

HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S IMPRESSIVE EXPOSÉ

On 13th November, during the debate on the Budget in the Hungarian Parliament, Count Stephen Csáky, Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in an impressive speech outlined the fundamental principles of Hungary's foreign policy. He laid particular stress on the point that *for a thousand years Hungary had fulfilled a European mission on the ridges of the Carpathians and in the Danube Valley. She would be able to fulfil that mission to better purpose now that certain parts of St. Stephen's Realm had been restored to the mother-country.* Count Csáky then continued as follows: —

"Much has been said about *the Hungarian nation's priority rights in the Danube Valley.* It is not, however, enough to speak about them; we must also be prepared to act. When I announce the nation's claim to be "*primus inter pares*", I am fully aware that I am not calling on the inhabitants of Hungary to undertake a representative task likely to enhance our prestige. What I expect of them is self-sacrificing, arduous efforts, *the fulfilment of a mission the stony path to which has been opened to us perhaps for the last time by Hungarian perseverance and Hungarian insistence.* I need not say that the most important sine qua non is that we maintain and cherish unimpaired the idea of our Hungarian existence as it has been crystallized by our history. A nation is not merely a State. A nation possesses a soul as does an individual. The strength of a nation is not always commensurate with the momentary strength of the State. And, vice versa, it cannot always be said that the strength of the State is the same as the strength of the nation maintaining it. The frontiers of a nation extend as far as does the radius of its moral forces and spiritual assets. The most striking illustration of this thesis was afforded by Dismembered Hungary, whose amputated limbs were kept alive only by this impalpable moral force until they were re-grafted and circulation was restored.

"The political balance-sheet of the past few years clearly

shows that *the soul of a nation is immortal*. States may disappear, partly or wholly, for a lengthy period of time, but so long as the nation refuses to surrender in spirit, so long as its soul radiates magnetic power, it lives and is indestructible. The more the nation is represented by the whole mass of the people, the truer this is; and the less defeatism we find, the more united and earnest is the patriotism of the whole nation. When I speak of our historical value I mean primarily our ability to survive even if abandoned by others."

The Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that our relations with Germany and Italy were well known to all. The policy of friendship with the Axis Powers was Hungary's national policy; it was in conformance with Hungary's interests and with those of Europe as a whole. The fruit of this friendship was the restoration of a strip of Upper Hungary, Subcarpathia, Eastern Hungary and parts of Transylvania. *Their restoration was also due in part to the circumspect, firm and unwavering foreign policy pursued by Hungary.* Count Csáky said that the expression "living space" (Lebensraum) was erroneously used by many. *It was often mistaken for political sovereignty, whereas it only meant the establishment for a given period of certain economic contacts and the marking out of a certain path of development.*

Speaking of Hungary's relations with Rumania, Count Csáky said: —

"It is well known that the recent unusually virulent Press campaign in Rumania was launched, and irresponsible statements about Hungary were made by responsible Rumanian statesmen, in order to force a revision of the Vienna Award. We did not take the matter too tragically. In due time the Rumanians will come to realize that those were bad tactics and that *their behaviour was certainly not calculated to add to the number of their friends*. They would have done better to accept the hand of friendship stretched out to them by Hungary and to cooperate in trying to heal painful wounds. Despite what has occurred, *we are ready to believe in the good faith of a Rumania seeking new paths, and again renew our offer of co-operation. The time for machinations and intrigue is past; the sufferings of the nations cry for constructive work, and it would be a pity were Rumania to delude herself with the vain hope that the Hungarian army regards the restored parts of Hungary*

as a temporary abode to be left if given notice to quit. *It is a peculiar trait of the Hungarian soldier that, once established in a place, he will never leave it unless law and justice demand it.* Enough land has been left to Rumania; she is perhaps one of the richest medium-sized States in Europe, and I am sure that if the Rumanians are sincerely wishful to work honestly, she will find friends willing to help her to occupy the place in South-Eastern Europe to which she is entitled. It would not serve Hungary's purpose to have dissatisfied, struggling neighbours around her especially when there are still large numbers of Magyars in those countries and when our economic and political interests are bound up with the prosperity of those States.

"As soon as developments in this direction are observable, as soon as negotiations are re-opened between Rumania and Hungary and we see that the attitude of the Rumanians towards Hungary is favourable, *we shall conclude a minority treaty with them, not merely a paper treaty, but one that will also be respected.* In the past Rumania repeatedly refused Hungary's offer to conclude such a treaty. New Rumania may — thanks mainly to changed circumstances — show more understanding for our aims than did Greater Rumania some ten months ago.

"As regards our other neighbours, I may establish the fact that *our relations with Yugoslavia continue to be sincere and cordial.* Reinforced Hungary watches with great interest the steady progress of her southern neighbour's work of state-building. Yugoslavia will have the opportunity of seeing that the friendship shown by the Hungarian nation during the past months was not insincere — a wily effort aimed perhaps at isolating Rumania —, but that it was rooted in an honest appreciation of Yugoslavia's qualities. Our relations with that country may perhaps be best described by saying that the Hungarian nation on every point reciprocates the feelings of the Yugoslav nation. In consequence of the recent amnesty agreement and the more understanding attitude towards the Hungarian minority exhibited by the Slovak Government, our relations with Slovakia show a satisfactory improvement. I sincerely hope that this improvement, which will primarily benefit the minorities in both countries, will continue. The approaching Slovak Census will be a reliable indication of how matters stand. I do believe that we shall not awaken to the fact that a considerable number of the

Magyars of Slovakia have disappeared in the columns devoted to "foreigners".

Count Csáky then proceeded as follows: —

"Our relations with Soviet Russia are correct and normal. At the time of the economic negotiations Moscow fully realized that the Hungarian Government is sincerely endeavouring to strengthen the economic ties between Hungary and Russia. The Hungarian Government is fully aware of the economic and political importance of the Soviet.

"Bulgaria's great political success was welcomed with unreserved sympathy by Hungary. All and sundry in this country felt the greatest satisfaction when Bulgaria reaped the fruit of a long and hard struggle, and we all wish her joy. We hope that this kindred nation will succeed in obtaining the position in the Balkan Peninsula to which it is entitled. Hungary devotes much attention to France. It is to be hoped that the harsh tone used now and again even today by the French Press when writing about Hungary is merely a mannerism left over from the old way of thinking and will soon cease along with many other bitter memories.

"Apparently we are in the fortunate position of being surrounded by a whole chain of States with the same aims as ourselves: viz. the establishment as quickly as possible of an equitable and lasting peace and the avoidance of any act that would add fresh fuel to the European conflagration."