

## COUNT STEPHEN BETHLEN'S MESSAGE TO SETON WATSON.

### I.

In the leading article of the 1934 Easter Number of the "8 órai Ujság" Count Stephen Bethlen wrote as follows:

"It is said that even in Hungary no-one wants Revision except the 'feudal magnates', who thereby wish to regain their old estates, and "the nobility", who have lost the ground under their feet and whose existence has been shaken". This is what M. Beneš's papers write; and Mr. Seton Watson plays the same tune in London. As against them it is sufficient to refer to one single fact — that today even the social democratic party in Hungary, under pressure of undivided Hungarian public feeling, and fearing that it might lose its present adherents if it did not do so, demands Revision. It is possible that the Little Entente leaders have also fallen under a psychic illusion, namely, that at last they have come to believe all the nonsense which a few Hungarian emigrés, bribed by them, write and proclaim to suit their (the Little Entente's) taste. However, I believe that the numerous unprejudiced British M. P. s and other foreigners who have spent some time in Hungary, who have come into contact with the country-side, with the peasants, craftsmen and every strata of the people, have all come to a different conclusion. These, and a considerable section of foreign public opinion in general, now know very well that Revision is a universal demand of Hungarian public opinion, from which it will never under any circumstances desist.

It is ridiculous to say that Revision is urged by those land-owning magnates only who have been deprived of their estates by the land reforms of the neighbouring States, because in our country there is not a single person unaware of the elementary fact that these agrarian reforms could not be undone even in the event of a Revision, and that these estates are finally divided and that should these areas come back to Hungary at any time, there could be no question of revoking the agrarian reforms already carried out.

### II.

In his speech made at the mass meeting of Hungarians driven out of Transylvania, held on 3rd June at Debreczen, Count Stephen Bethlen, Ex-Prime Minister of Hungary, among other things said:

"Many of our opponents, Titulescu, Benes and other gentlemen including Seton Watson, with whom, in the course of my recent tour through England I have stood face to face, say that it is not the question of revision that is important but the minority question, that such a legal situation for the minority should be created as would virtually eliminate frontiers. Here I do not desire to reply to Seton Watson's personal attacks recently made against me. I do not wish to do so since personal remarks are always a sign of weakness and if our arguments lack the weight of justice and truth no personal remarks will avail. Yet there is one thing I do wish to say. It may be true that the present conditions of Europe could greatly be improved by the extension of the minority question.

I would ask, however, why this is not done; why do they not begin? For if they were to do so and the frontiers should really disappear, who would be so foolish as to want to fight for frontier readjustment? But why do not they start now, when we see that owing to the Revision Movement, an increased oppression has been started against our Hungarian brethren beyond our frontiers.

I do not even wish that Seton Watson should demand from the Successor States the complete execution of the minority rights. I demand only one thing from Seton Watson, and by this he can prove his good faith, namely, that he should render it possible for the yield of the generosity which the Hungarian public will surely display, to reach the Hungarian people of Transylvania. And let it reach them without the Roumanian State ceasing to pay the salary supplements and similar assistance given, for instance to the Hungarian clergymen, and even then merely for ostentation. If Seton Watson, Benes

and Titulescu are of opinion that by developing the minority rights it is possible to undermine the revision movement, if there is any good faith in their statements, let them just refrain from preventing the generosity of the Hungarians living in the dismembered country, and allow us to support our racial brethren in Transylvania, in the Highlands and in the South. If they will not even do that, I must declare that there is neither seriousness nor good faith in their statements”.

Special attention should be given to the arguments of Count Bethlen, in the course of which he expressed his idea on the creation of an independent Transylvania, which he set forth in his lectures delivered in England.

He expounded this idea as follows:

”What does this independent Transylvania signify? It signifies the placing once again of the Hungarians of Transylvania on the level of a state for-

ming factor, and so delivering it from the hard lot of a minority into which it has been cast by Trianon; it signifies the restoration of the right of self-determination to the Hungarians of Transylvania, its restoration exclusively for the benefit of the people living in Transylvania, against the oppression under which they now live. It also signifies that we really are willing to come to an agreement, to a compromise with far-reaching conditions, but never to give up our rights. Few people on the other side understand this, or else they do not desire to understand it. The time may come when they will understand. Time is passing, and European relations are forming in such a way that perhaps the time will come sooner than expected when the Rumanian race will see that their only possibility of life is to come to an agreement with the Hungarian nation. Perhaps this time will come sooner than we think it will today, when apparently no difficulty stands in the way”.

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