

# DANUBIAN REVIEW

## (DANUBIAN NEWS)

A REVIEW DEVOTED TO RESEARCH INTO PROBLEMS OF THE  
DANUBIAN BASIN

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# HUNGARIAN REAL-POLICY

BY

ELEMÉR SZUDY

**F**or a thousand years Hungary has fulfilled the historical mission which has been described by a Yugoslav newspaper in the following words: "*Hungary is the advanced bulwark of the Balkans.*" Hungary has never sought to exploit this key position. She has never been led astray by petty imperialistic aims, by the wish to oppress other nations; on the contrary, her foreign policy has always been shaped to adapt itself to the wide, comprehensive perspective of Western European politics. Even when fortune smiled, Hungary refused to be tempted by dreams of conquest, and when fortune frowned, this country wisely abstained from adventurous undertakings. Hungary defended Western Christian civilization against the inroads of barbarians from the East, South-East and North-East, and for a century and a half bled and was laid waste in stemming the tide of Turkish imperialism threatening to overwhelm Europe. It was not until the whole of Europe had realised Hungary's mission that the Turks were driven out of this country, when the overthrow of the Turkish power as a universal European task, was accomplished with the aid of most of the European powers. As Hungary has never lost sight of her European mission, Europe must recognize the great importance of that mission for the whole of the Continent. And now our foreign policy has once more afforded striking evidence of its higher aims, when in order to be a real bulwark of peace in the Balkans, which is so important for Europe, Hungary — setting aside much legitimate bitterness — decided in agreement with the Rumanian Government to decrease the number of troops stationed on her eastern frontier. This agreement, negotiated with Yugoslavia's mediation, awoke loud echoes throughout the whole of Europe, in Italy and Germany as well as in France and

Great Britain. Hungary's decision was appreciated as a serious gesture indicative of a desire to maintain peace and order. It was also recognized as absolutely disinterested and eminently calculated to prevent the spread of war. On both sides the fact was established by numerous Press organs that Hungary's attitude was particularly praiseworthy, and her self-control particularly admirable in view of the circumstance that she has still differences to compose with her neighbours; these issues, however, might easily be settled with goodwill and understanding, which naturally must be reciprocal. Hungary's instinct for real-policy — says the foreign Press — has made itself manifest in the very fact that in these critical days she has found so convincing and pleasing a way of giving expression to her desire for peace and in that she has been able to combine this with a practical demonstration of the excellent relations she is maintaining with one of the most important Balkan States, Yugoslavia.

It is undeniable that the correctness and increasing sincerity of the relations between Hungary and Yugoslavia cannot be questioned. *Belgrade, as well as Budapest, is convinced that all the major arteries of the political and economic life of the peoples in the Danube Valley converge in those two capitals, and that the more closely these arteries are bound together — the more radically and rapidly an effort is made to eliminate the memories of old misunderstandings — the sooner will the two nations, which, in any case, respect one another's bravery and military virtues, be able to come to an understanding, and the more solid will be the basis upon which the peace of the peoples living in the Danube Valley rests.*

An examination of the question from a more general point of view reveals the fact that all this naturally depends on certain conditions. The most important of these conditions is however, already to hand, namely, an atmosphere of reciprocal goodwill and trust. The spirit of cunning intrigue and mistrust which was one of Beneš's favourite weapons, has vanished from the Danube Valley, and this alone is such a relief that we have every reason to await future developments with serious hope. It goes without saying, of

course, that no all-embracing arrangement is conceivable without the co-operation of Italy. Since the last war Italy has always been immediately concerned in the Danube Valley, not only because of her position as a Great Power, but also for the simple geo-political reason that Trieste and Fiume are the natural economic hinterland of the Carpathian Basin. And now that by virtue of her conquest of Albania she has entered the Balkan sphere of interest, she has actually become a co-partner of the peoples of the Danube Valley, and feels not merely entitled by her rank, but also called upon by her position, to exercise a directive influence on the development of their collective destinies.

This was clearly and explicitly expressed by Signor Mussolini's foreign political organ, the "Giornale D'Italia", in which we read very interesting comments on the Turco-Franco-British pact. According to that paper, the pact imposes on Italy an increased obligation towards the Balkans. Her role in the Balkans will not merely be to take the lead; she must also ensure balance. And, naturally, there can be no doubt that she will play the same part in the Danube Valley too. Hungary is perfectly content to await Italy's initiative, not only because of our old and well-tryed friendship with that country, but primarily because we know that Italy has historical justice on her side, and, though the course of historical justice may be stayed for a time, it cannot be checked for ever. Mussolini himself is convinced of this principle and has made it the axis of his foreign policy. *The circumstance that Hungary's problems lie along the line of Italy's foreign policy lends a great dynamic force to our issues.* It has also become evident that Hungary's position in Central Europe is a key position; that against Hungary, or even without her, nothing can be solved or arranged. And, if ever, now is the time to create a synthesis of the elements of peace, order and reconciliation against which no storm or stress will be able to prevail.

After recent events we are justified in supposing that this is realized by all the nations living here as neighbours which are now stretching out their hands to one another in order to be able to stand all the firmer against contingent vicissitudes. The great lessons of history are before us:

little peoples may be great nations, small States with no large populations may prove a force to be reckoned with, if they can rise to a high moral level and join hands. This, however, demands self-control, self effacement and sometimes self-sacrifice — in a word, real policy.

We believe that Hungary has given a sufficiently demonstrative example of these qualities. We have no imperialistic aims; we do not want to rule over other peoples, and we should be happy if those who rigidly turned the cold shoulder to us in the past, and who for that reason have certainly become the victims of a historical blunder, were to understand us now. We have never sought, and we do not seek, that which divides, only that which unites. Our one aim is to ensure the prosperity and development of the Hungarian people. This is no mere *pium desiderium*; on the other hand however, we know that it cannot be attained without the understanding and goodwill of our neighbours. This then is one of the obvious objects of Hungary's real-policy, the chief aim of which is to keep and preserve everything that is ours and never to surrender that which should by right belong to us. This is the only real policy that Hungary can possibly pursue. The present Government is pursuing that policy, and all our national endeavour must be directed towards remaining on this path.