

# A GLIMPSE INTO RUMANIA'S INTERNAL AND FOREIGN POLICY

BY

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In the course of the current year General Antonescu, leader of the Rumanian State, has made several statements about Rumania's foreign policy. According to those statements, "*Rumania joined the Axis without hesitation*". The more surprising then that the Rumanian Press freely publishes strange opinions about the friendship between Germany and Rumania, and that responsible statesmen — above all General Antonescu himself — are engaged in a campaign of unbridled agitation against the Award given in Vienna on 30th August last by the arbitrating Great Powers.

In the "Porunca Vremii", a daily appearing in Bucharest, the editor-in-chief, Ilie Radulescu, amongst other things writes: — "*We are not such great friends of Germany as to forget that in the first place we are Rumanians. Our pro-German sympathies must merely be used as a political means of more usefully serving our own country.*" In a word, Rumania's "friendship" with Germany is nothing but a means of serving her own ends. According to a report published by the Bucharest Orient Radio Bureau, General Antonescu made a speech in Bucharest on 26th March, on the occasion when relief was distributed among the relatives of the soldiers killed during the disturbances on 21st January. In that speech, amongst other things, General Antonescu said: — "*Neither myself, nor the Rumanian nation has accepted, or will accept, as final, the situation I found and in which I was forced to acquiesce. There will never be any peace in this corner of Europe, or justice in the world, until the wrongs done to the Rumanian nation are righted, or until the nation itself redresses them. The Rumanian people know what honour means, and they are ready to hold it in respect, but they also expect their own honour to be respected by others.*"

On the lips of a responsible statesman what else is this statement but *an open repudiation of the Vienna Award?* But General Antonescu is not the only politician who openly opposes the decision. The Rumanian Minister of National Education, General Radu Rosetti, on 14th March paid a visit to the Temesvár University of Sciences, on which occasion he told the professors not to invest any more money in the University, because *it would shortly return to its old headquarters in the town of Kolozsvár* (which was given back to Hungary by the Vienna Award). At the opening of a school in Belényes by the Bishop of the Orthodox Church, which took place in the last fortnight of March, an unprecedented attack was launched against the Vienna Award. Ion Sandru, State Secretary in the Ministry of Education, speaking on behalf of General Antonescu, amongst other things declared that he had come to Belényes with great pleasure, to that old town of nationalistic traditions *which had offered a temporary sanctuary to the Bishopric of Nagyvárad*. General P. Dumitrescu, also speaking on behalf of General Antonescu, said: — "As a soldier I can assure you that the army has only one idea — to be revenged for the humiliation it has suffered and for which it was not to blame. I pray God" — he said in conclusion, turning towards the Bishop" — that Your Eminence will soon be able to re-establish your See in Nagyvárad". (Nagyvárad was also restored to Hungary by the Vienna Award.) At Nagyszeben, on 14th March, in a speech to the pupils of a school for reserve cavalry officers, the colonel in command said: — "Be the leaders of those cavalry troops to which you will soon be in the happy position of giving the order to sweep across to *the precious Rumanian lands of which we have been despoiled*." In connection with the propaganda against the Vienna Award that is being made in Rumania, mention must be made of what took place in Arad on 8th April, an account of which was published in the Arad "Stirea". A priest named Manu Dumitru delivered a lecture on "The Catastrophe of 1940", the opening sentences of which ran as follows: — "We lost a diplomatic battle in Vienna. But I should have liked to see the Hungarian army face to face with ours. Our neighbours were cunning, and

we were not clever enough. *The Vienna Award was a humiliation for us, the like of which we never suffered in the whole course of our history.*"

Relations between Hungary and Rumania — in which an improvement was observable after the agreement concerning optants was concluded in Budapest on 26th February — have again grown worse, thanks to the way the Rumanian newspapers have violated the Press truce. The crowning touch to the anti-Hungarian behaviour of the Rumanian Press was an article that appeared from the pen of Stoica Sever in the Arad "Stirea" about the late Hungarian Premier, Count Paul Teleki.

Rumanian internal politics are characterized by the fact that after the successful issue of the plebiscite General Antonescu is now trying to carry through the reforms demanded by the present situation. In March numerous discussions were held, the National Liberals and the National Peasant Party being offered seats in the Cabinet. George Bratianu is being spoken of as the coming Minister for Foreign Affairs, if only because of his pronounced pro-German sympathies. In connection with Julius Maniu the sensation of the moment is that he has had a lengthy interview with Queen Helena. This fact shows that Maniu has again come into prominence. Another event that caused a sensation was the meeting that took place at the beginning of April between Maniu and the Yugoslav Minister in Bucharest, on which occasion they had a lengthy conversation. That this meeting should have caused a sensation, is explained by the fact that Maniu is well known to be a leader of the anti-Axis trend in Rumania.

Another event in Rumanian internal politics was the letter addressed to General Antonescu by *Horia Sima*, leader of the Iron Guard, who until the revolt in January was also Deputy Premier. In his first letter, with which after two months' silence he at last gave a sign of life from abroad, he had announced his resignation of the leadership of the Legionist movement, and as his successor designated *Vasile Ianinschi*, former Minister of Labour, who is also an exile in a foreign country and for whose arrest a warrant had been issued by the Rumanian authorities. Horia Sima's second

letter — as reported by the Orient Radio Bureau — was handed to General Antonescu on 14th April by Professor Gavanescu. In it Horia Sima asked the Leader of the State to co-operate with the Legionists. General Antonescu returned a written reply to Professor Gavanescu refusing any further co-operation with Horia Sima, Ianinschi and the rest of the former leaders of the Legionist movement who were responsible for the break between the Legion and the Rumanian people. He had — he said — irrefutable proof that they were the instigators of the rebellion which had thrown the country into confusion and ruin. In his reply General Antonescu laid stress also on the point that he himself desired to ensure complete tranquility in the country, but refused to have anything to do even with the sober elements in the Legionist movement, unless they first solemnly and publicly repudiated all connection with the Jilawa murders, the rebellion and the fools who still continued their subversive work against the present régime. The work of purification is still progressing, and the courts of justice are unceasingly engaged with the trials of Legionists. Fresh arrests have been made among those of the Iron Guard who have again put in an appearance.

This sketch of the internal situation in Rumania would be incomplete without mention of the letter made public by the Government on the 60th anniversary of the day on which Rumania was proclaimed a kingdom. A French translation of this letter was read by General Antonescu at a Press conference on 14th March. The letter was written by Queen Maria to her son, the present exiled King Carol II, in the December of 1925, when as Crown Prince he renounced his claim to the throne in order to be able to go abroad with Madame Lupescu. In her letter Queen Maria made reproaches to her son, saying that although he had everything necessary to his happiness, riches, honour, a beautiful and loving wife and a little son, he had left his family, his mother and his seriously ill father for the sake of a love that was nothing but unbridled sensuality. The Queen declared that Carol was unworthy to be the leader of his people, for he had betrayed, not only his family, but also his country.