

DANUBIAN REVIEW

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A REVIEW DEVOTED TO RESEARCH INTO PROBLEMS OF THE
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THE PROGRESS OF HUNGARIAN JUSTICE

BY

NICOLAS UDVARDY



A year ago M. *Majsky*, Russian Ambassador in London, said to a reporter:
"This is war already; the only difference is that the triggers are not being pulled yet."

These words of M. *Majsky* are very apt, but nevertheless they sound more like sensation-mongering journalism than like a serious statement of facts worthy of a diplomat. This is not war, and there is no reason why it should degenerate into a war. The truth is rather that the world is full of gunpowder barrels, and the slightest carelessness — a thrown-away cigarette end — might cause an explosion the results of which are unpredictable. Tension is strained almost to breaking-point, and the consequences are observable both in the field of diplomacy and international intercourse and in the disturbances that threaten to paralyse the whole system of international economy.

Diplomats are journeying to and fro, busily negotiating, concluding and preparing alliances, and in consequence two major conflicting spheres of interest are in process of formation, are, in fact, on the point of becoming petrified in Europe, as they were in the years preceding the last Great War. The international situation is dangerously like the state of affairs that prevailed in the spring of 1914. It does not, however, follow that the August of 1914 must repeat itself. If we examine the diplomatic explanations of the recent historical events the following picture will unfold itself.

In his speech of 15th May at Turin Signor *Mussolini* made the following statement:

"There are no questions in Europe at present that by reason of their importance and acuteness would justify a war which by the logical evolution of events would develop from a European into a world conflict. There are knots in

European politics, but perhaps it will not be necessary to cut them with the sword. Nevertheless these knots must be unravelled some time."

Speaking in the Chamber in 11th May, *M. Daladier* — it is true that it was said to justify some of his other postulates, but still "*verba manent*" — asked the following question: —

"Does peace consist of certain nations being sentenced to misery? . . . France is of the opinion that every nation should be able to find the conditions necessary to its happiness, liberty and prosperity in a world the natural resources of which have been increased tenfold by the discoveries of science . . . The one aim of our policy is to unite peoples and nations for the defence of peace."

On 19th May *Mr. Chamberlain*, addressing the House of Commons, said: —

" . . . This does not mean that we are not willing to discuss methods by means of which the rational ambitions of other nations might be satisfied, even if it means a certain modification of the present status quo."

On 22nd May, when the historical Italo-German treaty of friendship and alliance was signed in Berlin, *Count Ciano*, in a statement to the Press, emphasized the point that. —

"there are no questions in Europe that cannot be settled with goodwill and justice, nor any reasons that would justify a war which of necessity would develop from a European into a world war."

On the same day *Herr von Ribbentrop* made a statement to the same effect. He said: —

"It is the firm conviction of both Governments that there is not one single political question in Europe that might not be settled in a peaceful way with reciprocal goodwill."

If we compare these statements, we are forced to ask in surprise: where are the differences then? All these statements are similar in content. Why must conflicting alliances be concluded and an appalling state of tension created, like the tension in the spring of 1914? It is because these statements are merely — statements! Active international politics makes no attempt to do away with the organic causes of

the disease, and yet, if the treatment is confined to curing the symptoms, the trouble will grow dangerously worse, and there will be no return to that atmosphere of mutual trust which alone is conducive to the conclusion of lasting agreements.

We have no intention of entering into a discussion of the major international problems. We shall confine ourselves to the Hungarian question; but that question is one of the most important reasons why the present world crisis has become so acute, and until it is settled there can be no relaxation of the tension, particularly since Hungary, situated as she is in the gate between Eastern and Central Europe, is one of the most dangerous storm centres in the conflict between the two great spheres of interest in Europe.

One of Hungary's greatest statesmen, Francis Deák, who was known as "the wise man of Hungary" once said:

"If your waistcoat is badly buttoned, you mustn't cut the buttons off with your sword. You must unbutton it and then button it properly."

On 25th May *M. Radot Valery*, a well-known French author, delivered a lecture on Hungary in the Goujon hall in Paris in which, amongst other things, he said:

"The fate of Europe depends on Hungary. It is impossible that France should not understand the real significance of Hungary's historical mission. Very few Frenchmen know what actually took place at the Peace Conference. In Trianon a deadly sin was committed by Europe against Hungary, and for twenty years that sin weighed on the international conscience. But — to France's credit be it said — at the time when the Treaty of Trianon was being ratified, energetic protests against these crying injustices were raised in the French Parliament. *Danielou, De Monzie* and others raised their voices against the arbitrary delimitation of Hungary's frontiers. Briand, on the other hand, who was called to account in the Senate, replied to the questions put to him with the pitiful excuse that he, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had simply been confronted with a fait accompli . . .

M. Radot Valery then went on to say that the Peace

Treaties had caused a horrible mutilation of Hungary's living body. The Hungarians had suffered proudly and manfully. They had not yielded to despair, their self-control was admirable, and their feelings of bitterness had never driven them to reckless or violent action. Every Frenchman must take off his hat to the manly self-control exhibited by Hungary.

All that the French author said is perfectly true. The Hungarian problem is a menace to the peace of Europe, a seat of trouble in the international system, because in a critical area the Peace Treaties created conditions that are a hotbed of hatred between nation and nation, race and race, and that make the economic prosperity of the peoples an impossibility. Despite historical rights the traditions of a thousand years of symbiosis were nullified, cultural cohesion was broken up, a living organism that had been evolved in a thousand years was destroyed by the disruption of a geographical unit created by natural frontiers, and the welfare of the States that had wrested territory from Hungary was made impossible. This was one reason why the unnatural creation known as the Czecho-Slovak Republic fell to pieces, — one of the sources of international trouble today, — and because the liquidation of that State was not effected uniformly, Slovakia is bankrupt financially and economically, as we have reported in another article. Every nation needs a certain field of activity (*Lebensraum*) and Hungary's was determined by the dictates of geography within the thousand-year-old frontiers, inside of which present-day dismembered Hungary and the parts wrested from her were able to prosper and develop.

For those lopped-off parts pre-war Hungary was the same natural *Lebensraum* as it was for Dismembered Hungary. The dismemberment was carried out contrary to the principle of self-determination and without allowing the inhabitants of the detached areas to have a voice in the matter. If, therefore, it is desirable to heal the sores of this storm centre that menaces the peace of the whole of Europe, wrongs must be righted. It is time to unbutton the waistcoat and re-button it. It is time to revise the Treaty of Trianon.