emperor-King Charles to humble himself into making amends at the German General Staff Headquarters in Spa. . . The intention was to bring about the collapse of the Dual Monarchy, at a very critical moment for the Western Allies, by promising national independence to its peoples . . . Moreover, the so-called Spa Agreement of May 1918, which completely subjected Austria-Hungary to the German Reich, left no other possibility open than the fight to the bitter end against the Habsburg Monarchy. Only



six months before the end of the first world war, under the threat of a military defeat and much against its grain did the Entente accept the idea of carving up the Monarchy. " Lukaszewski goes on affirming that "an overwhelming majority of those populations, so different from one another in matters of language, culture and social class, remained loyal to the Monarchy, including the Poles and Ukrainians, striving for their respective objectives within the existing framework. . To them the Monarchy represented the lesser evil as compared with the dangers that might result from its disintegration. . . Even the Czechs who were traditionally considered the most formidable enemies of the Habsburg Empire, continued, in their great majority and up to the last phase of the war, along the line laid down in 1848 by Frantisek Palacky, the father of Czech national renaissance. " The Southern Slavs also kept faith with the time-honored ideas of Austro-Slavism. . ."

Never will one be able sufficiently to emphasize the immense propaganda effort deployed during the war in France, England, and the United States by a handful of Czech exiles, foremost among them Masaryk and Benes, before international public opinion, largely still favorable to the preservation of Austria-Hungary, could be persuaded, little by little and not without difficulty, to adopt the opposite view. The press was their principal tool in that sapping operation carried out with extraordinary perseverance and zeal. "They created press offices in Paris, London and the United States. In 1915, Benes published at Delgrave's in Paris his ill-famed Manifesto entitled "Let Austria-Hungary Be Destroyed", while Masaryk had his "Anti-Austrian Manifesto" published in London. They multiply their interviews and contacts with lawyers, bankers and politicians and also obtain the all-important backing of the Freemasonry, the sworn enemies of the Habsburgs and their Empire . . . On January 19, 1917, the name of Czechoslovakia first appeared in an official allied communique; not before August 9 and September 2, 1918, however' did the French, British, and Americans recognize the Czechoslovak

National Council as a belligerent power, which on September 29, 1918, became the Czechoslovak Provisional Government." (37)

Thus came true the "daydream" of Masaryk and Benes, who from the simple allied consultants they had been at the beginning of the conflict transformed themselves into the principal architects of allied policy in Central Europe. Having rallied most western statesmen little by little to their own views. Thus, owing to their powerful influence in the United States they won the support of President Wilson too. "To convince the allies of the need to destroy Austria-Hungary had been an uphill job" admitted President Masaryk in his Memoirs, adding that "the Magyars were helped everywhere by the memory of their 1848 revolution as well as that of Lajos Kossuth who had lived in the allied countries as an exile."

Now Charles Danielu, the Rapporteur of the Treaty of Trianon, reveals in his book that "Originally there had existed an other concept - that of the maintenance of the Habsburg Empire as opposed to a German Reich to be disbanded, with the obligation, however, imposed upon the former to grant autonomy to its nationalities, and political self-government 'On the Hungarian pattern to Bohemia and Croatia. That concept while preserving scaffolding constructed by the centuries would have attenuated the causes of discord in Central Europe. It would also have rallied the greatest number of assenting votes in France, particularly if it had been possible to achieve it in the form of a federation. As a matter of fact, however, it was the Wilsonian concept of absolute independence for the nationalities that prevailed . . ." (38).

From that moment 'on, wrote Thomas Masaryk triumphantly, the breaking up of, the Habsburg Empire appeared as the principal aim of the world war. However, on their road to that goal Masaryk and his collaborators were not spared a certain number of jolts. "The year 1917", recalls Masaryk, "was dangerous for us because the Emperor Charles was working secretly for the rapid conclusion of a separate peace to save his Empire." As indeed "there would have been no diplomatic impossibility to stand in

the way of an honorable stoppage of the massacre, in 1917, when the Emperor Charles made his peace proposals, with his brother-in-law, Prince Sixtus of Bourbon-Parma as middleman, stipulating the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine by France, the transfer of the Trentina province to Italy and the establishment of a Confederation of Danubian Peoples with equal autonomy for each one of them" (39). Once more Thomas Masaryk provides an enlightening explanation of why the dreadful carnage had to continue nevertheless. Thus in "Resurrection of a State" (40) he wrote: "I asked myself anxiously if the war would last as long as I had anticipated . . . For I feared that in case of a quick Allied victory we would finish up empty-handed . . . we would not have obtained our independence; in one form or another Austria would have been preserved." Thus it would seem that the war had to continue in order to obtain the total destruction of Austria-Hungary; that was why the Austro-Hungarian peace proposals were rejected at the cost of the lives of millions of additional victims.

The commitments entered into by the Allies in the course of the war also seem to have been decisive in the fateful succession of events. In order to extend their coalition, the allied powers have used bits of Austro-Hungarian territory, as bait to win over Italy and Roumania, the latter in particular being promised a sizable chunk of Hungary. However, taking into account the precarious position in which those "converts" found themselves - not only incapable of conquering by the force of arms the areas promised to them but even suffering crushing defeats (Roumania even laid down arms and concluded a separate peace in 1918, contrary to her commitments) - it would have been possible no doubt to obtain their assent to an at least partial revision of allied war aims, thereby greatly facilitating a compromise peace, such as failed to be brought about on several occasions in 1917. That kind of peace would have been undoubtedly much more salutary for the future of Europe than the one that was concluded after 1918. In that respect Clemenceau's uncompromising attitude seems to have been

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

unfortunately decisive. Austria-Hungary was thus compelled to walk the road to Calvary to its bitter end, although its young and generous ruler, as well as all its peoples, had been longing to be done with the war long before.

Another deplorable aspect of the onward march of events was that the longer the war lasted - and this applies to the second world war too - the more the spirit of reason, moderation and willingness to compromise was pushed into the background to yield its place to the spirit of revenge and hatred. The war aims, too, became harder and more demanding. Correspondingly, the peace treaties, conceived, as we shall see presently, in an atmosphere characterized by the absence of understanding and as the result of a series of fairly murky deals, came to bear the marks of the excessive length, harshness, and cruelty of the war which had preceded them. Moreover, the incontestable fact that the much greater part of the hostilities had taken place on the territory of the Entente powers, and that at the time of the several armistice agreements not one of their soldiers had yet set foot on the soil of the Central Empires, must have added to the victors' sense of annoyance. In fact, the force of arms had conquered neither Alsace, nor Posen, Slovakia, Transylvania or the Banat, in 1918. All those territories fell into the hands of the victorious powers and their small allies only after the several armistice agreements had been concluded. In Hungary's case Serbs and Roumanians advanced into that country by violating the armistice provisions, while the Czechs, authorized by the armistice concerning them to move into Slovakia, were beaten hollow there and repulsed by Bela Kun's tiny red army. Alas, when the conquered enemy remains formidable, the victors tend to be all the more pitiless towards him, trying to weaken him as much as possible, thereby making the conclusion of an equitable peace settlement practically impossible. Vanity wounded by an inglorious victory contributes, psychologically, to execrable peace treaties. It was precisely their totally miraculous and undeserved victory in 1918



which made the successor states lose all restraint and fall into a madly ridiculous megalomania. As has been said, those small countries were but the "adoptive children" of victory in which they, themselves, had taken no part. Then, overnight, they saw their wildest dreams come true. Those displaying the most fiery hatred were not necessarily the ones who had suffered most. Unsurpassed, however, proved to be the bumptiousness of the "poachers" of victory - the opportunists who having yesterday still been the docile servants of the old regime, today suddenly discovered their "allied" heart and ardent nationalist convictions. Many were of course overjoyed at finding themselves miraculously in the victorious camp instead of having to pay the ransom of defeat. Let us add that the hatred, which those had displayed then and continued displaying in respect of Hungary, stemmed most certainly from a fundamentally guilty conscience and also from their fear, based on ancestral experience, of the Hungarian quality of quick recovery - a fear that never really left them since Trianon. "We hate those whom we have hunt", said Tacitus. Strength and a sense of justice, sure of themselves, would have produced a very different attitude.

Admittedly, as we have said before, four years of cruel warfare had exasperated tempers and whetted appetites for territorial gain. "The chancelleries which had judiciously thought of employing chauvinist passions as their auxiliaries finished up by becoming their slaves... For those men Austria-Hungary was suddenly no more than a vast market of 'war surplus goods', the ethnic principle an excuse for conquest and democratic idealism a habit-forming drug." (41)

The treaties of 1919-1920 were in a large measure the product of "the environment in which they had been concluded", as explained so admirably Georges Roux between the two wars (42), Here is the gist of what he stated, confirming and supplementing our affirmations on the subject. "Having staked their very existence or their liberty, fought 4 to 5 years throwing in their last

ounce of strength and made immense sacrifices, the victor's exasperated and resentful to the extreme - did not feel inclined to exercise fairness, moderation and leniency. To keep the morale of their belligerents at the requisite peak of tension, the governments had recourse to an intensive propaganda of lies... The distortion of truth became the law of self-preservation and hatred a sacred emotion . . . Justifications of morality and idealistic aims were fabricated out of nothing in order to electrify one's own people and demoralize the adversary's. Also, the shining image of a peace concept, motivated not by egoism but exalted ideas, began increasingly to be bandied about. The American intervention accentuated that trend, stamping the struggle with the hallmark of disinterestedness and evangelical principles . . . It was in that kind of atmosphere that the Allied and Associated Powers were facing, late in 1918, the collapse of the Central Empires. . Victory came all of a sudden and almost unexpectedly. After a long row of failure upon failure, the Allies were ill prepared for their triumph, which consequently went to their heads. And the need to act quickly left them little time for reflection. Within a few months, still in a drunken haze of success, peace was made and a new Europe constructed without any deeper preparation of thought but with unlimited discretionary powers.

"The misuse of victory", continues Georges Roux, "although a mistake in the political sense is an allurements hard to avoid. Germany had not been able to escape from it either, in 1871, when it added purely French districts, such as that of Metz, to the German-speaking areas it annexed, for strategic reasons alone and not having recourse to a plebiscite. Moreover, the victorious powers were tied, hands and feet, by covenants earlier concluded between themselves or with their small auxiliaries. They arrived at the conference table burdened down with a great number of specific agreements, which they had been obliged to conclude in the course of the war with those who were prepared to side with them - for a consideration. . Those promises thrown out right and left, they

had to be redeemed on the day of reckoning... Thus, everything coincided in making the Allies throw overboard that very spirit of restraint which alone would have enabled their achievements to stand the test of time. For only justice and moderation can build structures which have a long life."



## CHAPTER III

### FROM ARMISTICE TO PEACE: KAROLYI AND BELA KUN

On October 17, 1918, the Emperor-King Charles of Austria Hungary - advancing half-way to meet the moral obligations to which the Entente had committed itself vis-à-vis the Empire's national minorities - solemnly recognized the Austrian provinces' right to regroup themselves on 'a linguistic basis and to constitute, by means of National Councils, separate entities to be united with Austria on a pattern similar to that of the United States of America or the Swiss cantons. He also recognized Hungary's full independence, which was tantamount to the repeal of the 1867 Compromise, with the person of the sovereign remaining the only link between Austria and Hungary. Thereafter, on October 26. he offered the Allies a separate peace. In that he was, alas, a few months too late. In the meantime more particularly President Wilson had officially acknowledged by the Allied and Associated Powers, and the national minorities' claim to independence. The course of events, too, became accelerated. On October 29 the Zagreb Diet proclaimed Croatia's independence, which was subsequently to be merged with the "Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes". On the eve of the same day improvised Czech National Council had announced in Prague, on the strength of its own authority, the birth of a "Czechoslovak State". The following day that resolution was endorsed by precipitately convened, so-called Slovak National Council at Turócszentmarton, owing to which Slovakia was absorbed by Bohemia by a sleight of hand, much the same way, as Croatia was to merge with Serbia a few days later. On October 30, 1918, Budapest became the scene of the so-called "chrysanthemum revolution", named after the flower its

perpetrators wore on their uniform headgear stuck in the place of the king's cockarde. Although proclaiming its bloodless character, one of the first feats of that revolution was the murder of Count Stephen Tisza by gang of marauding army deserters. He chose to stay put in his house shouldering with great courage and magnanimity the imaginary guilt that his enemies ascribed to him in respect of the outbreak of the war. "Fully aware that his life was not worth a penny, admitted one of his detractors, he remained in the capital whence many of his political friends had already fled abroad" (43). For a short while "his bitterest adversary", Count Michael Karolyi, the notorious franco- and anglophile and leader of the Kossuthist Independence Party succeeded Tisza. Having first sworn allegiance to the Emperor-King Charles, and subsequently been released from his oath on the telephone, Karolyi - who in contrast to the modest and ascetic Tisza had been one of the Monarchy's most luxuriously living, immensely rich grand seigneurs - was made Chairman of Hungary's National Council, to be proclaimed President of the first Hungarian Republic, to the strains of the Marseillaise, on November 16, 1918.

Unfortunately for Hungary which he was to disappoint most bitterly after the mad hopes which had been pinned on his person for a fleeting moment, Karolyi did not possess the strength of character which in addition to certain good intentions and a measure of intelligence would have been indispensable for anyone wanting to face the enormous task of the day, with disturbances and confusion increasing all the time under the combined influence of defeat and invasion. All that could be entered to the credit of his ephemeral and ridiculous tenure of office was to have enacted, during the 4 months that he lasted, an electoral law based on universal suffrage, a certain number of welfare measures, the outline of an agrarian reform and, finally, a project for the federal union of the country's national minorities. The latter, alas. came disastrously late for it had been preceded by the invasion of three quarters of the national territory which Karolyi's rule had not

been able to prevent. "A state in total dissolution. where uncertainty reigned and the frontiers receded hour after hour without anyone knowing where the ultimate limit lay; and victors whose understanding and political intelligence were not always a match to their appetites - such were the factors which were to determine within a few weeks the atmosphere of, the young Hungarian Republic" (44).

On November 2, 1918, the eve of the Padua Armistice, Count Michael Karolyi, with inexcusable ingenuousness and full of illusions concerning Allied good intentions towards Hungary, issued the following proclamation addressed "to the peoples of the world": "The Hungarian people have just achieved their peaceful, victorious revolution. They have broken the yoke which had enslaved them for centuries. Hungary today is a democratic and totally independent country. The Hungarian people energetically refuse to accept any responsibility whatever for the world war. Listening only to the voice of their conscience they lay down arms and call for peace. By acceding to the League of Nations they declare the fraternal equality of the peoples inhabiting Hungary. At this solemn moment let it be recalled that Hungary has a thousand-years-old history, it having been for centuries the bulwark of Europe and its civilization. The Hungarian people confidently believe therefore that they may entrust the existence and territorial integrity of their country to the sense of justice of all the free nations of the world" (45).

The gravest error on the part of Karolyi and his team had been "the belief that one could renounce the use of force either in international or in domestic governmental politics". Without even waiting for the outcome of the armistice negotiations with General Diaz, the plenipotentiary of the Allies, the Minister for War of Karolyi's Government ordered all Hungarian troops, on November 1, to lay down arms "on the basis of President Wilson's terms - disarmament, League of Nations, international arbitration" (46). Thus an armistice was signed at Padua on November 3,

coming into force, however, on November 4 only, thus enabling the Allied forces to take advantage of the disarray in which the Central Powers found themselves and make another 400,000 prisoners of war "in extremis". Let it be underlined, however, that with the Padua armistice Hungary left the first world war in the fullness of its territorial integrity - by that date not one enemy soldier had yet set foot on its soil. Unfortunately Karolyi assumed, wrongly, that the Allies' signature constituted a sufficient guarantee for Hungary. Hence, through his War Minister, Bela Linder, he made the fatal mistake of thoughtlessly disbanding the then still intact Hungarian army, thus leaving the country defenseless overnight, exposed to the greed of its neighbors. It was because of that fatal move that Karolyi was eventually, after the fall of his regime and that of the communists whom his weakness had subsequently installed in power, accused of high treason under Admiral Horthy's Government. This did not, however, prevent him from dying peacefully, at the age of 80, at France's Cote d'Azur, some 35 years after the event. Hungary having become a supposedly neutral country, in a new epoch which seemed to have done away with diplomatists and generals for ever, the Minister of War, Bela Linder launched his famous proclamation from the balcony of his office: "There is no need for an army; I don't want to see soldiers around here any more!" (Till his dying day Linder maintained that his words had been obliterated by the noise of the crowds and subsequently misinterpreted. What he really tried to say was: "I do not want to see any more soldiers loitering in the streets. - Translator's note.) Whatever the factual truth of that proclamation. there can be no doubt that it was followed by orders for the army to lay down arms and disperse. And this at a time when numerous units were retreating in perfect order, with their arms and ammunition, to the homeland from as far-away places as the Ukraine. It must be stated, in honor to certain general officers, that disregarding Linder's orders they refused to disband their disciplined units, only

to find that they were disarmed as soon as they arrived at their garrisons. The way Karolyi's Government was envisaging the situation is perfectly reflected by another one of Minister Linder's declarations published on November 5, in one of Budapest's most widely read evening newspapers: "The Government have taken all requisite measures to make sure that all soldiers return without carrying arms... We made every effort to enable all to return to their homes so that there should not be any soldiers left ever. . . Let no one fear hostile onslaughts . . . Nobody is marching against us, for the times when conquests could be made by the force of arms are gone forever. . It is likely however that French and British troops of occupation will enter Hungary. They will come as friends, not conquerors.. . etc." (47)

The prevailing mood of those days has been especially well described by Andre de Hevesy in his admirable work on the end of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, entitled "The Agony of an Empire". A few of his sentences are worth recalling here: "The Allies stood at the frontiers. They were expected, never before were vanquished seen to have such confidence in their conquerors . . . Austrians and Hungarians were hoping that the ideas of fairness and good will which had endowed the Allies with so great a moral force would be translated into practice. People spoke of the Allies but what they meant was France. Her prestige was immense. She was expected to establish the new status of the Danubian countries in the spirit of those great humanitarian ideas, which France had spread all over the world. Hers would be a role of political arbitration and moral guidance. Alas, the transformation of the old Monarchy into new national states was to take place under the most unfavorable conditions. Internally an atmosphere of feverish exasperation prevailed; externally one of vindictiveness . . . While Hungary was so imprudently breaking up her last remaining arms, the new states, inebriated by their good luck, gave way to their resentments and ,their national egoism. Hence their exaggerated territorial claims. Theirs was an easy success. The

Serb army corps advanced without difficulty through southern Hungary. The Roumanian army crossed the Carpathians. Czech units entered Slovakia. Neither of them encountered the slightest resistance. The magic of France's prestige paved their way. Thus for Hungary President Wilson's principle of national self-determination revealed itself as a kind of Trojan horse - once allowed within the city walls, armed conquerors poured forth from its sides" (48).

The armistice agreement concluded with the Italians on November 3, 1918, had left the door open for a decent peace. On November 8, however, at the request of the Marechal Foch and to the great fury of the Italian Government, the Supreme Council of the Allies, disavowing General Diaz who had only carried out its formal instructions, unilaterally declared null and void the Padua armistice. Whereupon General Franchet d'Esperay authorized the Serb forces to cross the Danube and Save river lines and to occupy the Bacska and Banat provinces. Encouraged by that example and by the withdrawal of General Mackensen's German army, the Roumanians, in complete disregard of the separate peace signed by them in Bucharest, resumed hostilities on November 9 and having crossed the Carpathians began looting in Transylvania. One may easily imagine how dumbfounded the Hungarians must have felt when after having, at their Government's behest, fully trusted the given word of the Allies, they suddenly saw the enemy advancing everywhere upon their territory in flagrant violation of the Padua armistice which had expressly stated that Hungary's demarcation line coincided with the political frontiers of the Kingdom. But of course it was then too late to think of offering any resistance: that had become impossible, on the one hand, because of the crazy disbandment of the Hungarians regiments and, on the other hand, on account of the general disorder which reigned in the country under Count Karolyi's "democratic" Government

To heap insult upon their humiliaton, on November 13,

General Franchet d'Esperay received in an off-hand and downright rude manner a Hungarian delegation of plenipotentiaries headed by Count Karolyi himself who had come to protest against the gross violation of the Padua armistice. After telling them that he "didn't care a damn" about General Diaz's armistice signed in Padua, that noble French war-lord flung in Karolyi's face a dictum which has long since acquired sad notoriety and which the Hungarians are still unable to forget: "Your country will have to pay and atone!" Let us add at 'Once that the new frontiers imposed upon Hungary by a document that with astute cynicism had been baptized "Implementing Convention" to the previous armistice agreement (cf. Annex III) completely altered the very content of the latter to the detriment of Hungary's territorial integrity, laying bare unscrupulously and in disregard of the given word vast areas of the country to Serb and Roumanian occupation.

However, even the Belgrade Convention was soon to be infringed in turn. On December 3, 1918 the Head of the Allied Military Mission in Budapest invited the Hungarian Government "to immediately withdraw its forces from the Slovak countryside" in the North where in previous days some hurriedly reconstituted Hungarian units had expelled the Czech "legionaries" infiltrated there thanks to Minister Linder's demobilization 'Order. The Allied Military Mission's initiative had been totally arbitrary, as has by now been recognized by all standard historic works dealing with that particular period and region. However, the Hungarian Government's protest notes, addressed to all conceivable allied authorities, proved of absolutely no avail. What's more, Serb and Roumanian units resumed, with the tacit assent of the French High Command, their forward march by transgressing the latest demarcation lines fixed in the East and South, thus hastening to occupy the maximum surface area in anticipation of the decisions of the Peace Conference already sitting. That seemed too much even for the latter which thereupon, 'On February 26, 1919, created a neutral zone 'of some 50 km in width. carved 'Out 'Once again

of Hungarian territory. Thus the provisions of the armistice were being progressively modified at the will of the victorious powers and their clients in complete disregard of the rules of international law. Even President Wilson had launched, on January 24, a protest against those encroachments, but no sooner had he tried to make his point than his words were, as the contemporary adage expressed it "gone with the wind."

Soon thereafter, however, the cup was to brim over. Yet another note handed to Karolyi by Lieutenant-Colonel Vyx, Head of the Inter-Allied Military Mission in Budapest, on March 19, 1919, and demanding that within 10 days Hungarian forces withdraw by another 100 km before the Roumanian army advancing through purely Hungarian-inhabited areas of vital importance to the country, triggered the resignation of the President of the first Hungarian Republic. Sick and tired of it all, Count Karolyi gave up his office on March 20, thereby pushing his country - "in a fit of collective neurasthenia", as was said at the time - into bolshevism. The communist and social-democratic parties having previously merged (in a manner that has become current routine practice long ago) took power on March 19, 1919, without any bloodshed, nay, even without one single shot having been fired. Bela Kun's Hungarian Soviet Republic, in the Hungarian translation of the Russian term styled "Republic of the Councils", which lasted exactly 133 days till August 1, 1919 revealed itself, somewhat similarly to the Paris Commune of 1871, "the explosion of desperate national feelings". At any rate that was the description used by Paul Boncour in the French National Assembly on June 7, 1921, adding that it had been "the policies of the Entente which rendered that episode possible and indeed inevitable." (49) Paradoxically enough it was that bolshevik government which in a last-minute flash of patriotism decided to defend the country's frontiers and which accordingly succeeded in rallying for a short while - around the Hungarian tricolor, not the red flag - those few thousand men who - as we shall see presently - proceeded to



advance victoriously into Slovakia, reconquered by their arms. In order to curry favor with Hungarian patriots, Bela Kun, too, promised to restore Hungary in the form of a Federal Republic including the national minorities.

A recently published excellent study by G. Jozsa, on the "Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919" (50) revealed that the occupation of two-thirds of the country's territory by foreign troops, which thereby was cut off from its principal sources of supply in raw materials, including fuel, created a catastrophical economic situation which also played into the hands of the extremists. "The death blow to newly-born Hungarian democracy, however", writes Jozsa, "was dealt by the lack of understanding and support on the part of the victorious powers". Their injustice and unfairness, which so sorely hurt national feelings; the loss of vast areas solidly inhabited by pure Hungarian populations; the acts of vandalism committed in the occupied territories; the despair caused by the failure of keeping the Wilsonian promises in respect of national self-determination - all these circumstances provided grist for the mills of communist and anti-Entente propaganda, the latter also calling for "national resistance".

Another paradox emphasized in Mr. Jozsa's essay was the fact that, in the beginning at any rate, the Entente powers adopted a much more conciliatory attitude towards Bela Kun's communist government than they had ever shown to the democrat Karolyi (\*). As a matter of fact an exploratory mission conducted in Hungary by the South African General Smuts (later on Field Marshal

\* At a meeting on March 31, 1919, of the "Council of Four", Lloyd George expressed doubts about Lt.-Col. Vyx having explained clearly enough to the Karolyi Government 1) that the fresh withdrawals demanded of the Hungarian troops were in no way meant to prejudge the issue of the definitive frontier lines. Wilson, for his part, called the new demand an "absurd" one. "It must not happen", he declared, "that because of our excessive harshness the vanquished countries are, one by one, pushed into the arms of bolshevism".

Smuts, Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa) in April, 1919, resulted in the Allies' restoring the demarcation lines that had been laid down in Belgrade. When Bela Kun, desirous to curry favor with the Hungarian masses' national sentiment refused to negotiate on that basis, the Roumanians and Czechs resumed their offensive. The Roumanian army crossing the river Tisza, on April 16, was fast approaching the capital, while in the North a new Czech army mounted an offensive directed at the town of Miskolc. At that critical moment, by virtue of a remarkable feat of strength, a "Hungarian Red Army", some 200,000 men strong was improvised within a few days. Former regular soldiers were hastily called up; the soldier's councils (soviets) were abolished; distinctions of rank and compulsory national service were reestablished; even the death sentence was carded out in some cases of major breach of discipline. That rag and tatters army was called upon to deploy its defenses along front-lines extending over more than 1,000 km and facing an enemy 3 times its superior in numbers. Nevertheless, under the command of a former Staff Colonel of the Imperial and Royal forces, Aurel Stromfeld, that improvised army stopped the Roumanians' advance as of May 3 and subsequently pushed them back in several places. On May 20, Stromfeld won a brilliant victory over the Czechs at Salgótarján, recaptured Miskolc. and then advanced some 150 km northward, liberating in a matter of days the whole of Eastern Slovakia and thereby enabling the creation, on June 16, 1919, of a Slovak Soviet Republic which was going to be federated with Hungary. However, when the Entente offered Bela Kun the cessation of hostilities in exchange for the withdrawal of the Hungarian troops from Slovakia, the evacuation of the latter was ordered, end of June, by Bela Kun himself. Having thus deprived the army of the fruits of its victory. the latter, as well as the country as a whole, became rapidly demoralized owing to an overwhelming sense of frustration. Giving up reconquered Slovakia - the only diplomatic and military trump card in Hungarian hands - was without any doubt

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Bela Kun's fatal error. Saved from disaster, the Czech army, contrary to Entente promises, resumed its offensive, on July 20, and coordinating its operations with those resumed by the Roumanians, enabled the latter to arrive, at the end of the month, at the confines of Budapest, thereby causing, on August 1, the downfall of Bela Kun and his "Republic of Councils".

Let us point out that under the pretext of lending a hand with the repression of Bela Kun's communist revolution, the Roumanian army organized a methodical looting campaign of Hungary, living on the land in the strictest sense of the word while committing acts of extortion and pillaging which far exceeded anything similar done by the communists. The total value of all kinds of goods and valuables (e. g. factory equipment, railway rolling stock, livestock, gold and silver currency, etc.) confiscated and carried away by the Roumanians during their 10 months of occupation of Hungary - for which, by the way, they had obtained no authority from any quarters - has been valued at 3,150 million gold Francs (51)\* Faced with the attitude of the Roumanian army which gave rise to a wave of general indignation and succeeded even in angering Clemenceau himself, the Peace Conference issued a first warning on August 8, 1919, and a second one, on August 23, ordering the Roumanian forces to put a stop to their criminal pilfering. On October 12 at last, the Supreme Allied Council issued an injunction ordering Roumania to evacuate Hungary forthwith. In absence of an acknowledgment the injunction was followed up by a formal ultimatum, which finally did the job. (52) In view of so many trials and humiliations and the fact that in spite of them the half-starved army of Colonel Stromfeld had been

\* General H. H. Bandholtz, the U.s. Representative on the Inter-Allied Military Mission in Budapest, described in his Memoirs (*An Undiplomatic Diary*; New York, 1933), the dismantling of factories and other acts of looting perpetrated by the Roumanian army of occupation in Hungary.

able. in a few weeks, to perform such admirable feats of arms in the face of forces vastly outnumbering his effectives both in men and equipment, one cannot help speculating what the gallant Hungarian people could have achieved, in November, 1918, if it had not been disarmed so stupidly by its own leaders. How much could have been done if the Hungarians had been electrified then, as they were in 1848-1849, by leaders worthy of them, when Croats, Serbs, Roumanians and Austrians had also attacked the country from every corner and angle, but were driven back piteously by Kossuth's Honvéds. Of course, to put it mildly, neither Michael Karolyi, nor Bela Kun had anything comparable with Kossuth's stature. This is not to say that if they had risen to the height of their task, either Karolyi or Kun could have saved the entire territorial integrity of their country, merely that a national uprising could have obtained from the Allies a peace settlement more equitable and honorable than the one that was forced upon Hungary at Trianon. In that respect the example of Turkey, quoted by the former Italian Premier Nitti in his book entitled "Peace" is particularly instructive. "In 1918 everything was set in motion to ruin Turkey as thoroughly as Austria-Hungary; to tear off the best part of its territory and drive it back to Asia. However no sooner had the Turks in a supreme effort recovered their indomitable vigor and thrown the defeated Greeks out of Anatolia than the same Great Powers which had previously charged them with all imaginable crimes started wooing ,their friendship, be. ginning with France." In fact the Treaty of Sevres "dictated" to vanquished Turkey, in 1920, had to be replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne with another Turkey emerging victorious, in 1923. Of course Turkey had in the meantime had the remarkable historic chance of being granted a man of the stature and qualities of an Ataturk to save its honor and independence, which was more than Hungary could boast in 1919-1920.

To conclude the narration of this lamentable period in Hungarian history it should be added that as from June 1919 a national

counter revolutionary government had been set up in Szeged, Hungary's second biggest city in the Southeast of the country, occupied by French forces. Shielded by them the government succeeded in raising a small army of 13,000 mainly professional soldiers, the command of which was entrusted to Admiral Nicholas Horthy, former Commander-in-Chief of the Austro-Hungarian Navy. At the time of the downfall of Bela Kun's regime Horthy's forces already controlled the southern and western parts of the country. After lengthy negotiations with the Entente aimed at obtaining the withdrawal of the Roumanians, Horthy was eventually enabled, on November 16, 1919, that is 3~ months after the collapse of Bela Kun's bolshevik republic, to make his, alas, more spectacular than glorious entry into a starving ,and humiliated Budapest.

At the end of January, 1920, a National Assembly was elected. Faced by the inexorable opposition of the Entente to see the country's legitimate sovereign, King Charles IV, restored to his

. throne, the National Assembly appointed Admiral Horthy Regent of the realm, on March 1, 1920. He was to exercise his functions right up to the day the Nazi Germans made him their prisoner on October 16, 1944. (53) But to begin with. it had been the grievous task of his first government to negotiate or rather ratify, and subsequently induce the nation to accept, the infamous Treaty of Trianon which deprived Hungary, under conditions which we shall recapitulate presently, of two-thirds of its population and three-quarters of its millenary territory.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TREATY OF TRIANON - ITS LEGAL, MORAL AND TERRITORIAL FOUNDATIONS

"Lloyd George, in discussing the world economic crisis (on July 21, 1930), stated that the Treaty of Versailles was at the time of its framing regarded as little more than a temporary measure of a nature to satisfy public opinion in the belligerent countries. 'Even Clemenceau', he added, 'thought that'." (Sir Harold Nicolson's Diaries; Collins, London, 1966)

The only hope that Hungary had to fall back on was the Peace Conference. It assembled in Paris, at the beginning of 1920, alas, in an atmosphere so charged with passion, rancor and rivalries as to hold out little promise for a just and lasting peace. As hinted at before, the Allied and Associated Powers were hagridden by a military inferiority complex, as well as bitterness and hatred toward the vanquished, in consequence of a long war, terminated by a doubtful victory descended from an American heaven practically at the very last moment. Let it be added also that by the time the Peace Conference opened the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had already become a thing of the past - if not in law, in fact it had ceased to exist. Hungary, in particular, had seen most of its territory, including the capital, occupied by its enemies in the course of 1919, owing, at first, to the naivety of its leaders, and subsequently to Bela Kun's bolshevik: revolution. The latter certainly contributed to the weakness of Hungary's cause, at the very time when the terms of the peace to be enforced in relation to the vanquished were being hammered out. Hence no sooner had Hungary succeeded in shaking off the bolshevik stranglehold than it found that its fate had been consummated. Finally, as we shall by the time the Peace Conference opened the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had already become a thing of the past - if not in law, in fact it had ceased to exist. Hungary, in particular, had seen most of its territory, including the capital, occupied by its enemies in the course of 1919, owing, at first, to the naivety of its leaders, and subsequently to Bela Kun's bolshevik revolution. The latter certainly contributed to the weakness of Hungary's cause, at the very time when the terms of the peace to be enforced in relation to the vanquished were being hammered out. Hence no sooner had Hungary succeeded in shaking off the bolshevik stranglehold than it found that its fate had been consummated. Finally, as we shall





see presently, the information which the Allies used for their enlightenment while taking their decisions - information concerning the history, economics and ethnic conditions of Central Europe - was either provided faked by their little protégés or notoriously insufficient. The combination of all those factors had an obviously disastrous effect on the peace arrangements arrived at in the Paris-Versailles region, and more specifically on the Treaty of Trianon which was thus to "bear the imprint of hate, on the one hand, and that of negligence, on the other hand" (54). As for the so-called "peace talks", let us quote verbatim what Robert Vallery-Radot had to say on the subject (55): "It was as late as December 1, 1919, that the Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers invited the Hungarian Government to send to Neuilly (yet another Paris suburb) its delegates duly empowered to conclude a Peace Treaty. The members of the delegation, with Count Albert Apponyi at their head, arrived in Neuilly, on January 7, 1920. There they were practically imprisoned in a building called the Chateau de Madrid, guarded by policemen, who would not allow anyone to leave, except for Count Apponyi who in consideration of his advanced age was granted the privilege of a short daily walk in the company of an inspector of the French police. Thus on January 15 the Hungarians were at last told what treatment they were going to receive. However Edouard Benes had already taken care to declare in the Paris daily 'Les Temps' of December 2, 1919, that the decision of the Peace Conference in respect of the frontiers of the future Hungarian State was final and that there could be no question of amendments in favour of that State. When the Hungarian delegates were at last told about the fate that had been prepared for their country so great was their sorrow that they almost felt paralyzed. They set to work immediately, nevertheless, and for 4 months running they applied themselves to showing up the historic errors, the geographical monstrosities and the economic absurdities which Edouard Benes had termed the decisions of the

Peace Conference. And as if those decisions amounting to arbitrary confiscation had anything to do with law or justice, the Hungarian delegation continued with scrupulous industry turning out submission upon submission, note upon note." Unfortunately, all their efforts proved to be a total waste. While confined to the Chateau de Madrid like a colony of lepers, the victors never communicated with them orally, only in writing. The considerable mass of documents, maps and statistics, which they had brought with them, were never consulted, the same as nobody ever read the notes they produced on the spot. Never at any moment did the Hungarian delegates have a chance of discussing matters bilaterally with the victors. Even the final declaration they were able to make remained a solitary monologue. Consequently there was no one to take into consideration the arguments marshaled by Hungary in defense of her cause. nor was she ever confronted with her detractors. "Even Bismarck", wrote Henri Pozzi, "had allowed our plenipotentiaries to plead our cause, in 1871, thus enabling us to win certain points - that was how Jules Favre. for instance, succeeded in saving Belfort from German annexation" (56). When on the last day Count Apponyi was. after all, admitted to the presence of that august conference "he defended his country", continues Pozzi, "in such a deeply moving manner and with such gripping outcries of sorrowful truth that certain plenipotentiaries were incapable of hiding their troubled feelings . . . The Supreme Council, however, remained inflexible." The reason for that inexorable attitude lay undoubtedly in the fact that the text of the Peace Treaty to be signed by Hungary had been drafted, down to its most minute details, long before the opening of the Peace Conference. and of course with the full complicity of its future beneficiaries. In fact, the victim eventually slaughtered at Trianon, had been selected for that role well in advance. As we have seen, Panslavism had conspired, even before the 1914-1918 war, to pluck Hungary to pieces and share out the spoils. Innumerable docu-

ments published since World War I bare this out. Also, certain maps of "Daco-Roumania", more than a hundred years ago placed the imaginary frontiers of that country along the river Tisza in the Hungarian heartland. But it is especially striking to find how closely the frontiers fixed at Trianon coincide with those figuring in certain pamphlets published in wartime Paris by Ernest Denis and his friends and accomplices of the "National Council of the Czech Countries". However that may be, the Treaty of Trianon remains above all a sentence pronounced by judges ill-informed and shamefully ill-used the fruit of the combined action of greedy neighbors and criminally ignorant great powers. "By now it has become quite clear that the statesmen of the Entente, who were the authors, if perhaps not the inventors, of these treaties, mostly had only very vague notions (which is their only excuse) of the ethnic, economical cultural conditions prevailing in the Danubian countries whose fate they were called upon to decide. Obviously, only few of them had the time, or the will, to study the political, economic or historical questions involved before reaching their decisions. How many millions of people would have been spared untold misery if they had proceeded a little more seriously and conscientiously" (57). "The great empires of peace did not have a first notion of the geography, ethnography or history of the peoples and countries whose fate they had to decide. Wilson, for example, kept muddling up 'Slovaks' and 'Slovenes'. Nor was Lloyd George any better informed. As for Clemenceau, all has long ago been stated about his stupendous ignorance concerning all things not pertaining to a certain romantic view of French history or French domestic politics" (58).

"Taking advantage of the geographical ignorance of Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson, the man to whom the task of studying the status of the states newly to be created had been entrusted - the Frenchman Philippe Barthelot - made his own views prevail. They had been dictated to him by Edouard

Benes. Thomas Masaryk in London played the same kind of game with Wickham Steed, the journalist, and Mr. Seton Watson. On April 4, 1919, Czechoslovakia was thus created in a matter of minutes, replete with alien nationalities of all sorts." (59). "Czech, Roumanian and Serb diplomats doled out around the green baize table of Trianon heaps of the most superficial, erroneous and tendentious information, distorting facts, engineering statistics and faking the will of the populations concerned in remarkably bad faith. Their task, in the performance of which no one excelled more than Edouard Benes, was facilitated by the shameful mediocrity of the Western negotiators. They simply conceded everything they had been asked for. And all the while Mr. Benes continued dishing up the grossest historic, geographical and ethnological absurdities in his quiet, smiling manner, often contradicting himself, without anyone at the Conference daring to object for fear that his crass ignorance might be found out. A marvelous game of grab, indeed. (60). "The Peace Treaty of Trianon was born in an environment particularly ill-suited to the creation of wise and enduring constructions. The great allied statesmen called upon to play the role of arbitrators knew little of those far-away regions of Eastern Europe with which they had to deal. So they left the job to the young claimants themselves, placing their confidence in those gallant Serbs, in the Roumanians, the spoilt adoptive children of France, and chiefly in two Czechs whose influence was considerable at the time the peace treaties were being drafted - Messrs Benes and Masaryk... Friendly connections at the highest level in the allied camp enabled them to help themselves, and their associates, handsomely to the good things they craved" (61). "Out of a hotch-potch of fakes and forgeries, out of a chaos of falsehoods was woven the Treaty of Trianon, lined with a map of absurdities, and the Hungarian plenipotentiaries, unable to make their protests heard, cooped up at the Chateau de Madrid under police surveillance, with all their communications with the outside world heavily censored, were

forced to sign it without any discussion, the swords of our worn out diplomats pointed at them." (62)

One could go on proliferating quotations of that kind indefinitely. David Lloyd George himself pronounced the verdict in a speech at the Guildhall in London, on October 7, 1928, when he admitted that the entire documentation they had been provided with by "some of their allies" during the peace negotiations was a bundle of falsehoods and fabrications. They had made their decisions on the basis of fakes. "That terrible accusation which has never been answered", wrote Henri Pozzi, "also spells out the responsibility of the allied negotiators. How could it be that they should not have noticed soon the procedures employed by the representatives of Prague, Bucharest and Belgrade, in order to subvert their good faith with those fancy statistics, fake petitions, tricks and lies which made Trianon one of the worst iniquities in diplomatic history." (63)

So many crushing testimonials of levity, thoughtlessness, ignorance and indeed scandalous bias on the part of the Western delegates to the Peace Conference leave one speechless. At least they ought to have mistrusted that morbid hunger for territorial gain so openly displayed by the small successor states, instead of encouraging the brazen greed with which, over and above the recuperation of their own racial brethren, they went all out to capture great numbers of Magyar hostages, too. In that they mutually cooperated for it was obvious that the greater the number of accomplices in hostility surrounding her, the easier could Hungary be gagged. The success of their joint action was so stupendous that it has been said - however incredible it may sound. - that even Benes felt rather frightened when confronted with its sum total. It explains at any rate why the frontiers drawn at Trianon did hardly ever coincide with ethnographic boundaries and did in fact deliberately cut into massive Hungarian populations. If one is to believe the rapporteur of the Trianon Treaty, the French politician Charles Daniélou, in the ultimate resort the

victors did not so much want to "punish" Hungary than rather to satisfy the demands of the successor states, "with the result that there were allowed to subsist among the peoples of Danubian Europe frictions of discontent hard to smooth over". In other words, instead of restoring and consolidating good understanding between those countries, in the higher interest of Europe as a whole, their quarrels had been further embittered by arbitrary dissections, rendering impossible for a long time that kind of collaboration between the Hungarians and their neighbours which had always prevailed to the XIXth century. Territories wrenched from Hungary had been turned into ready coinage with which to pay the price of alliances contracted during the war. To quote Henri Pozzi once more: "The question at Trianon was not who was right; the question was who should be declared right in the interest of the victors. . ." (64). This was confirmed by a Member of the British House of Commons, Sir Robert Gower, who recalled, "The Czechoslovak Republic was recognized by the Entente Powers in advance during the summer of 1918. On the other hand secret treaties had been concluded prior to the armistice. The one signed on August 18, 1916, had promised the Roumanians, in addition to Transylvania, a considerable portion of the great Hungarian plain. In the course of one of its meetings, held in June 1918, the Supreme Council of the Entente, decided to set up a state for the Southern Slavs as one of the war aims to be achieved. However, that decision could only be put into practice by dismembering Hungary. A country had thus been condemned without ever being heard." (65) In that way secret treaties had decided about the partition of Hungary long before the Peace Conference, Yet it should have been possible to draw ethnic frontiers which would have been much more equitable than those established by the Treaty of Trianon that cut into the very flesh of the country, arbitrarily separating large contiguous blocs of Hungarian populations, It makes you think of the terrifying words allegedly pronounced by Frederick II of

Prussia: "I grab, I loot and I steel; thereafter it's up to my lawyers to find the appropriate justification." And Clemenceau declared not less cynically: "the peace treaties are yet another means to continue the war."

So it happened that the Hungarian people, whose responsibility for touching off World War I had been categorically refuted point by point, found themselves most cruelly punished, mutilated and humiliated. As a matter of fact "of all Peace Treaties the one signed at Trianon was by far the harshest, depriving Hungary of 63 % of its inhabitants and 71 % of its territory. That in itself was punishment the like of which has rarely been meted out to a nation in the course of history.

What's worse, the remaining stump was subjected to conditions of fiscal, military and political bondage which amounted to the actual curtailment of its sovereignty . . . It had been deprived, in addition to its national minorities, of large areas inhabited by pure Hungarian populations . . . A mistake was thus made which may be compared with the partitions of Poland effected in the XVIIIth century . . . It is obviously impossible for the Hungarians to accept those brutal amputations committed by encroaching on all their rights as a people and without ever granting a hearing to those concerned. In the end one plebiscite was conceded, to the town of Sopron, and the outcome of that was favourable to Hungary. But of course the claimant there had been Austria, another defeated country, whereas no plebiscite had ever been granted at the risk of the nations patronized by the victors" (66).

The plebiscite would indeed have been the only effective means of ascertaining the genuine will of the populations concerned, carrying with it the immense advantage of putting an end, once and for all, to territorial disputes, as was shown in the case of Schleswig-Holstein where it had been meticulously applied, or as it happened subsequently at Sopron. The Treaty of Trianon was the only one where plebiscites were totally rejected, regardless of Count Apponyi's profoundly moving appeal to the Peace Conference\*



The attitude of the Hungarian delegation was indeed an impeccable and even noble one. Only moral force could prevail against historic right and they were prepared to bow to the verdict of the former. That moral force was the will of the peoples inhabiting the disputed areas. "Between Hungary which, basing itself on its historic rights wishes to keep those areas, and its neighbours who want to acquire them under a variety of pretexts, let them be adjudicated to those to whom their inhabitants would prefer to belong." Such was Count Apponyi's plea, but it went unheard. As one may see, at Trianon the Hungarian delegation had been fully prepared, in view of the circumstances, to comply with frontiers to be determined by plebiscites organized under impartial international supervision and thereafter to establish new relationships with Hungary's neighbours on such an equitable basis.. But Hungary's plea was sternly rejected. "It is difficult to understand", wrote Sir Robert Gower, "why Hungary's claim, based as it was on President Wilson's own principle, was rejected. The thesis that popular consultations properly speaking had been rendered superfluous by the clearly expressed will of the various nationalities just does not stand up to scrutiny, and it certainly does not justify the severing of three and a half million Hungarians from the mother country." (67)

The only exception, as already mentioned, was the modest plebiscite granted in December 1921, eighteen months after Trianon, at Italy's initiative for the district of Sopron in the Burgenland region adjudicated to Austria, where there lived a considerable Germanic population. As 65 % of them voted for Hungary, nevertheless, as opposed to 35 % for Austria, that dangerous experiment was not allowed to become a precedent. Let us add, in order to unmask the duplicity which had presided over the drawing of Hungary's new frontiers, that the Allies had given that western strip of Hungary to Austria solely as an apple of

. Cf. Annex No. IV

discord between the two vanquished countries. They therefore felt able in that case to afford complying with ethnographical niceties which they had so signally flouted elsewhere. Moreover, if Italy had not intervened, the Allies would have been prepared to split up that western frontier zone of Hungary between the Czechs and Yugoslavs so as to grant them a common frontier whilst thus completing the total encirclement of Hungary which by the same token would have been deprived of its only window turned on the Western world.

Even before the Germanic inhabitants of the Burgenland expressed their will to remain within Hungary other non-Magyar populations of the historic kingdom had energetically demanded the same without, however, being granted a hearing. Such had been the case notably of the Wends and Slovenes in the southwestern corner of the country, called the Muraköz, which was ex officio annexed by Yugoslavia. The Ruthens of Eastern Slovakia and the Swabians of the Banat also protested as vehemently and equally unsuccessfully to the Peace Conference against their separation from Hungary. Consequently Marius Moutet was justified in stating, during the debate of the Treaty of Trianon in the French National Assembly's Chamber of Deputies: "without being consulted, the ethnic minorities of Hungary have been assigned to nations which they had not chosen themselves" (68).

Taking account of all these facts and, in particular, the one exceptional plebiscite of Sopron, one may gauge the flabbergasting duplicity of President Millerand's covering letter with which he conveyed the text of the Treaty to the head of the Hungarian delegation, on May 6, 1920: "The Hungarian Delegation admittedly argues that in no instance did the terms of peace provide for plebiscites.

However, the Allied and Associated Powers felt that there was no need to have recourse to such popular consultations once they had made sure that such consultations - even if surrounded by the safest guarantees of sincerity - would not yield results that might be appreciably different from those to

which they have arrived after a meticulous study of the ethnographic conditions and national aspirations of Central Europe."

It was that refusal to admit the remedy of plebiscites - while at the same time severing 3.5 million Hungarians from their mother country - which constituted the basic flaw of the Treaty of Trianon and the disgrace of its authors.

To emphasize even more the deceitful of those authors let us add that while another page of Millerand's covering letter allowed the hope to transpire that Hungary might obtain certain rectifications of the new frontiers proved the delimitation commissions saw fit to do so, that promise was cancelled out by an underhand injunction addressed to the same commissions instructing them to adhere as closely as possible to the frontiers traced by the Treaty "regardless of linguistic, national or religious considerations" (69).

Another thing one may read in Millerand's covering letter, which was nothing more nor less than a disgraceful hoax, is the following sentence: "A state of affairs, be it millenary, has no right to subsist if it is not founded on justice." That strange doctrine has since gone a long way toward asserting itself, including the fact that the Bretons, for example, have come to discover their national individuality.

Unfortunately France has lent a hand, not to speak of its pen, to such hateful proceedings at the risk of being one day stigmatized by history herself. And that notwithstanding the unequivocal words pronounced by no less a person than the President of the French Republic, Raymond Poincare, at the opening of the Peace Conference. "The times have passed", said he, "when diplomats gathered round the corner of a table could authoritatively re-draw the frontiers of empires. In re-making the map of the world you are asked to do so in the name of the peoples concerned and on condition that you translate their ideas faithfully and respect the right of all nations, big or small, to determine their fate themselves." However, as we have already seen, the Peace Conference

preferred not to consult the peoples concerned and certainly not by way of plebiscites which it considered to be "useless". And yet the legal adviser to the French Foreign Ministry of that period, Professor de Lapradelle went on affirming "the annexor country shall acquire true sovereignty over its new subjects only if and when the latter have acquiesced in the new state of affairs." As to why, really, the Populations concerned were not granted the right of speaking up for themselves. Andre Tardieu - who was to become twice Prime Minister of the Third Republic between the wars - reveals the truth bluntly in his book entitled "Peace" (La Paix) in the following terms: "We had to choose between 'Organizing plebiscites 'Or creating Czechoslovakia". This also proves indirectly that despite Millerand's assertions to the contrary the populations concerned were not, at the time, passionately clamoring for a change of sovereignty. The plain truth is that the leaders of the Victorious powers just did not care a tinker's cuss about their real wishes. And that, after the slaughter of many millions of human beings, for the sake of the peoples' right to determine their fate themselves.

It is all the more important to acknowledge the lone attitude adopted by General (subsequently Field Marshal) Ian Smuts Chief Delegate and for many years Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa who demanded - in vain - plebiscites for Transylvania, Slovakia, Ruthenia and Croatia-Slavonia, on the strength of the argument that Germany had been accorded that right in the cases of Schleswig-Holstein, Silesia, East Prussia and the Saarland. Solitary in taking the initiative, Smuts did not remain alone for long. He was to be supported soon by the other British Dominions, as well as by Japan, Poland and Italy. The fear of the plebiscite, however, prevailed against them, leaving out of sight the truth so brilliantly formulated in latter years by the Swiss historian Aldo Dami who said "a plebiscite refused is a plebiscite taken in fact. "By the same token the Reverend Father Weterle, for many years the protesting voice of Alsace in the

German Imperial Parliament, declared in the French National Assembly on June 7, 1921: "I am profoundly convinced that had plebiscites been held neither the Serbs nor the Roumanians would have received more than one-third of the votes cast. People have been pushed about against their will. There can be no doubt about that. " Going even further, Aldo Dami rightly explains that the Peace Conference mixed up, moreover, the peoples' right to self-determination with the principle of defining nationality on a linguistic basis. The two are by no means identical, for an ethnic group may well decide to prefer belonging to a national sovereignty linguistically different from its own. The Peace Conference did in fact cynically flout both by cutting off a compact Magyar bloc big chunks of purely Hungarian-inhabited territories and awarding them to Hungary's neighbors for economic or strategic considerations. Two errors, or rather two injustices, have thus been compounded. "The frontiers drawn at Trianon", affirms Aldo Dami, excluded from Hungary a first zone of Hungarian territories, plus a second zone inhabited by non-Magyars whose interests were, however, so closely entwined with those of Hungary that there could have been no doubting their decision had they been consulted. Hence the Peace of Trianon is based neither on ethnography nor on popular sentiment nor even on the interests of the populations concerned - which the latter are sure to know best." (70) As an example Aldo Dami quotes the case of the Alsatians who though of Germanic race and language - desired to be French, the same as the Wends and Slovenes of the Muraköz, who despite of being Slavs by race and language requested, without success, to be allowed to remain within Hungary, in 1919. The later course of events also showed that it would have been in the best interests of the Croats and Slovaks, too, to be consulted before they were made to coalesce with the Serbs and the Czechs. As regards the latter, let it be recorded that when a delegation of Slovak: autonomists, led by the Reverends Hlinka and Jehlicka, turned up in

Paris to apply to the Peace Conference for a popular referendum to be organized in Slovakia, Dr. Benes had them expelled by the French police.

The peoples' right to self-determination cannot be made dependent uniquely on such factors as race, language or religion: it is their consciousness and their will to belong to this or that community that counts. It was on that understanding that self-determination had been made one of the Allies' war aims and incorporated among President Wilson's 14 points. Those who proclaimed that principle elaborated on it further by pointing out that no ethnic group must be forced to live within the framework of anyone particular state if for reasons of race, language, affinity or interest they wish to join another country. Alas, in the case of Hungary the right to self-determination was totally disregarded for neither of its inhabitants, be they Hungarians or non-Magyars, were ever asked if they wished to be incorporated in any one of the neighboring countries. They were not asked because it had been pretty clear that had they been consulted at all a great majority would have opted for the continuance of their traditional ties, on condition of course of obtaining regional autonomy and full equality of rights for all national minorities. A grand old country whose unity had been cemented by history, geography and economy, was thus chopped up without reference to its inhabitants while all those who became minorities in the areas annexed by the successor states were made the victims of the crudest oppression.

Trianon has indeed become the living symbol of the denial of the Wilsonian principles and of the peoples' right to self-determination - the very ideals for which the Allies had pretended to wage war but which were immediately repudiated once victory had been won. Without being forced to do so the Allied and Associated Powers ignored the very principles, which they, themselves, had solemnly declared the ones that would govern all peace settlements. By so doing they also betrayed a sacred trust for it

was on the strength of those famous 14 points that the Central Empires finally decided to lay down arms, hoping that thus they would be assured of acceptable conditions of peace. "The publication of the 14 points, the way in which the news about them spread all over Germany, Austria and Hungary, the immense feelings of relief and confidence to which they had given rise", wrote Henri Pozzi, "were the causes of the crumbling of civilian morale which alone entailed the collapse of the battle fronts." (71) It has long since become clear, as stated also the Hungarian diplomat Antal Ullein-Reviczky, that "all those attractive words were destined only to influence the world's public opinion in favor of the Entente powers and to demoralize the armed forces of the Central Empires. In fact the Wilsonian principles had penetrated more surely than allied rifle bullets the hearts of Austria-Hungary's soldiers . . . Why should we go on fighting, they said, when from the other side we are promised solemnly freedom, equal treatment and the right to self-determination? In Hungary, in particular, Count Karolyi's Peace Party made itself eagerly the mouthpiece of President Wilson's promises so as to convince the country that all further resistance was useless. It was to those Wilsonian principles, moreover that not only Austria-Hungary but also even Germany referred in October and November 1918, when suing for an armistice. . Yet when peace finally came to Hungary it certainly did not rest on those principles that had been publicly proffered and accepted when the armistice agreements were concluded in October-November 1918. Arguments of a more practical nature had persuaded the Peace Conference to grant Hungary's neighbors their territorial claims without having recourse to plebiscites. Both the Wilsonian principles and the secret agreements had played their useful, if separate, part in Allied victory." (72) To which Italy's wartime Prime Minister, Francesco Nitti added: "The peoples' right to self-determination proclaimed by the Allies during the war turned out to be merely a deceitful formula used as a rallying call during times of acute

danger. The peace, such as had been promised, was never made and the ideals for which so many men had laid down their lives, were betrayed by the negotiators of the treaties. The conditions imposed by the victors on the vanquished were dishonest and indeed guilty - guilty of an improper use of victory. Like the Atridae of an antique Greek tragedy, the initial crime entailed a continuous succession of others; but it was always the first crime which bore the principal responsibility." (73) Let us note that after the second world war the Western powers abandoned similarly and for similar reasons the same principle of self-determination, renouncing moreover the re-establishment of democracy in those unfortunate countries for whose liberties the late war had at least in part been fought, to begin with Poland which, along with a number of adjacent countries, was left to the tender mercies of the Soviet Union.

Yet it would seem certain that the honest application of Wilson's 14 points would, as from 1919 on, have ensured Europe an equitable peace and spared it its subsequent trials and tribulations. But President Wilson knew next to nothing about Europe, and by making concession after concession he ended up with the signing of peace treaties which were in signal contradiction to his ideas and constituted the negation of his most solemn commitments. Thus the 14 points found their lasting place in the annals as one of the biggest pieces of trickery in the world's history. "At the end of World War I", wrote Aldo Dami, "President Wilson appeared much more of an arbitrator than a belligerent, longing only for an equitable peace and plebiscites. In the end, however, it became a peace of defensive strategy, such as Clemenceau and the Marechal Foch had conceived of. And once again the scales of history's balance were prevented from staying in equilibrium. For not content with satisfying existing irredentisms the Allies created new ones. By distorting the facts, they made history spell out things that history was never meant to say. They called into question



territorial arrangements to which the passage of time had long before added its patina or justification" (74).

If only the redistribution of peoples and frontiers had been superior to the old order, but the opposite turned out to be true. The treaties of 1919-1920, and particularly the one signed at Trianon, eventually created situations which proved much less tolerable than had been the conditions those treaties were supposed to remedy. "Having decreed that a motley state such as Austria-Hungary was not worthy of having a life of its own, the Supreme Allied Council hastened to set up states such as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia or even Greater Roumania, which were as many replicas of the old Empire. embracing as many mixed nationalities." (75) Thus, in order to "liberate" 2 million Slovaks, nearly 2 million other ethnic minorities were subjected to Czech rule. In order to "liberate" 2.5 million Roumanians, the same number of non-Roumanians were subordinated to Bucharest. In order to "liberate" 1 million Serbs, 1,7 million Croats and 1,3 million other non-Serb nationals were transferred to supreme authority in Belgrade. Totting it all up, the successor states found themselves riddled with 16 million ethnic aliens out of a total population of 42 million.

Another aspect of the 1919-1920 peace treaties rightly underlined and criticised by Georges Roux (76) was that they drew part of their inspiration from the more than doubtful moral tenet of the Central Empires' guilt in bringing about World War I. In the victorious countries, of course, public opinion had become totally convinced by propaganda of that war guilt, "not being in the least aware that the search for responsibilities must always be a delicate affair." And at any rate, says Georges Roux, it is idle and dangerous to try to punish people too hard too long – they cannot stand it. "Supposing the vanquished had been guilty: the treatment meted out to them ought to have been harsh, may be, but short of duration". The upsetting of frontiers in a spirit of punishment was a monstrous error of judgment for "mistakes may

pass but the land remains". In the prevailing circumstances nobody vouchsafed to listen to the grievances of the vanquished; the treaties were simply "dictated" without any semblance of negotiation. Their terms were imposed unilaterally, a circumstance which left them with the combined imprint of brute force and frailty. That, in turn, made it easier for the vanquished to challenge many of the commitments thus forced upon them. Moreover, excess in conception tends to breed slackness in execution. For as time goes by that source of strength which resides in military victory slips away. Victory, as one may see today, is never more than a fleeting moment. Time restores, little by little, a just balance between victors and vanquished, calling in question the achievements of the former. It was said that Hungary had to atone for mistakes she had never made; for errors which she had indeed attempted, in the person of her Prime Minister Count Istvan Tisza, to avoid when opposing herself to an adventure by which she stood nothing to gain. As we have seen, Hungary in 1914 did not covet one square inch of anyone else's soil: she entered the war solely in fulfillment of her alliance obligations and for her own defense and survival, knowing all the time that her neighbors were planning her dismemberment, keen to share the spoils. However, regardless of the facts, in Article 161 of the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary, already humiliated and mutilated, had to admit her guilt in bringing about the war. By the way, as Georges Desbons so rightly noted, many former adversaries of the Entente, originally of Hungarian or Austrian nationality up to 1919 or 1920, suddenly became, by a weave of the magic wand at St. Germain or Trianon, Czechoslovaks, Yugoslavs or Roumanians, regarded overnight as friends, allies, nay maybe even "brethren-in-arms" although in truth they had fought against the Allies. So why not grant the same indulgence to those who remained Hungarians? Total absolution on one hand, ferocious retribution on the other hand: the one was as lacking in logic as the other. After all, Hungary, too, recovered

her complete independence only after the end of the war, while before she had been riveted to Austria like a Siamese twin. Except that after Trianon all that had been left to independence was a "stump", an insignificant residue of Hungary's millenary territory.

To be more precise, the Treaty of Trianon deprived Hungary of 71,5% of its surface area and 63,6% of its population, which was thus reduced from 18 million (not counting Croatia-Slavonia) to less than 8 million inhabitants. By comparison, the Versailles Treaty took away from Germany no more than 13% of its territory and 9,5% of its population. The corresponding figures of the Neuilly Treaty for Bulgaria amounted to 9,9% and 8,9% respectively. The peace of Frankfurt ending the Franco-Prussian war, in 1871, had cost France a mere 2,6% of her territory and 4,1% of her population. Comparable to the losses of Hungary were those suffered by Austria - 72,60 % and 77,6 % - and Turkey 61,6% and 39,6% respectively - except that in the case of these two countries the territories concerned lay far distant from the center and were geographically, ethnically and historically ill assorted. The-frontiers imposed upon Hungary, however, were and remain to this day geographically absurd and loathsome from a human point of view. In all their details as well as in their entirety they represent a challenge to common sense. "The most abominable of all enforced Peace Treaties, and the most idiotic one" as Henri Pozzi called it (77).

First of all and above all, Hungary's incomparable geographical and economic unity was smashed to pieces. The harmonious and mutually complementary symbiosis of the great central plain and its surrounding mountain ramparts was brutally interrupted. Everywhere the new frontiers cut across valleys, waterways, roads and railway lines that had previously converged from the Carpathian perimeter toward the central basin irrigated by the Danube and Tisza rivers. One of Europe's most dense and ancient networks of communications became thus totally dislocated. At Trianon Hungary lost 62,2% of its railways, 73,8% of its roads



and 64,6% of its navigable waterways. But it was not the economy of residual Hungary alone which suffered: the peripheral populations too - be they Slovaks, Ruthenians or Transylvanians had a heavy price to pay. Being cut away from their natural outlet, which had always been the great Hungarian plain, they had to endure, in addition, the consequences of the frighteningly stupid economic protectionism pursued by the successor states throughout the interwar period. Many an area which had been transferred to new state structures more than half a century ago still finds it easier, faster and more natural to communicate with Budapest than with the new capital cities of Prague, Bucharest or Belgrade.

The Treaty of Trianon also deprived Hungary of most of its timber, coal, iron ore and water power. Its salt and silver mines, which had been sources of prosperity ever since the middle ages, were totally confiscated. Finally, Hungary was also cut off from the sea. The port of Fiume, directly attached to Hungary in 1822, to serve it as an outlet as Trieste served Austria, berthed 134 Hungarian merchant vessels, in 1914, representing a turnover of 140,000 tons in goods and commodities. That port has by now shrunk beyond recognition - it never had much significance for Italy, which first possessed it, nor has it any for Yugoslavia today. And once more two different measures were applied: while Austria and Hungary were deprived of their outlets to the sea, Poland on the contrary had to be provided with one. Talking about Poland reminds one of the efforts spent by the successor states and their protectors on keeping Hungary and Poland separated by denying them that common frontier which the two had always cherished along the north-eastern stretch of the Carpathians throughout the centuries.

Trying to enumerate all the items of riches of which Trianon had deprived Hungary would lead us too far. Suffice it to state that with the exception of its agricultural industry the country had lost almost all of its natural resources, thus in particular 88% of its forests and 83% of its iron ore mines to the successor states.

The property lost by the Hungarian state owing to the transfer of frontiers alone represented at least 3,430 million gold crowns, according to the valuation - generally believed to have been undervalued - of the Reparations Commission. The economic provisions of the Treaty also imposed upon Hungary the payment of 210 million gold francs as well as other reparations in kind (78).

To that one has to add the revolting arbitrariness with which the new frontier lines were locally determined. As mentioned before, they cut one by one all economic arteries, rivers, roads, and railway lines. and also canals, dikes, dams, administrative and private property boundaries. Towns were separated from their suburbs, villages split in two, farmsteads severed from the arable land to which they belonged, mines cut off from their pitheads and many local communities deprived of their parish churches or cemeteries. Everywhere there transpired the sadistic desire to see Hungary humiliated, martyred and thrown upon the mercy of its enemies. Almost every frontier post, it was said, represented a tombstone on which the words could have been engraved: buried here lies justice. "Yesterday's frontiers followed the course of nature", wrote Georges Desbons, "those of today chop up fields and houses, roads and railway stations, with maniacal arbitrariness." After having enumerated a certain number of those hardly credible extravagances and incoherences, Georges Desbons quotes the following figures: 52 villages cut in two along the Roumanian frontier; 22 along the frontier with Austria; 76 on the Czechoslovak and 70 on the Yugoslav border. In addition more than one hundred townships were cut off from either their railway station or their water supply. But the worst of all remains the fact that all along, the residual stump's new frontiers many a compact bloc of Hungarians, having always lived in close communion with the central mass of its brethren, was transferred to the sovereignty of the successor states. For purely strategic considerations or rail communications convenience, large portions of the great Hungarian plain, populated exclusively by Hungarians had to

share that fate, in stark contradiction to the most obvious, visible and palpable ethnic facts. Those amputated border zones alone represented 2 million out of a total of 3.5 million Hungarians passed under alien rule. Another category of sufferers were the great urban population centres of the historic kingdom, whose care was mostly Hungarian, such as Pozsony, Kassa, Nagyvarad, Arad, Temesvar or Szabadka. Pozsony in particular (Pressburg in German and Bratislava in Slovak) had been Hungary's capital city throughout the Turkish occupation and a long while afterwards, for the best part of 3 centuries. "Just try to imagine", wrote Charles Tisseyre, "what gaping wounds those severed townships must have represented to the Hungarian people, so proud of its mother country and of those cities impregnated with historic memories." (80)

Charles Danielou himself, the rapporteur in the French Chamber of Deputies of the Treaty of Trianon, wrote as follows: "The greatest mistake made by those who wished to apply the nationality principle all along the line, was to have excluded from their country, while left in its vicinity on the other side of the border, 3 million Hungarians out of 8 million which is the country's total population at the present time. I must say that proportion has been laid on a bit thick. Who could believe it that those Magyars, whose profound national instinct is well known all over the world, would accept to remain forever separated from their brethren." (81)

Danielou also notes ironically that the Czech border has been pushed forward to a distance of not more than 40 km (a mere 25 miles) from Budapest so as to expose the Hungarian capital, in case of war, to easy artillery bombardment from Czechoslovak territory. In the South, on the other hand, the Hungarian-inhabited part of the Bacska province had been awarded to Yugoslavia for exactly the opposite reason - to remove Belgrade from the potential range of Hungarian guns. All the successor states were keen on establishing bridgeheads jutting deep into Hungarian territory. In this way a compact mass of 800,000

Hungarians were annexed by Czechoslovakia in the North, 400,000 by the Yugoslavs in the South and another 600,000 Hungarians subjected to Greater Roumania in the East, the latter chiefly in order to ensure transversal north-south rail communications with the first mentioned two countries, along but outside the new Hungarian border. In that respect Andre Tardieu himself felt compelled to admit at the Peace Conference that the frontier with Roumania did not coincide with the ethnographic line of demarcation of the Hungarians which was well and truly situated 20 km farther eastward.

Aldo Dami observed quite rightly that a comparison between the ethnic and geographic maps showed that, save for the Szekelys embedded in the south-eastern corner of the Carpathians, the Hungarian ethnographic border line coincided almost exactly with the confines of the plain. Cutting things fine one could have gone as far as stating that the Hungarians' "natural" frontier ran along the foothills of the mountains rather than the mountains themselves. In the south-west only the Drave river coincides, for the best part of its course, with the ethnic divide between Hungarians and Croats. "The maximum of losses inflicted upon Hungary", wrote Aldo Dami, "ought therefore never to have gone beyond the massive ethnic limit of the Magyars living on the great plain, provided also in that case that the isolated yet equally massive settlement of 700,000 Szekelys in Transylvania should have been granted strictly autonomous status within Roumania. The best solution", adds Aldo Dami, "would be to go even further, by establishing as nearly as possible an equilibrium between autochthonous and minoritarian populations in all the countries concerned, including Hungary, thereby imposing equal ethnic sacrifices an round. Even by rejecting the expedient of plebiscites and considering only the simple ethnic limits of the compact Magyar population of the great Hungarian plain, Hungary ought to have been allowed to preserve at Trianon, around and beyond its actual borders, with the one exception of the frontier along the Drave,



a belt of territories 15 to 70 km wide (including the townships having a Hungarian majority and quoted above) and representing a total surface area of some 23,000 km<sup>2</sup> inhabited by approximately 2 million people. At any rate, if one renounced the plebiscite as a solution a choice had to be made between geographic and economic realities, on the one hand, and ethnic realities, on the other hand, for the two rarely tally. Those who defend the ethnographic principle must be bold enough to drop the other two claims, and the other way round. In that sense the Slovaks belong geographically and historically to Hungary, as do the Sudeten Germans to Bohemia, but not ethnographically. (It is interesting to note that while the Hungarians were not allowed at Trianon to refer to their historic rights, in the Treaty of St. Germain the Czechs successfully availed themselves of those rights to Austria's detriment in respect of the frontiers of Bohemia.) Suffice it to consider the case of Southern Slovakia which is inhabited exclusively by Hungarians (or rather was so inhabited before the mass expulsions following World War II - Translator's Note) and which, more closely than the northern, mountainous region depends on the Hungarian lowland basin of which it forms part. The same applies to the belt of territories annexed by Roumania which is equally a part of the Hungarian plain. And finally the Bacska and partly the Banat in the South find themselves in a similar situation, for geographically, ethnically and economically they belong to Hungary. To every impartial observer", concludes Aldi Dami, "the terms of the Treaty of Trianon must needs appear as profoundly unjust, if only on a purely ethnic and linguistic basis, leaving geographical and historic considerations on the side. The simple requirements of fairness and equity condemn the actual course of Hungary's frontiers" (82).

In round figures the Trianon Treaty incorporated 2 million Hungarians in Roumania, 1 million in Czechoslovakia and ½ million in Yugoslavia, thus evicting 35 % of the Hungarians from their mother country and placing 1 of every 3 Hungarians under

alien rule. Of the traditional kingdom's 72 counties only 14 were graciously left to postwar Hungary. The surface area of the latter amounts to roughly 93,000 km<sup>2</sup> as compared with a prewar 325,000 km<sup>2</sup>, while at the same time the Czechs and the Roumanians doubled their respective national territories and the Serbs increased their own fivefold, having emerged from World War I with 248,000 km<sup>2</sup> as opposed to 48,000 km<sup>2</sup> in 1914 and with 13 million inhabitants instead of 4 million. The Hungarian lands transferred to Roumania alone represent 103,000 km<sup>2</sup>, which is more than all that was left for Hungary at Trianon. What's worse, those amazing territorial aggrandizements, the likes of which have never before been seen in history, and which no plebiscite would ever have confirmed, resulted in the creation of truly absurd political monsters which threatened to explode at any moment. Under the pretext of liquidating the ethnic mosaic of the peoples of the former Austria-Hungary, states were created whose ethnic composition turned out to be just as heterogeneous and chequered, except that they were completely arbitrary and enjoyed no unity of any sort, neither geographic, nor ethnic, let alone historic. Thus by dismembering Hungary which counted after all (without autonomous Croatia-Slavonia) very nearly 55% of Magyars, 10% of Germans considering themselves Hungarians, and only 35% of authentically alien minorities, Trianon created a Czechoslovakia with, originally, only 43% of Czechs and 17% of Slovaks, a Yugoslavia ruled by a minority of only 39% of Serbs, and a Roumania with 69% of Roumanians, of whom however only 53% lived in Transylvania. An equitable compromise peace, concludes Aldo Dami from those figures, should not have taken from the historic kingdom of Hungary more than 35% of its inhabitants, instead of which it was made to lose 63%. The loss of one-third of its population would have been more than enough: instead of which she was reduced by two-thirds. Roumania's case is a particularly illustrative one. So as to enable that country to recuperate 2,900,000 racial brethren who in

Hungary had constituted 15% of the total population, Trianon compelled it to annex 2 million Hungarians which at the time represented a little over 12% of the new Greater Roumania's total population figure. Was it really worth while asks Aldo Dami. to create a new situation that was merely the converse of the old one? For our part, we are convinced that it would have been much better to seek the solution in granting the ethnic groups the widest possible autonomy within their time-honoured political and administrative structures, for those had at least the advantage of boasting remarkably solid geographical foundations and, in addition, centuries of a common history. Something was demolished that - according to the varying terms employed at the time - could have been "modified" or "improved", "transformed" or "regenerated", but ought not to have been destroyed, in any event, as recklessly as had been done by the victors of the first world war. The only solace left for the unfortunate Hungarians is to recall Victor Cousin's dictum: "In international disputes to have history and geography on one's side means that, whatever the actual situation may be, the future is yours."

Aldo Dami does not tire of comparing the Frankfurt Peace Treaty (83) of 1871, which had kept alive an atmosphere of profound concern in Europe for 50 years, with the Treaty of Trianon which, on the contrary, does not seem to have troubled anyone's sleep. "In 1920 the Allies repeated, on a much larger scale, the error committed by Germany in 1871" writes Aldo Dami in substance. "For in 1871 Germany could marshal more justification in favour of annexing Alsace-Lorraine than had the Allied and Associated Powers, in 1920, when they dismembered Hungary. After all the Alsatians were racially and linguistically a Germanic people and the Vosges Mountains a better natural frontier than the Rhine; also, historically speaking, the two provinces of Alsace and Lorraine had been part of France for only two centuries, while previously they had lived, since times immemorial, within the framework of the Holy German-Roman Empire. And there was

the moral justification of France having declared war on Prussia. But the latter had committed the same sin of omission, in 1871, of which the Allies made themselves guilty vis-a.-vis Hungary, in 1920: they forgot to consult the populations concerned. But at least Prussia, in the 1870-1871 war, had never pretended to fight for the peoples' right to self-determination, whereas the Allies had inscribed that principle on their banners since the outbreak of World War I. They are all the more guilty of having betrayed that principle, particularly after having made the whole of Europe expect of them a peace based on justice and fair frontier lines. a peace giving rise to no recriminations or grudges. At Trianon 3½ million Hungarians of pure Magyar race had been wrenched from their mother country as opposed to only 1½ million Germans separated from France by the Frankfurt Treaty. The geographical entity so brutally destroyed at Trianon was much more marked than the one which Frankfurt had only inflicted a wound, no matter how painful. Also Hungary's historic frontiers were at least 5 times more ancient than those that bound Alsace to France. And lastly, in 1914 Hungary's guilt in bringing about the war was incomparably smaller than had been France's responsibility for declaring war on Prussia, in 1870. The Hungary of today, compared with the historic kingdom, represents perhaps less than would France if it had been reduced to the Ile de France and the Massif Central." But in his book entitled "The Century of Joan of Arc and Hungary's Last Century" A. Póka-Pivny draws an even more gripping parallel between, on the one hand, the consequences to France of the Hundred Years' War and the Treaty of Troyes which ended it in 1420 and, on the other hand, the effect which the Treaty of Trianon had in respect of Hungary, in 1920 and thereafter.

Many historians and political scientists believe that the Treaty of Trianon "comes terribly close to what were in 1772 and 1795 the dismemberments of, as some prefer to call them, the first two partitions of Poland" - animated by a spirit of depredation and

carried out with the tacit consent of the rest of Europe - "and which our history professors taught us to regard with abhorrence" (85) It was on the strength of that simile that Georges Roux felt induced to write, not without good reason, that "it is alarming to find that in the XXth century France has created 'a new Poland'" (86). Conveniently forgotten were all the services rendered by Hungary to Europe and the West throughout her history - sacrifices which induced the Holy See to call Hungary "the living rampart and the shield of Christianity" against the onslaughts of Tartars and Turks\*. The best of Hungary's sons had given their lives over the centuries in the defence of Europe's eastern frontier - gallant fighters of whom Eugene Prince of Savoy had coined the sadly cynical words: "if they will it will be our victory: if they lose it will be their funeral. "Hungary, together with Poland" wrote Rene Grousset, "had for long been the West's outpost facing Asiatic barbarism. Ever since the conversion of Arpad's realm to Latin civilisation its role was to stop at the Carpathians and along the Danube all pressures coming from the steppes of the East or from Asia Minor. It was due to Hungary's resistance in the XIIIth century that the Mongol invasion could be deflected towards the Black Sea. It was Hungary's heroism which bade a halt to the expansion of the Ottoman Empire on the Danube and ultimately compelled it to withdraw ever farther in the Balkans" (87). And quite recently, this was what Victor Tapie had to add: "Europe failed to recognize in time its profound solidarity with Hungary. . . on whose shoulders had fallen nearly all the weight of the wars against the Turks. . . Hungary's nobility had assumed the role of the knights errants of Christianity sustaining for a long time a considerable and efficacious military effort. " The Hungarian

. How many Europeans know - one wonders - that the midday Angelus was instituted by the Papacy in commemoration of Janos Hunyadi's victory over the Turks at Belgrade, in 1456?

nation, having captured the affection of other peoples owing to her irreducible resistance, has accumulated a treasure of prestige which remains one of the major facts of political history... Between the XIIth and XVth centuries it had proved its fitness to be the equal of the great realms of Europe... But the Hungarians also had to learn that they must rely on no one except themselves. . ." (88). "For the West", wrote Edouard Sayous less than a hundred years ago, "the most important thing is to be aware of the services which Hungary has rendered to civilisation, first, by holding up with its own body the onward march of barbarism, and, subsequently, thanks to its indomitable attachment to liberty." (89) And the great Michelet himself, the sage of French historiography, could hardly have had something like the Treaty of Trianon in mind when he coined his memorable question: "When shall we at last pay our debt to that blessed people, the saviour of the Occident?."

It must have been indignation felt at the fate reserved for Hungary which induced Robert Vallery-Radot to write as follows: "When a people has thus endured for more than a thousand years. faithful to its shortcomings as well as to its virtues, and resisted during those thousand years all invasions, is it entitled to the highest respect, particularly as it can no longer defend itself. And when moreover his victors, claiming for themselves a monopoly of justice, declare solemnly before the entire world that the peace they are going to dictate will not be inspired by brute force, as all the others were, but by the law of nations, that people is entitled to expect fair treatment of its judges" (90).

Yet the Treaty of Trianon is probably one of the most terribly cruel treaties of history. It has turned one of Europe's most meritorious and vigorous ancient nations into an invalid. "Its mutilation was so monstrous and dishonest that no one wants to accept responsibility for it any longer, nor to know 'anything about it", wrote the former Italian Premier, Francesco Nitti. And he added the question: "In the face of such universal shame one may

justifiably ask oneself, who ever wanted that horribly iniquitous mutilation of Hungary? . . . Suppose that France were reduced in an analogous situation to one-third of its national territory and population (Nitti was writing between the two world wars), what would the reactions of the French be? There is no Englishman, no Frenchman, no Italian who would accept, for the duration, such conditions as were imposed upon Hungary, the same as there is no Hungarian worthy of that name, from Prince Primate down to the humblest peasant, to acquiesce in such a state of affairs~" (91).

"Trianon is, on an international plane, strangely similar to those evil acts of which, by tacit agreement and owing to a sense of shame, nobody will speak . . . That conspiracy of silence is however more eloquent than any indictment or accusation could ever be" (92).

## CHAPTER V

### THE OPPRESSION OF HUNGARIAN MINORITIES; REVISIONISM AND WORLD WAR II THE TRANSYLVANIAN PROBLEM

Unable to resolve in an equitable manner the ethnic problems raised by the treaties of St. Germain and Trianon, the Great Powers made the successor states sign so-called minorities treaties (in 1919-1920) in which the latter pledged themselves to respect the race, language, religion and possessions of the national minorities living within their borders. The enforcement of those treaties was placed under the supervision of the League of Nations. Alas, not only were those solemn obligations being flouted, but also the national minorities of the Danubian Basin had never before been subjected to greater persecution and humiliation. Today one cannot escape, the assumption that those minorities treaties were a mere shame. And how could it have been otherwise, since not one of their provisions was ever put into practice.

Innumerable were the violations of the minorities' civil, cultural and religious rights, let alone the expulsions, brutalities and all sorts of arbitrary actions from which they had to suffer. "Is it not scandalous", wrote Sir Robert Gower, "that an European reconstruction, loudly hailed as one that was going to liberate the national minorities, should have resulted in their persecution, the severity of which is such that there is no parallel to it to be found in the ancient Kingdom of Hungary where the nationalities had been treated with infinitely more benevolence" (93).

As a matter of fact, the minorities' treaties were cold-bloodedly and systematically violated by the successor states, and in so doing the latter could hardly even be bothered to conceal their objective, which was the hasty elimination or assimilation of the national minorities, by brute force. It was the logical outcome of those



initial acts of violence that had consisted in subjecting those minorities to alien rule, thereby infringing those great humanitarian principles for which the Allies had pretended\ to fight for years. Subsequently, every effort was made on the part of the victors to frustrate the minorities' endeavors to lodge official complaints with the League of Nations - the conspiracy of silence artificially created around post-Trianon Hungary was instrumental in obtaining that result. And yet, on rare occasions, those "formidable" minorities succeeded in penetrating their masters' stonewalling tactics and reaching the League of Nations. But as each one of their petitions was inevitably followed by a new wave of repression to the detriment, the harassed minorities soon learned to abstain from petitioning the League of Nations. The more so as most of their complaints remained unheeded anyway. Thus, having branded the Hungarians as "oppressors" for so long, the successor states, for their part, promptly omitted to grant their minorities even a modicum of autonomy. On the contrary, they in turn set themselves to applying oppressive practices which bear no comparison with anything that pre-war Hungary had been accused of by its minorities, "Within 10 years", wrote Gabriel Goron 'in 1933, "the successor states have sinned against their minorities more often than did the Hungarians in a thousand years" (94). To which Aldo Dami, the great Swiss expert of national minorities' problems added: "The position of the minorities in historic Hungary was a better one, as is well known, and any comparison can only turn out to the advantage of that Hungary, so unjustly-decried for such a long time. The Hungarians who are today annexed by the successor states would be very happy if they enjoyed the status granted to minorities in their fatherland of yore." (95) First of all, an effort was made to reduce by all possible means, in fact as well as in appearance, the numerical strength of the Hungarian minorities. In a first phase, roughly up to 1924, some 350,000 Hungarians were compelled, by all kinds of intimidation

and coercion to flee the successor states and find refuge in rump Hungary. Thereafter faked statistics and population counts were resorted to, year by year, to hoodwink the outside world in respect of the true numbers of the Hungarian minorities. Strangely enough the later remained stationary while the rest of the population continued to grow ceaselessly. Such was the case of the Hungarian minorities in Roumanian Transylvania and Yugoslav Voivodina. In Slovakia, however, the number of Hungarians was made to show such dramatic decreases, year after year, that the international authorities called upon to survey the scene should have been alarmed by that fact alone. Thus the Czechoslovak census of 1919 had still accounted for 1.077.000 Hungarians in the Republic; in 1930 there remained apparently only 571.988 hardly more than half of the original number. Now, that was a bit too thick, after all, in a country so loudly praised at that time in France for its "tolerance", as well as for the exemplary "liberties" said to have prevailed there. As several contemporary authors and chroniclers pointed out "while oppression was practised by perfidious legal devices in Czechoslovakia, it manifested itself more overtly and cynically in Yugoslavia and Roumania". Yugoslavia was particularly notorious for the "savage" oppression by the Serbs of all the racial minorities without exception - Bulgars, Macedonians, Albanians, Croats and Hungarians were all made to share the same fate. But it was Roumania above all - although counting only 5 m aliens out of a total population of 18 million which distinguished itself by a raving and indeed almost insane chauvinism in respect particularly of its Hungarian minority, which was and remains the most numerous one in that country (12%). Already in those early days Roumanian official sources would indulge in ominous predictions to the effect that "within a comparatively brief space of time, the problem of ethnic minorities in Roumania will be solved once and for all" (96). Whatever may have been certain shades of difference in the treatment meted out by those 3 countries to their respective

national minorities, each one of them, in its own way, undertook all in its power to denationalize and weaken politically, ethnically and culturally its Hungarian minority, submitting the latter to all imaginable sorts of persecution and vexation. It is not an exaggeration to state that the Hungarians had become practically "outlaws" in those countries. Agrarian reforms enacted during the years following World War I proved to be particularly efficacious means of expropriation and spoliation. Everywhere the Hungarian minorities had to choose between nationality or property. In Transylvania, for example, where even prior to Trianon 56,4% of all smallholdings had belonged to Roumanians (a ratio slightly higher than their share in the total population which was 55 per cent), of all farming estates expropriated up to World War II 86 per cent had belonged to Hungarians and only 5 per cent to Roumanians while the rest had been confiscated from the members of other ethnic minorities.

Similar was the fate reserved for the Hungarian language. In his book rightly entitled "The Madmen of Peace", Robert Vallery-Radot clearly stated that "the Serb, Czech, Wallachian or Slovak tongues had never been persecuted in the old Monarchy anywhere nearly as savagely as the Hungarian language is now in the successor states where even simple books of grammar or geography are banned if written in that language". In Transylvania the use of Hungarian was banned from the schools even during playtime. Hungarian schools, both public and private, were being closed down one after another under all kinds of pretexts until of 2,461 in existence in 1918 only 795 remained by 1938. One of the most insidious devices was the re-drawing of administrative district boundaries in such a manner that areas having a solid majority of Hungarians were artificially and arbitrarily subdivided between a number of adjoining districts, with the result that neither of the new subdivisions contained a sufficient number of Hungarians to entitle them to a school of their own . . . And so the abuses of power indulged in by the dominating nationality went on piling up

as the years went by, grievously extending the suffering and ravages of the Great War that had preceded them. Also, national intolerance was more often than not accompanied by religious intolerance. For in those countries nationality and religion are in most cases intimately linked. As a result the Catholic Slovaks, Croats and Slovenes became very soon strongly antagonistic to the new powers, which had come to rule over them, while in Transylvania Catholics and Protestants of all nationalities turned vehemently against the Roumanian Orthodox Church.

All those scandalous facts were either generally ignored or glossed over by the West, more particularly in France whose heavily biased Press - strangely losing all its native curiosity where Hungary was concerned - methodically passed over them in total silence. And yet, had it not been a French President of the Republic by the name of Alexandre Millerand who in his famous "covering letter" to the Treaty of Trianon formally ensured, the Hungarian minorities that they had nothing to fear from their new masters? "As for those islets of Magyar populations which will pass under non-Hungarian sovereignty", he wrote, "the treaties drawn up for the protection of minorities will fully safeguard their rights."

"What has become of that solemn pledge pronounced by the Conference of Ambassadors on behalf of civilized Europe as a whole?" asked Georges Desbons. Indeed why did France have to become, in the interwar years, a standing accomplice to those

Evildoings, in the name of her friendship - and what a shortsighted friendship it was - with the states of the Little Entente to which she had so signally failed to provide moral leadership? There can be no doubt that the policy of forcible assimilation and oppression of the national minorities as practiced by the states of the Little Entente constituted one of the most scandalous features of the political history of the interwar period, alas covered up by French diplomacy.

This, by the way, raises in a more general fashion the question of the legitimacy of the progressive assimilation of national minorities by the State to which they happen to be subjected particularly when such assimilation is practiced, as it is in the cases of concern to us here, by means of force and oppression. One should of course note in this respect that it had been the typically French concept of nation which was first invoked to justify assimilation, and that it had been the armies of the Revolution and the Empire which first thought that the conquered peoples ought to adopt with pride and joy the French language in lieu of their underdeveloped vernaculars. To which one might retort with Aldo Dami that most states have practiced in the course of their history, and are practicing still, policies of assimilation by means of which they tend little by little to absorb their minorities. Such was notably the procedure adopted by France vis-à-vis the Corsicans, Catalonians, Basques, Flemings and Alsatian-Lotharingians. Admittedly those are cases of assimilation, which were taking place not only very slowly and progressively, but were moreover accepted by those concerned under the impression that thereby they were benefiting from a culture more highly perfected than theirs. As regards forcible assimilation, in the proper sense of that word, such as practiced by the successor states in respect of their newly won minorities, it represents deliberate outrage as well as an error of calculation. For it has frequently turned out that the loss of the use of the mother tongue is not at all tantamount to a loss of affection for one's country of origin. The Alsatians and Lotharingians, for instance, despite 40 years of German assimilation in the course of which most of them had altogether forgotten the French language by 1918, received the victorious French troops with delirious enthusiasm. It is therefore more than possible, continues Aldo Dami, that former Hungarian territories might, even after generations of Slovakization, Roumanization or Serbization, preserve intact their Hungarian feelings coupled with all the grudge and hatred felt for their overlords which oppression or

frustration never fail to breed. Poland is a case in point, having risen from the dead more Polish than ever, after a century and a half of total disappearance under the cloak of enforced Germanization or Russification.

There remains a psychological factor to be taken into consideration. Having recourse to force and arbitrary action in respect particularly of their Hungarian minorities, the successor states revealed quite obviously a lack of confidence in themselves as well as in the validity of the territorial advantages gained to Hungary's detriment. But essentially it was case of a secret guilt-complex translating itself into violent action. For the Hungarians who owing to the Treaty of Trianon suddenly found themselves thrust into minority status the latter was all the more difficult to bear as they had been accustomed for many centuries to a traditionally libertarian system instituted by their "Buna Aurea" drawn up in 1222 and thus junior by only five years to the English "Magna Charta". Respect for minority rights is one of the acid tests of real civilization in any country, as well of its sense of morality, honesty, equity and justice (97).

No sooner had the Treaty of Trianon been signed than its revision became in Hungary a matter of national endeavor and indeed an intangible doctrine which dominated the nation's entire life for all the 25 years of Admiral Horthy's regency. The nation's sorrow was immense and sincere. Against that "accursed treaty" the entire people rose in a sacred union of wrath immediately and instinctively from the first day onwards -it became a truly collective psychosis . . . It is a particularly remarkable fact that between the two wars all political parties in Hungary were "revisilonist" without exception. "There has never been a single soul in Hungary to doubt the necessity of having the Treaty of Trianon revised. In, that respect Hungarian public opinion showed it infinitely more resolute and unanimous than the Germans ever were as regards the Treaty of Versailles. The magnitude of Hungary's losses and the resulting desperation of a profoundly

shaken, sincere sense of patriotism produced a frame of mind so absolute that nothing could erode it for one single moment throughout the interwar period - on the contrary" (98). The fact that such a frame of mind remained unchanged during 20 years and became, if anything, even more accentuated as time went by is proof of its profound legitimacy. Such, then, was the tragic situation which after Trianon confronted a people, accustomed since times immemorial to conceive of its life within no other framework than the one provided by the Hungary created by the Holy King St. Stephen. Having always regarded its right to the integrity of that territory as an indisputable 'tenet of faith, the Hungarian people had to see its centuries-old ideal disintegrate in one lightning stroke - it was nearly enough for the nation to lose its soul. .

"Hence, throughout the period between two world wars, succeeding Hungarian governments never ceased to persuade the European Powers that there was a need to revise that ruinous treaty by peaceful and friendly understanding, if only to prevent the Hungarian people from brimming over those iniquitous frontiers one day in an upsurge of mad desperation. The Hungarian governments' persistent attitude eventually found support in some foreign quarters, notably in Great Britain and Italy owing to the generous, disinterested and impartial initiatives taken by a handful of particularly well-informed and enlightened politicians and writers. In 1927, Lord Rothermere, owner of the London newspaper *The Daily Mail* put the problem of a revision of the Treaty of Trianon before the public opinion of the West. His campaign aroused favorable echoes even in France and created the awareness in Europe of a Hungarian problem as well as of the need to remedy it. The fate of Hungary and its minorities at last began to alert public opinion. Public writers of varied political party allegiance devoted time and energy to studying and subsequently exposing those problems in books and articles and as time went by the Hungarian cause gained ever firmer hold on the minds,

winning more and more champions every day." (99) Up to the eve of Munich and World War II which unfortunately called everything in question once more. In a profoundly searching and well-documented article, accompanied by an equally accurate map, published in The Daily Mail on August 30, 1927, above the signature of Lord Rothermere, its author put forward one of the most reasonable schemes ever for an adjustment of the frontiers drawn at Trianon. Without any brutal shifting of those frontiers, Rothermere's plan would have enabled Hungary to recover 1 ~million Magyars out of 3 million severed from the mother country by means of plebiscites to be arranged in all disputed areas. Under the Rothermere plan a fairly narrow strip of land, varying between 10 and 45 miles in width would have been restituted to Hungary, with a number of townships having a largely, if not purely, Hungarian population, such as Pozsony, Komarom, Nyitra, Ersekujvar, Kassa, Ungvar, Szatmar, Nagykaroly, Nagyvarad, Arad, Temesvar, Szabadka and Zombor, all dotted along the Trianon frontier line. All in all the recovered areas would have represented a surface area of 23,000 km<sup>2</sup> with 1,880,000 inhabitants of whom 1,650,000 were Magyar's. Under the Rothermere plan the successor states would have made a relatively good bargain. At any rate in comparison with a plan previously established by the "Hungarian League for the Revision of the Treaty of Trianon" which had claimed the recovery of 95,000 km<sup>2</sup> populated by 5,831,000 inhabitants so as to distribute own nationals and minority populations more or less evenly between historic Hungary and her successor states. As a result Hungary would have had 13~ million inhabitants as against populations of 14 m for Roumania and 12 m each for Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

A third scheme, equally elaborate but more strictly based on the ethnographic principle, was proposed in 1930 by Aldo Dami in his repeatedly quoted book, entitled "Tomorrow's Hungary". Under that plan Hungary would have recovered some 2 m Magyars,



along with roughly 1 m German-speaking inhabitants and ½ million other nationalities, on the understanding that some 900,000 Hungarians in Transylvania would be granted far-reaching self-government by the Roumanians. Aldo Dami wrote on this subject as follows: "Territorial readjustment carried out in Central Europe with careful preparation, plebiscites and, wherever necessary, extremely fretwork-like, denticulated frontiers, would leave subjected to foreign sovereignty hardly more than one-tenth of those national minorities now under alien rule... Moreover such territorial revision would also carry with it the advantage to distribute that small portion of remaining minorities fairly equally on either side of the frontiers, which again would enable equitable exchanges of population or the reciprocal protection of minorities owing to a kind of compensatory equilibrium" (100).

Having taken cognizance of the Aldo Dami plan, Georges Desbons commented as follows: "By a slight adjustment of the present border lines the successor states could consolidate their frontiers; by liberating compact masses of national minorities they would stabilize their internal balance. An era of real economic and political cooperation might at long last be opened up between them." Much to the point was Aldo Dami's remark who' felt that only a little more justice in drawing the border lines would have sufficed to eliminate almost all sources of misunderstanding between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, as also' between Hungary and Yugoslavia. "Denmark had been extremely reasonable", he wrote, "in refusing the Kiel-canal line offered it by Clemenceau and by contenting itself with the results of the plebiscite organized in Schleswig-Holstein which thus yielded the advantage of revealing clearly the true frontiers of Language and sentiment."

There was, by the way, a striking resemblance in general outline between the plans proposed respectively by Lord Rothermere and Aldo Dami; coincidence which confirmed the value of both their studies and suggestions. The modifications they proposed did in no' way hurt the vital strategic or economic interests of the suc-

cessor states, while the advantages which would have resulted from them were considerable both morally and materially for all concerned, for once again, it is hard to understand why it should have been in the interests of the successor states to keep only just inside their frontier lines those massive Hungarian minorities. Moreover each one of those successor states there emerged sensible politicians - including President Masaryk - who began to voice the opinion that one day or another an equitable revision of the Trianon frontiers would become necessary. Alas, the two Italo-German arbitrations, pronounced in Vienna in 1938 and 1940 respectively, plus the war and the ensuing Russian occupation of most of the countries concerned put an end to all such trends.

Even in France, where the influence of Little Entente political personalities was all pervasive at that time, a whole trend of opinion in favor of the revision of the Treaty of Trianon had welled up almost on the morrow of its signature. That trend reached right up to the highest governmental circles. Even Georges Clemenceau is reputed to have one day pronounced the famous wisecrack: "So many blunders were made at Trianon that one could jolly well afford to put some of them right." It all started in June 1920 with what was after its author called the "Paleologue plan". On the morrow of Trianon the bolshevik armies of General Tukhachevski, having invaded Poland, were menacing Warsaw, while of Poland's neighbors only the Hungarians were prepared to help her. In the face of the Poles' extremely dangerous position and taking account of the Hungarians' generous preparedness, Monsieur Maurice Paleologue, then Political Director of the French Foreign Ministry, the Quai d'Orsay, conceived of a diplomatic maneuver the outcome of which would have been a partial revision of the Trianon Treaty in return for Hungary's supplying an army of 100,000 men to support the Poles. There was another secret condition - of which the so-called Fouchet Note of July 4, 1920, subsequently published by the Hungarian Government constitutes proof - namely that Hungary accord on her territory

economic concessions to a certain number of French big business companies. On those terms France would have undertaken to obtain for Hungary the, re-transfer of the most important Magyar population groups living along and outside the new frontiers, as well the autonomy of Transylvania. (101) However, the Czech Government, which had already refused the passage through Slovakia of Hungarian arms and ammunitions destined for Poland, also strictly rejected any idea of a Hungarian auxiliary army marching through her territory in aid of Poland. In the meantime, by the middle of August 1920, Marshal Pilsudski, ably seconded by the French General Maxime Weygand, stopped the Russians just outside Warsaw - an event which came later to be known as "the miracle of the Vistula - and subsequently made them withdraw from Poland in total disorder. At that there was obviously no need any longer for bringing up Hungarian aid and the "Paléologue plan" consequently disintegrated into thin air. Let us add all the same, because it is a historically established fact, that the Polish victory over the Red Army facing Warsaw was in a large measure rendered possible by those 80 railway carriages loaded with Hungarian arms and ammunition which could cross Roumanian territory just in time to bring the much needed relief to the Poles. But of that nobody took notice any longer (Forgotten soon were also the heroic feats of arms of a number of Hungarian officers who had fought as volunteers under Pilsudski.) May we just recall at this stage how crucially important it would have been for Poland and Hungary to have a common frontier on the Carpathians, which the Poles had indeed been clamoring for since 1918. It was for that reason that they supported the Hungarian claim to Subcarpathian Ruthenia throughout the interwar period (102).

Alas, despite their increasing domestic difficulties, both economic and political; despite the threat of disintegration which hung over at least two of them, namely Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia; in spite also of the growing German threat. in the face of which

they would have badly needed the defense support in depth of a reconciled Hungary; the states of the Little Entente stubbornly refused the latter all her requests concerning a revision of the Treaty of Trianon. It was an irreducible opposition desperately clinging to a rigid "status quo" which left no room whatsoever for the understanding of the basic requirements of the hour. "For the formation of a Danubian bloc, including a Hungary at peace with her neighbors and loyally prepared to make common cause with them, might perhaps have stopped in time Hitler's expansionism in Central Europe. Slight sacrifices on the part of the Little Entente would have been well worth such insurance against the German danger" (103).

At this point we might as well refer to Wenzel Jaksch, that Sudeten German Social Democrat, who spent the war years in exile in Great Britain to become subsequently one of the most highly esteemed personalities in the Bundestag of the postwar German Federal Republic. There is no one to have better described the bankruptcy of the Little Entente than Wenzel Jaksch (104): "Her exaggerated self-reliance went arm in arm with her blind faith in the French alliance . . . but when the moment of trial came, the guarantee of far-away France proved as illusory to her as it was to be for Poland. . . Yet in March and May 1934 still, the joint General Staff of the Little Entente conceived in Bucharest of a plan for a general alarm in which the first warlike move would have been a concentrated attack upon Hungary. . . Regardless of the fact that the principal threat they had to fear came from outside. They had even divided up Hungary into zones of occupation . . . Their obsession with what, they assumed to be Hungarian revanchism was such that it totally blinded them to the dangers menacing them from Germany, Italy and Russia . . . When the representatives of the Little Entente assembled for the last time in Bled, Yugoslavia, in August 1938, they had nothing better to do than to deplore a certain increase in the strength of the Hungarian armed forces, regardless of Hitler's conquest of

Austria which had taken place in March of that same year . . ." Let us add what has since become a historically established fact, namely that throughout the two decades of the interwar period the total partition of Hungary remained a constant topic of discussion between the powers of the Little Entente and that Prague, Belgrade and Bucharest never ceased to wait for an opportunity to put that plan into practice. The frontiers themselves imposed upon Hungary along with numerous restrictions were meant to serve the Little Entente's wish to be able at any moment to occupy Hungary without going to actual war.

"After the first world war", wrote Wenzel Jaksch, "the peoples of Europe had exactly 10 years' grace to put their house in order. The Wall-Street crash of October 4, 1929, was the turning point. In the autumn of 1930, the Nazi Party moved into the Reichstag, the Parliament of the Weimar Republic, 107 men strong, thanks to the enormous increase of unemployment caused by the economic crisis. Democracy was forced to retreat everywhere, including Poland, Roumania and Yugoslavia, before the onslaught of social unrest" (105). Although the Anschluss of Austria had been the decisive blow, most eyes in France were really opened in September only, during the Munich crisis, to all the fatal errors committed in Central Europe. It was then that Monsieur Hubert Beuve-Mery. University lecturer and special correspondent in Prague of the Paris daily "Le Temps" (after World War II he became Founder Editor of the highly reputed "LeMonde") wrote this in the October

1938 issue of the political review "Politique": "I have already said so and I repeat it that the frontiers drawn for Hungary were unjust and clumsy, and that it would be wise to grasp the first suitable opportunity to readjust them." "Suddenly one began to understand that when working out the peace treaties of 1919-1920 democracy had disowned its very foundations and that it would be utterly impossible now to go to war in order to refuse the fight to self-determination to 3½ million Sudeten Germans, 2½ million Slovaks and 1 million Hungarians, thus to save from destruction a State

which should never have existed." Thus, in 1938, Czechoslovakia, up till then the spoilt child of the Entente, suddenly became a target for criticism and was abandoned by public opinion not only in England but also even in France. There Professor Joseph Barthelemy, the eminent jurist of the Sorbonne University, wrote on April 14, 1938, in the daily newspaper "Le Temps": "Is it worth setting fire to the whole world in order to preserve the Czechoslovak State, that purely political compound of several nationalities? Do we have to sacrifice 3 million French lives so that 3 million Sudeten Germans may remain enclosed there"? To which the former cabinet minister Anatole de Monzie added, on September 24, 1938: "Shall we now go to war for the sole objective to preserve that which we were wrong in creating?" In that perspective Wenzel Jaksch was far from wrong in maintaining that "Munich. So much decried since the war, had after all been the first fully honest application of the ethnic principle: it was peace founded on border lines corresponding to ethnic reality. It needed the German aggression of March 15, 1939, with the ensuing occupation of Prague to lend moral justification to the resistance against Hitler, for the status quo as it had existed before was in itself immoral and unjustifiable."

At any rate, continued Wenzel Jaksch. "the events of 1938-'1939 disproved radically the underlying idea of the peace treaties, according to which the powers of resistance of the successor states would be commensurate with their territorial size. Finland and Greece unencumbered by alien territorial acquisitions, displayed at that time forces of resistance which exceeded by a long stretch the achievements of Czechoslovakia, Roumania and Yugoslavia in that field." As we shall see presently, when it came to the test of the second world war, the Little Entente, in spite of a total population exceeding 45 million and capable of mobilizing 4 to 5 million men under arms, proved to be weak and unfaithful to its great protectors. There was of course the reverse of the medal. For after the Munich agreement, which in itself represented a

grave infringement of the Western Powers' commitment to the security of the successor states. Those Powers swung from one extreme to the other by totally abandoning Central Europe to its fate.

The first Vienna Award effected by Germany and Italy on November 2, 1938, to settle the dispute between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, was 'a clear demonstration of the self-effacement, if not complete loss of interest, on the part of the Western Great Powers\*. That arbitration, which was based on the excellent ethnographic map established after the 1910 census, ordered the return to Hungary from Slovakia and Sub Carpathian Ruthenia of 11,830 km<sup>2</sup> inhabited by 862,474 souls, 764,915 of whom were Hungarians. On March 18, 1939, following the total disintegration of Czechoslovakia, Hungary forestalled Germany by a few hours by entering Subcarpathian Ruthenia with its armed forces and thus putting an enraged Hitler before the accomplished fact of establishing a common frontier with Poland. Thus the German Reich, outpaced by Hungary, was able to extend its "Protectorat" only to Bohemia-Moravia and to a nominally independent Slovakia. Hungary recovered by two stages an area along its northern frontier of some 23,000 km<sup>2</sup>, inhabited by roughly 1 ~ million people of whom more than 900,000 were Hungarians.

Let it be emphasized that owing to that common frontier established in March 1939, Hungary was subsequently able to receive and shelter shortly thereafter a great number of Polish refugees. It enabled her in fact to follow to the full her generous instincts toward Poland after the latter had been invaded by Germany and Russia. Maurice Baumont, in his recently published book on "The

\* The quadripartite Munich agreements stipulated, in so many words that "if the fate of the Hungarian and Polish minorities living in Czechoslovakia could not be settled within the ensuing three months by the governments concerned, the heads of government of the four great powers would study those problems afresh at another one of their meetings."

Origins of the Second World War" (106), records the perplexity into which an ambiguous situation had thrust the Hungarian nation, "proud, consciously chivalrous, bursting of rightful claims, yet emotionally linked with Poland". Hence, as early as July 1939, the Hungarian Prime Minister Count Paul Teleki (the same who subsequently committed suicide in protest against the German invasion of Yugoslavia from Hungarian soil) sent a letter to Hitler in which he made it clear that "owing to considerations of an ethical nature Hungary could not undertake any kind of military operation against Poland. Despite their strong revisionist fervor", wrote Paul Teleki, "95 per cent of Hungarians, from the Regent to the poorest beggar, would take a very unfavorable view of a German aggression against their Polish friends."

Correspondingly, Hungary refused to put her railway lines at the Germans' disposal, thus preventing the latter from dealing Poland a backhand blow\*. On September 9, 1939, the German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop requested in a note addressed to the Hungarian Government the right for the German armed forces to march against Poland through Hungarian territory. The Hungarian Regency Council, assembled on the same day flatly declared by a unanimous vote that for the Hungarian people it was a question of their national honor not to participate in any kind of military operation against Poland. But subsequently the Hungarians went even much further when during the one month of September 1939 they extended asylum to nearly 100.000 Polish soldiers fleeing across the Carpathian frontier. Later on the bulk of those Polish soldiers were, in spite of Germany's repeated protests, clandestinely funneled through Yugoslavia and Italy (then still non-belligerent) into France, Great Britain, the British bases

\* The Regent, Admiral Horthy, gave strict orders to blow up all the bridges of the Kassa railway line in case the Germans should be trying to use it for the transport of their armed forces.



in the Middle East and the United States. Of the Polish armed forces thus reconstituted some units fought in the campaign of France. in May and June 1940; their bulk, however, covered itself with glory in the Western Desert. including the defense of Tobruk. It was a Polish force, which bore, the brunt of the battle at Monte Cassino. before taking Ancona and Bologna. and finally striking out as far north as Normandy and Arnhem. And all that to some extent thanks to Hungary, however odd the thing may appear at first glance.

Contrasting strangely with Hungary's proud, and noble attitude, Roumania was the first power in Eastern Europe to align itself, as from 1938 onwards, on Nazi Germany's policies. Not much later that "safest pillar of collective security in Eastern Europe" and principal beneficiary of the victory won in 1918, which brought her such considerable territorial aggrandizement, abandoned herself body and soul to total collaboration with Germany under the leadership of the famous Marshal Antonescu. Already in September 1939, Roumania had backed out of her "offensive and defensive" alliance with Poland. In May 1940 she loosened all ties that bound her to France in distress and heaped insult upon injury when formally joining the Berlin-Rome Axis, on June 22, 1940. the very day of the Franco-German Armistice. Finally, on July 4 of the same year, Roumania left the League of Nations, which for twenty years had served her so well. Next, "heroic" Roumania, the "impregnable fortresses of the Carolline" notwithstanding, and ,in spite of boasting "the strongest army in South-Eastern Europe" gave up the province of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, without firing a shot, to the Soviet Union, in response to Moscow's first ultimatum, launched on June 28, 1940. In that respect one may recall that on the same date Hungary declined Stalin's offer to participate in the carving up of Roumania. However, two months later, on August 30, 1940, Roumania bowed, without shilly-shallying, to the second Italo-German arbitration which awarded Hungary the whole of northern Tran-

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

sylvania covering an area of 43,492 km<sup>2</sup> (of 103,000 km<sup>2</sup> adjudicated to Roumania by the Treaty of Trianon) with 2,185,546 inhabitants. of whom 1,123,216 were Hungarians and 916,690 Roumanians. Southern Transylvania remained Roumanian. extending over roughly 60.000 km<sup>2</sup> and counting 3 m inhabitants. approximately 2 m of them being Roumanians. the Germans and Hungarians following next with half a million inhabitants each. With those newly recovered territories Hungary's surface area attained as much as 171.640 km<sup>2</sup>. However. not unlike the true mother in the face of Solomon's judgment. many Hungarians felt heartbroken at 'the cruel bisection of Transylvania which had with one, arbitrary stroke destroyed its centuries-old geographic, economic and historic unity. They would have much preferred - as a contemporary diplomatic note found in the German Foreign Ministry's archives bears witness - "the creation of an independent State of Transylvania in which Germans, Hungarians and Roumanians could have lived under a system of self-government. endowed with equal rights.

Two other important facts must also be briefly mentioned here. First, that the frontiers determined by the two Vienna Awards, although far from perfect. responded better to the requirements of a balanced state of affairs in the Danubian basin. and to ethnic realities, than had those fixed by the Treaty of Trianon. Second, it was Czechoslovakia and Roumania who had recourse of their own accord, to arbitration by Germany and Italy, offer bilateral talks between them and Hungary had broken down. As for the Hungarians. they would have preferred. and for obvious reasons, not to see Germany mixed up in affairs, which did not concern her directly and only provided her with leverage to blackmail the interested parties one after another and finally drag them into the war.

Yugoslavia was the only country from which Hungary recuperated some territory by armed occupation if not strictly by the force of arms, namely the Bacska province and the southern

comer of the wholly Hungarian Baranya county. Those two territories extended over some 11,475 km<sup>2</sup>, with 950,000 inhabitants of whom roughly 350,000 were Hungarians, 200,000 Germans and about 150,000 Serbs. This compares with Yugoslavia's gains at Trianon which amounted to a total of 21,000 km<sup>2</sup> having a population of 1 ½ million, more than half of whom were Hungarians and Germans. Hungary has since much been blamed for her participation, although clearly forced upon her by the Nazi Germans, in the occupation of Yugoslavia in the spring of 1941. A measure of how much this went against the nation's grain was provided by Count Paul Teleki's suicide in his Prime Minister's official residence, on the dawn, and because, of the invasion of Yugoslavia by the Nazi armies. Nor should it be entirely forgotten that Yugoslavia had been one of the beneficiaries of iniquitous Treaty of Trianon, with its sequel of persecution and oppression to the detriment of the then newly constituted Hungarian minorities, an odious policy pursued in Yugoslavia just as vigorously as in the other successor states. Lastly, every nation under the sun is entitled to repealing, when occasion offers, the unjust provisions of a treaty forced upon it. Moreover, it was the beneficiaries of the Treaty of Trianon who were the first to violate its articles providing for the protection of the racial minorities. From a strictly legal point of view that alone sufficed to render null and void the entire treaty, for after all it is not the vanquished alone who should be made to respect treaty commitments. Another point that needs clarification, particularly in view of French public opinion, which continues clinging to certain misconceptions in this respect, relates to the economic and military support respectively given to Nazi Germany in the late war by Roumania and Hungary. There can be no doubt that as an auxiliary the former was by far more zealous and munificent than the latter. Along with Slovakia, Roumania declared war on the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941, the very first day of the German onslaught, going an out as Hitlerite Germany's staunchest ally.

The Hungarian declaration of war occurred on June 26, after the bombing of the cities of Kassa and Munkacs by what were at first believed to be Soviet airplanes, but which were most likely camouflaged Nazi aircraft used in a plot of trickery to push a reluctant Hungary to war with Soviet Russia. In 1941 Hungary mustered 7 divisions for the Russian front, Roumania 12. In 1942 there were 16 Hungarian divisions fighting on Germany's side as against 34 Roumanian divisions (107). The final confirmation of that comparison came from Field-Marshal Manstein himself, who wrote in 1952: "The Roumanians were our best allies, when we more or less forced the Hungarians into the war." Let us add that with her customary morbid hunger for territorial gains Roumania had, in the wake of Germany's first victories in the Ukraine, annexed the entire western half of that huge country under the fake name of "Transnistria", including the port of Odessa. But even prior to that, Roumania had not hesitated, on the occasion of the Second Vienna Award, to claim territory from her former ally, Czechoslovakia. Neither of which attitudes prevented her subsequently from dropping her German ally like a piece of the cake as soon as the Soviet armies reached her frontiers. What's more, Roumania joined the latter at once, in August 1944, to turn on their side against the retreating Germans. Hungary, on the other hand, after having done everything in her power to limit her participation in Nazi Germany's unwanted war - indeed to the extent of being occupied herself by Germany on March 19, 1944 - made an about turn in the late fall of that same year when she saw her national territory threatened by the Red Army\*. Hungary's resis-

\* The Armistice Agreement which Admiral Horthy tried to negotiate with the U.S.S.R., at the beginning of October, before being made a prisoner by the Germans, demonstrated Hungary's real intentions. However, as news began pouring in from the Soviet-occupied countryside of Russian extortions of all kinds, the bulk of Hungarian troops decided to defend their homeland to the bitter end.

tance lasted a solid 8 months, from the autumn of 1944 till spring in 1945, thus saving probably Austria and possibly even Bavaria, partially or wholly, from Soviet occupation. "Had Hungary not resisted so ferociously in that last phase of the war", argued one of the participants in those rearguard battles, "the Soviet Union might have found herself in an even more favourable position at Yalta, enabling her to present increasing demands, with Austria and Bavaria as pawns in her hands. Such, however, had not been the case, for while the talks went on at Yalta in February 1945, guns were still roaring around the ramparts of Soviet-besieged Budapest while the armies of the Marshals Tolbukhin and Malinowski continued marking time on Hungarian soil, fiercely defended by its most gallant sons. Budapest alone had resisted the Russians for 51 days - from December 24 to February 13 - the siege leaving 50,000 Hungarian and German dead under the city's ruins and only about 25 per cent of its houses still standing" (108).

But let us return for a moment or two in order to contemplate the collapse, under the first blasts of World War II, of those three heterogeneous conglomerates which the Treaties of St. Germain and Trianon had created in Central Europe, in 1919-1920, regardless of all the laws of geography and history.

To begin with, the union of Czechs and Slovaks proved "a matrimony concluded against the rules of nature between two nations which had no common traditions, held no common beliefs, and had neither a common language nor common interests." Obviously the Czech nation had every right to an existence on her own within the framework of the Bohemian plateau, which not unlike traditional Hungary formed a perfect natural entity. It is more difficult to understand what persuaded the Czechs to literally annex the Slovak region, which, situated on the other slope of the Carpathian watershed, is physically dependent: on the Danubian basin, being its northern rim. By what right could 6~ million Czechs set up a state of 14 million inhabitants while the Hungarian nation, representing a central bloc of at least 10 million

Magyars, had to content itself with a country reduced to a population of merely 8 million? Annexed without their assent, governed and administered by the Czechs, the Slovaks continued clamoring in vain for an autonomy which, as admitted by Thomas Masaryk himself, "they could have only obtained within Hungary" (190). The great French historian, Jacques de Bainville, had this to say on the subject, writing in the periodical "La Revue Universelle": "The geographical situation of Slovakia a country too small and too weak to be able to constitute a completely independent state, compels it to look to Hungary rather than Bohemia. It is to Hungary that she is tied by centuries-old bonds. Being attached to Bohemia while separated from Hungary cannot but lead that country to ruin." Another facet of the same situation was pointed out by Joseph Mikus, Member of the Slovak Institute of Cleveland, Ohio: "Within Hungary Slovakia had been the most highly industrialized region. In the historic kingdom she occupied the same place that was Bohemia's in relation to the Austrian economy. But no sooner had Slovakia changed her political allegiance than she was laid open to fierce competition by the more highly industrialized Czech lands. Determined to promote their own industries, the Czechs proceeded to shut down Slovak undertakings, one after another. The mining of copper was abandoned; the manufacture of glass disappeared almost totally. Czech economic policy aimed at reducing Slovakia gradually to an exclusively agricultural production" (110). Similarly Subcarpathian Ruthenia was literally wasting away once she had been cut off the Hungarian plain, the latter being the one and only outlet for her sole produce - timber, transported by raft down the rivers to Hungary in the older days. In return, the staple food of the Ruthenian mountaineers had been the wheat they used to bring back from the Hungarian plain where they were in the time-honored habit of descending each summer for working at the harvest. Clearly, therefore, their vital interests, too, pleaded for a close association with Hungary. "To annex Ruthenia to Prague",

wrote Aldo Dami not without a spark of humor, "was tantamount to attaching Biarritz to the Republic of Andorra by means of a corridor running along the peaks of the Pyrenees" (111).

We have noted that in order to recuperate part of its historic common frontier with Poland, Hungary, availing itself of the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, had proceeded on March 19, 1939, in the teeth of the enraged Germans, to reintegrate Subcarpathian Ruthenia, immediately granting the latter a large measure of self-government. A few days prior to that event, on March 14, 1939, Slovakia had declared its independence, placing itself, however, "under the protection of Germany", instead of following the road of its true interests by turning towards Hungary which would have granted it a very liberal status of autonomy. Yet without bearing it a grudge, Hungary was the first to recognize Slovakia on the morrow of its declaration of independence, followed by Poland on the next day. Let it be stated at this juncture that independent Slovakia boasted a surface area of only just on to 38,000 km<sup>2</sup> and 2,700,000 inhabitants, 85 per cent of who were Slovaks. After an initial period of tension, due to Ruthenia's occupation by Hungary, "relations between the two began improving little by little. On the margin of politics their reciprocal trade continued developing to the benefit of both, while the difficulties and sufferings occasioned by their participation in Germany's war on the eastern front gradually made for an ever closer rapprochement between those two peoples." (112) The process was far advanced when, in the spring of 1945, the Soviet invasion called everything into question once more. J. A. Mikus records it as a fact that Karol Sidor, Father Hlinka's successor as leader of the Slovak Nationalist Party had during World War II (when on account of his anti-Nazism he was semi-exiled in Rome as Minister to the Vatican) championed the grand design of a vast regional union which, once peace was restored, would have encompassed Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia (113). As mentioned before, on June 22, 1941, Slovakia had declared war

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

on the Soviet Union, at the same time as the Nazi German Reich and Roumania. 3½ years later, however, an uprising against the Germans took place in September-October 1944, which was crushed by the German armed forces at the cost of 25,000 casualties to the Slovaks. This was made possible by lack of support on the part of the Russians who obviously preferred a German part success at that juncture to liberation by non-communist powers. Only six months later, in March 1945, did the "liberating" Red Army pour into Slovakia, followed by its trail of habitual horrors. (114)

Here and now is the time to recall the fact, to the shame of the free world, that immediately following upon liberation, in 1945, at the initiative of that ill-starred man, Edouard Benes and with the scandalous connivance of the Western Allies, the Prague Government adopted the principle of the collective responsibility of the Magyars of Slovakia who, likewise as the Sudeten Germans, had during the Munich crisis expressed in their great majority the wish to be reintegrated with their country of origin. It was even decided that only "the Slavs" could be "fully-fledged citizens" of new Czechoslovakia. This was followed by the arbitrary expulsion of the Magyars and the confiscation of their property. A proposed investigation by the Allied Control Commission - never carried into practice - as subsequent interventions in Prague by, first, the democratically constituted Hungarian Coalition Government of 1945 and second, even Matyas Rakosi's communist regime, in 1948, proved of no avail. "Refusing to recognize henceforth any Hungarian national minority", Czechoslovakia decided to disperse the Hungarians, evicted from their homes, in the Sudeten region of Bohemia from which its autochthonous Germanic population had, in turn, been expelled. With its habitual legalistic hypocrisy, the Czechoslovak Government based its arbitrary act on a wartime measure "on the mobilization of manpower" relating to men between the age-groups of 16 and 55, as well as women between the ages of 18 and 45: "As from November 1947", wrote A. J.



Mikus. "the population transfer began to be carried out, under armed escort and in cattle trucks (also sometimes in lorries), mostly in very cold weather. Tens of thousands of Magyars were thus compelled to abandon their homes. Many of them preferred slipping clandestinely across the border into Hungary to being deported to Bohemian lands." (115) Let us underline with Mikus that only Slovakia's Roman Catholic hierarchy raised its voice in protest against the deportation of the Magyars, while the Slovak communists, with Messrs Clementis and Husak at the helm, deliberately supported the brutal solution of the Hungarian minority problem. (116) Luckily, by the end of 1948, the fate of the Hungarian minority - or rather what was left of it - swung to the better by being restituted to Czechoslovak nationality, while as from the beginning of 1949, those exiled to the Sudeten region were allowed to return to Slovakia (117). Taking account of the preceding facts as well as of the annexation of Sub Carpathian Ruthenia by the Soviet Union, in 1945, it is not astonishing that Czechoslovakia today presents an almost homogeneous complexion. According to the 1967 census, out of 14,333,000 inhabitants 94,1 per cent were Czechs and Slovaks (more precisely 64,8% Czechs and 29,3% Slovaks), there remaining, officially, only 563,000 Magyars, hardly 4% of the total population. In 1968 still, when Czechoslovakia was converted into a Federal Republic, those Magyars forming a homogeneous cluster stuck to the wrong side of the Hungarian border were clamoring in vain for being granted autonomy similarly to the Czechs and Slovaks (118). The same is the situation of the half a million Hungarians of the Yugoslav province of the Voivodina (1961 census) who have struggled for years to be recognized as an autonomous Republic, as are other constituent nationalities of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Similarly to Slovakia and Sub Carpathian Ruthenia, Transylvania is geographically speaking intimately linked with Hungary, not separated from it by any natural frontier. Its valleys,

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

rivers (bar one), roads and railway lines all converge on the great Hungarian plain and, ultimately, Budapest. Transylvania's only natural frontier, that of the massive rampart of the Carpathians, which except for a very few gorges difficult to penetrate presents an obstacle to communication, is exactly the one, that separates it from the old kingdom of Roumania. There is no denying it either that the many-centuries-old historical, economic and even ethnic bonds which tie Transylvania to Hungary are much stronger than its affinity for the original Roumanian provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia. "The morally most cruel wound inflicted by the Treaty of Trianon", wrote Rene Dupuis, "was without any doubt the separation of Transylvania from Hungary, regardless of the former having been in the XVIIth century the country of the Rak6czis and that of Gabriel Bethlen, the land where the purest Hungarian language is spoken and where Hungarian popular art had found its most exalted, most perfect and most original expression" (119). It should be added that it had been Transylvania which gave Hungary the Hunyadis and the Bathoris and that often the tragedy of the battle of Mohács the vital forces of the Hungarian race had found refuge in Transylvania, endowing the latter with economic prosperity, organized administration and civilization. Hungarian was the language of its Diet, its legislation, its princely court and its churches, while the Hungarian printing press enjoyed uninterrupted development there. Even in modern times some of the greatest and most successful masterpieces of post-World War I Hungarian literature were written in Transylvania. "Hungary's right to Transylvania", wrote Aldo Dami, "is much more justified than is France's claim to Alsace-Lorraine. For Transylvania had belonged to Hungary for 1,000 years and is geographically speaking still a part of it. And if the Roumanians represent a little more than half of Transylvania's population, it ought not to be forgotten that the population of Alsace-Lorraine is 80% Germanic while its territory lies outside the natural frontiers of France, to which it has belonged for only 250 years

as the result of armed conquest. In other words, Transylvania is certainly no more alien to Hungary than is Alsace-Lorraine to France." (120) As we have seen, the proportion of Roumanians in Transylvania, prior to World War I, had been about the same as that of the Hungarians in the traditional kingdom (autonomous Croatia excluded), that is, 53,8% as against 54,4%. In Transylvania proper there were at that time indeed only 33% of Hungarians, plus 11% of Saxons, with another 3% of miscellaneous national minorities. But that fact alone, which one must remember was the result of Hungary's centuries-old liberal hospitality, could it in fairness be regarded as justifying "the separation of Transylvania from the Hungarian mother country which had so equitably administered it during a whole millennium?" (121) And that without at least consulting its indigenous populations. The territory of the Szekelys alone, which with its 700,000 Hungarians constitutes a compact, if isolated, community and is in itself the most homogeneous ethnic bloc in Transylvania, extends over a larger surface area than the whole of Alsace-Lorraine. Hungary - the true country if not the official one - will never acquiesce in the adjudication to Roumania of those territories; no more than Russia has ever recognized during the interwar period the annexation of Bessarabia by Roumania. Let it be recalled in this respect that since the last quarter of the XIXth century, Franco-Russian diplomacy never ceased to dangle the Transylvanian bait under the noses of the "greater Roumanian" nationalists, in the hope of persuading Bucharest to turn against the Central Powers. Hence the conclusion, in June 1914, of the Russo-Roumanian secret treaty, notwithstanding the extension in the previous year of the Austro-Roumanian Treaty of Alliance of 1883 for another decade. However, the defeat suffered by the Russian armies at Tannenberg, in August 1914, deterred Roumania from entering the war right at its beginning, no matter how much it had been longing to pounce upon the Austro-Hungarian quarry in the footsteps of the attacking Russian

colossus. Only after Italy had joined the Allies, did Roumania, on August 27, 1916, at long last launch its army against Transylvania, almost completely depleted of defending troops – at the outcome of 2 years of blackmail and sordid bargaining with the Russians and their Western Allies. But no sooner had the Roumanians entered Transylvania than they were ejected from it in a disorderly rout which ended with the Central Powers' occupation of Bucharest and, finally, the ignominious separate peace of May 7, 1918. It was a stab in the back of Roumania's former Allies, in return for which the Central Powers rewarded Roumania with the entire 44,000 km<sup>2</sup> and 3 million inhabitants of Russian Bessarabia - a bargain not to be underestimated. In the end, as we now know, Roumania's defection did not prevent the Allied and Associated Powers from allotting to it, over and above Russian Bessarabia and Bukovina, the whole of Transylvania and even a big slice of the Hungarian plain. How right was Aldo Dami in maintaining that "Roumanian policy had always rested on the axiom that Roumania must enter wars at a minimum of risk, always find a place at peace conferences at the victors' side, so as to extract the greatest advantages at the cost of the smallest sacrifice possible." When Roumania first joined the Allies, in August 1916, it was by no means for "having espoused the cause of justice", as a mendacious Roumanian propaganda would try to make the world, and France in particular, believe after the event. The event being the victory of the Allies who were in fact less taken in by Roumania's fairy tales than one would be inclined to believe. "Roumania only joined us in the war", wrote Henri Pozzi, "because she anticipated our victory, not for the sake of our just cause or her deep-seated racial affinities (with France) . . . And when she left us in the lurch on May 8, 1918, having signed a peace treaty, which Clemenceau qualified as a disgraceful act of cowardice, she did so for fear of having backed the wrong horse. In November 1918 she sided with us once more, falling into the back of Field Marshal Mackensen's



retreating armies, because we were victorious and she was determined to get her share of the booty. . . Of all the scoundrels of this war, said Clemenceau to me in October 1918, the Roumanians were the worst scoundrels. For two years, being our allies but acting as if they were the allies of the Boches, they earned millions by selling their petrol and wheat to the enemy, and with what zeal did they supply Germany once more from May to October, 1918... On the battlefield they behaved like cads and in defeat like traitors. But once victory was won by others, they had the cheek: to claim their reward at the Peace Conference. What a damned audacity, exclaimed Clemenceau, when the Roumanian claims were presented to him. They left us in the lurch and now we should look after their interests. This is really too much. . . Nevertheless, of all the beneficiaries of a victory in which their share had been nil, they reaped the richest harvest." (122)

Between 1941 and 1944, Adolf Hitler was using the leverage of the Transylvanian problem once more, as we have seen, so as to gain the support of both Hungary and Rourmania in his war against the Soviet Union. As for Stalin, he did not succeed in persuading Hungary, in July 1940, to grab Transylvania while he was recuperating Bessarabia. At the end of the war, however, he was able to call the Transylvanian trump card once more so as to make communism prevail and establish Soviet paramountcy in both Hungary and Roumania. Eventually the latter obtained, by virtue of the Paris (Peace) Treaty, the retrocession of Northern Transylvania (temporarily returned to Hungarian sovereignty thanks to the 2nd Vienna Award of August 30, 1941) as a compensation for the loss of Bessarabia. As usual, Hungary had to foot the bill of that ingenious diplomatic transaction. After all, the Soviet Union, having annexed at the end of the war some counties inhabited by Magyars in Sub Carpathian Ruthenia (there were about 200,000 of them), had herself become a "successor state", clinging to the "status quo" in full solidarity with

them. Let it be noted, however, that as from November 14, 1944, and throughout the first few months that followed the "Liberation" of Transylvania up to the spring of 1945, the Roumanians who had entered in the wake of the Russian troops were driven back by the latter into Southern Transylvania - for the reason, hard to believe, of the Roumanians' outrageous acts of violence and exactions committed against the Hungarian population. Northern Transylvania was thus temporarily placed under Soviet Military Government, till March 1944 when Stalin, well before the beginning of peace negotiations in Paris, gave Northern Transylvania back to the Roumanians (in compensation, as we have seen, for the Soviet annexation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina), strictly on condition, however, that the minority rights of the various ethnic groups be respected. Furthermore, in 1952, there was created under Soviet pressure an "autonomous Hungarian Province" in the land of the Székelys in Eastern Transylvania, in application of Lenin's famous principle of nationalities and on the pattern of the autonomous provinces of the U.S.S.R. The amendment to the Roumanian Constitution, adopted for that purpose, read as follows: "The Roumanian People's Republic guarantees the Magyar population of the Szekely Region, where they live in compact settlements, their administrative and territorial autonomy." According to the Roumanian census of 1956, the Magyar Autonomous Region comprised 731.361 inhabitants. 79,38 per cent of whom were Hungarians and 20,62 per cent Roumanians. The triangle formed by this region on the map, pointing as it was towards the Carpathian arch, resembled remarkably the "Hungarian horn" which the 2nd Vienna Award had thrust across that country in 1940. (123)

Only after the epic Hungarian uprising of 1956 - which the Kremlin bitterly resented as an unprecedented affront to its prestige - did the Soviets give the Roumanian Government complete freedom of action in Transylvania. All the more so since in that country the Hungarian uprising had struck understandably

profound reverberations, on which the communist newspapers put their own peculiar interpretation pretending that "the Hungarians have still not succeeded in living down their chauvinist fascist past". The unexpected opportunity was eagerly grasped by the Roumanian authorities so as to renew their policy of terrorism to the detriment of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. People living in free Western Europe have no idea to what a scourge of arbitrary arrests, mass deportations, long-term hard labour and death sentences the unfortunate Hungarian minority was subjected until its fate became truly tragic and practically intolerable. Moreover, the Hungarian uprising provided the Roumanian Communist Party with a welcome opportunity to prove, at small cost to itself, its loyalty to the U.S.S.R. by relieving the Soviets of the distasteful chore of deporting the leaders of the rebellion into their own country. Thus Premier Imre Nagy, his Minister of Defense Pal Maleter and other leaders of the Hungarian people's revolution were, as we now know, savagely butchered at Sinaia, in Roumania, in January 1957, in other words well before they were said to have stood their "trial". Two years after the heroic Hungarian uprising the Roumanian Government was handsomely paid for its invaluable services rendered to the Soviet Union - in the shape of the final and total withdrawal of all Russian troops from Roumania. Finally, in December 1960, pretending to simplify regional administration, Nicolae Ceaucescu, the head of the Communist Party and Government in Roumania, issued a decree re-drawing completely the boundaries of the "Autonomous Magyar Province", which, at any rate, had become contradictory to the new conception of a Roumanian National State. Two districts in the south, populated up to 92% by Hungarians were detached from the Magyar Autonomous Region and merged with the Roumanian Province of Brasov, while in the north there was added to it a vast zone with an 88% Roumanian majority, the whole of the new structure to be re-named "The Autonomous Hungarian-Mures Territory". The



result of such ethnic engineering was the instantaneous fall in the ratio of the Hungarian majority to 63,97% and the corresponding rise of the Roumanian element to 36,03%. No need to add that this obviously reduced the Hungarian character of the former autonomous Magyar Province. Elsewhere, too, in Transylvania district and municipal boundaries were re-drawn practically everywhere, all of them entailing the reduction of local Hungarian majorities by splitting up the Magyar settlements and drowning them in adjoining Roumanian masses. The speeding up of industrialization also helped to enhance Roumanian majorities in Transylvania by adding to them Roumanian immigrants from the old "Regat" provinces, while the Hungarians are increasingly forced to emigrate in search for work elsewhere. As from the end of World War II, Roumanian refugees from Bessarabia were being systematically settled in most of the larger Transylvanian towns and cities, such as, for example, the capital Cluj (formerly Kolozsvár) or Oradea (formerly Nagyvarad), which had previously been of a predominantly Hungarian character but which are now having an increasingly mixed population, destined to become predominantly Roumanian soon. As said Senator Halpern in the U.S. Congress on March 24, 1965: "Mixed districts and cities are assuming an increasingly Roumanian character while formerly pure Hungarian districts are getting mixed populations" (124). All those tricks of ethnic engineering by methodically tenacious integration and dispersal are so adroitly carried out as to make it not at all easy to trace on the spot. One thing emerges clearly, nevertheless, from all relevant reports - for the last few years there has been going on in Transylvania a fresh wave of "feverish absorption" of the Hungarian minority which is thus progressively drowned both in the moral and physical sense of the word.

Statistical figures prove this more eloquently than anything else. From 53,8% of the total population of Transylvania in 1910, the Roumanians rose to 57,8% in 1930, and have arrived by now at the figure of 65%. It has been calculated that between 1918 and

1956 the Roumanians had added 1,320,000 to their number while that of the Hungarians remained practically stationary. In Transylvania's capital, Cluj, alone, of which once the Hungarians had formed the overwhelming majority, hardly one-third of the population remains Hungarian today.

Roumanian foreign policy, too, has been made to contribute its share to the oppression of the Hungarian minorities. The main objective is to isolate the latter, as completely as possible, particularly from Hungary: For a Transylvanian Hungarian it is almost as difficult to get a passport and an exit visa to Hungary as it is to travel to capitalist countries. The great haste with which Roumania is pressing for the creation of a Standing Conference of Balkan Countries\* reveals the secret desire of rendering final the scission between Transylvania and Hungary. The Hungarian-Roumanian cultural and trade agreements - more than modest at any rate - are being systematically sabotaged by the Roumanian party. Between 1949 and 1970 Roumania's share in Hungary's foreign trade was reduced from 5 to 2%\*\* Yet the most elementary interests of those two neighbouring countries, as well as the facts of geography would make it plain sense for them to increase their cooperation.

The catastrophic inundations which occurred in 1970 both in Transylvania and Hungary reminded people with a bang of the economic and hydrographic interdependence of those two regions.

In the light of that disaster the need for reorganizing the entire water system of the Danubian Basin appears as an extremely urgent one. Those recurring floods are due "in the first place to the destruction of the forests in the mountain regions (as pointed out, i. a., by the Hungarian Transylvanian Committee at the Paris

Le Monde diplomatique - July 1970 - p. 10

\*\* "Kiilkereskedelem" (Review of Foreign Trade) - Budapest - March  
1970 - p. 71

Peace Conference). The many hundreds of thousands living in the lowland parts of that region have therefore a vital interest in seeing the forests of Transylvania placed under proper forestry control. The Roumanian state did not bother to institute such a control, since the floods coming from its uplands affected only the Hungarians living on the great plain who are not its favorite sons and daughters, to put it mildly. The damage caused by those floods due to Roumanian sins of omission was very considerable, particularly in the neighborhood of the rivers Koros and Szamos" \* however, once more Transylvania was not listened to. Hence the tragic floods of 1970, which hit both Transylvania and certain territories of today's Hungary, the latter suffering the full impact of the masses of water scarcely kept in check by Romania's insufficient dams. Be it as it may, those regularly recurring inundations, causing the ruin of hundreds of thousands of lowland inhabitants once every ten or fifteen years, should not be tolerated any longer. The creation of a coordinated water system encompassing the entire Danubian Basin, and in particular the upper course of its tributaries, situated outside Hungary's frontiers in those mountain regions where alone effective barrages may be built, has become a vital necessity for all the nations living inside the Carpathian ramparts. The gravity of the situation is such as to justify international handling. Let it be added that Roumania's negative attitude is partly due to the fact that being rich in other sources of energy it is not keen on developing Transylvania's hydro-electric potentialities.

As regards the whittling down of the Hungarian-Roumanian cultural agreements, even the French press has been writing quite unequivocally, as may be judged from the following two samples. "Cultural exchanges constitute for obvious reasons the most

\* Transylvania Demands to be heard" (a Memorandum presented to the Paris Peace Conference, 1947, by the Hungarian Transylvanian Committee)

sensitive sphere. Roumania cannot be likened to Canada, and he who expected the toleration of privileged cultural relations between a foreign country - be it even a friendly one- and what is considered "part of the Roumanian nation" would prove himself pretty ignorant about the true nature of the power wielded by Bucharest." And another sample: "Let everyone handle his own Hungarians, is the opinion prevailing in the Roumanian capital. Ours have the same rights as everybody else, but precisely because they are Roumanian citizens. It would be inadmissible that they should enjoy the additional advantage of having direct exchanges with Budapest." The paradoxical result of that attitude, though quite understandable politically, is that the share of the Hungarians of Transylvania in those exchanges tends to be rather less than that of their Rumanian fellow-citizens. Thus, for instance, exhibitions of Hungarian books, organized roughly every other year, always take place in Bucharest, not in Cluj (Kolozsvar) or Tirgu-Mures (Marosvasarhely) where they would find the most knowledgeable amateurs in ready numbers. The Cluj Opera occasionally admits Hungarian guest singers, but only soloists, and as a body it is never allowed touring abroad. Some years ago the Transylvanian capital was bestowed the honor of a visit by the world-famous Comedie Francaise. Budapest's József Attila Theatre, on the other hand may produce plays only in Bucharest. The Hungarian Theatrical Company of Tirgu Mures (Marosvasarhely), one of the most highly reputed in the country, has not been allowed to visit Hungary since 1958. And the most recent visit of a Hungarian theatrical group in Transylvania occurred in 1946.

As regards newspapers and periodicals, the difficulties of penetration seem to be both permanent and overwhelming. It would be totally useless, for example, to search the newsstands of Transylvania for the official Hungarian communist party daily "Nepszabadsag" - it is practically unobtainable. The city of Kolozsvar-Cluj, counting up to seventy thousand Hungarian in

habitants, receives 115 copies of that newspaper, subscriptions included, as well as 29 copies of the other great Budapest daily "Magyar Nemzet", and 11 copies 'Of the literary review "Élet es Irodalom". Only the strictly non-political monthly "Science and Life" is allowed into Cluj with what would seem a normal number of 526 copies. It is comparatively easier in the capital of Transylvania to scoop up the Paris daily "Le Monde" (fifty copies per day) or the illustrated "Paris-Match" (twenty-five copies) than a newspaper coming from Hungary. \*

In view of all those facts 'One cannot help feeling confronted with a vast scheme of the Roumanian communist government, aimed today more keenly than ever before, at uprooting and denationalizing systematically, within the next 10--15 years, the entire Hungarian minority of Transylvania, still counting same 1,700,000 souls (exactly 1,587,000) according to the Official Roumanian census of 1956). Roumanian has superseded the Hungarian language as the medium for official communications at all levels, including the purely Hungarian districts. On the other hand, known in the past throughout the centuries as "the classical country of religious freedom", Transylvania has, in the last 50 years, become a country 'of religious persecution. Thus far example, in order to make disappear altogether the typically Transylvanian type of Roumanian personality, by merging it with the oriental mass 'Of Orthodox Roumanians, the "Uniate" denomination 'Of Eastern rite but living in communion with Rome has been simply extinguished in Transylvania, where it had been sturdily implanted with five dioceses looking after 1,570,000 Catholics 'Of Oriental rite. Under pressure from the Roumanian communist authorities all have been forced into the Roumanian Orthodox Church and in 1948 their six bishops and 600 priests

\* Cf. Mime! Tatu's article "Transylvania, a Crossroad of Nationalities" in Le Monde of November 14, 1967, p. 5

were arrested - four of the six bishops - actually died in captivity. Let it be recorded here, marginally, that a similar fate struck unfortunately Subcarpathian Ruthenia, in 1949, its 500,000 Catholics of Byzantine rite being forcibly merged with the Orthodox Church, after their bishop had been murdered. In Slovakia too, there had existed a diocese of Catholics of Oriental rite, counting some 320,000 faithful. After the arrest of their bishop and his suffrage in April 1950, they were also forced to join the Orthodox Church. Only in Hungary, where there subsists the Greek-Catholic diocese of Hajdudorog with some 200,000 faithful, have the Catholics 'Of Oriental rite been apparently spared so far.

All those elements making up the tragic predicament of Transylvania are covered by a heavy hull of silence; witness that poignant message entitled "The S.O.S. of Transylvania" which had reached the West by clandestine channels, in 1962. It was published in 1967 in Pierre Sequeil's "The Case of Transylvania" (Le Dossier de la Transylvanie), with a preface by Gabriel Marcel and edited by a Franco-Hungarian team. Most 'Of the facts relating to the Transylvanian problem as set out above have been extracted from that pamphlet.

Not unlike Hitlerite Germany, the Soviet Union is obviously not interested either in the fate 'Of the Hungarian minorities of Transylvania, or Slovakia for that matter, except insofar as those minorities may occasionally constitute useful counterbalancing forces in the game of see-saw which the Kremlin likes to play with its satellites. As for the Hungarian communist state, completely domesticated by Soviet Russia, it does occasionally pay lip service to the condemnation 'of the "Imperialist Dictate of Trianon" \*. Seemingly however, if not in fact, it is indifferent to

\* Declaration made by Janos Kadar on the platform of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, November-December 1966, as reported by Michel Tatu in *Le Monde* of December 3, 1966

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

the fate of the Hungarian minorities living in the neighboring countries. Incidentally, one may ask what would happen to the relatively balanced and peaceable condition of the entire Central-East European region if it occurred to Mr. Kadar one fine day to tender to his compatriots only just one-quarter of the kind of advice the late General de Gaulle had heaped on the French speaking Canadians of Quebec." (123) Or if the Hungarians of Transylvania were suddenly to stir up trouble, similarly to the Turks of Cyprus, the South Tyroleans or the Kurds?

The world is actually witnessing in Roumania under Comrade Ceaucescu's communist government a vigorous recrudescence of nationalism of the prewar "greater Roumanian", if not the 1940-1944 "Iron Guard" style. For the time being that policy certainly manifests itself by an apparently greater independence as regards Moscow, but involves also, in return, on the domestic plane one of the worst Stalinist regimes, and, above all, by the accelerated "Roumanization" of the ethnic minorities. To hoodwink the Western world, and more particularly perhaps the French, the Roumanian communist leaders pretend that in their country the problem of national minorities no longer exists, as opposed to the conditions prevailing in Czechoslovakia and, above all, in Yugoslavia. The truth, however, is that Roumania remains willy-nilly a multi-national state, and all the more so since the loss of Bessarabia, essentially because of the especially troublesome Transylvanian problem. On the diplomatic level, the Roumanian leaders are constantly offering the following subtle bargain to the West: we will remain outside the Kremlin's orbit so long as you shut both eyes to the accelerated Roumanization of Transylvania. For there the Roumanian authorities are still obstinately trying, with all the means at their disposal, to extirpate the Hungarian minority which after half-a-century's attempts in that direction still survives as a comparatively considerable ethnic group. One is there fore entitled to speak of fifty years of oppression, and decadence in respect of the Hungarian minority of Transylvania,

which at the present time does not enjoy, moreover, either protection or support from any quarter. In Transylvania the Roumanians are displaying such outrageous chauvinism as was practised before 1914 by the Germans in Alsace-Lorraine.

Under such conditions the Transylvanian problem could never be settled satisfactorily. It is humanly impossible for martyred Transylvania to remain forever the constituent part of a Roumanian "national" state. It must become autonomous as soon as possible. Since the statute of the ethnic minorities of Transylvania laid down in a special covenant following two world wars was being deliberately and systematically violated by consecutive Roumanian governments over a period of more than 50 years, it would by now seem totally illusory to go on trying to ensure the fundamental rights of Transylvania's racial minorities by rules put into written words, at any rate so long as that country remains within the framework of Roumania. In the course of the last half-century succeeding Roumanian governments have, alias, given ample proof of the disregard in which they held the rights of the minorities, whose subjection to oppression, so far from being mitigated with the passage of time, has steadily gone from bad to worse until today it has turned particularly intolerable and scandalous being practiced by a regime which tries quite overtly to curry favor with the West and solicit its support. It is even more than doubtful that international supervision could remedy that state of affairs.

Between 1921 and 1937 the Hungarians of Transylvania had submitted in due form as many as 33 complaints to the League of Nations, which did in no way attenuate the hatred of their oppressors: on the contrary it made it burn with an even hotter flame. Purely legal guarantees can no longer be considered sufficient for solving that grave problem, especially if one takes account of the fact that today's new Roumania is no improvement on its predecessor. After the very deficient and mostly ineffectual supervisory procedure of the League of Nations during the interwar period have followed nearly three decades of silence and a big



black void. Roumania can today afford to oppress its minorities with total impunity. Admittedly, as we have said before, considering the geographic, Historical and cultural unity of Transylvania, the Vienna award of 1940, which split the country in two, was a bad solution. The more so as it could not be satisfactory even on ethnographic grounds, given the extremely chequered location of the nationalities. On the other hand, we have seen how those 150 years in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries during which Transylvania had enjoyed independence corresponded to the golden age of that country - an island-fortress of peace and prosperity amid the Ottoman flood which, while submerging all the surrounding lowland regions, had almost miraculously spared it. Transylvania's geographical condition predestined it to be to some extent a closed system, making for peace and liberty within, not unlike what has since materialized in Switzerland, of which Transylvania had in a way been the eastern forerunner. In fact, the Principality 'Of Transylvania had been the rampart of the freedom of conscience and racial tolerance at a period during which the great West European countries were still moaning under the scourges of autocratic tyranny and cruel religious strife.

Today perhaps more than ever before, its natural frontiers enclosing it on three sides, and the numbers of its population could justify Transylvania's reverting to a status of independence. Having incorporated the former province of the Banat and the ex-Hungarian border zone called "Partium", present-day Transylvania extends over a surface area of 193,000 km<sup>2</sup>, counting 6,700,000 inhabitants. This is nearly twice as much as historic Transylvania, the population of which amounted to 3,700,000 souls only, living on an area of some 57,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Greater Transylvania could thus become a very viable state, ranking with contemporary Austria or Hungary. Once independent, it could form, like Switzerland, a little Confederation within which all its ethnic groups would find once more room and opportunity for living

out their lives normally. It could even become - who knows? the model for a much vaster solution, eventually to be adopted by the entire Danubian Basin. Such a solution of Transylvania's political problem would moreover carry with it the considerable advantage of creating both the internal equilibrium of its nationalities and an external balance of power between Hungary and Roumania. After all, those two nations, between whom Transylvania has been an apple of discord for so long, should be each other's natural allies gripped as they both are between the northern and southern jaws of the huge Slavonic vise. In face of that danger they ought to be able to rely on each other, but they cannot because the dispute over the possession of Transylvania so viciously divides them. Only Transylvania's independence could bring about their reconciliation. The very frame of mind of the Transylvanians themselves - be they Roumanian, Hungarian or Saxon - is one shaped by strongly liberal traditions and devoid of racial prejudices. Semblances to the contrary are ephemeral and superficial: the true Transylvanian character is eminently suited to the solution described above which, moreover, would also benefit Transylvania's neighbors. It must not be forgotten that at the end of World War I the whole population was clamoring for a plebiscite, including the Roumanians who were obviously not too keen on falling under the domination of their racial brethren from the old provinces beyond the Carpathians. That was the reason why, in November 1918 still, they negotiated in order to obtain autonomy from Professor Oscar Jaszi, Minister of National Minorities in the Government of Michael Karolyi's Hungarian Republic. Those negotiations were superseded by the arrival of the troops of King Ferdinand of Roumania and the Assembly of Alba Julia (Gyulafehervar), where only some leaders of the ethnic group, supported by the bayonets of the Roumanian army, proclaimed the adhesion of Transylvania to Roumania, on December 1, 1918, in accordance with a scenario carefully prepared beforehand

(125). Had a plebiscite been organized at that time, provided with all reasonable safeguards, it would most likely have stabilized the balance at a happy medium, choosing the reasonable compromise of independence, the only one to enable the Hungarians and Roumanians to settle their dispute definitively. The ideal solution remains for Transylvania, "so far from being a cause of discord, to represent the bond which ties Hungary and Roumania together" (126).

As for the fate of Croatia, it has been particularly harsh and cruel ever since it decided on 29 October 1918, to quit its association with Hungary which had been so harmonious and fruitful for nearly 8 centuries. As early as 1849, after the defeat of Hungary's liberal revolutionary war, the Croats had utterly lost their independence, being subjected by Vienna to the same kind of Germanic centralization that was the fate of the Hungarians whom they had helped to bring to heel. This did not, however, prevent the Croat propagandists from continuing their day-dreaming about a "Greater Illyria" to be established under their management. Little did they ask themselves how a people like theirs, steeped in Western-Latin cultural traditions could, without incurring catastrophic consequences, let themselves in for a wholly unnatural union with Serbia, a Balkanic country possessed by the lust for domination. The truth is of course that what the Croats really wanted was a merger with Bosnia-Herzegovina, where they outnumbered the Serbs by 57% to 43%, in order thus to form an independent state. But there again, the victorious Allies, basing themselves on the so-called "expressions of the national will" as represented by "Yugoslav National Congresses" \_ those of Corfu (27. 7. 1917) and Rome (8.4.1918), both inspired and orchestrated by the Serbs - decided on their own responsibility to join Croatia, Slovenia and the other Balkanic provinces of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire to Serbia, without the holding of plebiscites anywhere (127). The Croats discovered, alas too late after having been subjugated by the Serbs, what a chasm

separated them from the latter. By then they would have been more than happy to enjoy the same rights that had been theirs under the much-decried "Hungarian despotism", with their autonomous government and diet in Zagreb, a separate Croatian army and their own Croatian flag. . . They had indeed fallen from the frying pan into the fire of the centralizing pan-Serb regime of Yugoslavia's King Alexander, whose assassination was, incidentally, the outcome of the Croats' bitter disappointment. May we, for the sake of the clear understanding of the Croatian problem, quote here and now from a recent book by Bertrand George, entitled "The West Gambles and Loses: Yugoslavia during the War" (128). "The 5 million Croats", writes Bertrand George, "belong to the Western-Latin world: the 10 million Serbs to the Eastern Byzantine one. . . The Serbs should have learnt the lesson history -especially the history of Austria-Hungary-taught them: namely that the Croat problem was by no means an easy one since even the Habsburg had failed to solve it. For eight centuries under the Crown of St. Stephen the Croats had struggled to obtain an ever wider administrative autonomy. But even though it is true in a sense that the double-headed eagle of Austria-Hungary had not succeeded in resolving the Croat problem, it is also true that there never occurred a popular uprising directed against the dynasty in Croatia. When the Croat National Assembly (the sabor) convened in Zagreb, in October 1918, it decided to secede from the Austro-Hungarian Empire already in its death-throes, but it did in no way decree the union of Croats and Serbs in the same state. The fusion was achieved later by an act of force, which marked also the beginning of Croat resistance to Serb hegemony. One of its most violent episodes was the murder of the Croat Peasant Party leader, Stepan Raditch, in a plenary sitting of the Belgrade Parliament, on July 20, 1928. ("Never again to Belgrade. . .", he murmured on his deathbed.) On January 6, 1929, the Constitution was suspended by King Alexander I, thereby instituting the Royal dictatorship, a dictatorship of the Serbs. It was to be an era of

centralisation within a unitary Yugoslav state. In reaction to it the Croat lawyer and Member of Parliament, Dr. Ante Pavelitch founded the "Ustasha" ("the rebels") movement and the Croat Civil Guard. They found shelter in Italy whence they plotted acts of terrorism in league with the Macedonian O.R.I.M. group, including the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles, on October 9, 1934. After the 1935 general elections, decreed by Prince Paul, the head of the Regency Council, Dr. Vlatko Matchek became the Parliamentary leader of the Croat Peasant Party... On April 10, 1941, four days after the Nazi German had invaded Yugoslavia armies, Slavko Kvaternik, ex-colonel of the Austro-Hungarian Army, declared an Independent Croat State in Zagreb. A few days later Dr. Ante Pavelitch entered Zagreb with his entire retinue of Croat émigrés, assuming the title of "Poglavnik" (head of state) and installing himself in the historic mansion of the one-time "Bans" (governors) of Croatia. He appointed Slavko Kvaternik "Marshal of Croatia and First Doglavnik" .

"The new Croat State included Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia, on the one hand, but was subdivided, on the other hand, into a German and Italian zone of occupation. The Italian Prince of the House of Savoy, Aimone, Duke of Spoleto, was proclaimed King of Croatia with the name of Zvonimir II, but in fact never occupied his throne for one moment. Southern Slovenia was annexed by Italy, its Northern part and Styria by the Nazi German Reich, while Hungary recuperated the small triangle of the Muraköz between the rivers Drave and Mura.. Montenegro became an independent Principality once more and the Macedonian parts of Serbia were incorporated by Bulgaria. . .

Between the two world wars the Croats suffered very much from Serb centralism - for which they took revenge, during World War II, their fury being further exacerbated by religious fanaticism which made them feel that they were waging "a crusade", "a holy war". Beginning during the summer of 1941, they de-

populated entire Serb villages. massacring most of their inhabitants. The country was "Croatized" in the strictest sense of the word by iron and fire, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina where the various ethnic elements were most intricately interlaced. Much like Serbia had been in 1918. Croatia was inflated with vain-gloriousness, thirsting to avenge the long years of Serb oppressm. But vengeance engendered vengeance of the other side, neither camp yielding second place to the other in terms of cruelty... The Danube and Save rivers were full of Serb corpses floating downstream. with cardboard labels tied round their necks bearing the inscription "returned to the homeland" ... Towards the end of the war "Croat Armed Forces". some 230.000 men strong faced about 500.000 of Tito's partisans, of whom more than 300.000 actually occupied Croat soil . In that desperate situation the Croat units received the order to fight on the Germans' side to the bitter end... The tragic end came on May 14. 1945, at Bleiburg. where 400.000 retreating Croats. men. women and children. were delivered to the tender mercies of Tito's partisans after having been disarmed by the British. By mid-June up to 130.000 of them were massacred by the Titoists in the neighbourhood of Maribor. According to Mr. Dedijer. one of Marshal Tito's principal lieutenants. the total toll of World War II in Yugoslavia amounted to about 1.700,000 dead. 810.000 of whom were Serbs, killed by the Croat Ustashis. And Croatia was decimated in turn. Somewhere between 200.000 and 300,000 paid with their lives the restoration of "Yugoslav Unity and Fraternity". None of this, alas, needs any commentary.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FRENCH SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

#### JOURNALISTS, DIPLOMATS, GENERALS

"To have a true feeling for France means to know that her genius, her tenderness, her sanctity constitute a treasure which can neither be expressed in terms of money nor be devalued by any triumph of violence. Even when, on occasion, by betraying her mission, France disappoints those who pinned their hopes on her, that very disappointment amounts to a testimony. For there are peoples of whom no one ever expected anything: there are also reproaches which cannot be conceived without an ingredient of love. It is France's honour to be a nation to whom mediocrity is not forgiven; a people of whom greatness is expected."

Rev. Paul Doncoeur: "La France vivra" (France Shall Live) Paris, 1941: p. 99.

Before and during World War I, two schools of thought were vying with each other in France in respect of the fate to be reserved to Austria-Hungary, and more specifically to Hungary. One pleaded for dismemberment, the other for preservation. Unfortunately the former prevailed against the latter.

We have already mentioned a certain propaganda doing preparatory spadework, before and during the first world war, in order to attain that double dismemberment, which it subsequently devoted itself to stabilizing and at all costs. Thomas Masaryk and Edouard Benes, in particular, worked as assiduously during the

war on influencing French opinion as had done Isvolsky, the Tsar's powerful diplomatist, between 1909 and 1914, in order to drag France into the war. Both succeeded in misleading French opinion at two critical junctures in war and peace. Their task being greatly facilitated by what was described at that time by one of Isvolsky's agents as "the abominable venality of the Parisian Press" (129). The most influential journalist in the French capital, prior to becoming a negotiator of the peace treaties, was at that time a certain Andre Tardieu, Foreign Editor of the daily newspaper "Temps". More than anyone else he devoted his energies to that propaganda which subsequently proved so fateful to Austria Hungary. Henri Pozzi's book "Les Coupables" (The Guilty Men) quotes one example, which goes a long way towards explaining how things happened. "On March 11, 1914, wrote Henri Pozzi, Andre Tardieu gave a lecture in Bucharest - entitled 'Transylvania, Romania's Alsace-Lorraine' - in the presence of the French Minister Plenipotentiary to an audience of Roumanian Cabinet Ministers and General Officers. The appeal he made to Roumanian chauvinism and imperialism was apparently tremendous" (130). But there were two other men in France at that time who performed a no less pernicious role in the drama of destruction with which we are concerned. One of them was a particularly obtuse and sectarian professor of history at the University of Sorbonne - Ernest Denis, a partisan of Edouard Benes' ideas who was to become, subsequently, the principal architect of the new frontiers in Central Europe. The other one was Philippe Berthelot, Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry, dubbed the 'sovereign master of the Quai d'Orsay' who, according to Henri Pozzi, at the end of July, 1914, "employed all his authority to frustrate the advances made by Austria-Hungary, at the very moment when the latter seemed prepared to compromise" (131). It was the same Berthelot who at the end of the war ordered his Ministry "to do, in respect of Central Europe, everything as requested by Monsieur Benes". Hence it was Edouard Benes who.



using Philippe Berthelot as middleman, called the tune at the Quai d'Orsay. Edouard Benes was without any shred of doubt the man chiefly responsible for the destruction of the Dual Monarchy and the dismemberment of Hungary. He was also one of the cleverest and most wily propagandists of his time, "achieving his ends by means of a flowery rhetoric, perfidious misinterpretations, deliberate omissions, trickeries and the brazen distortion of documents and facts". On top of it all he was a notorious opportunist, lacking both courage and generosity of vision, fated to become twice during his long career the gravedigger of his own country as well as of Europe. Today he is being increasingly criticized and denounced for his ill-fated activities, not least in France where he had once been so popular and influential. In addition to the very objective profile drawn of him in Henri Pozzi's book "Les Coupables" (132), Gabriel Puaux has come out more recently with a scathing condemnation of Benes whom he accuses of having "led his country down the path to dismemberment and slavery" (133). Jacques Mordal in his book "Versailles ou la paix impossible" wrote in a similar vein (134). But in our view it was Venzel Jaksch who asked the most pertinent and indeed damning question in the following terms: "Why, at the end of the first world war, did the Quai d'Orsay and Marshal Foch's General Staff adopt Benes' theses, thus abandoning France's own peace project? . Why did they blindly support all their small allies' excessive demands? Instead of acting as the arbiter, which in fact and by right was the proper role for France to play?" (135). The answer to those questions had been already given thirty years earlier by Aldo Dami in these terms: "Ignorance of the history of the peoples and countries of the Danubian Basin characterized unfortunately most of the French politicians. Hence they became the tools and victims of the deceitful propaganda so adroitly pursued by Benes and his associates who, for the sake of achieving their ends, never hesitated to willfully distort the truth

by mendacious assertions aimed at deceiving their French friends and opposite numbers." And he added: "One cannot but note regretfully that at the Peace Conference the French delegates were the ones to contribute most to the harshness of the fate meted out to Hungary, as indeed to the harshness of the treaties in general. If Czechoslovakia, in particular, obtained the Danube as her southern frontier, in disregard of the ethnic principle and the peoples' right of self-determination, that was above all due to Marshal Foch's insistence upon his strategic considerations . . . French political writers are therefore mistaken - sometimes in good faith - when answering revisionist criticisms with the assertion that France had not acted alone in working out the peace treaties, thus trying to make the allies collectively share in the responsibility for the errors committed in Central Europe." It needs moral courage indeed to make the affirmation that French statesmen, including Georges Clemenceau and Raymond Poincare, were indisputably the principal architects of the 1919-1920 peace treaties, all of them dictated, by the way, in the neighborhood of Paris. All of them did of course subsequently plead obligations contracted during the war, for example Poincare who declared: "whether we did right or wrong in dismembering Hungary and Austria, the fact remains that it had to be done by virtue of our commitments entered into in the course of the war. In the last resort it was considered something that had to be tried."

Andre Tardieu, on assuming his functions as chairman of the Committee called upon to settle the fate of Austria-Hungary, declared bluntly: "No pity must be shown to Hungary" . . . (136) - echoing incidentally General Franchet d'Esperey's brutal outburst."

Such was the frame of mind of the leaders of France at that time. "All counter-proposals, all protests", adds Henri Pozzi, "were met by the inexorable opposition of Andre Tardieu." And he goes on: "The Trianon Peace Conference will appear on the record of history well informed as the handiwork of Andre Tardieu. Hiding

behind Clemenceau and Wilson he did it all. . Today we are able to take the true measure of the immense mistake which he caused the victorious allies to commit at Trianon, actuated by blind hatred, by his ruthless concern for ensuring the fullness of loot to the Czech and Serb Slavs as well as their Roumanian associates, the loot which they craved and the possession of which he - their collaborator and paid hireling of many years' standing - had guaranteed them." (137)

For the sake of historic truth and in fairness to France there existed at the time, which is the object of these recollections, another school of thought. It represented quite obviously the best of the intellectual and moral forces of the country, but it was unable to prevail against the others and impose its views upon them. But at least it raised a great number of voices. Gabriel Gobron, in his book already often quoted on these pages, passed some of them in review: "Trianon? A peace of ignorance, declared Gabriel Hanotaux. A peace of cruel imagination, according to Senator de Monzie. A peace disorganizing Europe, said Monsieur Lentil. A peace, which the fathers of the glorious dead for the fatherland could not have had the courage to ratify, admitted Monsieur de Lamarzelle. An imperfect peace, emphasized Aristide Briand. And why not add to that rosary of sad assessments the words of Paul Doumer, President of the Senate: 'Poor Hungary to which we've been so unjust . . .' A year went by", continues Gabriel Gobron, "before the powers in control plucked up sufficient courage to present the criminal Treaty of Trianon to the French Parliament for ratification. For it the French negotiators had been at least as responsible as their Allied colleagues. When confronted by Czech trickery they could have examined objectively the Hungarian objections formulated by Count Albert Apponyi. But nothing of that kind was done because those responsible did not wish to do so. Yet, being embarrassed by their own negativism they held out fallacious promises of rectification and revision for a vague future. Such

was Millerand's ill-famed covering letter, which was merely heaping insult upon injury. And as to the attempts at whitewashing the French negotiators and Parliamentarians, if they were not guilty, what sense would make the protestations of some of them? Such as Lamarzelle, Paul Boncour, Charles Danielou, Anatole de Monzie, Charles Tisseyre, Aristide Briand, etc. Trianon was a criminal act; there is no other term to describe adequately the most wicked of all wartime treaties, imposed amid the vapors of blood, the haze of gunpowder, the exaltation of victory and the 'Schadenfreude' derived from torturing the vanquished. There was the generosity of France for you! Torchbearer of civilization indeed! Her so-called policy of greatness, humaneness and readiness to sacrifice, etc, to quote only the most pompous and hackneyed clichés of the French professional politicians' vocabulary! . . . What monstrously pitiful unawareness! . . . Because to us the name of France is inseparable from the notion of JUSTICE", concludes Gabriel Gobron, "Let us ask forgiveness of a Hungary impoverished and aggrieved because of the ills which our elders and betters have inflicted upon her!," (138). Georges Desbons, repeatedly quoted above, wrote in a similar vein: "Should one consider intangible this treaty which oozes error and ignorance? Consider definitive a text which French diplomacy dared submit to Parliamentary ratification only one year after it had been signed?" (139). Let it be made clear that the French Senate, deeply perturbed by the revelations emanating from some of its members, as well by statements made in the Chamber of Deputies, beginning with the rapporteur, Charles Danielou, of whose speech we have quoted some extracts - the French voted the Treaty of Trianon with considerable reluctance and with the explicit reservation that the French Government would exert itself in order to have revised all the errors and injustices, which had been pointed out. Of course nothing of the kind ever happened; nor is there anything to be astonished about it. What remains is the record of those Parliamentary debates of

June-July 1921, which reveals a great deal of the embarrassment, if not a sense of shame, felt in France at the provisions of that scandalous Treaty. During the sitting of July 11, 1921, Senator de Lamarzelle made, literally, the following declaration: "In the face of all those who' gave their children's' blood in order that France may become mare beautiful after her victory, I am unable to' pluck up sufficient courage far putting my signature underneath such a Treaty." (140) Even the statement made by Aristide Briand in the Chamber of Deputies, an June 7, 1921, although far from being of the same kind, was characteristic none the less of the uncomfortable feelings which haunted the French politicians at that time. "The Treaty of Trianon", said Briand, is certainly not perfect, and I should be the last person to' vindicate the contrary . . . Who' could contest the fact that the frontiers of Hungary have been somewhat arbitrarily drawn? Suffice it to' look at the map and follow the frontier line - which is not absolutely definitive anyway - to' realize that it represents anything but the embodiment of justice" (141). Let it be added that the United States Congress refused, pure and simple, to' recognize and sign the Treaty of Trianon: in fact America, in order to signify its disapproval more markedly, concluded a separate peace with Hungary, an August 29, 1920.

May we refer at this juncture to some French can temporary opinions, expressed mare elaborately than the preceding statements. Take, for example, Senator de Monzie: "The psychologists of history will never understand why the French politicians of our day were so dead set against Hungary alone, risking to transfer her remains to' those very powers which we always pretended to' look upon as a future menace. What Neronian madness pushes us to' starting irredentist movements, as, though we wished deliberately to maintain endemic seats of fire around a people which we loathe so much that we throw it as fuel for recurring incendiary flames to feed on? By what aberration of the mind did the same men who' had been trumpeting all aver the world

the sanctity of racial and national rights, deprive the Magyars of towns the entire population of which - apart from a very few exceptions - spoke Hungarian, and indeed was Hungarian by origin, heart and culture, Why, indeed why?" (142). Charles Tisseyre, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, had this to say: "It needed all the bad faith of some to join forces with the ignorance of others in order to cut to pieces, on account of some imaginary oppressiveness, that marvelous entity which was ancient Hungary. That nation, which had lived the reality of administrative and political unity for 10 centuries and which by virtue of its geographical conformation represented an economic entity was torn to shreds under the pretext of consisting of disparate nationalities. And by so doing what have they achieved? They have created three new countries inhabited by a mixture of races even more disparate than that of Hungary had been. They destroyed the political and economic unity of a strong and sound country so as to build from its fragments new states whose unity is much more fragile . . . Hungary attributes to France, not unjustifiedly, the responsibility for the errors and injustices from which she suffers. This state of affairs must not be allowed to last forever. Why did France allow all this to happen? . . . This Treaty is our handiwork. Thanks to a policy of blunder, contradictory to long historic experience, we have alienated a nation which everything ought to attract to France... The Hungarians were the faithful and loyal allies of the Germans during the late war? All right, do not let us forget that. However, are we entitled to blame the Hungarians for having become Germany's allies? Didn't we push them by favouring as much as we have done the growth of Panslavism in the countries of Austria-Hungary? " Now Trianon has thrust Hungary into Germany's arms once more. Was it thinkable that Hungary could afford not to go to war on Austria's side? We all know today what attitude Count Tisza had adopted in the Crown Council in Vienna, held on the morrow of the Sarajevo murders. As for the Hungarians, their war was not

directed against France: they fought against the Russians and Serbs who threatened them. . . Throughout the war French subjects were enabled to live in Budapest as free individuals, subject to no coercion, free to speak their language - and the theatres in Budapest continued producing French plays... And need one add that the outbreak of Count Michael Karolyi's revolution was accompanied by the cry 'Long live France'? That we wished to punish Hungary for having participated in the war, is something that may be discussed. But why treat her more harshly than Germany or Austria? The Hungarians have not been able to get a jot of justice out of France. No wonder that as time went by they have come to regard France as the sole source of all the ills, which have befallen Hungary since Trianon... The French Press is distinguishing itself especially by its anti-Magyar ravings. In Hungary you get the impression that every one of their misfortunes comes from France . . . You ask yourself if you are awake or dreaming; what could have been the incentive of those who built that monument of insanity which is Trianon?" (143)

Rene Dupuis, author of "The Hungarian Problem" (Paris 1931) wrote this i.a.: "Prior to 1914, Hungary enjoyed affinities in France the sum total of which amounted to an almost traditional friendship. All that has been forgotten because of the war and at the present time there is perhaps no other country in Europe of which the French know less than they do of Hungary. Already during the 10 to 12 years preceding the war, Franco Hungarian relations which had been so multiple and close in a still recent past, began to fade little by little almost unnoticeably. Less and less distinction was made between Budapest and Vienna, between Hungary and Austria, the latter hitching her fortunes increasingly to the German bandwagon. That was the time, too, when Serbs, Czechs and Roumanians began to spread in France tendentious pamphlets which were more often than not excessive and unjustified in putting forward claims and revealing the allegedly dire condition of their racial brethren living in the





Empire - in other words the myth of Hungary's oppressing her Slavonic and Roumanian minorities . . . That chasm was obviously further widened by the war... That frame of mind, artificially created just before and during the war, as well as the political dexterity of the Czech, Serb and Roumanian delegates to the Peace Conference were largely instrumental in drawing up the Treaty of Trianon and rendering it so unjustly detrimental to Hungary. Hence the stupor of the Hungarians at seeing France, whom they had rightly expected to intervene with counsels of moderation, implacably and deliberately hostile to their cause, down to the most trifling details and formalities. " Yet as matters had turned out at the end of the war, France seemed predestined to be the supreme arbiter in the settlement of Central European affairs. Unfortunately the French Government did not grasp the difficult yet magnificent role it was called upon to play: it had the weakness of espousing, instead, the passions of its local allies and satisfying all their demands in contempt of justice and at the risk of jeopardizing their true interests as well as its own, and the peace of Europe . . . By failing to moderate the territorial claims of its allies in Prague, Bucharest and Belgrade, the French Government in fact created a Hungarian irredenta, as justified in law and equity, for at least part of its claims, as had been those of France in relation to Alsace-Lorraine prior to 1914. . . As a matter of fact the rightful nature of those claims resulted in Hungary's becoming the object of a kind of sneaking dislike on the part of the nations responsible for the Trianon Treaty, such as notably France... When the war had ended, geographic and economic conditions required the reconstitution of Austria Hungary, albeit in a different, more supple form than before, which would have ensured for all the states called upon to become the component parts of a new Union of Danubia Peoples with equal rights and complete political independence. Only France, comparatively far away and disinterested, could have brought about the reconciliation of all those peoples, needed for the for

mation and consolidation of such a central bloc in Europe. Alas, France failed to seize all opportunities available for obtaining that result" (144).

To this must be added, in conformity with Rene Dupuis, that the Little Entente, which France had patronized between two world wars, represented but a miserable "trade association of victors", its only objective being to keep in bondage that Hungary which ought to have been the natural and indispensable nucleus of a sound Danubian Union. France, on the other hand, having failed to bring together in peace and prosperity all those states, had to watch them being welded together, for the last 35 years, first by Germany and subsequently by Soviet Russia, in slavery and unhappiness. None of this relieves France of the duty of repairing the damage done one day by seeing to it that "justice is rendered to Hungary and by helping the Hungarian nation to rise to its feet again."

Henri Pozzi summed up his ideas in the following manner: "Of all the vanquished of World War I Hungary had been the most cruelly hit. In the name of justice she was literally quartered. The punishment inflicted upon her was an execution . . . Never since the partition of Poland has a nation been tom to pieces in such fashion . . . Never before had a peace imposed by violence been more brutal in its bias, madder in destructiveness, more forgetful of the lessons of history and better calculated to stir up old hatreds to new flames of loathing, than the "peace of redress and reason" born in 1920... What Trianon effected in actual fact was quite simply, to endorse and legalize the occupations by conquest, achieved after the cessation of hostilities by the armed forces of the so-called successor states, in stark violation of the armistice agreements concluded with the Allied and Associated Powers. Injustices, abuses and illogicalities - worse than anything of the kind experienced in the past - were thus sanctioned for the benefit of three countries whose leaders, in order to better divide among themselves the prospective spoils of Austria

Hungary had in 1917 formed a conspiracy proper of intrigues and appetites. They set to work in ministerial as well as editorial offices, the latter including the influential newspapers of Paris, Rome, London and New York, with their propaganda articles and cheque-books, forging maps and statistics, mutilating documents and using all kinds of horse-trading methods in general. When Clemenceau at last saw them, alas too late, for what they really were at work, he called them "the jackals of our victory" . . . Unfortunately France supported those men of prey up to the hilt, while they in turn took advantage of the ignorance and credulity of the architects of peace - Clemenceau in the first place. It is not astonishing therefore that France should be held responsible for the abominable results which ensued. For that peace has unfortunately created more injustice, disorder and arbitrariness than it pretended to eliminate. The most exalted and noble formulae were used to camouflage the vilest appetites and the most contemptible schemes combining conquest with business... And ethnic minorities were being crushed by new oppressive practices, a hundred times more cruel than had been those they replaced. However, I can hear the objection: 'In what respect does all this concern us? Why should we get mixed up in those Balkanic bickerings? Let them sort out their affairs for themselves! But France, alas remains responsible for the errors, violations and injustices committed by the three states which she has turned into what they actually are supporting them with her influence, money and prestige. It had been France who blindly satisfied their lust for vengeance, their greed and their haughty imperialist ambitions, thereby letting loose in that region of Europe more hatred than had ever ravaged it throughout the centuries. That her confidence should have been ill-used in the process does little to reduce her responsibility. . ." (145). Between the two wars - one might go on, still with Henri Pozzi- France missed an unheard-of opportunity to create for herself in Hungary a position of gratitude and prestige. To attain that

end it would have been sufficient to keep the pledge given in Millerand's "covering letter" in respect of a potential revision of the Treaty, without demolishing it as a whole. If France had seen to it that remedy should be applied where it was needed, while ensuring respect for the guaranteed rights of the ethnic minorities, many things could have been changed in Central Europe.

De La Reveliere, in his book on Central Europe (Paris, 1923), which he termed "a study of an incendiary situation" leaves no doubt of there having existed another "policy for France to pursue, by treating with due consideration the interests of both her allies and the vanquished, so as to pacify a huge portion of the former battlefield along the Danube, and thereby win their gratitude. However, instead of proceeding in that manner we succeeded, thanks to our ill-considered measures, in kindling hatred all round. . . Yet we had not penetrated the Central Empires as conquerors: we had come as liberators and pacifists. And it should have been possible for us to give Europe a measure of our justice and our Danubian conceptions from Budapest, which at that time still represented a potential center for the Little Entente. Why haven't we done it? Considering the Hungary of today in relation to the Little Entente one cannot fail seeing that country as a kind of nucleus - a center of energy and influence for the groupings of tomorrow which we cannot afford either to neglect or to do away with, not even for the sake of yielding to the ardent greed of its heirs . . . The Magyars are occupying a citadel in the centre of the Danubian Basin. . . At Trianon an act of injustice has been perpetrated deliberately. An old oak tree has been replaced by samplings of mixed foliage, left without props to sustain them . . . AH those peoples could enjoy enviable economic conditions if only they lived within reasonable frontiers with a status settled once and for all, without grudge or regret. Now, this ill-assorted aggregate, which ought to remain united and to which it would have been better for us to gently suggest the spirit of reconciliation rather than try to impose it, rests on treaties resulting from both

THE TRAGIC FATE OF  
HUNGARY

172

premeditation and a criminal lack of foresight. For we have neglected the all-important aspect of sincere collaboration... Hungary is not a negligible dot on the political horizon, as some of the theoreticians and professors of our friends seem to believe: her people has an ancient history, traditions profoundly anchored in its soul, a highly developed civilization, gallantry and grudges which others will know how to exploit. ." (146)

To this one may add that the monumental error of the treaties of 1919-1920 consisted in having led to results diametrically opposed to the aims pursued. They did in fact surrender Central Europe to the Germans, only to have it handed over subsequently to the Russians, since it is quite clear today that the treaties in question favored those two imperialisms much more than would have the preservation of an Austria-Hungary remodeled by the Allies. The Germans would have found it much more difficult to exercise their influence in Slovakia, Croatia and Transylvania than they actually did if those regions had remained united with Hungary. The "Drang nach Osten" was made much easier to realize than it would have been, had it found astride its forward march a Hungary still in the possession of her essential pride and power, traditionally averse to both Pan-Germanism and PanSlavism. Instead of which the "Anschluss" of Austria to the Nazi German Reich found a Hungary that had been thoughtlessly weakened and humiliated, thrown upon the tender mercies of the first comer. In that respect, had it not been one of the most monumental stupidities of Trianon to have given a piece of Hungary to Austria, which thus eventually became a free gift to Greater Germany? A strong Hungary, closely linked to Poland in the North and - why not? to Yugoslavia in the South, would have been a much harder nut to crack for Hitler's ambitions than proved the deliquescent Little Entente. "One only leans on that which resists", said Stendhal.

As time goes by it appears even more clearly today that France committed a grave error at St. Germain and Trianon by parcelling

out the Danubian Basin and, particularly, by carving up its perfect unit - Hungary. It was catastrophically wrong to separate essentially interdependent territories and peoples and set them one against the other, thus opening the road for German and subsequently Russian imperialism which could not but find the hopelessly split ruined and demoralized Danubian valley an easy prey. All that unholy mess was of course entirely contrary to France's well-considered, long-term interests as well as to those of her small allies. Honour was saved, nevertheless, as we have seen, by some French politicians who, from 1919-1920 on and throughout the interwar period, denounced as madness the new organization of the Danube Valley. Unfortunately their warnings were not heeded; France continued pursuing, at any rate as far as Munich, the ruinous policy dictated by Prague.

There were even chroniclers to suggest that certain French leaders, aspiring for their country to assume the role of sole great power on the European continent, had been plotting for a long time past and finally achieved the insane dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire. They had wanted to replace it deliberately by little states which would be seemingly independent but would in actual fact be dependent on France. They are said to have feared that a great federal state, economically well balanced and composed of mutually reconciled autonomous units, might in the end become in the Danube Valley a more powerful rival to France than the Habsburg Monarchy had ever been throughout the centuries, owing to the weakening effect of the recalcitrance of its nationalities. In order to make sure that the latter, once liberated, would never coalesce of their own accord, frontier lines of such injustice had to be drawn as to foment ceaseless enmity between those peoples. Indeed, those diabolical frontiers had proved so effective in that respect that Russia showed herself most keen, at the close of World War II, on not changing them but preserving them intact, obviously for the same reasons that had inspired France in the first place to impose them, in 1919-1920, and

equally without bothering in the least about the true interests of the local populations concerned.

In any case, between the two world wars France was rightly considered - the same as Soviet Russia is today - in Hungary as elsewhere, the unyielding guardian of the European status quo, and therefore logically also as the power principally responsible for maintaining the Treaty of Trianon in force. Moreover, France had been linked to the Little Entente by a formal pact of military assistance. There existed all the same a basic misunderstanding between France and the successor states in respect of the reasons for which the Little Entente had been created, as well as of the role allotted to it. In the French concept the Little Entente was viewed, first and foremost, as a barrage against German expansion and revanchism, whereas the successor states saw in it a means for keeping Hungary encircled and gagged. Well, had the Little Entente constituted any kind of a dam to hold back the expansion of Hitlerite Germany? Had it contributed anything whatsoever to the victory of the Allies in the late world war? (Except for the efficacious' action by Tito's partisans who, however, were actuated by rather particular motives.) We have seen that "powerful dam" collapse at the first blow. Some of its member states, such as Roumania, or their component elements, such as Slovakia or Croatia, went so far as .to turn to the Germans as their liberators and even become their fanatical allies - the term is not too strong - whereas France had always naively viewed them as her best auxiliaries against German expansion. But if France has made a mistake - and what a mistake for that matter - why persevere in the wrong line of policy? Yet for over half a century France has kept telling herself lies, not having the courage to face reality. For France as well as for the entire world, the First World War had been nothing if not a monstrous fl1aud, and the peace, which followed it, was even worse. Hence, during the interwar period the commandment prevailing in France for long years had been to camouflage at any price the truths that

might be unpleasant to the successor states and herself. But as truth will always come out in the end, it finished up by piercing its way to daylight even in France. That was what happened in respect of the true origin and motives of the double murder committed sixty years ago at Sarajevo, or of the so-called responsibility for the outbreak of the first world war, so mendaciously put at Count Stephen Tisza's doorstep. And these are only two examples among the many. Unfortunately none of those part-revelations has prevented France from sticking to her ostrich policy, both as regards complacency in respect of her own security and a disarmingly naive 'good conscience' where the deplorable fate of the East European countries is concerned. The soap bubble of yet another French self-delusion was pricked and burst a few years ago by Georges Andersen in the Paris daily newspaper "Combat". "The original sin", he wrote, "which caused the tragedies of Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) goes back much further than the Yalta agreements of which a biased propaganda tries to make French public opinion believe that they were to be blamed for everything. The second thought being that as France had been absent from Yalta she may hold her head high and wash her hands of the collective murder committed in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. It is a little too easy-going and oversimplifying things to try to attribute all the ills of Central and Eastern Europe to the agreements made at Yalta, whereas the true origins of that situation go back to the disastrous Treaties concluded in the wake of the first world war" (147). Moreover, as Wenzel Jaksch so rightly recalls, "the shortsighted patriotism of the Gaullists continued pursuing in the course of World War II the tradition of Dr. Benes' yes-men, prepared to fulfill all his wishes. In that attitude de Gaulle did not represent, however", adds Wenzel Jaksch, "the entire French resistance; some of its leaders refused to support, for example, the projects hatched by some Czechs in exile in respect of the expulsion of the non-Slavonic nationalities... When Paris was



liberated, intact, in August 1944, and the Chairman of the National Council of the Resistance, Georges Bidault, became a member of de Gaulle's provisional government, high hopes were still being pinned on European democracy's victory over Hitler.

Those feelings were shared, in particular, by Daniel Mayer, Georges Bidault's second-in-command at the helm of the National Council of the Resistance. However, the Gaullists' external policies, the chauvinism engineered by the French communists and the resentment of the 'men of Munich', together prevented France from contributing her share to the self-criticism of European democracy... although the reappraisal of the events of the interwar period in Europe should have been a task especially proper for France to perform. After all, Dr. Benes' cannot separate France forever from realities in Eastern Europe" (148). Oblivious of all the disasters of her recent past, de Gaulle's France has obviously reverted to the pro-Russian policies of the period prior to World War I, as if the General just could not extricate himself from the stranglehold of the erroneous and dangerous ideas entertained by his generation. On the occasion of his first visit paid to the Soviet Union, on December 20, 1944, General de Gaulle declared, as Raymond Poincare is sure to have done at St. Petersburg in July 1914: "For France and for Russia to be united means to be strong: as soon as they separate they will find themselves in danger. The truth is that this amounts to a categorical imperative of geography, experience and common sense." Paradoxically President Roosevelt echoed enough that language a few weeks later when he affirmed just as peremptorily "owing to the Yalta agreements Europe will become politically much more stable than it has ever been before." Those agreements, of which Roosevelt was content to say that "they satisfied Russia's legitimate ambitions", did in fact throw upon her mercy 120 million Europeans, beginning with allied Poland which the West had pushed to war, in 1939, and which was now the first to be sacrificed to Stalin . . . Consequently, the Paris daily

newspaper "Le Monde" was justified in declaring in its issue of April 17, 1945: "The clock of history has struck the Slavonic hour! ."

When in 1966, on the occasion of his second journey to the U.S.S.R., General de Gaulle set himself up as the guarantor of the purity of Russia's intentions, did he not in fact repeat, 20 years later, the same mistake Churchill and Roosevelt had committed in 1945? . . . Already at the time of the pseudo-dissolution of the Komintern, that masterstroke of Soviet diplomacy announced in the course of the late word war, the vigilance of the western democracies 108t much of its alertness. Today few remember how keenly the re-establishment of the Orthodox Church was celebrated in France as an event of the highest political significance. The words "detente" and "cooperation" are by no means new; they were on many lips in 1945. And how could one refrain from comparing Roosevelt, who told his people during the late war that "the Soviet Union was a democracy enamored with peace", with de Gaulle affirming quite seriously, in 1966, that the U.S.S.R. had all of the sudden become "actuated by a pacific fervor"?

It is, of course, a time-honored reality that the western countries, which had never been directly affected by the threat from the east, have in the course of their history often pursued shortsighted policies - a myopic diplomacy of alliances with oriental conquerors to spite their European rivals. It was thus that the kings of France had repeatedly sought to ally themselves with the powerful Ottoman-Turkish emperors in their struggle with the Habsburg dynasty. Similarly, in order to defeat Germany, accommodation was found with Pan-Slavism and Muscovite strivings for hegemony, twice in the course of our century. The final upshot of it all was that by thus losing obviously sight of the West's essential interests, in 1945 Russia was allowed to extend her hegemony as far as the Alps. Similarly to King Francis I, who, desirous of making the Ottoman Empire the counterpoise of France's policies in Europe, greatly helped extending Turkish

domination right to the gates of Vienna. Only too often do the French tend to forget that Russia is by more than half an Asiatic empire and that communism is much more intolerant and cruel than Islam had ever been. The alliances of the West with Turks or Muscovites had always been compounds contrary to nature in fact, the betrayals of the formers Long-term interests. Roosevelt and Churchill, by covenanting with Stalin in 1940, merely repeated the French King François Ier who in his boundless hatred of the error - one is almost tempted to say: crime - committed by Habsburg Emperor Charles V, allied himself with the Grand Turk in 1521, thus enabling the latter to crush Hungary at Mohacs in 1526 and occupy the best part of her for a century and a half.

Let us add that following the victory of the English-speaking great powers and the U.S.S.R. over Hitlerite Germany, the propagandist advocates of Trianon regained their breath. Hungary was branded once more the No.1 satellite and "the most faithful friend" of Germany. Not a word was said, on the other hand, about Roumania which had, during most of the second world war, supported the Reich's war effort to the hilt; nor was any mention made, of course, of the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia which never budged throughout the war while its whole economic machine, and Czech factories in particular, continued working at full capacity for the Germans. One is reminded of Dr. Benes' repartee at the time of Munich: "if you /want us to become the servants of the Germans, you will see what excellent servants we can be."\* Wenzel Jaksch, in his book entitled "Potsdam", affirms that "the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia was up to the last weeks of World War II - similarly to what it had been within Austria-Hungary during World War I - one of Hitler's most highly productive arsenals (the output being 'apparently even

\* Dr. Benes' repartee was also reported by Count Carlo Sforza in his book "The Totalitarian War and After" (London, 1942)

superior to that of the Reich proper by 15-18%), and nowhere was collaboration between occupants and occupied closer than in the Protectorate. "Compared with the above examples it really needed impudence to blame Hungary for her feeble participation in Germany's war - feeble at any rate up to the country's invasion by the Red Army. Nor had indeed an acceptable alternative been open to Hungary at that sinister epoch. And as for the alleged "subservience" of Hungary to the Hitlerite Reich, the secret archives of its Foreign Ministry, the Wilhelmstrasse, are eloquent enough in spelling out Hitler's loathing of, and violent outburst of fury against, the Hungarians. More light has been recently thrown on this by M. Maurice Baumont, Chairman of the French Committee of Research into the History of World War II, in his book on the origins of the latter (149). Moreover, Hungary herself had been invaded by Hitler, in March 1944, because of the generous protection and shelter offered by her to the Jews for 4 years, as well as her lukewarm attitude of participation in Germany's war. Yet what did one see happen once again? Despite the Hitlerite German invasion of March 19, 1944; despite the secret agreement arrived at between Great Britain and Admiral Horthy's Government, in Turkey, on August 17, 1943, providing that Hungary would surrender to the Western Allies as soon as they reached the country's borders; despite all the assistance extended throughout the war to Allied (above all Polish and French) prisoners of war escaped from German PoW camps; despite the overt collaboration of Hungary's Slovak, Roumanian and Croat neighbors with Germany; despite Prime Minister Count Paul Tarköczy's most significant suicide as a gesture of protest against violating Hungarian non-belligerence, of whom Churchill predicted that his spirit would hover over the Peace Conference (where, however, his name was not even mentioned) - in spite of all these arguments in her favor, Hungary was once more sacrificed to all her neighbors. The English-speaking Allied Powers could not muster su-

ficient moral force, or perhaps simply sufficient strength, to counter Soviet Russia's demands, so as to put right the terrible errors of Trianon, although they at least had recognized them between the two world wars.

Thus, on February 10, 1947, the Paris Treaty re-established the deplorable Trianon frontiers, with even a slight amendment in Czechoslovakia's favor. It was done in total disregard of the clearly proven fragility, absurdity and injustice of those borders and without taking the slightest account of the Vienna awards, effected at the request and with the consent of the Czechs and Roumanians, whose positive attitude to the Hitlerite war effort was pointed out earlier on in this chapter. As for the unfortunate Hungarian minorities we have already seen that they are being trampled underfoot more than ever before. More particularly in Transylvania, where upwards from 1½million Hungarians have once more been submitted with impunity for nearly 30 years to forced and progressive assimilation by the Roumanian communist authorities. It constitutes methodically organized genocide, against which no official, nor to our knowledge even semi-official protest has ever been voiced in France, at least up to date. Consequently, taking account of the Trianon and Paris Treaties, the sorely stricken Hungarian people now clearly understand the value which they at least may attribute to such grandiloquent, sacred and, alas, oft-desecrated phrases as "international justice", "minority rights" and "the peoples' freedom to determine their own fate".

As for Franco-Hungarian relations, their origin dates back to the Christian high middle ages, to that happy period when two Anjou princes consecutively occupied Hungary's royal throne. They had greatly contributed to that spirit of Christianity and Latinity, which a former French envoy, Louis de Vienne had come to discover in Hungary between the two world wars (150). During subsequent centuries meetings of soul and mind between the two countries took place time and again. Louis XIV, for example,

vigourously supported Prince Francis Rakóczy's heroic insurrection. When it was finally beaten down by Austria, the Prince and his retinue of Hungarian patriots found generous asylum in Paris. The son of Rakóczy's Commander-in-Chief, Count Miklós Bercsenyi, was subsequently to become a gallant Marshal of France and founder of France's modern light cavalry, the hussar regiments. .. Again, the Hungarian revolution of 1848 was largely inspired by the ideals of French liberalism. "Why, have not certain profound affinities of mind and heart between the French and the Hungarians frequently manifested themselves all along their history? The spirit of chivalry and idealism, a sense of military honour, fidelity to the given word, individualism and the love of freedom, a highly developed taste for the law and politics - are they not as traditionally cherished in Hungary as they are in France?" (151).

Some will retort by affirming that Hungary and the Hungarian people have been enjoying unprecedented understanding and compassion in France ever since their glorious uprising of October

November 1956. This is perfectly true and stands clearly revealed in a public 'Opinion poll commissioned by the illustrated weekly "Paris-Match" and effected by the French Public Opinion Research Institute (I.F.O.P.) in September 1967.

According to that poll, inquiring of the French public as to which East European country they found most attractive, Hungary was ranking high (30%) second only to Poland (41%). But whereas the annual ceremonies held in commemoration of the Hungarian people's heroic struggle are always well attended by French audiences, official France never sent a representative, not even in 1966, when the 10th anniversary of the uprising was celebrated in conjunction with a funeral mass. It coincided, of course, with a certain famous visit to Moscow where a voice of world-wide renown was raised exalting "Franco-Soviet friendship", whereas that same voice had never found one word of compassion for the heroic Hungarian

people in its tragedy which cost it 25,000 dead . As for myself. I have never been able to forget that.

French policy today, after having resulted in the scandalous dismemberment of Hungary, is no longer fundamentally hostile to that unhappy country. In that respect I feel that reference may be made to the declaration issued by General de Gaulle as President of the French Republic, at a luncheon offered by him. on March 30, 1968, to the visiting Hungarian Prime Minister. Mr. Jeno Fock, the text of which was published in the Paris daily "Le Monde" on the following day. Its gist reads as follows, without any commentary added to it:

"Hungary has lived long enough, partaken sufficiently of the harsh destinies of our Europe, passed through trials and experiences enough to know that 'anything may happen' or that, at any rate, everything begins afresh. France has acquired the same knowledge for the same reasons. It is true that a series of dramatic historic events have for a long time led our relations astray. Not because any direct enmity or contrariety between Hungary and France but as the consequence of quarrels, conflicts and upheavals on a global scale in which both got involved. It is also true, however, that a new situation calls upon our countries at the present time to draw closer and act together in a number of essential fields. This new situation may undoubtedly be given expression by saying that the whole of our Europe, having undergone so many heartbreaks, wars and revolutions has come to discover in its very depths that life itself - indeed life - now demands the relaxation of tensions, mutual understanding and cooperation. overcoming all the barriers which rival ideologies. accumulated grudges, opposing blocs and differences in forms of government may have erected. But who cannot see, at the same time, that such a change cannot take place on any foundation other than that of deliberately combined action by states which are masters of their own fate, and cannot be actuated by any ferment other than their respective national personalities? If Hungary and France, con-

vinced of that transformation, decide to cooperate on the largest possible scale, both in their own interests as well as those of others, then, they will obviously have to develop practical relations. In the cultural and scientific sphere their multiple affinities would seem to facilitate things. But in the economic and technical fields, where their exchanges are at present limited, a big enough effort is required. Finally, viewing matters under a political angle, and provided that both our states are dependent solely on their own peoples, the union of Europe, the peace of the world and the progress of mankind are henceforward the aims which they will have to serve jointly. In other words, in every respect everything induces them to organize their contacts and draw closer their relations. "



## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

The Treaty of Trianon has dismembered 'a nation whose millenary historic role and mission may well be qualified as invaluable for Western Christianity and its civilization. It would also seem obvious that exceptional qualities were needed for surviving a thousand years in the maelstrom of so many accumulated trials, for playing that role and fulfilling that mission successfully. That role and mission, had they, then, come to an end and Hungary lost her *raison d'être*? - as would maintain those who advocated her destruction. The answer to those questions was given Europe and the world at large by the events of 1956, reminding them that millenary Hungary, the "living bulwark of the West", had neither disappeared altogether nor was it dead. In 1956 the Magyar people presented themselves once more to an astounded world for what they really are, and always have been - "the hardest nut to crack" for any kind of imperialism desirous of establishing its rule in Central Europe - be it Mongol or Türkish in the more remote, German or Soviet in the more recent past. "Both Pan Slavism sallying forth from North to South and Pan-Germanism from West to East, have always found their road inevitably barred by the Hungarians who, being neither Slav nor German, seemed to be placed there like a rock facing the onslaught of hostile tides and thereby an indispensable element of security for Europe" (152). Hence the historic grandeur of that nation, but alas, also its tragic destiny. For Hungary does indeed occupy a most dangerous position in Europe, being situated at the point of intersection of the interests and strivings of the three great races - Latins, Teutons and Slavs - which dominate our Continent. However, owing to the same reasons, Hungary has also been a kind of keystone to the balance of power in Europe at all

times when the nation had been able to preserve its independence. As we have already noted, it was above all "the threat of Pan Slavism in the North-East and in the South that impelled Hungary towards the end of the last century to choose the German alliance. For after so many centuries of struggle for survival against the German menace, the Slavonic peril had become the more dangerous one. That, by the way, had been the tragic constraint imposed upon Hungary by her very situation - namely, to always have to choose between two dangers. Had the Hungarians not been possessed of an extremely lively national spirit, never short of the highest peaks of tension, they would have disappeared long ago under such dangerous and unfavorable conditions" (153). If nothing else, the last two world wars clearly demonstrated the fact that "all the Hungarians had to choose from was the gravy with they would be eaten". Neither in 1918 nor in 1945 did the Hungarians stand to gain a great deal by a German victory, for in that event it was most likely that they would be colonized and perhaps even dismembered all the same.

That the Hungarians had shouldered the noble mission of "defending European and Christian civilization" has been acknowledged over the centuries not only by popes and eminent statesmen but also by some of the most enlightened and illustrious Frenchmen, including such historians and geographers as Michelet, Quinet, Reclus, Chassin or Sacous. They were vocal in proclaiming Hungary's role throughout the XIXth century. Each page of Hungary's history reflects the Magyars' fierce will to remain free and refuse all kinds of foreign oppression, were it even that of a Western power. Their deadly revolts against Habsburg imperialism had left bloodstained marks all along the record of the XVIIth century, and up to the first decade of the XVIIIth, perpetuating the memory of such leaders as Stephen Bocskay, Gabriel Bethlen and the princes George and Francis Rakóczi. But much better known by the French was the unhappily glorious war for freedom led by Louis Kossuth in 1848-1849, which like the

1956 uprising was fated to be trampled underfoot by Russian armies. It was perhaps precisely because of their indomitable fidelity to Western ideas that the Hungarians, themselves of oriental origin, were always most cruelly treated by invaders coming from East and South. For sheer destructiveness there was not much to choose between the Tartars, Turks and more recently, the Russians.

All those practically unending struggles have ended up by deeply marking the Hungarian mind with a European as well as a national sense of mission - with a calling to defend Western values against onslaughts from the East. It was that solidly inculcated idea, which sparked off the 1956 uprising against the Soviet occupier and oppressor. That spontaneous popular movement can be understood in its full significance only by being looked upon in the light of Hungarian history of which it constitutes both a dramatically glorious episode and a logical sequel. It also needs to be examined in the more distant light of those disastrous agreements reached at Yalta and Potsdam which had so blindly thrown upon Soviet Russia's mercy the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. What's more, 1956 cannot be properly understood without recognizing the equally disastrous long-, term effect of the St. Germain and Trianon treaties which a quarter of a century earlier had so thoughtlessly destroyed Austria-Hungary and the Realm of St. Stephen.

Those memorable events of October-November 1956 - accompanied not infrequently by the strains of the Marseillaise - are forever inscribed upon some of the most moving pages of the Hungarians' long history. They also advantageously obliterate, in the eyes of a flabbergasted world, the listlessness of some other countries, among who are found Hungary's traditional accusers and most rabid detractors. Let it be added that, in 1956, a certain generation of more or less prominent Western political leaders were undoubtedly feeling thwarted and embarrassed in their false sense of a tranquil conscience, seeing the real, heroic resistance to

communism rise from that small country of the Magyars who had once upon a time been a great nation, diminished and so unjustly persecuted by them with suspicion and acrimony, proving once more the validity of Tacitus' dictum quoted earlier on: "We hate those whom we have hurt."

"Traits of the Hungarian character that are really beautifully proud we mistook for arrogance and conceit. No sooner had the first news of the great insurrection reached us than we realized of a sudden that all the features of the Hungarian national character, which may have shocked us somewhat, also have their wonderful side. If there is a tendency to exaggerate on the one hand, there is fascinating greatness on the other hand; a subconscious bent for the irrational is offset by heroism, which engenders our admiration. Great gestures are balanced by a truly grandiose spirit of sacrifice. By the time that heroic uprising had reached its point of culmination an imperative inner voice compelled us to ask for the Hungarian people's forgiveness. They were so close to us and we did not understand them; they were so great and we did not know it." A national of one of the successor states wrote those words on November 2, 1956. (154)

For how much longer will the Hungarian people have to endure the enslavement imposed upon them by the Russians? In any event they have given proof during 150 years of Ottoman rule of their powers of resistance. Also after its war for freedom had been crushed, in 1849, Hungary, although rendered powerless, went on struggling against a regime of terror and enslavement for nearly 20 years without losing heart. Never for a moment throughout those long years did the country accept to have anything in common with the form of government which had been forced upon it. It was that resistance which finally impelled Austria to stoop to the deal of 1867 - whereupon the Hungarian people dressed itself up proudly once more, staging within half a century a comeback that commanded the admiration of the whole of Europe. Therefore let no one have any doubt: as on so many other

occasions in the course of her history, Hungary will know how to recover her liberty, shake of, one way or another the yoke of Soviet oppression and revert, sooner or later, to her thousand year-old tradition. It would not be the first spectacular recovery the Magyars have effected over the centuries. Today, as in the XVIth century, eastern tidewaters seem to be engulfing Hungary and sweeping her away. However, the character of a nation cannot be changed overnight; nor will Soviet Russia be able to conquer within a few years or decades that which has so effectively resisted the secular onslaught of the Turks. In 1956, the Hungarian people's instinct of self-preservation came into play once more in opposition to a communist attempt to draw them forcibly into the eastern, materialistic orbit, to compel them to turn toward Russia for which they have no sense of affinity and thus to detach them from both the West and their own past. Indeed, in 1956, Hungary had desperately tried to extricate herself from Asia's chains and rejoin that West which had treated her so ungratefully and which, once more, did not move a finger to save her.

This is why the premonitory words pronounced by Count Stephen Bethlen on the morrow of Trianon have not lost one title of their topicality. "One thing is certain", he said, "Namely that this cannot go on indefinitely. Not only because one cannot live like that and that therefore life in Hungary today is a slow dying process - a gradual wasting away, a progressive annihilation - but also because one may already discern on the horizon signs which are the forerunners of new storms which will sweep away like a house of cards this patched-up edifice that owing to the very flaws of its construction cannot subsist" (155).

Courage is needed to recognize one's errors and learn from the harsh lessons of experience. Now, the treaties, which followed two world wars, had come into being as the result of much egoism, error and cowardice exacerbated by those two long and terrible conflagrations. Yet, the victors had previously based their wartime propaganda on high-sounding moralistic and humanitarian

slogans. "The crusade for democracy and liberty" had twice been the theme song of Allied war propaganda. As many will admit today, the most elementary rules of common sense, let alone those of justice, had been scoffed at in 1919-1920 as well as 1945. The fate of Central Europe was twice settled with such levity, hypocrisy and cynicism as stand unparalleled in history. The Atlantic Charter, signed on August 14, 1941, by Churchill and Roosevelt - and subsequently adopted by Stalin - proved as deceitful and illusory as President Wilson's famous 14 points had been. No territorial aggrandizement, proclaimed the Charter, without the populations concerned freely expressing their wishes; right of the people to choose their own form of government, etc. Yet, in October 1944, Winston Churchill had, as we now know, between two puffs of cigar smoke scandalously conceded to Stalin 90 per cent influence in Roumania and Yugoslavia and 50 per cent in Hungary, as against 99 per cent of preponderant British influence in Greece... Instead of redeeming their promises of "international justice" and "fraternity", the victors confined themselves to their respective ghettos of chauvinistic and unscrupulous egoism; combined with an incredible amount of intellectual oversimplification and cynicism. "We shall not commit the same errors again", Winston Churchill is reputed to have announced in a loud voice at the moment of victory, only to add in an aside: "I am sure we'll make others." Freedom had twice been proclaimed and promised during both world wars. Yet, after neither of them had progress been made in Europe in that direction: on the contrary, regression became manifest each time. Alas, the two world wars had no more been fought for the "rights" of people than the ensuing peace treaties had been drafted to make their "liberation" prevail. And to pretend that today they live in the best and most just Europe possible would be telling a blatant lie. Having all the means of mass propaganda at their disposal, the victors knew how to impose upon international public opinion the justification of their errors, while their own peoples, saturated with that deceitful

propaganda, were no longer capable of recognizing plain truth. "Already after World War I the ruling powers of the day had been convinced to have ensured their respective nations' peace and security forever. But how should that have been possible when no heed was taken whatsoever either of the precepts of morality or the teachings of history? Events have demonstrated since the futility of their false calculations, but those responsible for all subsequent catastrophes, born from their errors committed in 1919-1920, so far from recognizing this, heaped the burden of responsibility once more on the shoulders of the conquered" (156).

Let us add that twice the Western Allies had won the war owing to American intervention only, a fact which in itself ought to have made them behave with more wisdom and moderation towards the conquered, in a succession of victories which was by no means all of their own making. Neither in 1945 nor in 1919-1920 did the victors know how to conquer their own triumph to give the world an example of equity and moderation, although peace based on justice would have humiliated no one nor hurt the interests of any of the peoples concerned. After a war hatred must recede in order to prevent the clash from repeating itself. For "how could one otherwise maintain peace between nations some of which have been plundered while others are satiated to suffocation?" "An enforced peace lasts only as long as the military and economic superiority of the victors... Hence we can now, after the recovery at lightning speed of a series of nations (France after 1870; Germany after 1918; Japan and Italy after 1945) take the measure of the precariousness of all victories", wrote the great lawyer Jacques Isorni in his "True History of the Great War".

Real peace implies, the coming into play of certain moral values which alone make it acceptable to the vanquished and prove to them that a war of revenge is not needed for obtaining justice. Whereas the two last batches of peace treaties engendered more hatred than had the wars which preceded them. This was well expressed, as early as 1925, by the wartime Italian Prime Minister

Francesco Nitti, in his book entitled "Peace", in which he wrote i.a. as follows: "Instead of restoring peace, the treaties had sown the seeds of hatred, distrust and grudge. Moreover hatred, like generosity, is contagious. Also, alas victors are most of the time bent on paralyzing and ruining the vanquished. Hence, in 1919-1920, unbridled passionate striving went into action around the green baize tables of the peace conference. In the ultimate resort, the victors had thus diminished their own security and prosperity by trying to ruin the vanquished. For the prosperity of every nation depends more and more on general prosperity: the interdependence of nations becomes more and more evident as time goes by. The partitions now in existence are absurd because contrary to production, trade and that natural solidarity which stands engraved in all geographical structures. Wisdom ought to suggest moderation to the victors; in other words, terms which render possible the maintenance of peace. Is there anyone to believe that such peace terms are acceptable? That the vanquished will, in the long run, acquiesce in those inequities? That accomplished facts will end up by making themselves acceptable? There is no true peace in Europe, only passing resignation in the face of superior force. Peace in Europe today is an ambiguous situation, and there will be no real peace until the injustices committed in the wake of the war have been put right; not until Europe has restored the ties of solidarity which are so desperately and reciprocally needed by the various peoples of which it is composed. Who remains blind to the fact that the status quo, as it exists today, is maintained purely by the victors' force? And the latter are wrong in taking for granted the stoic resignation of the vanquished. . Of course, truth ought to prevail, but naked truth is implacable and not very many can stand it. Acts of violence and violations of natural law and the law of nations were not committed by one of the parties to the conflict alone. It is not true that on the one side there was Civilization and on the other Barbarism. Both could be found in either camp. . .



Thus, one is only too apt to forget that France, for instance, is the country which can boast the biggest number of wars in the course of her history; that it was Germany's territory which had been the blood-drenched theatre of most of the wars conducted by France: that in modern times France had, owing to an almost uninterrupted series of wars, exercised unparalleled military hegemony in Europe - from Richelieu to Napoleon. France had waged 64 wars in the XVIIIth century; 52 wars in the XIXth century 'and 32 wars in the XXth.

In 1931 was published Georges Roux's work entitled "Let the Treaties Be Revised". One relevant passage of it reads as follows: "It appears impossible, both morally and physically, that certain states should be enabled to benefit indefinitely from an error and that Europe should crystallize on the basis of intolerable injustice. He who believes that the status quo can be preserved forever indulges in wishful thinking. To declare the inviolability of frontiers is fine for those who are satisfied with them. But what about those who are dissatisfied with the frontiers imposed upon them? . . . The weariness of the vanquished is as ephemeral as the vigor of the victors. " Man-made treaties do not constitute everlasting, divine law. This is what Albert Sorel, the historian, spoke about when he said: 'treaties are the reflection of relations, as they exist when those treaties are being concluded. The law which they lay down never survives the conditions under which they were established.' There are no eternal treaties any more than there exist immutable political laws. When they cease to represent the relations that the nature of things requires, the maintenance of the treaties becomes a matter of sheer force. Only when ruffled patriotic feelings are smoothed once more by having received satisfaction of their basic requirements, will an European federation become possible - not before. The first thing to be done is to remake Europe by means of equitably drawn frontiers. The first pre-condition of an European federation is the readjustment and harmonization of its nations; it will be the first stage of the

pacification of our ancient Continent. The territorial problem is the first one to be resolved, without endangering the equilibrium of the construction of Europe. After the despondency which resulted from defeat and revolution, the powers thus diminished return to life. The leveling-down effected by the victory of their adversaries cannot be maintained forever. Victory, like war itself, is only a temporary condition. Its value diminishes in an inverted ratio to the distance at which it recedes into the past. And what was the nature of that victory at any rate? For it is a fact that the German Empire and its Allies had been victorious for 4 years; that the initiative had been theirs almost ceaselessly in all military operations, as well as the benefit of territorial gains. and that compared with our effectives they could boast military superiority, too. Let us recall also the support we enjoyed and beware of excessive pride, for the latter could lead us into some dangerous presumptions. . Above all else, let us tell ourselves that victory does not bestow nor naked force creates rights. Victory 'only provides the means for establishing justice. It is a means, not an end - an instrument of peace. In order to be good, victory must be wise" (157).

In the light of all this what should one think of those who wish to maintain peace in Central Europe at the cost of preserving there a status quo both unfair and contrary to nature? Peace is not crystallization; the perpetuation of situations created at any given moment rather it is a work of life, "continuous creation" as Raymond Poincare once called it. Do we really have to rely on time, that "great repairer of human errors", or perhaps on new cataclysms, far remedying the disastrous situation created in Central Europe by the victors of the last two great wars, and for applying to it the changes required by morality and justice, and, what's more, the very nature of things?

This refusal to accept a situation which, apart from a short break during World War II, has lasted more than half a century, one might ask, does it retain any significance? Our answer is that

there are, alas, factual situations which one has to accept, temporarily. Today still the Hungarians have to take things for what they are. "At any rate, brute force must never have the last word. Similar was the situation of Alsace-Lorraine, the loss of which neither the French people nor their leaders ever accepted as an accomplished fact and kept protesting against for nearly half a century, from 1871 till 1918. Material contingencies may sometimes keep in being, for shorter or longer periods, situations, which are basically abnormal and dishonest: the essential thing is never to accept them and never to cease protesting against them while maintaining one's claims. It is a question of principle and hope. Such is the position of peoples or individuals who have been subjected to a law the validity of which they dispute. No one has the right to silence them" (158). Neither in politics nor in morality is there known to exist a "statute of limitations" - even though certain countries would like to adduce it as an argument, reinforced as we have seen by the compulsory assimilation of national minorities in order to set the seal of final confirmation of positions unlawfully attained. To this they will reply that such a statute of limitations is indispensable to the stability of international order and the interests of peace. There you have, once more, the traditional attitude of the thief in retirement calling for the strengthening of the police force.

In his excellent book, entitled "The Legal Nature of the Territorial Provisions of the Treaty of Trianon" (159) the late Anthony Ullein-Reviczky wrote of this subject as follows: "Negative prescription is based on the presumption that the plaintiff, having kept silent for a long period of time, has voluntarily abandoned his right. It was precisely in order to prevent the statute of limitations from coming into play that France had never ceased protesting against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. Nor had the Poles ever ceased to claim the restoration of their country carved up in 1792... As a matter of fact, the Allies themselves undercut any claim based on acquisitive prescription

when in the covering note to the Treaty of Trianon dated May 6, 1920, and signed by Millerand, they inserted the double-edged sentence: "A state of affairs be it a thousand years old, has no right to subsist once it has been recognized to be contrary to justice." That principle was meant to be pronounced against Hungary: in our view it applies with equal force to the successor states. If a thousand years had not sufficed to render legitimate in the eyes of the Allies Hungary's right of possession, how much time will have to pass in order to justify her dismemberment. Vitiating, as she was by many irregularities, injustices and flaws? For the acquisition of enduring validity the least that is needed is the lawfully expressed mutual consent of the parties concerned, as required for contracts between private individuals." Let us add with Aldo Dami that "history knows no example of territorial treaty provisions having subsisted for more than a century or two". And with Prime Minister Nitti that "no treaty can be maintained in force indefinitely, nor can military occupation prevent a great nation from being reborn and claiming the conditions needed for its survival. Hungary, in particular, will never accept anyone of the unjust mutilations of which it was made a victim."

If one does not take account of the interruptions effected by two world wars and the two Vienna awards, the period of prescription relating to the Treaty of Trianon would, by the time this book appears in print, amount to something between 54 and 55 years. But Hungary as a state has - thanks to the Lord - been in existence since 896 A.D. not since 1920 like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, nor even since 1878 like Roumania. And the Treaty of Trianon is after all but one particularly cruel vicissitude in a long history that has known a great many others. A thousand years of history cannot be cancelled with one stroke of the pen, and nobody can prevent the wheels of fortune from turning either. Recent events have brought proof once more that "causes which one had thought lost forever preserve their entire internal vigour, provided national consciousness remains vigilant and

keeps the home-fire of its culture burning with pious care". Everything still indicates that the situation created in 1920 at Trianon and reconstituted in the Paris Treaty of 1947, will not remain in force in the long run, particularly seeing that after the experience of more than half a century all the facts speak in favor of Hungary's cause alone. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia obviously remain structures incapable of unbuttressed survival, for only naked force keeps together Czechs and Slovaks, Serbs and Croats respectively. To this day they cannot stand one another - their divorce, sure to materialize sooner or later, is written in the stars. At the first blast of the Second World War "those rootless trees were seen to come down in one fell swoop". And restoration of the status quo, when it came in the end, was accompanied by an unprecedented upsurge of oppression and violence, extermination and mass deportations. The very existence of the Croat, Slovak and Transylvanian problems - perhaps more exacerbated today than they were 50 years ago - will inevitably make the three successor states burst at the seams one day, if not for Hungary's immediate and spectacular benefit, at least within the framework of an enlarged Danubian Confederation which will in turn enable a peaceful regrouping of its component parts. "If we want to avoid the errors of the past in Central Europe", wrote Mikus in substance, "we must be realistic and concede to each nation or nationality their legal personality, even if that involves the re- building of multinational states on that basis" (160). Their geographical situation and the common ties woven over so many centuries will eventually induce, by the very nature of things, Slovakia, Croatia, Ruthenia and Transylvania to turn once again towards Hungary, each one having recovered its autonomy or independence. The conditions actually prevailing in the Middle Danube Basin - of which we have seen that it is a region clearly outlined by its mountain ramparts and irrigated by its self-contained water system - can only be temporary ones, and it is absolutely inevitable that the thousand-year-old order be restored

there one day, most likely in the shape of a union freely agreed upon by all the peoples concerned. If nothing else, the example of Poland is there to prove that it is a vain endeavour to try to cut off pieces and annihilate a nation, which has, for centuries, demonstrated its vitality and indeed necessity, wherefore its scattered fragments will always in the end manage to get together. Hence, one might also assuredly predict with La Reveliere "that the time will come when the rump of that body of so regular a shape that had once been Hungary for so long, will seek to reassemble its scattered extremities, and that they will indeed reconvene, of their own accord as it were, within their time-honored framework" (161).

Hungary's geographical position in the very center of the Carpathian Basin, with the natural attraction, which the force of gravity must necessarily exercise in respect of the periphery, invests that country with the role of keystone in the entire Danubian system. That is also the reason why Hungary, instead of being the nucleus of Central Europe, has been a "gaping hole" in it - since Trianon (162). The wounds of that great casualty of two world wars have since ceased to bleed, but she remains a cripple, nevertheless, to her own misfortune as well as to that of her neighbours and indeed the whole of Europe. It has been said that "even though a people may be able to put up with much suffering and privation, it will always sense humiliation as something intolerable. That applies with particular force to the proud Magyars. It explains why the Hungarian nation, fully aware of the values of its civilization, as well as of the role which its history, its qualities and its geographical situation enable it to play in Europe, for the benefit of all, including itself, will never acquiesce in that kind of precarious, diminished and low-grade life to which it finds itself reduced in its present circumstances . . . In the course of its history the Hungarian race has proved its astonishing faculty of recovery, while its organizing ability keeps earmarking it for a comeback, one of these days, as the crystallizing nucleus of Central Europe"

(163). "Indeed there could be no better proof of the outstanding vitality of the Hungarian people than the tremendous promptness with which, after each national catastrophe, they settled down to rebuilding their country, without foreign aid or support. Indeed more often than not surrounded by hostility" (164). "Hungary fought to be enabled again to play in any future reconstruction of Central Europe the role to which it is predestined by its history, inherent qualities and geographical situation" (165).

"To some extent, Trianon has reinforced the vital vigour of the Hungarian people. To them it was by no means the first catastrophe of their history, and like the others it produced the same reaction. For never did they collapse under the weight of accomplished facts: nor did they ever cease to react to and oppose energetically all outside attacks. Also, they never lost faith in their future, not even during the 150 years of Turkish occupation. The Hungarian people will never renounce their historic rights. They never put up with unfavorable conditions imposed upon them; and they will grasp the first opportunity that offers itself for seeking redress for the injustices suffered. Passive resistance was the invincible weapon to which the Hungarians always had recourse and which they employed once more, beginning on the morrow of the disaster of Trianon, if only to protest against the situation thus created and to give expression to their unshakable resolve never to admit that 'dictate' as the definitive settlement of Hungary's affairs" (166).

As mentioned before, the present-day Hungarian Government, kept as it is on a short leash by the U.S.S.R., seems to take no interest in the fate of the Hungarian minorities living in the successor states, It also appears, for even more cogent reasons, to have abandoned any idea relating to a potential revision of the Trianon and Paris Treaties. Also of the artificially created semblance of "fraternal friendship" between socialist countries is, for the time being, covering old quarrels with a "thick overcoat of silence". Thus, the situation can be said to be "frozen" but not

"settled". The law of "survival first" has certainly also played its part. Russian and communist domination being the principal evil of the moment, it has temporarily superseded the other problems to some extent. But they will no doubt crop up again in the future. Nor is it hard to discern among the events of recent years the persistency of nationalist trends in the states now commonly styled "people's republics". even though the Russians - not unlike the Germans, Austrians or Turks before them - have largely succeeded in creating unanimity of resentment: against themselves. It would seem, nevertheless, that as a result of their common trials and tribulations frictions, have somewhat diminished between the various ethnic groups inhabiting those countries, except of course when discord is artificially stirred up by the Russians in order to consolidate their dominion.

Since 1956 the Hungarians seem to have gone into a kind of hibernation. but poor would be the knowledge of the Hungarians and their history if whomsoever imagined that they have spoken their last word and that they have acquiesced forever in their actual fate as well as in the amputations inflicted on their country by the Treaty of Trianon. As a matter of fact, despite a great number of other grave preoccupations, Trianon remains. undiminished by the passage of time. a real obsession with every single Hungarian worthy of that name. It must never be forgotten that during the inter-war period the entire Hungarian people, regardless of social class, material position or party allegiance. had risen like one man against the "accursed treaty" which had thus brought about a nationwide alliance of all Hungarians in a conformity of outraged feelings. One may, therefore not go wide of the truth by asserting that Hungarians, whatever their social class or condition, may, even communist party membership, while keeping silent for the time being. are all unanimous in their thinking on the subject of Trianon. Not only is there not one to accept the mutilations inflicted by Trianon: not one believes seriously either in the intangibility of the present-day status quo



## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

in Central Europe. And if the ubiquitous pre-war slogan of "Nem, nem, soha!" (No, no, never) is not to be seen any more anywhere in Hungary, another one seems to have taken its place in the minds. The advice which the French statesman Leon Gambetta kept repeating to his compatriots in the years after the defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and the Frankfurt Treaty of 1871: "Think of it all the time, but never talk of it!" Gambetta also added another clause, which equally holds for Hungary: "sooner or later the hour .of immanent justice will strike".

Whether one likes it or not, Trianon remains for Hungary a pathetic crack in her millenary history. Endre Ady himself -Hungary's leading left-wing revolutionary poet of the turn-of century - revealed his own ineradicable patriotic attachment as a Hungarian to his native Transylvania when on the eve of his death, 27 January 1919, he scrawled these symbolical words into his bedside Bible: "O Lord, O Lord, why hast thou forsaken us?"

It cannot be repeated often enough: the victors of the first world war sold out the ancient kingdom of St. Stephen among peoples which could boast neither its history nor its courage but which pounced on their prey with "Neronian insanity" to use the words .of Senator Anatole de Monzie. An historic error, a monstrosity of geography and an economic absurdity, the Treaty of Trianon - unjust in substance and tragic of consequence made Henri Pazzi write: "Everywhere in the world Hungary has become far all tender consciences sensitive to justice and liberty - by the same right as France had been after 1871 - the symbol of right crushed by might" (167).

However "contrary to what is generally assumed by public opinion, history, so far from discouraging us, brings new justification for faith and hope. This applies particularly to the life of states from which great lessons .of encouragement may be derived. If some of them have disappeared or had to bow to oppression, the reason for their submission was that they just did not have sufficient moral strength to continue the struggle for inde-

pendence. Only those survive who doggedly want it - liberty is not given, it is conquered" (168). Hungarians may also apply to their own cause, up to this day, the words of the former French Foreign Minister, Theophile Delcasse, principal architect of the Franco-Russian Alliance and the Entente Cordiale concluded with Great Britain: "A nation has not lost its honor for having been defeated or signed a disastrous treaty under the threat of a dagger pointed at its throat. It will lose its honor, however, if it ceases to protest and consents to its own ruin. Downfall is caused not by defeat but by renunciation. . ."

Sacrifice and resistance always reap their reward of renaissance and victory, if only in the long run. Hungary today is undoubtedly "a land crucified awaiting its resurrection." For more than half a century she has lived, endured and indeed suffered one of the most terribly pathetic periods of her long and glorious history, so rich in dramatic events. Few nations have suffered more of the two world wars and their aftermath of peace-patchwork than Hungary has. It may be affirmed without hesitation that, in the course of the last fifty years or so, not one Hungarian has remained unaffected in his or her material and physical existence by those peace treaties, whatever the social background of the person concerned. For the collective memory of the nation there is little that is new in all this. For throughout its history the Hungarian nation has always struggled forward from disappointment to disappointment, from trial to trial. Hence the prevailing mood of the nation, so similar to its music, forever tossed between sorrow and joy, melancholy and fierce self-assertion.

One wonders if by now at least Central Europe may have reached the end of suffering irreparable damage in order to embark on a period of reflexion about its future, so important indeed to the whole of Europe. Enough time has gone by for all to see fairly clearly how the facts produced and, above all the errors committed by the victors of two world wars are all linked up one with another in producing their ultimate results. As Fustel de

Coulanges had written in 1871, "Events do not reveal their consequences quickly. Sometimes a quarter of a century or even more time has to pass before one may say: Lo and behold, here is the result." "You'll reap the consequences", prophesied Jacques Bainville, the great French historian, on the morrow of the 1919-1920 peace treaties. And the here oft-quoted Francesco Nitti did not mince his words either: "A crime breeds further crimes, and a fault leads to other faults." As a matter of fact "suffice it to glance at a map to realize that as of now nothing protects any longer on European soil Western civilisation from Russian aggression. Therefore when the time comes - and it will come - for reconstructing a greater Europe, thought will have to be given to the cohesion and organic assemblage - in a new shape of course - of the peoples of the Danubian Basin, for they are the advanced outposts of the West in the face of barbarism." (169) In opposition to the spirit of hatred and destructiveness which had inspired the "Balkanization" of the peoples of Central Europe, it is the duty today of all men of good will to work for a federated, supra-national, united Europe. All free Europeans worthy of that name are in duty bound to strive and work for a rational form of organizing all its peoples, but more particularly those of Central Europe where the extremely complex territorial imbrication of the ethnic and linguistic elements is one more reason for seeking federal or confederal solutions on the Swiss pattern. And let us add with Aldo Dami that the consultation of the populations concerned will be all the more important as they alone can justify indisputably the establishment of a new order. Let plebiscites be held everywhere, demanded Count Albert Apponyi, the leader of the Hungarian delegation to the Peace Conference, more than half a century ago. That job still remains to be done; one fine day it will have to come to the real self-determination of all the nationalities of the Danubian Basin. "Plebiscites ought to become the general rule anyway for only when all people in all the world will have clearly stated who

they are and where they want to go, shall we have peace" (170).

As for the present situation in Central Europe. all that can be said is that: it runs counter to nature and cannot therefore be considered definitive. Once conditions permit a settlement, a naturally balanced state of affairs will have to be restored to that area for its own benefit as well as that of the whole of Europe. One day or another the unity of the Danubian Basin will inevitably have to be reconstituted. "History demands of the free world much more than paying lip-service to the unity and freedom of self-determination of all peoples . . . The only possible basis for such unity is respect for the natural right of the weakest coupled with exemplary moderation exercised by the strongest" (171). Nothing is definitely settled until it is settled in accordance with justice. Indeed history teaches us that whenever peace is not founded on at least a modicum of equity it will not resist to the erosion of time. Only the acceptance of peace, freely decided by the populations concerned can endow such settlements with an element of solidity, for power will inevitably change hands from one day to another.

A balanced state of affairs, so indispensable to this neuralgic region of Europe, as between Germans, Magyars, Slavs and Latins, is after all only conceivable within the framework of a vast Danubian Federation, belated heir to the quondam Habsburg Empire. And as for Hungary, the "real" Hungary, how could anyone doubt that she would be among the first to welcome such a Central European Federation within an even more heart-warming great free and united Europe, in which the Hungarian nation would be called upon to play once more a part worthy of its past and its noble traditions.

ANNEXE 1

EXTRACTS FROM THE SLOVAK MEMORANDUM ADDRESSED TO THE  
HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT  
IN 1861

Upon the arrival of the Magyars, the confederation of Slavonic tribes living in this land and still being in the first phase of their evolution, came to an end to make place for a new unit which was to occupy, a century later, an honorable position among the other states, under the name of Hungary, or St. Stephen's Realm, and to preserve it despite all sorts of vicissitudes for nine centuries up to our times.

Common interests of a material and spiritual order have united the different races of this country in one family, like the children of one and the same mother.

The task which they were jointly called upon to perform consisting in the defense of Western civilization against the barbarians of the East and in the protection of their independence from threats coming from the West - always found them ready to serve humanity, be it with arms in hand on the battlefield, be it by means of wise consultation in the councils of the country.

Despite their differing languages, the men of these races understood one another perfectly, in their military units as well as in their several assemblies. Love of the common fatherland and fraternal trust were the best interpreters of their good mutual understanding. Neither of them ever hit on the idea to scorn or detest the language of a neighbour. Neither of them ever sought to consolidate or aggrandize his own race by exterminating another one. Neither of them ever thought it necessary to aspire to the high place where, for the sake of ensuring their common stability, must converge the sacred interests of the fatherland as a whole, one and only mother of all these races.

.....  
.....

Our fatherland which derives its vital strength from the fraternal love and concord of all its races, has luckily survived the horrors and devastation of the Tartar invasion, as well as the dangers of being engulfed by Islam on the one hand, and by Western absolutism, on the other. Religious wars have passed overhead like thunderstorms after which, once they spent their force, nature appears more green and beautiful. It has got rid, if not entirely at any rate of the major part, of its mediaeval feudal structure, by granting all its children equal rights. Even an oppressing system lasting as long as eleven years (from the end of the war for freedom till 1859) did not succeed in stifling in its breast the breath of freedom. And now it will have to face happy or unhappy developments according to whether or not it will manage to solve the nationality problem which is the active principle of our century.

It is our wish that this question, instead of deteriorating into an incurable wound for our common mother, should on the contrary become her solid shield from which shall bounce back all the arrows directed at her by her enemies.

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If in the course of several centuries there have been capable to exist in Hungary, without prejudice to the fatherland, the Kouman and Yazig districts, the Haydou townships, the ten Lancers' settlements, the sixteen cities of the Zips and the forty-four Comitats (or Counties), and that in spite of all the difficulties due to their respective geographical situation; if moreover, prior to 1848, the internal organization of our fatherland made possible its division into four districts, without threat to its integrity or unity, we do not see any reason why the Slovak nation, which forms an unbroken entity on the territory that nature assigned to it and which it effectively occupies, could not, in the course of the reorganization of our country and its counties which we expect from the present legislature, find a place for itself under the

name of the Slovak Region of Upper Hungary. Moreover, such recognition represents undoubtedly a corollary to the principle of the equality of rights. It being also recommendable on the strength of the advantages which unity of language would mean to the Region referred to above, in respect of civil and judicial administration, as well as the evolution of civic liberties.

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We feel impelled, right from the beginning, to oppose any such objections as might pretend that the establishment of a Slovak Region would be directed against the historic unity of the Kingdom of Hungary with positive legislative sanction. Already the Holy King St. Stephen, in his last will and testament addressed to his son and heir, the Prince Emeric, declared that "Regnum unius linguae imbecile et fragile est" and advised him to respect the customs, manners and habits of the several races inhabiting his realm. The unity and integrity of the fatherland had already been established under that first reign on the basis of the full equality of all tribes. If those tribes have transformed -themselves into nations conscious of their personality and if, consequently, the unity and integrity of our fatherland have to be sought no longer in the equality of tribes but in that of nations, for this we ought neither to be blamed nor praised.

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In the common past of the peoples which had constituted this fatherland we can see the finger of Providence pointing the way to the future. We are aware that the geographical character of Upper Hungary which we inhabit, our common interests, material as well as spiritual, the links of trade and even family, all bind us together in close unity with our Magyar brethren. About this we feel very deeply. Far be it therefore from us to be the enemies of the integrity and unity of our fatherland. Therefore no one must look in the Slovak Region, destined to personify our nation, for anything but the unequivocal guarantee of the equality of

rights of our nations. that equality being the very cornerstone in the edifice of our fatherland.

.....

We Slovaks attributing much more importance to concord among the nations of Hungary than we do to futile national pride, are fully prepared to recognize within the framework of our fatherland the diplomatic primacy of the Hungarian language provided that it is contained within fair limits.

.....

No race excels our Magyar brethren in the love of their language and their jealous affection with which they cling to their nationality. But should it be assumed that the Creator has formed our hearts and minds on a different pattern? Not at all! That which hurts their feelings hurts us just the same. That which is of inestimable value to them represents the same value to us.

A



## ANNEXE II

### THE HUNGARIAN ARMISTICE (Belgrade, 13 November 1918)

On the above date General Henrys and the Voevod Michititch, delegated by General Pranchet d'Esperey, signed at Belgrade with Mr. Bela Linder, delegate of the Hungarian Government, a military convention, the essential provisions of which read as follows:

Military Convention setting forth, in respect of Hungary, the terms of application of the Armistice Agreement concluded between the Allies and Austria-Hungary.

I. The Hungarian Government shall withdraw its troops to the north of the line marked by the upper course of the great Szamos, Beszterce and Maros rivers, as far as the confluence of the latter with the Tisza, Szabadka, Baja, Pecs - these townships not to be occupied by Hungarian military units - the course of the Drave river to where it intersects the frontier of Croatia-Slavonia. Evacuation shall be completed within eight days.

The region thus evacuated shall be occupied as of right by the Allies under conditions to be laid down by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Allied Armies. Civil administration shall remain in the care of the government of the day. Within the evacuated zone there shall remain only such police and constabulary (gendarmerie) forces as are indispensable for maintaining law and order, as well as the special forces entrusted with ensuring the security of the railway lines.

II. Demobilization of the Hungarian Army on land and at sea, excepting six infantry and two cavalry divisions for the maintenance of internal order and the police units mentioned in paragraph I.

III. The right of occupation by the Allies of all such localities or strategic points as may be designated for the duration by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Allied Armies.

Right of way and garrisoning for the Allied forces everywhere on Hungarian territory. The right at all times to use for the Allies' military purposes all rolling stock by road or rail, furthermore all navigable craft belonging to the State or the inhabitants of Hungary. The same to apply to draught and pack animals.

IV & V. (concerned the handing over of rolling stock and other means of transport: 2000 carriages and 100 railway engines of standard gauge; 500 carriages and 50 engines of narrow gauge; 6 river gunboats to be delivered forthwith at Belgrade - the rest of the Danube flotilla to be disarmed.)

VI, VII & VIII. 3000 railway troops to be put at the disposal of the Allied C-in-C in order to repair damaged railway lines in Serbia; also signal units with their gear to repair telegraph and telephone lines.

IX. 15 days' grace is accorded for the passage and stationing of German troops moving across Hungary, the period to be counted from the date of signature of the Armistice concluded with General Diaz (4 November at 15.00 hours).

Postal and telegraphic communications with Germany may take place under Allied military supervision only. The Hungarian Government pledges itself not to allow any communication of a military nature to be passed on to Germany by telegraph.

XVI. Hungary to cease all relations with Germany, including troop and munitions transports, excepting those designed for the German troops in Roumania with the assent of the Allied Commander-in-Chief.

13

November 1918

For the Hungarian Government

The Minister for War Signed: Bela LINDER

The Delegates of the Commander-in-Chief Allied Armies of the Orient

The General Commanding the French Army of the Orient

Signed: HENRYS

The Voevod: Signed MICHITITCH

### ANNEXE III

#### WERE THE ARCHITECTS OF THE TREATY OF TRIANON GUIDED BY THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO DETERMINE THEIR FATE FOR THEMSELVES?

The following is a brief summary of the terms in which the Hungarian Delegation to the Peace Conference presented its argument:

“...We cannot see any reason, based on the general interest or on international justice, for dismembering Hungary. There may perhaps be one and only one such reason, to which we would be prepared to bow, a moral force that might replace historic rights: the will of the populations living in the areas under dispute. Between Hungary, which, convinced of its right, wishes to keep them, and Hungary's neighbors who would like to take them on various pretexts, let them go to whomsoever they wish to belong. Any solution bypassing their assent would be stained by arbitrariness. Having been reached by force, any such solution would be liable to be destroyed by force with the changing balance of power, which the whole world would be free to watch. Only the freely expressed will of nations may create, in replacement of the old law which is so frequently called in question nowadays, an indisputable new law, having sufficient authority to command the respect even of those whose designs it may cross. If the arguments we have adduced in favor of keeping our territory do not seem conclusive to you, go and ask for the advice of those most directly concerned: do not deal with them as if they were cattle devoid of a will of their own. This is the touchstone of those oft-proclaimed great principles of international justice and liberty; it is here that the sincerity of those who proclaim them will be put to the test. Strengthened by those principles we demand that plebiscites be held in all the regions, which it is intended to sever from Hungary. We ask that they be held under conditions of guaranteed liberty. And we declare to accept their decisions whatever they may be.

And should our adversaries decline the only test, which might safely establish the will of the populations concerned. Their case will be referred to the judgment of the Court of Human Conscience, for they will have clearly revealed their resolve to submit to their yoke millions of human beings who refuse to belong to them. The principle underlying the new arrangements would in that case be neither the ethnic principle nor that of justice nor even that of liberty - it would be the enslavement of the vanquished which would thus emerge as the dominant idea of the twentieth century." .

\* Hungarian Peace Negotiations. Report on the work of the Hungarian Peace Delegation. Budapest, 1920. Vol. I. pp. 31-32

## ANNEXE V

### "A LANDMARK AT THE FOOT OF A CALVARY"

"Somewhere in the north of the Hungarian plain, on the edge of the wheat-growing area there is a village called Tarpa. The peasants usually harvest wheat there in abundance but are lacking in wood to heat their houses and mend them. Luckily Providence, which is aware of the needs of men, has placed near Tarpa, at only two hours' ox-cart travel, the forestry borough of Berehovo, inhabited exclusively by lumbermen. For more than a thousand years the men of Tarpa were wont to take their wheat to Berehovo whence they would return in their ox-carts loaded with timber. For each bag of grain and bundle of logs thus transported the Treasury took its dime of excise duty and everybody was content.

However, one day in the summer of 1919 there came some gentlemen and pointing to the boundary-stone at the foot of the old Calvary said to the peasants: "you chaps of Tarpa, you are Hungarians, and you blokes of Berehovo, you are Slovaks. This stone, here, marks the frontier between you and those two frontier policemen will tell you the rest. The peasants doffed their hats. Since then neither wheat nor timber passes along the road. But the people of Berehovo are hungry and the people of Tarpa are cold. That's all."

Henri Beraud: *Le Feu qui couve*; Les Editions de France. 1932.)

## ANNEXE VI

### THE "MONGOL LETTER" ADDRESSED BY BELA IV, KING OF HUNGARY, TO POPE INNOCENT IV ON 11 NOVEMBER 1252

To our Holy Father in Christ, our Lord INNOCENT, by the Grace of God High Pontiff of our Holy Roman Catholic Church - Bela by the Grace of God King of Hungary sends his dutiful and cordial respects.

In the wake of the Mongol disaster the major part of Hungary has been turned into desert. Pagan tribes surround it, like hedges the sheep-fold. Ruthenians and Wallachians in the East; heretic Bulgars and Bosniacs in the South, with whom we are still at war. In the North and West there are the Germans of whom, owing to our common faith, we should expect help. However, instead of the fruit of aid all we get from them are the thorns of war. For they keep raiding our country for plunder and rape. For reason of all these woes, but above all on account of the Mongols who taught us, like they did other people they have trampled underfoot, to fear the experience of war - and having taken counsel with the Barons and Prelates of our Realm - we address ourselves to the Vicar of Christ and His Brethren, last refuge of Christians in extreme peril, in order to prevent from happening to us, and through us to other Christian peoples, that which we fear.

News is reaching us, day after day, about the Mongols. They are preparing to attack not only us, whom they hate most for not having, despite the wounds inflicted on them, bowed to their yoke, whilst all the other peoples against whom they have brought force to bear performed acts of submission and became their tributaries - east of our frontier the Russian lands, as well as that of the Coumanians, Wallachians and Bulgars, who had once been under our rule. Those Mongols are henceforward organizing themselves not only against us but against the entire Christian world and, as borne out by very many trustworthy witnesses, they

will soon deploy their immense cohorts against the whole of Europe.

We are equally afraid lest should those people appear once more, our men, knowing the savage cruelty of the Tartars, might hesitate or simply not dare to resist them any more, fear bending them under the yoke of the enemy, as it has the other neighbouring peoples, unless the Holy Apostolic See, guided by wise foresight, effectively strengthen our country with its reinforcement, thus instilling its inhabitants with new courage.

We are writing this principally for two reasons - so as not to be accused afterwards of not having explored all possibilities or of plain negligence.

As regards negligence, we may affirm that we have done everything possible in our position and based on our experience when we had exposed ourselves and all our belongings to the menace and violence of the Tartars, still largely unknown at that time.

Nor can anyone accuse us of sins of omission.

The Tartars were still cutting throats in our country when already we addressed ourselves to the three great powers of the Christian world:

- To the Holy See, master and teacher of all Christendom;

- To the Imperial Court to which we have even offered our submission provided that it lent us timely and decisive aid against the Mongol pest;

- And also to the Royal House of France, but from nowhere did we get aid or comfort, only words.

And yet we had left no stone unturned; for the sake of Christendom we humbled our Royal Majesty by giving two of our daughters as wives to Ruthenian princes and one to a Polish prince to procure from them, and other friends living to the east of us, jealously guarded secret information concerning the Tartars, so as to be able to resist the designs and intrigues of the latter.

We received in our country also the fugitive Coumanians, and it is sad to say that thus we defend our country with the help of

## THE TRAGIC FATE OF HUNGARY

pagans; it is with them that we combat the enemies of the Church.

Moreover, for the protection of the Christian faith we have wedded our oldest son to a Coumanian bride, in order to avoid the worst, thus inducing the Coumanians to embrace Christianity, as we had one before with other populations.

For these and other reasons we wish to furnish proof to his Holiness the Pope that amidst all those misfortunes we have received no aid from any Sovereign, any European people whatsoever, except from the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem who at our request not long ago, have taken up arms against the pagans and schismatics for the defence of our country and true Christian faith.

We have already stationed them at places of danger, on the Bulgaro-Coumanian frontier and the Lower Danube, for it had been there that the Tartars made irruption into our country.

But on that territory we have other designs, too. We hope that if God aids our work and that done by our above-mentioned brethren, and if the Holy See should deign to help us too, we may spread the Christian faith with the assistance of the Knights all along the Danube as far as the Sea of Constantinople, thus providing adequate aid to the Roman Empire and also the Holy Land.

On the other hand, we have placed Knights to defend the fortresses we built along the Danube, which are as yet novel things to our people.

For it is our oft-proven belief that if we reinforce the defence of the Danube with fortresses it will be our salvation as well as that of the whole of Europe.

For the Danube is the river of resistance.

Even though unprepared and having suffered a terrible defeat we were able to hold out against the Mongols for ten months, at a time when our country had almost no fortresses at all, nor strong defenders.



If the Mongols should succeed in taking possession of the Danube and then, God forbid, occupy our country, the road would lie open to them towards other Christian countries; for once because there is no sea to stand in their way, and on the other hand, because here they could most advantageously install their families with which they are abundantly provided.

Let us recall Attila who came from the East to conquer the West and installed his principal camp in the middle of Hungary or, on the other hand, the Roman Emperors who sallied forth fighting from the West to subdue the East and who again installed the majority of their troops between the frontiers of our country. May Your Holiness meditate all these things carefully so as to take appropriate measures and bring remedy to the wound before it begins to fester.

It is precisely for that reason that I beg your vigilant Papal Holiness to grant us its aid, take salutary measures and apply beneficial remedies lest the wound become envenomed.

Many thinking men are astonished at seeing Your Holiness tolerate under the present conditions the indifference shown to Europe by the King of France, that eminent member of the Church.

They are also astonished at all the care heaped by Your Holiness on the Empire of Constantinople as well as other lands oversea. Yet, if those were to be lost - which God forbid - less harm would be done to the inhabitants of Europe than if our country alone were occupied.

We declare before God and all men that our need is so great and our cause so grave that were it only for the perils of the road we would, instead of merely sending ambassadors as we do, prostrate ourselves personally at Your Holiness's feet, in order to make ourselves heard by the entire Church, to submit our apologies and obtain Your approval to coming to an understanding with the Mongols, in case Your Holiness does not grant us the aid requested should danger befall us.

We implore the Holy Mother Church to take into consideration, if not our own merits, those of our saintly royal predecessors who had, full of devotion and respect, maintained themselves and their peoples in the faith of salvation. similarly to other princes of this world. in the purity of that faith and in obedience to the Church, wherefore the Holy Apostolic See had offered them while all went well for them, and promised, in the event of danger, even without submitting any special requests, all kinds of graces and favours.

At the present time, however, a grave danger threatens.

Let Your Holiness open His paternal heart and send us an armed force signifying substantial aid for the protection of the Faith and for the good of the people at this time of great persecutions.

For if Your Holiness should - an event we cannot believe refuse our well-founded request which is of interest to all the faithful of the Church of Rome, we would be compelled, no longer as children but as outcasts from the fatherly flock to beg protection elsewhere.

Done at Sarospatak, this eleventh day of November, feast of the Bishop and Martyr Saint Martin.

BELA IV King of Hungary

(The original of the above letter written on a parchment scroll, was found some twenty-odd years ago in the secret archives of the Vatican with the help of a priestly friend by Aladar KOVACH, the Hungarian writer and playwright, and a former Director of the Budapest National Theatre.)

## A PRECIOUS PIECE OF EVIDENCE

Since its publication, late in 1971, Yves de Daruvar's book has had profound and wide-spread repercussions in France. Some measure of its effect may be taken from the manuscript letter published in English translation here below:

PIERRE MESMER

Prime Minister

"read your book on the Tragic Fate of Hungary with great interest prior to his official visit to Budapest. While disputing some of your arguments and without accepting all your conclusions, he recognizes none the less the just nature and power of your essential thesis.

He takes this opportunity to repeat to you the expression of his friendly remembrance."

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- (142) Charles TISSEYRE - idem - preface de M. de MONZIE, p. VII.
- (143) Charles TISSEYRE - idem - pp. 9 it 18, 53, 54, (144) Rene DUPUIS - idem - pp. 15, 16, 17, 18 et 139 a 161.
- (145) Henri POZZI « La guerre revient » Paris 1933.
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- (147) Georges ANDERSEN « Quant la France s'en lave les mains » dans « Combat » du 1/9/68.
- (148) Wenzel JAKSCH - idem - p. 307.
- (149) Maurice BAUMONT « Les origines de la 2eme Guerre Mondiale » Paris 1969.
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- (151) Rene DUPUIS - idem - pp. 139 a 161.
- (152) Paul et Jean LEBOURG - idem -.
- (153) Aldo DAMI - idem -.
- (154) Janko MUSULIN dans le « Salzburger Nachrichten » du 2/11/56 cite par le R. P. SZALAY dans « Verites sur l'Europe Centrale » pp. 157, 158.
- (155) Georges DESBONS - idem - p. 106.
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- (158) Dominique AUDOLLENT, article dans « Exil et Liberte » d'octobre 1966.
- (159) Antal ULLEIN-REVICZKY - idem - p. 111 de la premiere edition de 1929.
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- (168) Louis-Paul DESCHANEL « Deux gardiens de la Civilisation : Hongrie et France » article publie dans la « Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie » de decembre 1936.
- (169) Philippe GAILLANT « Fallait-il detruire l'AutricheHongrie » dans la revue du « XXeme siecle federaliste » no 395 de decembre 1968.
- (170) Aldo DAMI- idem -.
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The maps printed on separate pages of this book have been extracted from Paul and Jean Lebourg's work "Les consciences se reveillent", Delpeuch, 1929.

CONTENTS

I. Millenary Hungary - its Geographic Unity and  
Ethnic Disparateness. . . . .

II. The Great War: its Origins, its Evolution, and the  
Climate of 1918. . . . .

III. From Armistice to Peace: Karolyi and Bela Kun . .

IV. The Treaty of Trianon - its Legal, Moral and Terri-  
torial Foundations. . . . .

V. The Oppression of Hungarian Minorities; Revision  
ism and World War II. The Transylvanian Problem

VI. The French Share of Responsibility: Journalists,  
Diplomats, Generals. . . . .

VII. Conclusion

. . . . .

. . . . .

15

45 67

81

111

159 185

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Translated from the French original:

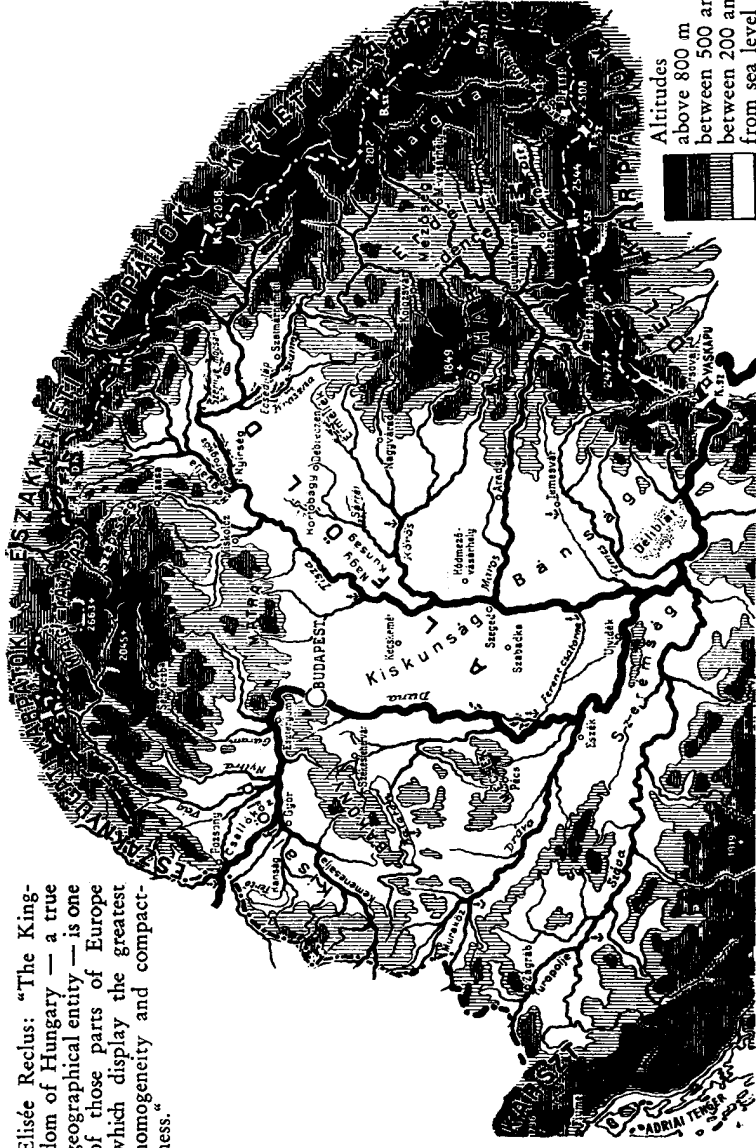
Yves de Daruvar



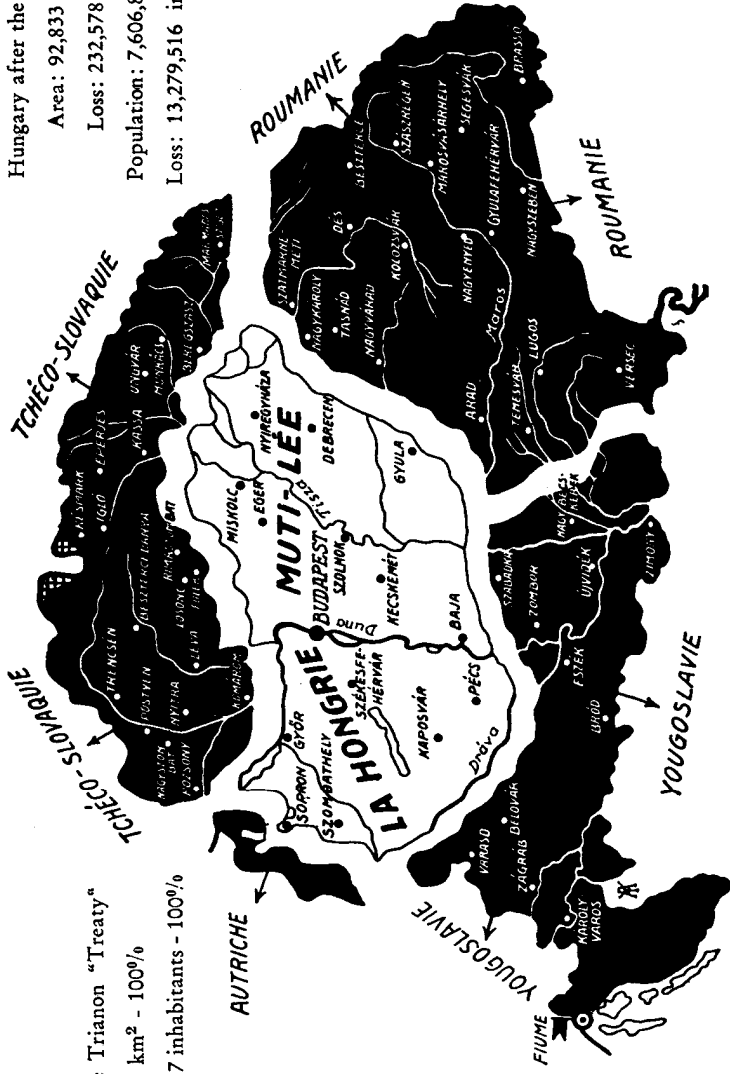


## **The Perfect Geographical Unity of the Pre-War Kingdom of Hungary**

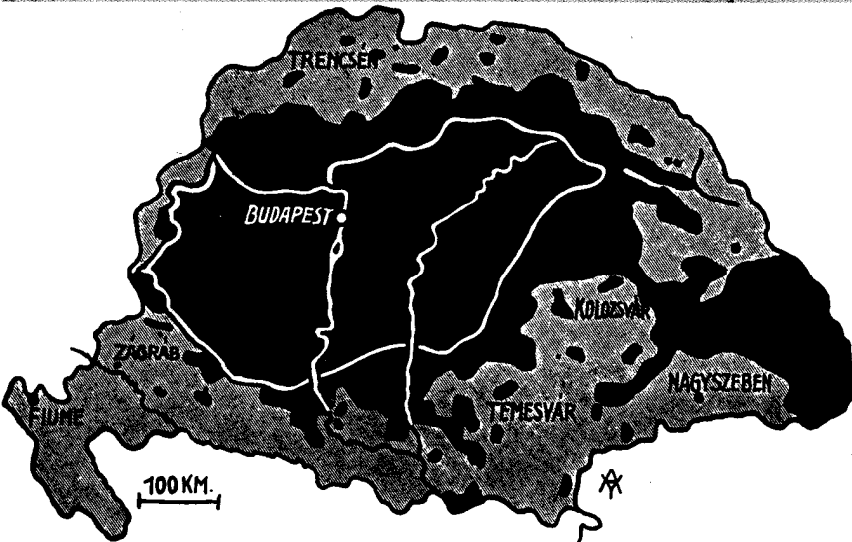
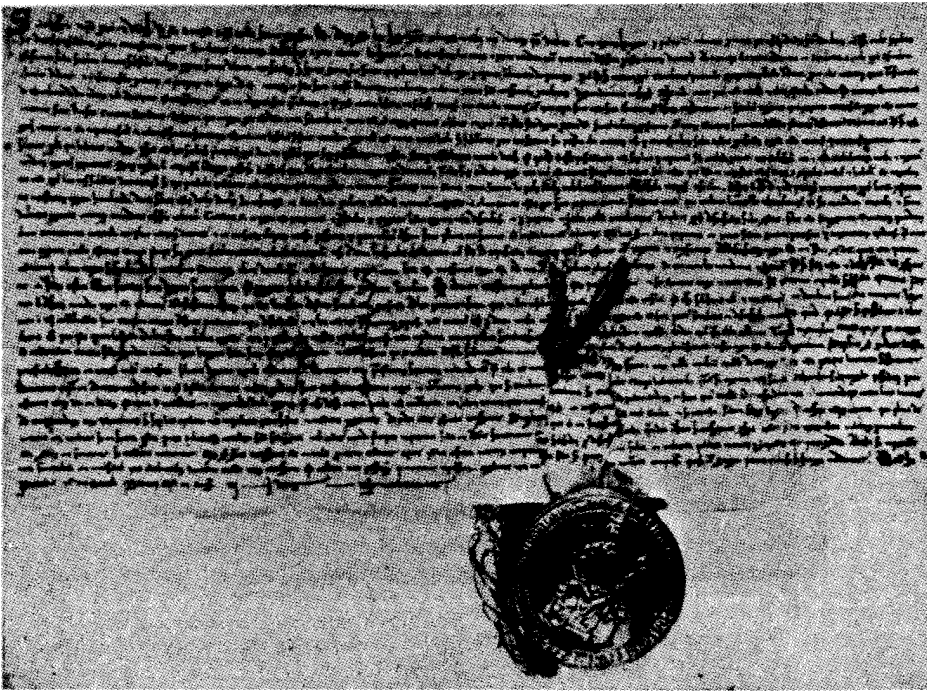
Elisée Reclus: "The Kingdom of Hungary — a true geographical entity — is one of those parts of Europe which display the greatest homogeneity and compactness."



Hungary after the Trianon "Treaty"  
 Area: 92,833 km<sup>2</sup> (28,5%)  
 Loss: 232,578 km<sup>2</sup> (71,5%)  
 Population: 7,606,871 inhab. (36,4%)  
 Loss: 13,279,516 inhabitants (63,6%)



Hungary before the Trianon "Treaty"  
 Area: 325,411 km<sup>2</sup> - 100%  
 Population: 20,886,487 inhabitants - 100%



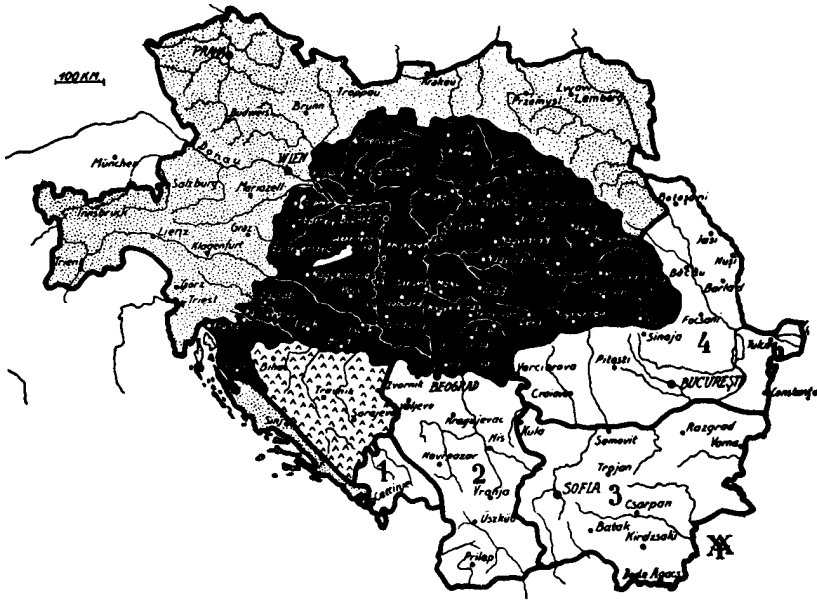
The original of the so-called Mongol Letter of 11 November 1251, addressed by Bela IV, King of Hungary, to Pope Innocent IV, which was found intact some years ago in the Secret Archives of the Vatican. Its translation appears under Annex V of this book.

lowland and hill  
 . regions inhabit't'd  
 by compact Hun  
 garian masses

sparingly or hardly inhabited mountain regions, having an overwhelmingly non-Hungarian population

Trianon frontiers

Map showing the location of the Hungarians within the Kingdom at the time the Treaty of Trianon was drawn up.



The States of the Danubian Basin before World War I

The Dual Monarchy

I  
[I] Montenegro (1) Serbia

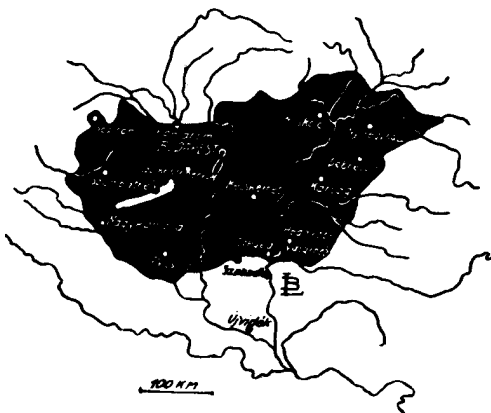
[II]  
[I]  
Bulgaria Roumania

/'  
1m  
Austrian Empire  
. Kingdom of Hungary  
§ liosnia-Herzegovina

The States of the Danubian Basin after the Peace Treaties

\UOXI'f1  
f1J Republic of Austria . Mutilated Hungary

\  
rn [I] [3] [II]  
Czechoslovakia  
Yugoslavia Bulgaria  
Roumania



The Kingdom of Hungary before World War I  
Hungary  
Croatia-Slavonia of Fiume  
Hungary as mutilated by the Treaty of Trianon

