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## CONTENTS



- Attitude of Hungarian Government respecting  
Actual International Questions
- Economic Connection between Great Britain  
and Hungary During the Age of Reform *Alexander Fest*
- Tercentenary of the Budapest University of  
Sciences . . . . . *Arthur B. Yolland*
- Political Mosaic
- How Minorities Live
- Theatre, Literature, Arts  
Professor Zoltán Gombocz † *Stephen Ullmann*
- Political Economy
- Sports

# ATTITUDE OF HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT RESPECTING ACTUAL INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS

On May 28th, during the discussion in the Lower House of the National Defence and Foreign Affairs Estimates, Gyula Gömbös, Prime Minister of Hungary, made a long speech, the passages referring to the attitude of the Hungarian Government respecting actual questions of international politics being as follows: —

In his exposé dealing with the Foreign Affairs Estimates the Premier spoke primarily of the general questions of interest to Hungary too which were left undecided by the Treaties of Peace.

"It is quite natural" — he said — "that this thesis of ours — a *positive solution of the questions of revision, minorities, equality, and of the economic questions* — should meet with opposition on the part of those whose policy has so far been directed towards frustrating all Hungarian endeavours of the kind and preventing this nation, dismembered as it is but supported by the powerful spiritual forces still latent within it, from achieving the objects which the consciousness of its mission impels it to strive to attain. I refer to our neighbours, who have not displayed any friendship towards Hungary since the end of the Great War and the conclusion of the treaties of peace. Our neighbours, who have compelled all Hungarian Governments alike at all times to look farther forward and strive to enforce political conceptions calculated in economic respects particularly to counterbalance the activity of these countries."

## THE ROME PACT

The Premier then continued by stating that the first positive tendency in the foreign policy of Hungary was the move towards agreement with Italy. *"The Rome Pact has proved efficient, not only in economic, but also in political respects, seeing that the friendship of Rome — and above all the foreign policy of the Duce — has served the interests of Hungary"* As concerns the economic results of the Rome Pact, in answer to the critics of that agreement the Premier pointed out that *"if last year we had had a more plentiful harvest — in particular of cereals — the ratio existing today would wear a quite different appearance*

*and would have been all in favour of the Rome Pact. The mere fact that both Rome and Vienna admitted the possibility of marketing wheat at a price in excess of that ruling in the world market, having both afforded a certain security on this point, in itself shows that the path taken by us is perfectly sound, and that that was the first real step towards placing European politics in the chaos prevailing in Europe on a basis of "real" policy."*

## ON THE EVE OF THE DANUBE CONFERENCES

"The negotiations being carried on without a break" — continued the Premier — "in the same way as in the case of the Rome Pact are preparing the way for treaties the apparent object which is to create order in Europe. *If that is the object the negotiating Parties really wish to attain, — if the tendency of this activity in the field of international politics is an unequivocal assertion of justice, — if these negotiations and preparations for the conclusion of treaties have not for their object the one-sided stabilisation of existing conditions on the basis, not of justice, but of injustice, — if they are not directed against us, — then we are only too ready to take part in the work of stabilising the peace of Europe.* However, should we see that the reverse is true, — that it is a question of strengthening the French system of Powers and of stabilising the injustices of the peace treaties, — no Hungarian statesman can possibly take part in such negotiations or set his signature to any treaty resulting therefrom. The Hungarian Government has always displayed peaceful intentions. This is not due only to the individual attitude of the respective Government, but is the desire of the Hungarian people too; though the Hungarian people is one with the Hungarian Government also in desiring that its interests shall be duly represented both here in the Carpathian Basin and at the Danube Conference. *We cannot agree to any treaty selling our rights for a pottage of lentils; for we know surely that, however small this nation may be, its geographical situation and its historical past entitle it a thousandfold to demand the right*



to create for itself in Europe a position in keeping with the mission it has fulfilled for over a thousand years."

### PROTEST AGAINST METHODS OF POLITICAL PERSECUTION

"What have we experienced so far? Whatever the political conflict or incident in question, at all times a deliberate attempt was made to discover some guilt on the Hungarian side. The Marseilles affair, I am thankful to say, is closed. Nor do I wish to deal with that question; though I feel sure that the House will agree with me in establishing the fact that the Marseilles affair was exploited for the purpose of starting a campaign against Hungary with the object of annihilating our nation. Thanks to the sound common sense of the Great Powers — and, I must admit, recently also of the States most nearly concerned — this incident did not develop into a campaign of international political persecution, but has been shelved altogether. So long as the States surrounding our country continue to adopt the attitude of political persecution and to maintain an atmosphere of political reprisals, no Hungarian statesman having the interests of his country really at heart could possibly adopt any other attitude than that of absolute reserve. And this attitude of reserve applies in all fields alike; for this people of ours, which has been living here on the highway of the nations and in the danger spot of Europe, must needs have its interests represented with the utmost caution in all international relations. We are unable to be the apostles or active executors of great conceptions because we lack the power and the authority and the resources essential thereto. We may act as assistants in furthering the realisation of conceptions which serve the interests, not of Hungary alone, but of the whole of Central Europe. And this is what we have been longing for." —

### THE AUSTRIAN QUESTION

After stating that there were fewer conflicts in Europe on the line from North to South than on the line from West to East, and that the only barrier between Italy and Germany was that set up by the Austrian question, the Hungarian Premier proceeded to express the opinion that "if possible, the Austrian question must be liquidated... In this respect it would be an advantage if the representatives of the big nations could agree to accept a sound basis and to accept the idea of the independence of the Austrian State. For this question is of interest to Europe as a whole. Austria — like Hungary — is centrally situated on the map of Europe, under economic and political conditions of such a character as to make the Austrian question of moment to practically all the European States alike."

In this connection, while maintaining the

attitude laid down in the statement made by him last year, Premier Gömbös declared that he was opposed to a *Habsburg Restoration*. To quote his own words, the question of a king „we shall desire, when the time comes, to settle in a manner in keeping with the interests of the nation, in the peaceful atmosphere which will in all probability be created by this question being above all parties." He in any case believed that the question was not up for discussion at all, seeing that the situation had not matured sufficiently for that.

### THE POLICY OF THE INTERESTS OF HUNGARY

Speaking of Germany, the Hungarian Premier at one point established the fact that "the basis of Hungary's policy in the Carpathian Basin was under all circumstances bound to be *the consideration at all times of the existence of the mighty force represented by Germany.*"

In another place the Premier said: — "I cannot today speak emphatically of a policy of a free hand, because I am under engagements to certain States. It would therefore be out of place to stress that point, for, while I am in full agreement with Austria, I am also in full agreement with Italy; and I have sympathies with Germany too and — from the point of view of "real" policy — with all three countries alike. For it would be silly to say that for this or that consideration I would be ready to turn my back on this or that friendship. This situation is one of difficulty, for placed as we are at the point of contact of many forces, we look like one changing his colour — chameleon like — every day. That is what lends correctness to the attitude adopted by us, — that, namely, of proposing to continue in the future too a *policy representing the interests of Hungary, — a policy which must eventually lead to a strengthening of Hungary.*"

In answer to a remark made by Mr. Peyer, Social Democrat Deputy, the Premier spoke of the visit of the Prussian Prime Minister, *General Göring*, and said: — "*The Hungarian nation has always regarded as an honour the visit of a foreign statesman; and it is quite in keeping with the time-honoured tradition of Hungarian hospitality and with the cordiality of that hospitality that everyone should show that statesman every respect. This has nothing to do with political questions. It is merely a question of international courtesy.*"

### HUNGARY AND THE LITTLE ENTENTE

In the concluding part of his exposé, when speaking of the economic connections between Hungary and the Little Entente States, Premier Gömbös made the following statements: —

"Just think of the engagements in economic matters which Hungary had to perform in the early thirties of the present century in her relations with the Little Entente. A glance at the foreign trade



statistics shows us that in all three relations alike the trade balance was adverse to Hungary. The respective nations of participation in economic intercourse were against Hungary, viz. 3—1, 4—1 and 2—1 respectively in favour of the Little Entente States. Our first business was therefore to try to find more distant — not always natural — markets in a western, south-eastern and north-western direction respectively; though we never for a moment forgot that *this nation must not sink to the level of making the conditions of its life and its political existence depend exclusively upon economic considerations*. For, although we know, for instance, — I am speaking openly — that we need the Czech market just as badly as the Czechs need to secure Hungary as a market for their products, nevertheless we cannot be expected to pursue an economic policy or initiate a *rapprochement* involving our forgetting our political demands or all the tears being shed by our Magyar minorities in their lives beyond the frontier.

*"We are quite ready to negotiate with any of our neighbours; but they must realise that a nation with a past of ten centuries cannot be bound hand and foot. This nation must be liberated and allowed in its entirety to fulfil its historic mission. If that is done, and if it is admitted that we are entitled to live in the Carpathian Basin not only because our history shows that we have been the only people able to form a State in that Basin, but also because the given circumstances, the existence of twelve million Magyars — a point referred to so aptly by my honourable friend —, and the fact that these twelve million Magyars cannot conceive of their economic strivings being confined to a*

*limited space of 90,000 square kilometres, but cherish far greater ambitions based upon mere even justice, — I repeat, if all these points are realised, then it will not be the fault of the Hungarian Government or the Hungarian nation if we fail to come to an understanding or to solve the problem of the Danube Basin."*

### HUNGARIAN-POLISH FRIENDSHIP

Special interest was aroused by the words spoken by the Hungarian Premier when he said that "the political conceptions here in conflict will perhaps ultimately lead to the line connecting up Warsaw with Vienna, Budapest and Rome being extended possibly to Berlin too, where a certain equilibrium is in evidence, and the way prepared, not for aggressiveness, but for ensuring peace, — not with an aggressive purpose, but with the idea of peace; and those conceptions are sound in economic respects too, particularly from the point of view of agriculture."

In this connection the Premier made the following statements: — "for my own part I cannot but speak of my visit to Warsaw and my paying my respects to the late Marshal Pilsudski as a most auspicious bit of diplomacy. History does certainly repeat itself. *The relations between Warsaw and Budapest are no mere accident. Nor is it a mere accident that today, on the occasion of all international pourparlers, we find the Polish Foreign Minister, Joseph Beck, while defending the interests of Poland always showing that he has the interests of Hungary too at heart.*"

## EQUALITY IN RESPECT OF ARMAMENTS

"We have shown" — said the Premier in his exposé on the National Defence Estimates — "to the whole of Europe, that we stand on a basis, not of arbitrary force, but of *right and justice*, and that we trust in the victory of justice.

"We patiently await the moment when the European Great Powers will grant Hungary the part of national sovereignty which is still lacking.

"We shall *not follow Germany*, because we are Members of the League of Nations; but we trust in the justice of the League, in the discernment of the Powers, and are ready to enter into negotiations in the hope that the League will shortly grant Hungary military equality in every respect and that we shall not be compelled to resort to arbitrary means in this question.

"It is characteristic of Hungarian *patience* — which has been generally characteristic of Hungary throughout history — that we wait even though we feel that we have suffered humiliation. But our patience is coming to an end; for we cannot see why the one-sided situation endangering the peace of Europe should be maintained artificially.

„We therefore demand to be given *the right*

*of conscription. We demand the right of introducing military service by conscription for a period not to exceed two years; and we demand possibilities of armament on a level with those enjoyed by the Little Entente. We demand that the Hungarian National Defence Army be given proportionate means of air defence. If these demands are granted, Hungary will still have a smaller army than that possessed by the smallest of the Little Entente States. Even if a position of absolute equality actually ensues, we shall still be weaker from a military point of view than the smallest of the Little Entente States. And indeed, that is not why we insist on the matter; what we desire is moral satisfaction. We must receive this moral satisfaction in return for the patience, the exact observance of legal postulates, displayed by Hungary. The size of an army depends upon the strength of the people or rather upon the number of inhabitants.*

"We insist upon these demands particularly in view of the fact that *the maintenance of a mercenary army in Hungary is attended with most formidable difficulties*. The inhabitants are not in sympathy with such an army. The Hungarian sol-

dier serves his country as a volunteer. We shall certainly put these demands forward, and I trust that no exception can be taken to them in this form. I do not wish to presume that those who are our opponents in this question will persist foolishly in desiring to maintain the unjust situation prevailing hitherto on the plea of peace being endangered. A self-respecting State like Hungary cannot possibly agree to tolerate the coercion of fetters and the yoke of submission. The Hungarian nation is far too self-respecting to tolerate its present and its future subjection to thralldom. I am convinced that common sense will win the day; for that policy which is generally known as the policy of peace must triumph: and the final victory of that policy would seem assured if we desire to use it for the purpose of asserting the cause of justice. Those politicians who try to find justice are always in the right; but those politicians who would maintain a situation one-sidedly deformed are a constant menace to the peace of Europe."

In his exposé relating to the Foreign Affairs Estimates too Premier Gömbös once more said that Hungary could not follow in Germany's wake in proclaiming "Wehrhoheit".

"We must" — he said — "trust in the victory of moral forces enabling us to obtain justice. And I believe that in the event of any actual Danube or other Conference assembling, Hungary will have an opportunity there to successfully advocate the idea and cause of equality. Should that not happen, we should have to doubt the *raison d'être* of international forums. For we must appeal primarily to the Great Powers to provide that, while we are living our own life here in a condition of almost provocative defencelessness in the Carpathian Basin, those who demand the observance of the treaties of peace should endeavour to protect us against those who may possibly attempt to exploit their position one-sidedly ensured them to the detriment of Hungary."

## ECONOMIC CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND HUNGARY DURING THE AGE OF REFORM

by

*Alexander Fest*

The economic reforms in Hungary connected with the name of Count Stephen Széchenyi brought about a lively intercourse between Britain and Hungary which lasted for several decenniums. The highly developed economic life of Britain, her mighty industry and her world trade, had previously too challenged the admiration and interest as a student of a prominent Hungarian — Count Francis Széchenyi, Stephen Széchenyi's father, who founded the Hungarian National Museum. Earlier in the century too British machines had occasionally been imported into Hungary, where the achievements of British technical science had been familiar and had been glorified and envied previously too: but it was Stephen Széchenyi who first drew public attention in Hungary to the economic life of the British Isles. He proposed to follow the example of England and encourage horse-breeding by arranging horse-races; he acquired from England plans for the technical creations which he desired to introduce and engaged British engineers and experts to carry those plans into execution. In the history of Danube navigation we often come across British names; the Budapest Chain Bridge was planned and built by Scotch engineers; while the diving bell used during the improvement works on the lower reaches of the

Danube was tested by an Englishman. Széchenyi's guiding spirit is to be seen everywhere.

Each several chapter of his work entitled „Lovakrul" (Of Horses: 1828) betrays the sound practical sense of the Englishman. He has English examples always in his mind and constantly refers to them. In a separate chapter he deals with the „condition" of horses in Great Britain, with the origin and history of English horses, and with „the profits on horse-breeding". The horse-races in Hungary were arranged on the British model; while from 1827 a „Gyepkönyv" (Turf Book) was issued on the lines of the Racing Calendar and the Stud Book. The British racing regulations were translated by Anthony Tasner (1836), the preface to the translation telling us that those regulations had the binding force of law in Hungary too. In all questions relating to horse racing reference was made to British examples and precedents. Naturally British horses were imported too; and British trainers also appeared on the scene. We are told that Baron Nicholas Wesselényi sold his stud because he proposed to breed only „horses of English origin and race" („Magyar Kurir", II., 1828, pp. 154—55). Wesselényi's example was followed by others too. The descriptions of the older Pest horse-races contain many British names;