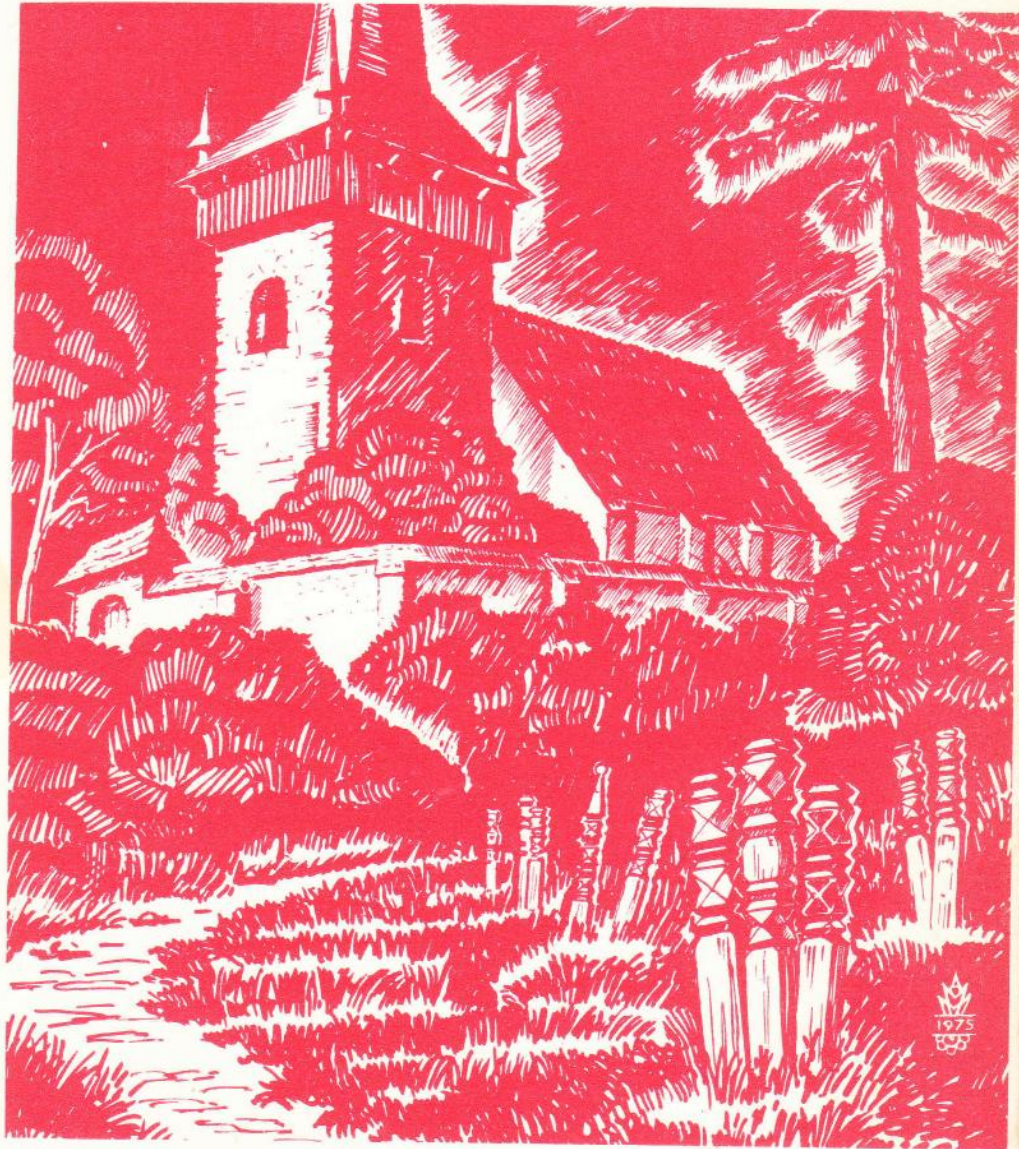


# Documenta Transsylvania



1

1975  
BB

## IN THIS ISSUE

ILONA KISS : Béla Bartók's pentatonic collection of the province of Csik	58
GABRIEL ADRIÁNYI : Zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ritterordens in Siebenbürgen	72
LÁSZLÓ MAKKAI : Transylvanian Towns	82
I. ERDÉLYI - L. PATAKY : Die Belohnung der Finder des Attila-Schatzes von Nagyszentmiklós	94
L. MAKKAI : Responsabilité scientifique ou jeu avec les mots ?	100
F. PÖLÖSKEI : István Tisza's Policy toward the Rumanian Nationalities on the Eve of World War I	124
GEORGE BAILEY : Trouble over Transsylvania	133
*	
MINORITY CITIZENSHIP IN RUMANIA	144
TESTIMONY OF SOME HUNGARIANS ON THE SITUATION OF THEIR COMPATRIOTS IN TRANSYLVANIA	152
*	
ZOLTÁN KALLÓS : The book of ballads ( Rec. E. M. F. )	156
HECKENAST-NOVÁKI-VASTAGH-ZOLTAI : History of Hungarians Metallurgy in the Early Middle Ages (Recens. A. BARTHA )	160
E. ANDICS : Metternich und die Frage Ungarns ( Recens. E. ARATO )	164
ENDRE ARATÓ : L'histoire de l'Europe Orientale dans la premiere moitié du XIX <sup>e</sup> siècle. ( Recens. Z. SZÁSZ )	167
GY. LÁSZLÓ : From Vértesszőlős to Pusztaszer ( Recens. A. BARTHA )	169
SHERMAN D. SPECTOR : Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference ( Rec. ZS. L. NAGY )	174

# István Tisza's Policy toward the Romanian Nationalities on the Eve of World War I

by

F. PÖLÖSKEI

In the 1910s, the crisis, both social and national, in the Austro—Hungarian Dual Monarchy (henceforward termed dualism) continued to increase. In Hungary, this was clearly indicated by various signs, such as a militant determination on the part of the working class, undertaking even a massive general political strike; a standstill in the customary parliamentary life; the appearance of anti-militarism and the republican movement; Mihály Károlyi's Entente orientation. This decade also opened a new epoch in the history of national minorities. Beside the emerging idea of trialism popular among the Southern Slavs (Yugoslavs), the conception of a Southern Slav state, independent of Austria—Hungary, also made headway. A new impetus was given to the national and political aspirations of Slovak and Romanian minorities. Attracting much attention was what was called schism-movement among the Carpathian Ukrainians.

National animosities assumed particularly remarkable proportions in Austria. The Austrian governments repeatedly tried hard to gain support from the nations and nationalities under their control — first of all from the Czechs and Poles — by means of coercive pacts, and by offering or promising ministerial portfolios. The co-operation of Austria's Slav nationalities against the government, however, inevitably became more and more intensive. Economic and political antagonism between the Austrian and Hungarian ruling classes did not ease off either.

The crisis of the dualistic monarchy was further aggravated by the events of world politics, primarily by the Balkan Wars of 1912—1913. The main objective of the Austrian—Hungarian Balkan-policy had been, for several decades, to stabilize the frontiers of the Turkish Empire, that is to maintain the *status quo*. In 1912, however, the Balkan Alliance was formed, including Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Greece. These countries started military operations against Turkey as early as the autumn of 1912. The quickly won victories of the Alliance confronted the diplomatic machinery of the great powers with a new, accomplished fact. With the carefully watched *status quo* broken up, the Monarchy sought to base its Balkan policy on the internal con-

flicts of the Alliance. This conception was furthered by the national independence struggles of the Balkan peoples changing into an all-out aggressive imperialist war in which these peoples became tools in the hands of the great powers. In the Second Balkan War, the former allies waged war against each other, or more precisely Serbia, Montenegro and Greece fought against Bulgaria. Romania also joined forces with them. Thus a seat of world war took shape in the Balkan region in 1912—1913. Preparations for a world war on the part of the great powers also commenced. The disappointed Monarchy might well register the outcome of the Balkan Wars as a failure. The first Balkan War had demolished the very basis of the Monarchy's former policy: the hope of *status quo* had to be given up; the only thing the Monarchy was able to achieve — in exchange — was the creation of an independent Albania at the London Peace Conference. For the Monarchy, the Second Balkan war turned out a series of failures in foreign policy. The former conservative and negotiation-minded diplomacy was replaced by a world war-oriented policy in concert with Germany. First they reckoned only with a local war confined to Serbia. From the turn of 1913 and 1914 onward, however, both Tisza and Berchtold had to realize, that Russia would not stand neutral in a possible war.

From among the politicians of the ruling classes, István Tisza was the first to recognize the Monarchy being in danger. This recognition gave rise to his extreme obstinacy with which he literally drove his party to carry out the transformation of the country's domestic politics. He had this end in mind when he undertook to assume the function of Speaker of the House in May, 1912, and that of Prime-Minister in June, 1913. For the same reason he sent the sovereign — with unflagging enthusiasm — his memoranda, containing his conceptions regarding the main lines of the Balkan policy. Tisza tended to consider the legislative activities — or rather operation — of the Parliament and the Cabinet as the primary means — sort of miraculous power — leading to success. After June, 1912, the national labour party governments, therefore, first revised, then remodelled the governmental system of domestic politics, which had been built up after the Compromise of 1867, in the belief that they would thus be able to consolidate their rule in the long range. By extending the scope of authority of the Speaker of the House and by setting up the "guard" of the House of Representatives, they eliminated even the possibility of obstruction once for all. The reshaping of the conventional forms and rules of domestic politics started with the destruction of the customary weapons of the opposition. Then several laws and government decisions that had regulated the socio-economic and political life after the Compromise, were subjected to revision. Before the outbreak of World War I, the national labour party government enacted — among others — a new law of suffrage and a new press-law, and pushed through an act investing the government with spe-

cial powers in case of war; it strengthened militarism by making special recommendations as to the defence; curtailed the freedom of assembly and organization, extended the scope of authority of the gendarmerie. They also wanted to settle the problems of nationalities by terror and bargaining. The Lukács and Tisza governments planned to abrogate the former liberal concessions of domestic politics, primarily in trade laws, penal law and common jury.

Becoming particularly significant in the pre-war period was the National Labour Party's — and within this, primarily István Tisza's — policy towards nationalities.<sup>1</sup> Tisza was particularly active in this respect. To study his policy towards the nationalities is an important task of Hungarian historiography not only because this question has recently been gaining ever stronger impetus but also because of its many implications for the maturing democratic revolution. Tisza's conception differed in several points from those of his predecessors, and he also modified his own conceptions in this matter. While the policy towards the nationalities during the coalition era — between 1906 and 1910 — had to a large extent been based on force, the National Labour Party — and Tisza in the first place — thought that Hungarian supremacy could be much more effectively strengthened by negotiations aimed at compromises than by the forcible »Magyarization«.

Long before he was elected Speaker of the House, Tisza had examined the nationality question from the viewpoint of the Monarchy's future as a great power. He considered the setting of the nationality question very important for the consolidation of the dualistic establishment. He saw the minor states, Rumania and Serbia in the first place, gain in strength beyond the country's frontiers. Being well aware of the intensification of Russia's influence on the Slavic peoples in the Balkans, as well as in the Monarchy, he made efforts to prevent them from joining forces, because he knew that their union would have a fatal impact on the future of the dualistic monarchy. Initially, Tisza thought it necessary to build up closer co-operation with them. With this, he tried to separate them from Russia's expansionist endeavours and

<sup>1</sup> I have studied István Tisza's policy towards nationalities primarily in so far unknown archivalia. These recently discovered sources are concerned, first of all, with Tisza's negotiations with the Romanians and with his Croatian policy. This circumstance determined both the subject and the character of my study. This thematic field is dealt with by the following more remarkable Hungarian works: F. ALBRECHT: *Forrástanulmányok gróf Tisza István román nemzetiségi politikájához*. (Source studies on Count István Tisza's policy towards the Romanian nationalities.) Lugos, 1933; G. GRATZ: *A dualizmus kora*. (The dualistic period) Vol. 2. Budapest, 1934; J. GULYA: *A máramarosszigeti rutén kérdés 1910—1914 között*. (The Ruthenian question in Máramarossziget in 1910—1914.) Szeged, 1968; G. G. KEMÉNY: *A nemzetiségi kérdés története*. (A history of the nationality question.) Budapest, 1947; L. KATUS: *Horvátország és a magyarországi nemzetiségi kérdés története*. (Croatia and the history of the nationality problem in Hungary. Manuscript.); Z. I. TÓTH: *Magyarok és románok*. (Hungarians and Romanians.) Budapest, 1966; Z. SZÁSZ: *A román kérdés Tisza István első kormányának politikájában*. (The Romanian question in the policy of István Tisza's first government.) *Történelmi Szemle*, 1969. No. 3. p. 224—239.

to induce them to give up their active part in the national movements of their kins within the Monarchy.

Besides checking the Russian influence and establishing co-operation with the minor countries in the Balkans, Tisza also aimed at "reconciling" the national minorities in Hungary. His address in the House on 12 July, 1910 focussed attention on the necessity of settling the nationality problem in a quite novel fashion. In his opinion, this was made possible by the great victory of the National Labour Party on the June elections in 1910. Once the Party was in power, he opined, there would be more chances to negotiate and to appreciate the "rightful demands" of the nationalities, at the same time, it would be possible to keep a strong fist over the inciters and trouble-makers. He thought that concessions made from the position of absolute power would be held in higher esteem by the nationalities since the National Labour Party did not make them out of fear.<sup>2</sup>

After its victory on the elections in June, 1910, the National Labour Party put an end to the negotiations started early in 1910 with the bourgeois parties of the nationalities, and broke its former promises. To tighten up the press administration, cabinet sessions ever more frequently withdrew the right of postal carriage of nationality publications and foreign newspapers.<sup>3</sup> In the field of the press, Tisza had, from the outset, sought to increase the severity of judicature. Beside police measures, he continued the process of "Magyarization" partly through the educational system, partly through the activities of nationalist adult educational societies. At the same time, on the basis of the Hungarian nationalist hegemony, he also sought to come to an agreement with the higher circles of the nationalities, first of all with big landowners and high priests. Naturally, his approach to the problem was pregnant with the consequence that the radical democratic elements of the nationalities would shrink from any kind of negotiations based on sheer power position.

As against the coalition, in his policy towards nationalities, Tisza primarily concentrated on the Romanian question and paid less attention to the Croatian events. He thought that — making best of the frontier debates between the Romanians and Russians — it would be easier to settle the Problem of Romanians living in Hungary than to come to peaceful terms with the Southern Slavs, that lived in the neighbourhood of Serbia and were strongly exposed to the Panслав agitation. Besides, the settling of the virtually simpler Romanian problem was much more convenient for the Romanophile foreign policy of the Triple Alliance. Not infrequently did Tisza ask the common foreign minister to help him with his actions in this matter.<sup>4</sup> As early as 1910,

<sup>2</sup> Pesti Napló (henceforward: P. N.) July 12, 1910.

<sup>3</sup> Országos Levéltár. Minisztertanácsi jegyzőkönyv (National Archives, Minutes of the Cabinet Meetings — henceforward: O. L. Min. tan. jkv.) November 5, 1910.

<sup>4</sup> Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv. Wien (henceforward: H. H. St. A.) XXXX. 174. P. A. Internal. Korresp. mit Zivilbehörden (Ungarn).

István Ugron, Hungarian minister in Bucharest, had regularly reported on the mood of the king, government and the press.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, to settle the Romanian question was one of the most difficult tasks for the National Labour Party, because the nationality policy of the Hungarian ruling classes assumed the form of brute force in the Romanian-inhabited territories of Hungary. Headed by its "Ban", Croatia, in contrast, had a fairly high degree of independence. By virtue of the 1868 Act on the compromise with Croatia, it also had autonomy both in its domestic politics and in the cultural field. Economically, a good part of the Hungarian ruling classes was interested in territories more or less inhabited by Romanians. In those regions Tisza, Andrassy, István Bethlen and others owned large estates on which the cheap labour-power of Hungarian and Romanian workers and peasants provided the primary source of their material well-being. Thus, the Romanian national movement absorbed most of the energy of the National Labour Party in its efforts to consolidate the dualistic system. On the 1910 elections, the electioneering of the Khuen-Héderváry government managed to turn down more than one leader of the Romanian National Party: Vlad, Goldis, Maniu and others. After that they wanted to realize the so much desired agreement through the medium of Romanian high priests and big landowners. Right after the elections, Tisza appealed to the Romanian high priests, inviting them to act as mediators of a political rapprochement.<sup>6</sup> Simultaneously, the Hungarian government even maintained the promise of certain concessions. In a confidential order, the minister of culture and education instructed the school-inspectors not to enforce too rigidly the laws and decrees on the use of the Hungarian language and advised them to be particularly considerate with Romanian educational and ecclesiastical authorities, at the same time the minister of justice ordered the attorneys not to urge on subversion (incitation) trials.<sup>7</sup>

In his letter of September 10, 1910 to the common foreign minister Aehrenthal, Brătianu, leader of the Romanian liberals explained that he agreed with the government in its attempts at bringing about reconciliation, but he deemed it more expedient to carry on such negotiations with the Romanian National Party leaders.<sup>8</sup> However, in the period after the elections of June 1910, Khuen-Héderváry turned a deaf ear to this request. He refused to recognize the justification of the Romanian National Party, and made the dissolution of the party a condition of agreement. He had talks only with the

<sup>5</sup> O. L. Miniszterelnökségi levéltár (Archives of the Prime Minister's Office — henceforward M. E.) 1912. XXV. 226; furthermore: H. H. St. A. XL. P. A. 176. Interna. Korresp. mit Zivilbehörden (Ungarn).

<sup>6</sup> Református Egyház Központi Levéltára (Central Archives of the Reformed Church — henceforward: R. E. K. L.) Tisza iratok. 14.

<sup>7</sup> P. N. October 21, 1910.

<sup>8</sup> H. H. St. A. XL. 174. P. A. Interna.

Romanian Greek Catholic bishops and with Mihu, a big landowner and a lawyer by profession. On September 12, 1910, Mihu submitted Tisza a list of desiderata he had prepared on the basis of his talks "with Romanian high priests and leaders representing various shades of the political life". The memorandum entitled "Proposals concerning those desires of Romanians living in Hungary which are necessary for creating the possibilities of a peaceful relation and cooperation" disclosed Romanian grievances and demands of ecclesiastic, linguistic, cultural, and political nature. In the first place, the document demanded that as regards the Romanian Church and schools the relevant provisions of the 1868 Act on the nationalities should be observed, and that all contrary regulations, decrees, as well as the "erroneous practice" should be cancelled. Furthermore, it demanded the government to permit the organization and undisturbed activity of an independent Romanian political party; to grant the universal, equal, direct suffrage, secret ballot and election in each community; as well as to set up 50 Romanian election districts. It also claimed to employ Romanians in public administration and judicial authorities. Finally, as a condition of "peace", in the field of church and language, the document proposed the establishment of new Greek Orthodox dioceses, the increased financial support of the Romanian Churches, the full observance of the right of instruction in the mother tongue at elementary schools, and the setting up of further three Romanian-language secondary schools (gymnasia).<sup>9</sup>

However, the Romanian high priests and big landowners in Transylvania did not have adequate mass support. Nor did the Hungarian government accept Mihu's proposals as basis for negotiations. Excluded from the parliament, representatives of the Romanian nationality party then started an even sharper attack on both the Khuen-Héderváry government and the bargaining Romanian high priests. Under such circumstances, an agreement or compromise was — as it had been from the very beginning — quite hopeless. The King of Romania thus explained the situation to Ugron: it is not to be expected that the Romanian political party should be completely absorbed by the Hungarian parties.<sup>10</sup> Negotiations were often broken off, then started over again, still the possibility of an agreement faded away, owing to the ever more reactionary domestic politics of Hungarian governments.

It might seem somewhat curious that the National Labour Party with its active, anti-democratic and nationalist domestic policy, which came into full display after June 4, 1912, started bargaining with the Romanian National Party in December 1912. It is the more surprising because Tisza took part in these negotiations, though it was himself who had strongly demanded the independent Romanian Nationality Party to be dissolved in 1910. So far Tisza

<sup>9</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 14.

<sup>10</sup> O. L. M. E. 1912. XXV. 226.



had carried on talks exclusively with politicians outside the leadership of the Romanian Nationality Party, thus with the big landowner Miha and Romanian Greek Catholic high priests. The main issue, then, is this: what causes or motives had induced Tisza to be lenient, in spite of his strong inclination to reject all kind of compromises and concessions, which conception had been carried out through the Lukács-government? This change was not primarily related with the modification of Tisza's domestic policy; it was much sooner prompted by international political trends, the foreign policy of the Monarchy and Germany, as well as by the particular situation of Romania at the time. Namely, it was not long before these negotiations were started that a Greek Catholic Hungarian episcopate had been organized in order to lessen the influence of the Romanian Church. Several Romanian-language parishes were placed under the authority of the Hajdúdorog see. Besides the Romanian Churches, the Romanian national party, too, made grievance about the organization of this episcopate. On July 25, 1912, a mass-meeting of the party adopted a resolution containing the following passage: "The meeting considers the attack on the domestic Romanian Greek Catholic Church as a most barbarous insult against the ethnic being of the Romanian nation in Transylvania, and against the freedom of religion and denomination warranted by the laws of the country and Church. Protesting against such a violation of the fundamental rights, (the meeting) encourages its endangered brethren, and expresses that it will maintain the solidarity of all domestic Romanians at any price by safeguarding the freedom of the two Churches and the Romanian language in them".<sup>11</sup>

The outbreak of the Balkan Wars and the successes the allied minor states achieved against the Turks considerably undermined the authority of the Monarchy and partly Germany's prestige in foreign policy. At the time, they looked upon Romania as a most important means of regaining their lost positions. Therefore, in addition to renewing the Triple Alliance, they further extended the validity of the treaty of alliance with Romania. The real value of this treaty, however, had from the outset, been made questionable by the problem of Romanians in Hungary. In the autumn of 1912, the German diplomacy in line with the Austrian top leaders tried to eliminate the obstacle in the way of deepening the alliance with Romania.

A secret ally of the Triple Alliance, Romania, too, was astonished at the victories and conquests of the minor Balkan states. Russia even mobilized along the Romanian border with the aim of preventing Romania from intervening by force to back up Turkey. The leader of the liberals and the shrewdest Romanian tactician in the 1910s, prime-minister Brătianu was not long

<sup>11</sup> Szegedi Állami Levéltár. Főispáni bizalmas iratok. (The Szeged State Archives. Confidential papers of the county Lord-Lieutenancy) 1912. No. 39. The government voted István Balogh, the first bishop, a much higher salary than the amounts Roman Catholic or Protestant bishops were receiving.

to take good notice of the changes taking place in the Balkans. He fully understood the implications of the concentration of Russian troops, and started a series of hardly visible diplomatic manoeuvres. He was quick to realize that Romania would not be able to strengthen its positions in the Balkans without Russia, thus he tried to make up for what he had failed to do for a long time, i.e. to establish friendly relations with Russia. At the same time, he took Germany's advice, as well, and in late November 1912, he visited Prince Fürstenberg, the Monarchy's new minister in Bucharest. With reference to the Russian mobilization he expressed that he deemed it necessary to restore the harmonious relations between Hungary and Romania. To achieve this end, the entire public opinion of the Romanian Kingdom might be won, provided the Hungarian government would be considerate with the Romanian population of Hungary.<sup>12</sup> On the following day, — November 27 —, in his letter to Tisza, foreign minister Berchtold asked the Hungarian government to convene and take over the petitions of the presidium of the club of Romanian representatives.<sup>13</sup> Being fully aware of Tisza's standpoint, Berchtold found it appropriate to motivate his request at length. First of all, he called Tisza's attention to the fact that Russia was to drive in a wedge between the Monarchy and Romania, and that this might have fatal implications in respect of the foreign policy of the Double Alliance. "Under such circumstances" — wrote Berchtold — "you will certainly understand that I would like to miss no opportunity to withhold our south-eastern neighbour that virtually tends to slip out of our hand. Now quite unexpectedly, an opportunity presents itself, and that on the part of the Romanian liberals who mostly feel drawn to the dangerous activities of our enemies." The same day, Berchtold sent Wickenburg, a department head of the foreign ministry, to Budapest. "With regard to the great influence of your personality" — wrote the foreign minister to Tisza — "and to the compatibility of your views in this particular matter with those of the responsible quarters of our foreign policy, I would like to ask you to express your opinion to Lukács to the effect that we might preserve our relations with Romania from further deterioration lest this valuable base of the Triple Alliance should be lost."<sup>14</sup>

On November 29, 1912, Wickenburg called on Tisza and Lukács. The two Hungarian politicians showed remarkable open-mindedness to Brătianu's initiative, strongly emphasizing their wish to come to an understanding with the Romanians. However, they refrained from the "nice gestures" for the time being. On November 30, Wickenburg prepared a detailed account of his talks. On the same day, Tisza, too, mentioned the discussions in his letter to Berchtold.

<sup>12</sup> H. H. St. A. Interna. 1912—13. LXIX. Fürstenberg's letter of November 26, 1912 to Berchtold.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

told: "Wickenburg has certainly reported you on our talks, thus it would be needless to recapitulate them here. I only want to assure you that I consider the elimination of differences that have existed between the Hungarians and Romanians for decades as a crucial problem of our policy towards nationalities, and I will most devotedly serve this cause as soon as there opens a way for an appropriate solution."<sup>15</sup>

At the time, however, it was not with the Romanian National Party that they tried to find an appropriate solution — as it appears from Wickenburg's report. Tisza, again, wanted to start negotiations with the lawyer and landowner Mihiu, while Lukács tended to look upon the Romanian Greek Orthodox bishops as most suitable persons to bargain with. In the course of negotiations, however, Lukács did not completely and definitely refrain from the Romanian National Party's group participating in the Hungarian parliament. But the initiative — maintained Lukács — must be taken by this group of the Romanian National Party. Said prime-minister Lukács: "If on our part the reception of Mihaili were desirable, for which he shows readiness, the initial steps ought to be taken by him, so that no occasion may be given for false comments."<sup>16</sup>

Berchtold sent a telegramme to Fürstenberg, the Monarchy's minister in Bucharest, on December 2, 1912, in which he referred to Wickenburg's talks in Budapest and furthered the wish of prime-minister Lukács and Tisza to come to a lasting and good understanding with the Romanians. He, furthermore, requested the minister to inform Brătianu in this matter and ask him whether he found Mihiu suitable to mediate in this reconciliation action, "or, would he deem it, from the aspect of an effective implementation, indispensable to establish direct relations between the Hungarian government and Mr. Mihaili?"<sup>17</sup>

The discussion between Tisza and Brătianu, the actual leaders of the Hungarian and Romanian ruling classes and masters of domestic politics in the two countries, about the persons of the mediators lasted almost two weeks.

In his telegramme of December 4 to the foreign minister, Fürstenberg already reported on Brătianu's opinion as to the disputed persons of mediators:

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Wickenburg's note of November 30, 1912 to Berchtold. Wickenburg, furthermore, gave a detailed account of the opinions of both Hungarian politicians as to the actual state and prospects of the Romanian nationalities. According to this, Lukács acknowledged the complaints against county administration as justifiable. However, as it turned out later, he did so mainly because by this he wanted to convince Vienna of the necessity of an administrative reform. He tended to attribute the main reason of the tension between Romanians and Hungarians to the irredentist aspirations of Romanians, and described the post-Compromise language act as far too liberal, which overstepped the mark so that it could hardly be put into effect. According to Wickenburg, "Tisza admitted that the Romanian question is significant, but unlike Lukács, he still strictly refused to carry on direct negotiations with the Romanian national party."

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

the Romanian prime-minister had not explicitly rejected the Tisza-oriented Miĥu's involvement in the negotiations, but, from the aspect of the desirable result, he had considered this solution unfeasible. "Though Brătianu does not regard Mr. Miĥu unsuitable as mediator" — wrote the minister — "yet, in his view, Mr. Miĥu could not have much influence on the party since he does not belong to the party's political committee. Mr. Mihalji — who is not so much of an extremist as he otherwise seems to be for party political reasons, in fact, there are much more radical elements among the Romanians — is more suitable than Mr. Miĥu if only because he is the head of the Party, and thus could be able to conclude agreements, mandatory for all Romanians and acceptable even for the most extremist elements."<sup>18</sup>

In his letter of December 6, 1912, Fürstenberg gave the foreign minister further details of his talks with Brătianu. From this it appears that the leader of the Romanian liberals held Mihalji the most suitable negotiator even from the viewpoint of the interests of the Hungarian ruling classes: "Mr. Mihalji fully adheres to the contemporary political law of Hungary" — wrote the minister — "thus he has to be ranked among the moderate members. Still, not to decrease his influence on his men on the extremist flank, he is occasionally compelled to touch an implacable tone. A similar process can be observed in the parliament, too. Political leaders must — at least formally — make allowance for the most radical and thus most troublesome members of their party."<sup>19</sup>

Simultaneously, Tisza tried to convince the Romanian minister Alexander Constantinescu, staying in Budapest at the time, of Miĥu's suitability. As proved by his private letter to Berchtold, during this discussion, Tisza convinced himself of Brătianu's firmness. Notably, Constantinescu made it clear that Bucharest looked upon Miĥu only as "a far too insignificant lawyer in a small town", and wished to involve more weighty personalities in the negotiations. At the same time, reassuring Tisza, Constantinescu also stated that the leaders of the Romanian Nationality Party had received instructions from Bucharest to the effect that they would conclude agreement on the basis of "the present legal status". Under such circumstances Tisza finally accepted Brătianu's proposal. In concert with Lukács, Tisza thus wrote to Berchtold on December 6, 1912: "Despite our misgivings we are ready to contact their confidential man, whom they find suitable, we only ask them to instruct their man to near us in a proper way."<sup>20</sup>

Tisza, then, — who had formerly demanded the elimination of all parties and political bodies organized on nationality basis —, in December 1912, expected the central delegates of the Romanian Nationality Party to the con-

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

ference table — though on certain conditions. Widely-known as a stubborn man, strictly adhering to his conception, Tisza was forced to modify his former standpoint mainly for such political reasons, such as the failure of the Monarchy's earlier Balkan policy, and also in the interest of making the alliance with Romania more intensive. Upon Berchtold's repeated requests, he finally acknowledged: if Austria—Hungary wished to maintain its influence on the Balkans, it could not afford to open fronts against each south-eastern European country; though to maintain the Monarchy's position was Tisza's only foreign-policy objective, in his view the only way to achieve this was by checking Serbia gaining in strength. In the situation after the outbreak of the first Balkan War, he could not take the responsibility of the Monarchy's further isolation in the field of foreign policy. Adding to the modification of his former conceptions concerning the nationality parties was Constantinescu's promise that only the actual legal status, i.e. the unchanged maintenance of the dualistic system may provide the basis for "reconciliation negotiations" of the Romanian National Party.

Tisza was not inclined to renew his predecessors' *divide et impera* policy characteristic of the first phase after the Compromise of 1867. He also discarded the political heritage of Andrassy senior and his own father which was a storehouse of compromises and rather variegated forms of solving the given problems. In early December 1912, however, as a result of his defensive policy against the Southern Slavic movements, a certain discord broke the harmony of his political line: still, although with strong reservations, he showed readiness to bargaining.

On December 7, 1912, Berchtold wrote an acknowledgement note to Lukács for the support and understanding of his (Berchtold's) request concerning the Romanian question and the related foreign policy interests. "I very much ask you" — he continued — "to be so kind as to take care of this matter as soon as possible, if only because of those good dispositions which seem to be prevailing in that factor, i.e. the Romanian Kingdom, and which may be inferred from Brătianu's initiative, and from the attitude he shows currently towards the Monarchy in his newspaper."<sup>21</sup>

No evidence can be found either in the Staatsarchiv or Tisza's rich document material, nor in Jenő Balogh's papers, why the government gave up the conditions it had deemed necessary in early December 1912 of the negotiations to be started with the Romanians. Why did it not wait — formally — for the negotiation offer of Mihalji's circle? It is a fact, however, that on December 18, 1912, Tisza advised Mihalji, the president of the Romanian Nationality Party, that he would like to start negotiations with him.<sup>22</sup> It is highly probable, however, that he contacted Mihalji for the same political reasons, foreign and do-

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Képviseleti Napló (Diary of the House — henceforward: K. N.) March 20, 1914.

mestic, as had prompted him to alter his former standpoint concerning the Romanian Nationality Party.

The second phase of his so-called Romanian-negotiations started with his message to Mihalji. While his talks with Mihiu in autumn 1910 were going on due to his personal desire for an agreement, and thus had — mostly — been restricted to peripheral issues, the discussion started in December 1912 formed part of the international relations between Romania and the Monarchy, and the range of subjects under discussion extended considerably.

Upon Tisza's request, the Romanian National Party started elaborating its demands. On January 12, 1913, the party sent a commission of three — Mihalji, Maniu and Braniste — to carry on negotiations.<sup>23</sup> On behalf of the Romanian National Party, the elected commission handed over a list of demands, containing 11 items, to Tisza on January 21, 1913. Most important among their demands were as follows: "In accordance with the principle of the freedom of teaching, right should be granted, an institutional possibility should be given to the Romanian people to have access to vernacular education at all levels of public education both in state- or communal and in ecclesiastical schools. To carry into effect the freedom of religion and the equality of denominations, to be acknowledged and warranted is the autonomy of the Greek Orthodox Romanian Church both in the ecclesiastic and educational and in the internal administrative and foundation fields . . . To be placed at the disposal of the Romanian Church is a support proportional to amounts allocated to other denominations for both ecclesiastical and educational purposes . . . Romanian communities placed under the authority of the Hajdúdorog see should be placed again under the authority of the Gyulafehérvár and Fogaras Greek Catholic Romanian dioceses. The freedom of press is to be warranted, and the political persecutions of Romanian prints should be stopped." As can be seen, the memorandum included questions affecting the basic democratic rights in addition to religious, ecclesiastical and educational issues. Besides the freedom of press, it also demanded the freedom of assembly and organization, as well as the organization freedom of the Romanian National Party. The institutional introduction of the Romanian-language public administration in areas with massive Romanian population, and the employment of Romanians in public administration were part of the documents.<sup>24</sup>

On February 6, 1913, Tisza replied to each item of the Romanian National Party's list of democratic and national demands. Considering the government's anti-democratic and nationalist policy, we are not surprised that the government rejected most of the demands. How could have Tisza — after all — promised the Romanians to observe e.g. the democratic suffrage, the right of

<sup>23</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza ir. 45.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

assembly and public meeting or the freedom of press if — as has been seen — it was precisely the curtailing of such freedoms he aimed at, in accordance with the government, by putting limits on the bourgeois parliamentarism? At the same time his certain promises of reforms of ecclesiastical nature, and his holding out of the prospect of certain concessions relative to public administration and the government's economic policy could not satisfy the Romanian National Party endeavouring to extend the circle of its demands.

Tisza's so-called Romanian negotiations started then with an unsuccessful exchange of notes. After such premises, personal talks could not lead to success, either. All the less since — in the meanwhile — the November 1912 tension between Russia and Romania, which had previously prompted Brătianu to start negotiating, eased. Moreover, from the spring of 1913 on, Romania — and Brătianu himself — expected Russia to restore its prestige in the Balkans lessened by the overthrown *status quo* after the Balkan War. The foreign policy of the Monarchy thus had to face an ever more serious situation. Under these circumstances, Brătianu was no longer in the position to press the Romanian National Party to offer further concessions. At the same time, various groups of the Hungarian ruling classes took a uniform stand against the increasing demands of the Romanian National Party. This could not escape the attention of Tisza and Lukács. On the failure of the negotiations, on May 23, 1932, Maniu made the following remark to the Debrecen professor Dr. József Kun, who handled Tisza's documents: "The fact is that even Tisza with his statesmanship and foresight could have accustomed himself to the idea of a solution acceptable for us, no Hungarian party and no single Hungarian statesman would have backed Count István Tisza in this decisive action."<sup>25</sup>

Despite the fading hope of success after February 1913, Tisza tried hard to hold the negotiations in his hand. Irrespective of the failure of the exchange of notes, under-secretary of the ministry of culture and education Ferenc Csorba was commissioned to record all Romanian grievances in the ecclesiastical field.<sup>26</sup>

With the grievances listed, the Lukács government did no longer bother much to give further evidence of its reconciliation-mindedness. It was the Tisza government that took the initiative to resume negotiations, although under changed circumstances, in the autumn of 1913. When the Balkan tension turned into an impending danger of a world war in 1913, Tisza's policy towards nationalities continued to be closely related with foreign policy. What Tisza mostly desired was a new European constellation in which the Triple Alliance would get the upper hand on the continent. His efforts to isolate Serbia, win over Bulgaria, and to neutralize Romania and Greece, furthermore the failure

<sup>25</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 46.

<sup>26</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 18.

of his conservative-fashioned bargaining with Russia necessarily involved a revaluation of the situation of nationalities living in Hungary and Croatia, i.e. Southern Slavs, Romanians, Slovaks, and Carpathian Ukrainians. Both Berchtold and Tisza recognized that the planned active foreign policy would remain illusory as long as the kin peoples, living within the Monarchy, of the said countries were tending out of the Monarchy, and the leaders of their political parties were defying the Hungarian government. As the leader of the Monarchy's foreign policy, Berchtold, therefore, wrote a letter to Tisza on September 2, 1913, asking for detailed information on any significant event or momentum of domestic politics which might have an effect on the external situation.<sup>27</sup> In his reply of September 6 1913, Tisza recognized this request as justifiable, and gave a detailed account of his conception with particular view to Croatia. The Hungarian prime-minister wrote as follows: "I lay emphasis on my being on intimate terms with your Excellency along the entire line of political life: as regards the situation in Croatia, I readily place all information available at your disposal as requested."<sup>28</sup>

Indeed, the leaders of foreign policy and the nationality affairs maintained a regular exchange of information not only on the southern Slavic but also on the Romanian and Ukrainian questions. Preserved in archives, documents, which have not yet been adequately explored and published, clearly show that these two statesmen mutually satisfied each other's requests.

Naturally, Tisza did not deem the framework in which the nationality problems were manifest, suitable from the aspect of domestic politics either. He felt uneasy about the increasing popularity of the democratic national programs of the bourgeois parties of the minorities. With his rich political experiences, he had to realize the decreasing influence of aristocrats, high priests, and other dualism-sympathizers. On the eve of World War I, he saw that the terrorist acts and measures of Hungarian governments were no longer capable of suppressing the intensifying anti-dualistic, democratic endeavours of the nationalities. In accordance with its Balkan-politics the Monarchy, therefore, promised further concessions, first of all, to the Romanians living in Hungary and also to Croatia. Commissions were given to record the grievances of Slovaks, too. In his speech of January 1, 1914, Tisza said: "Important among the future tasks is to concentrate energies: to develop military force. But perhaps even more important than that is to concentrate on that particular internal work which aims at a possible elimination of points of disagreement in our fatherland."<sup>29</sup> With his policy of concessions, he sought to recruit a new and broader-than-ever stratum of politicians that would have been devotedly attached to the cause of dualism. But owing precisely to his con-

<sup>27</sup> R. E. K. L. Balogh *Jenő-iz.* 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Az Ujság*, January 2, 1914.



cession policy, he got cross-fired by the nationalist opposition of the ruling classes, without having been able to achieve his objective: to win over, though only temporarily the representatives of the democratic tendencies in the nationality movements.

As it may appear from Tisza's political objectives in the 1910s, his policy towards the nationalities, intervoven with concessions, was basically opposed to his antidemocratic domestic politics aimed at eliminating even the traces of liberalism. Obviously, there were some differences. Unlike the Hungarian ruling classes, blindfolded by nationalism, Tisza recognized that by means of sheer terror he could not eliminate those tendencies in the nationality movements which openly opposed the dualism and its administrative and socio-political system. This line would have been very much like adding fuel to the fire, i.e. to strenghten the nationality movements, unwillingly though, thus driving them, sooner or later, to the politics of their respective fatherlands. That is why Tisza tended to look upon concessions as indispensable in this field. At the same time, he did not condemn terror either. In fact, in one of his confidential letters to Berchtold enlarging on the political situation in Croatia, he considered the form of absolutism practiced previously — prior to 1910 — an important condition for constitutional government. "The Royal Commissariat was an absolute necessity," — he wrote — "a fact which essentially proved true despite all the hostilities. They checked agitation in the press, and produced evidence that all efforts directed against forming an alliance, based on interstate law, with Hungary were, in fact, fully opposing the power of the Crown. The ensuing relaxation has only been due to this circumstance."<sup>30</sup>

In his letter of August 7, 1913 to Tisza, Khuen-Héderváry also praised the Čuvaj-regime for its having facilitated preparations for an agreement.<sup>31</sup>

However, the differences between his general anti-democratic domestic political line and his policy towards nationalities seem to be insignificant, if his domestic policy measures extended also to the nationality areas — reform of the suffrage and the common jury, the press law, curtailment of the freedom of assembly and meeting, and so forth — are considered. And it was precisely in such regions that the abuses of local administrative authorities assumed the form of brutality — as it so often appeared from complaints of both the leaders and the press of the nationalities. The motivations were also identical. With his negotiations, Tisza wanted to achieve the same end: to consolidate the foundations of constitutional law conceived in 1867, to keep the ruling classes in power against forces undermining the dualism. Tisza's policy towards nationalities, which was not devoid of concession-mindedness, was later qualified by the historiography of the counter-revolutionary period as "liberal", "serving mutual understanding" and the like. With this, they wanted to

<sup>30</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. Tisza's letter of September 6, 1913 to Berchtold.,

<sup>31</sup> R. E. K. L. Balogh Jenő-ir. 10.

camouflage a program in Tisza's "Great Hungarian" conception which, in fact, had aimed at a forcible assimilation of the nationalities, their aspirations for independence, and wanted to impede this objective historical process by means of a certain virtual liberalism. The National Labour Party, along with Tisza's policy towards nationalities was, in fact, to serve the purposes of war preparations and the consolidation of a unified Hungarian state:

On the 27th and 28th October 1913, Tisza continued his negotiations with the Romanian National Party, or more precisely with Braniste, Mihalji and Maniu, three leading members of the party. With the nationality politicians' requests increased, the range of problems to be discussed extended correspondingly. While in the autumn of 1910 Tisza and Romanian big landowner Mihu had discussed only some concessions concerning Romanian schools and the Romanian Church, throwing the dissolution of the Romanian National Party into the other scale, during the Lukács-regime, Tisza had his talks directly with the leaders of the Romanian National Party, and the bargaining was focussed on educational, cultural, and political questions which necessarily led them to discuss the policy of "Magyarization" pursued by the Hungarian governments. By the autumn of 1913, both sides had already recorded their respective conditions for agreement in the form of lengthy memoranda.

It appears from Tisza's confidential notes, as well as from his speeches he delivered in parliament, or from his statements he made in the press, that he was desirous to come to a compromise, and also that there emerged immense obstacles in the way of any compromise. What were originally but ecclesiastical, educational and cultural grievances grew into important debates concerning domestic policy measures and regulations. The Romanian National Party demanded, among others, that the Romanians should be permitted to use their mother tongue in courts of first instances and also in the field of public administration. As a condition for agreement they requested 50 election districts to be organized in areas of Romanian majority. To modify the given system of executive power, and to appoint Romanians as country "Lord-Lieutenants" and under-secretaries of state in ministries were also listed among the request. However, Tisza promised them to remedy their grievances in the ecclesiastical and educational fields only. In his notes on the discussions held on the 27th and 28th October 1913, Tisza wrote the following: "We wish to refrain from any measure which — without good reason — would dissolve Romanian ecclesiastical schools or would hinder them in their development."<sup>32</sup> He also held out the prospect of a revision of the 1907 public education act, and of a more liberal use of the vernacular language in schools of Romanian majority. Nor did he reject the instruction of the Romanian language and literature in regions where the majority of population was Romanian. "In secondary schools of regions where

<sup>32</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 18.

nationalities other than Hungarian live in masses, we shall introduce the instruction of their language and literature" — wrote he — "so that the non-Hungarian pupils may be permitted to acquire a profound knowledge of their own mother tongue and vernacular literature."<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, he refused the national demands concerning the organization of nationality election districts, the language of public administration and courts of first instance. As regards the language of courts of first instance and public administration, he could not think of more than "that the members of the courts and administrative bodies dealing with the people are expected to understand the language of the nationality people living in large numbers in that particular region, and to contact their non-Hungarian speaking clients or parties in their vernacular language, thus ensuring a direct understanding between the authorities and the non-Hungarian speaking population." As to the supplements to applications, he did not insist upon a practice of obligatory translation, but he did not want to change the language of the applications.<sup>34</sup> In respect of the organization of nationality election districts, Tisza referred to the cultural level and rejected the request in a refined formulation: "In organizing election districts, I wish to refrain from any influence or artificial procedure which would change the naturally existing power relations to the detriment of Romanians. On the contrary, I wish to offer a scope to organize election districts of Romanian majority or, in many places, of overwhelming Romanian majority wherever this comes naturally from the given situation, provided that the procedure is loyal. The results will temporarily fall short of the Romanian's aspirations: owing to the more backward cultural level of the Romanian population, a considerably lower percentage of the Romanian population has suffrage than Hungarians or even Germans living mixed with them. This, however, is only a transitional state which the spread of culture will certainly modify to the advantage of the Romanians . . ." As to the government, Tisza most definitely rejected the Romanian requests. "In the field of government" — wrote Tisza — "the influence of Romanians cannot be ensured institutionally. This will be a function of a virtually given political harmony when every Romanian statesman active in the public or official life will be able to struggle unhindered his way up to any place suitable to his abilities. It would be very much desirable if Romanians in adequate numbers were participating in various branches of the central government."<sup>35</sup>

Differences between the respective standpoints of the negotiating parties had from the outset made any agreement hopeless. Adding to this were further severe conditions on the part of Tisza who never really felt inclined to resort to a compromise. The said educational and cultural con-

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

cessions would have been "granted" only if the Romanian National Party had made an obligatory promise to regard the compromise as a final settling of the nationality problem. Tisza thus concluded his note to Vienna: "All these far-reaching measures would be subject to the condition that they should really attain their object, which is to fully reassure the so far dissatisfied Romanians and to induce them to put an end to their nationalist movement. Therefore, in case of coming to an agreement, the Romanian National Party ought to declare that they would accept the offered solutions as being fully satisfactory and a final settling of the nationality problem; that they would take a firm stand on it, omitting all further points of their program and concentrating activities on the fullest possible implementation of the articles of the agreement, so as to obtain the fruits of reconciliation for the domestic Romanians."<sup>36</sup>

However, the memorandum the Romanians prepared and handed over to Tisza in December 1913, contained further demands as compared to the previous ones. Although this memorandum started out from the Romanian National Party's willingness to bring the vital national interests of the Romanian people into harmony with the integrity, territorial and political, of the state, the scope of actual demands included in it was considerably extended. This memorandum demanded that the instruction of Romanian students should go on in Romanian; the government should modify Article XXVII, 1907, and acknowledge the right of the two Romanian denominations to maintain schools even where ecclesiastical schools had already been shut. Moreover, the Romanian Churches should be invested with the right of inspecting ecclesiastical elementary schools, and the state-school inspectors should be selected from those cherishing kindly feelings toward Romanian-language instruction. State school-inspectors should control schools in common with the Churches and act uniformly in disciplinary procedures. It was also demanded that priests might also be employed temporarily as teachers, and their Churches might also establish Romanian-language secondary and vocational schools. To achieve this, the government was expected to give financial aid to the Churches. The mandatory instruction of the Romanian language and literature and the right of denominations and societies to set up boarding schools in Romanian-inhabited regions were also stipulated in the memorandum. The instruction of Romanian pupils in religion should uniformly be performed by Romanians. Due respect must be paid to the traditions of the Romanian people, and this must be given proper emphasis in the plans of tuition as well. The document repeated also the necessity of taking out Romanian parishes of the Hajdúdorog diocese, and dwelt upon the grievances of the Romanian Churches. Their further demands included freedom of press, unhindered import

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

of Romanian press products, free exercise of the right of meeting and association, freedom of parliamentary elections, and so forth. The former demand concerning Romanian-language applications without obligatory translations and the permission of Romanian notice in municipal, state or local authorities and offices were recapitulated. Finally, it was claimed that a Romanian minister without portfolio should participate in the Hungarian government and that Romanian under-secretaries of state should be appointed in the Ministry of the Interior and in the Ministry of Education.<sup>37</sup>

The divergent platforms of the two negotiating parties were discussed several times in December 1913 and in January 1914. The Romanian national committee assembled in January 1914. However, as it turned out at once, its majority did not accept Tisza's proposals. Under these circumstances, Czernin, minister of the Monarchy in Bucharest, asked Tisza to suspend both the negotiations and the decision to gain time. Romanian liberal leader, Brătianu gave the same advice to the leaders of the Romanian National Party. "If it is not possible otherwise" — telegraphed Czernin to Tisza on January 15, 1914, — "in my opinion, you had better put off negotiations with the statement that they would be resumed in a couple of weeks. An official declaration of break, however, should be prevented in any case."<sup>38</sup>

As a result of advices coming from Vienna and Bucharest, the party postponed its decision. In the interest of the success of a compromise, Tisza had recourse to the Romanian episcopacy loyal to the government and to the county "Lord-Lieutenants". In his letter of January 23, 1914 to the bishops he dwelt upon his former negotiations: the Romanian negotiators — continued Tisza — have inclination to an agreement, but the party committee, which held its meeting in recent days, will not accept it. "It seems to me that the more peaceful members of deeper political insight did not venture to force an issue lest an unfavourable resolution should lay the success open to danger." They, therefore, agreed on resuming negotiations in 10 to 15 days. In the meanwhile, the committee members might gain time which the bishops, too, could make the best use of. "I am strongly determined to help those who want peace" — wrote Tisza — "but I cannot battle them with the promise that I will permit radical and significant changes since it has never been my intention to enter into some sort of bargaining — on the contrary, from the very beginning I have made clear my standpoint in an open manner."<sup>39</sup>

To promote the success of an agreement, he also wrote a circular to the country "Lord-Lieutenants", on February 2, 1914: "I confidentially

<sup>37</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 46. No. 53.

<sup>38</sup> H. H. St. A. Interna LXIX.

<sup>39</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. Item 19. — Metropolitan Metianu, archbishop of Nagyszeben, replied to Tisza's letter of the 23rd January on the 31st January 1914. According to this, he got in touch with the other bishops who, though not knowing the subject of the talk, were ready to promote its success. — R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 25.

call your attention to the fact that on the initiative of the Hungarian Cultural Association of Transylvania, the country's cultural associations are discussing the question of negotiations now in progress with the Romanians, and — naturally — it would be of primary importance that the stand these associations are to take in favour of the Hungarian national idea should not involve any hostile feeling towards the country's non-Hungarian speaking citizen or towards the government's endeavours to pay due attention to these citizens' justifiable demands . . . I strongly recommend this cause to your attention because it is an important public interest to counterbalance the campaign of the opposition aimed at misleading and agitating the Hungarian public opinion."<sup>40</sup>

Romanian high priests, however, especially in this period — when the government's general anti-democratic policy particularly seriously affected the nationalities — did not have any considerable influence on the party decision. At the same time, as a consequence of the Bucharest peace favouring Monarchic revisionist tendencies after the Second Balkan War, the anti-agreement movement was strengthening in Romania, while the Hungarian opposition found even Tisza's concession in the ecclesiastical and cultural affairs far too much advanced. His letter to the county "Lord-Lieutenants" remained ineffective. Under such circumstances, by the time of the Party's February session the possibility of an agreement had become even more unrealistic. In his letter of February 12, 1914, Tisza wrote to Mihalji: "Considering your latest statements, regrettably enough, there is not too much hope of achieving our objective now; but I was glad to see that you, too, admit there is a considerable progress and approach, and that you would like to preserve the results so far achieved for the future. I also make every effort to this effect. It is in this way that I should like to handle this question and the relations to the Romanians in general, and I ask you to act so that your conduct will not throw obstacles on the way of this effort."<sup>41</sup>

Then Francis Joseph II — through the mediation of István Burián — asked Tisza to take into account the interests of the Monarchy, in spite of the failure of the negotiations, and to make further efforts to win over the Romanians living in the Monarchy. According to Burián's letter, Francis Joseph II expressed his hope "that the Romanians will not be deprived of the benefits promised to them, if for lack of understanding on the part of their leaders, the negotiations carried on with them do not lead to the desirable agreement for the time being."<sup>42</sup>

Thus the resolution of February 17, 1914 of the executive committee of the Romanian National Party of Hungary and Transylvania, rejecting

<sup>40</sup> Székesfehérvári Állami Levéltár. Főispáni bizalmas iratok. (The Székesfehérvár State Archives. Confidential papers of the county Lord-Lieutenancy.) 1914. No. 8.

<sup>41</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ír. 19.

<sup>42</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ír. 23.

Tisza's proposals, did not come surprisingly. According to this resolution, the Hungarian prime-minister's proposal regarding the "final solution is unsuitable to bridge over, even for a short term, the differences between the government policy of the Hungarian state and the Romanians, not only because of its content but also because of the consequences which were defined as conditions for the implementation."<sup>43</sup>

On February 20, 1914, during the session of the Parliament, Tisza reported on the failure of his negotiations with the Romanians. At the same time, in pursuance of Francis Joseph's wish, he also announced that preparations for a pact would be resumed. He criticized the nationality policy of the former governments, mainly that of the coalition-governments, and promised to raise the Romanian teachers' salary, to establish a new Romanian secondary school (gymnasium) and to remedy part of the grievances connected with the Romanian language.<sup>44</sup>

After the failure of the compromise in the spring of 1914, according to his promises he made in Parliament, Tisza modified some of the regulations of the education act. He made it easier to maintain non-Hungarian-language ecclesiastical schools; mitigated the regulations governing school buildings; permitted religious instruction in Romanian in state and communal elementary schools; prescribed the instruction of Romanian in state elementary schools in regions inhabited by Romanians.<sup>45</sup>

Tisza, however, resumed negotiations only under the pressure of foreign policy reasons after the outbreak of World War I. With regard to the former criticism by the parliamentary opposition, Tisza did not inform first the leaders of the Romanian National Party, but announced his intention to the heads of the two Romanian Churches in letters of similar content dated September 22, 1914.<sup>46</sup> Now he promised already the reform of the public education act. Contrary to his opinion held at the turn of 1913 and 1914, he held out the prospect or rather possibility of the use of Romanian in state offices, the modification of certain regulations of suffrage, and also promised amnesty for the convicts of nationality trials. Tisza, at that time, hoped for a possible agreement mainly on the basis of an anti-Russian platform. "Indeed, the feeling of the common danger" — wrote Tisza to the minister of justice, Jenő Balogh, on September 24, 1914 — "will bring souls nearer. Every Romanian must feel that the Russian struggle for world hegemony will decide on the existence of their nation, and that the Hungarians must trustfully return the loyal, faithful and determined behaviour of their Romanian fellow citizens."<sup>47</sup> At that

<sup>43</sup> P. N. February 19, 1914.

<sup>44</sup> K. N. February 20, 1914.

<sup>45</sup> Prime-min.'s order No. 1798 of April 24, 1914, and orders No. 52 000 of April 9 and No. 114 000 of August 13 of the minister of culture.

<sup>46</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. 46.

<sup>47</sup> R. E. K. L. Balogh Jenő-ir. 13.

time, however, the Romanian diplomacy had already unambiguously oriented towards the Entente. This fact in itself was sufficient to thwart Tisza's plans.

Up to this date, Tisza's negotiations have been subject of a most controversial chapter in the history of that period. Political struggles and debates of the contemporaries survived the generation of the turn of the century. Resumed again and again between 1910 and 1914, the negotiations of this established representative of social conservatism with the Romanian feudal ecclesiastical circles and with the leaders of the Romanian National Party gave much food for thinking not only to the politicians and historians of the counter-revolutionary period, but have raised several problems for the historians, Hungarian and foreign, in our days as well. The difference does not always lie in the respective viewpoints of the Marxist and bourgeois historians: the real divergence of views arises rather from an incomplete knowledge of facts as well as from a deficient elaboration of the history of this period. Under such circumstances much guesswork and subjective judgement of open questions have been disclosed. A satisfactory settling of the problems is aggravated by the defective co-operation of Marxist historians in the countries concerned and also by the lack of complex investigations. What remains a primary and common research task for Soviet, Romanian, Austrian, German, and Hungarian historians is a painstaking inquiry into the circumstances which largely influenced Tisza's negotiations with the Romanian National Party, such as the pre-war foreign policy of Romanian liberals, relations between the Romanian National Party and Brătianu, Francis Ferdinand's policy towards nationalities, Germany's Romanian policy etc. Relying upon factual material in documents available in Hungary and in archives in Vienna, I have made an attempt to reconstruct the course of negotiations, their motivations, the role they played in and the reception they were given by the Hungarian domestic politics. Tisza kept all the time quiet about the motivation of his policy towards nationalities, and denied that foreign policy considerations, and, by implication, the foreign policy leadership of the Monarchy and Germany would have ever urged him on concluding an agreement with the Romanian National Party. Without having been asked, he always asserted that he was not acting under Germany's pressure. His political followers tended to declare him a man of genius, mainly on the pretence that it was he who came to recognize the inevitable necessity of agreement in order to maintain the dualism and to preserve the integrity of Hungary. The above-mentioned sources, however, bear witness against these statements. In this context we have already quoted the Vienna and Berlin appraisal of the Balkan Wars, Francis Joseph's message sent through István Burián in February 1913, as well as Czernin's telegramme. Czernin gave daily reports to Tisza on his talks with Brătianu, and the prime-minister, too, informed the Monarchy's minister in Bucharest about the progress of the negotiations. German emperor William II, visiting Francis Ferdinand too, on March



27, 1914, made special mention of the situation of the Romanians in Hungary. "Above all it is necessary" — he said — "that the question of Romanians in Hungary should be handled in the same way as Tisza has handled it, and according to his statements, will handle it in the future, too."<sup>48</sup>

In his letter of May 23, 1932, to the Debrecen professor Dr. József Kun, Maniu also confirmed what have been stated above: "Count István Tisza's negotiations with the delegates of the Romanian National Committee were started at the request and initiative of Emperor-King Francis Joseph II and the Romanian King Charles I, and with the consent and approval of the heir to the throne, Francis Ferdinand."<sup>49</sup> It is naturally obvious that Tisza — as has been shown — found the "agreement" necessary for merely domestic political reasons. All the same time, he recognized the increasing importance of the national problem from the aspect of the Monarchy's state as great power as well. A condition for winning over or rather neutralizing Romania was — according to the leaders of the Triple Alliance — the reconciliation of Romanians in Hungary. Tisza's plans for the stabilization of domestic politics were thus in line with the conceptions of the Triple Alliance and — above all — with those of Germany. It was precisely this coincidence that explains Tisza's unusual tolerance towards, and also his frequent significant concessions to, the Romanian nationalities in Hungary. However, he made the greatest concessions to the Romanian National Party at a time when, after the second Balkan War and the Bucharest Peace, he had become an active participant of the Triple Alliance's foreign policy, that is when he formulated the Bulgarian-oriented Balkan-policy, and had it accepted by Berchtold, though — in the meanwhile — he had several times queried Romania's loyalty to the alliance. At the time, then, the Romanian question for Tisza was no longer a sheer domestic political business, but became part of his foreign policy. As Maniu put it in his above-cited letter: "The approach of world war made it imperative for both Germany and the Monarchy to make political preparations for it . . . Politically, however," — continued Maniu — "the odds were against Austria-Hungary. Several wounds were wide open on its state life, and among them the Romanian question was the more important, since Charles, king of Romania, foresaw it with anxiety that he would not be able to mobilize Romania on the side of the Central Powers until Hungary has settled the Romanian question. With regard to the coming and rather hopeless international showdown, the settling of the Romanian question was held by the German, Austro-Hungarian and Romanian diplomacy necessary and pressing . . . Romania's adherence to the Central Powers depended on the reconciliation of Romanians. And this adherence was of primary importance to Austria-Hungary."<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Grosse Politik. Vol. 39. No. 15, 720.

<sup>49</sup> R. E. K. L. Tisza-ir. No. 104.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

Tisza, then, prior to World War I, recognized the importance of the nationality question from the aspect of politics, foreign and domestic. He sought to find ways to ease up the accumulated tensions. However, he, too, suspected there were unsurmountable obstacles in the way of solution. With his concessions Tisza was always in a phase lag behind the actual demands of the Romanian National Party. Referring to his latest concessions, Tisza bitterly wrote to Romanian Bishop Vazul Hosszú on October 11, 1914: "Had I granted them all this during the winter, the agreement would have certainly been concluded. At the time I could not go further with a view to the general atmosphere, now I dare to run this risk, but they must be aware that it is only now that I can do it, and if they will not give a warm reception to this initiative, they will thwart the possibility of my policy towards the Romanians for good."<sup>51</sup>

With Romania's entry into war, all the remaining illusions of an agreement soon faded away.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*