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L. Tilkovszky

PÁL TELEKI (1879—1941)

A Biographical Sketch

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by L. TILKOVSZKY

Pál Teleki was one of the most significant statesmen of Hungary in the period from 1919 to 1941. During his first premiership (1920—21) he contributed to the consolidation of the counter-revolutionary system. Later, he devoted most of his time and energy to inaugurate a territorial revision of the Peace Treaty of Trianon. His revisionist ideas, however, reached the threshold of realization through the forcible awards of the Axis Powers instead of the common decision of the leading European powers. Teleki was aware of the dangers of the situation: during his second premiership in 1939 he emphasized that Hungary must not recover her prewar territories at the expense of a one-sided and unconditional German-oriented alignment; at the same time, he tried to check the advance of right-wing extremists in the internal political arena. Although evoking illusions home and abroad, his ideas had been doomed to frustration, and in the final issue this was the cause of his suicide in 1941, in the days of the Yugoslavian conflict.



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INTRODUCTION

Relying on the laconic communiqué released by the Hungarian Telegraphic Agency on April 3, 1941, both the radio and the press were not long to make known throughout the country: "Count Pál Teleki de Szék, Royal Hungarian Privy Councillor, Royal Hungarian Prime Minister, found his death in tragic circumstances tonight." Correspondents of various foreign news agencies transmitted the news at once so that it became widely known by noon and in the early afternoon through the world press.

Although the death of an active statesman always makes a great stir – as did that of Gömbös a few years before – this fact in itself cannot account for the high degree of astonishment it caused all over the world. In a strained international situation, aggravated by the latest developments in Yugoslavia, however, at a time when the position and the attitude of the neighbouring Hungary became so important as to command public interest, the report on the sudden and tragic death of the country's Prime Minister with all its implications seemed to be immediately of utmost significance.

The world press widely publicized the long-winded efforts of German diplomacy aimed at drawing Yugoslavia into the Three-Power Pact, thus backing the Italian military operations then in a critical state in Greece, and it also was known that Hungary – that had been the first to join the Three-Power Pact – played a certain mediating or reconciling role on the basis of her treaty of friendship concluded with Yugoslavia in December, 1940. Diplomatic correspondents and commentators of major international newspapers, who keenly watched the events following March 27, 1941, when a military coup removed the Cvetković government that had only previously signed the protocol on the adherence to the Three-Power Pact, and when the people's feelings manifested themselves in genuine anti-German demonstrations, did not delay to point to the agonizing situation of the Hungarian government: in case of a clash between Yugoslavia and Germany, the Hungarian diplomacy had to make a hard decision. Stipulations included in the Hungarian-Yugoslav treaty of friendship, originally concluded in the spirit of the Three-Power Pact, came into irreconcilable conflict with those of the latter. The fact of the Hungarian Prime Minister's death inevitably raised the question of whether Teleki was the victim of this dilemma?

According to the first report, Teleki, at 62, died of heart-stroke as a result of the extraordinary strain caused by the unexpected developments. The western press held it highly probable that the German Reich – which according to all indications was to take a strong line against Yugoslavia – put pressure on Hungary, and that this had much to do with Teleki's death, thus inspiring sympathy for Teleki. Formerly, not infrequently had the British press criticized Teleki for his increasingly

submissive policy towards the Germans, having called him “the Hungarian Schuschnigg”, though at the same time it had also given evidence of a certain degree of understanding of the policy of the Prime Minister “manoeuvring in a grave situation”, and – above all – it had taken good care not to criticize him sharply for fear of driving him into Germany’s arm. At the news of his death, these critical tones faded away to give place to the expression of sympathy. Outlining the biography of the deceased, the newspapers tended, with a certain degree of bias, to underline such things as his British relations: his liking for the English way of life owing to his aristocratic origin and education, his mastering of the English language, his books and studies published in English, his travels in the English-speaking world, his friendship with western politicians, scientists, scholars, his pro-British arbitration in the League of Nations concerning the Mosul oil-fields, his outstanding role in promoting the scouting movement of English origin in Hungary, and the like.

At any rate, for the British policy, which tended to comment even on Teleki’s “heart-stroke” in such a way as a sign of Germany’s pressure on Hungary, the new version of his death – suicide – was much more sensational.

The new communiqué of the Hungarian Telegraphic Agency, released at 16.17 p.m., verified the rumours and reported the official medical bulletin on Teleki’s suicide.

Reacting with sympathy to Teleki’s death from the outset, the western press now went far beyond an indulgent “understanding” of Teleki’s policy, and started appreciating Teleki as a genuine tragic hero of the anti-German resistance, a champion of Hungarian freedom and independence, remaining loyal till death. Western newspapers began to enlarge on how many times and in what issues Teleki had refused the German demands; emphasized that his very first deed as prime minister had been to deal the Hungarian national socialists a heavy blow; from his speeches, they also selected and often cited sentences which “might not have been too agreeable to the Germans”. Those elements of his policy which could not or could only hardly be fitted into this picture were most frequently ignored, and his statesmanship and political abilities were praised rather uncritically.

Reports by press correspondents, stating that on April 3, 1941, when Teleki committed suicide, German troops were pressing forward via Budapest toward the Yugoslav border, gave further support to the conviction that Teleki’s suicide had been a deliberate political manifestation. According to the News Chronicle, this excellent and straightforward man laid down his life for focussing the attention of the civilized world on the intolerable situation created by Hitler’s megalomania in Hungary and in South-Eastern Europe. The New York Times, too, looked upon Teleki’s fatal decision as a “well-considered protest” forewarning both the country and the whole world.

By representing and appraising Teleki’s suicide as a perplexing deed of tremendous ethical and political impact, the enemies of Hitler’s Germany wanted to achieve a well-defined objective. Each British and American broadcasting station concluded its lengthy report on Teleki’s death by expressing the hope that the great statesman, who by his political wisdom had been able until then to keep his country out of war, did not commit suicide in vain: his political legacy would not be disreputed by an attack on Yugoslavia. Again, the editorial in the New York Herald Tribune expressed the hope that Teleki’s patriotic self-sacrifice would in-

spire the Hungarians to defend their country's independence at any price. By Teleki's idealized example, they all wanted to encourage the Hungarian nation to protest and resist. With an anti-German tendency, certain newspapers went even further: they tended to deny Teleki's death as suicide by making hints at his having been murdered. According to the Daily Express, Teleki had to die much in the same way as Dollfuss. As is widely known, the above-named Austrian chancellor had been shot dead by Nazi terrorist in his own office.

Despite its shifting the responsibility for Teleki's death in a direct manner on the Germans, the murder-version played only a minor role in the world-press as compared to the much more sensational representation that the Hungarian Prime Minister preferred death by his own hands to giving into the Germans. Understandably enough, what they wanted to propagate was not that leaders resisting the Germans would be put to death – instead they wanted to encourage the Hungarian political leadership to preserve their own free will even at the price of their lives. In this respect, they cherished too much illusion as to the Regent, looking upon Admiral Horthy, too, as a strong, steadfast character, a gentleman like Teleki, who would certainly find a successor worthy of the deceased Prime Minister, capable of preventing or delaying Germany's action against Yugoslavia. They mostly would have put their trust in Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer, Minister of the Interior and senior member of the Cabinet, who was appointed *pro tempore* Prime Minister, but Horthy's choice finally fell on foreign minister László Bárdossy. Bárdossy's appointment as Prime Minister was received by the western press rather sceptically: certain newspapers regarded him as a hearty supporter of the Germans on the basis of a statement he had made on the occasion of his visit to Hitler, while others tended to think him Anglophile, remembering the favourable impressions he had made during the years of his activities as minister in London.

In the western press, however, there were some more sober tones as well, which sought to evaluate Teleki's policy in consideration of its contradictions, and to assess the real significance and expectable results of his final act in a more realistic manner. Thus the Basler Nachrichten admitted that although Teleki was a tragic figure, deserving the sympathy of other countries, he could not be deemed a hero after all. According to the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, no matter how much confidence was placed in his statesmanship and in the country's stability, the Prime Minister's suicide raised serious doubts as to the effectiveness of his policy. The Manchester Guardian qualified as erroneous that part of Teleki's conception that Italy might be a counterpoise to the exaggerated German demands, and also his hope that he might retain his sovereignty in internal affairs at the price of concessions in foreign policy. According to this newspaper, Teleki's suicide was tantamount to saying that the scholarly statesman had come to his wit's end. The Sunday Times warned that Hungary had closer ties to the Axis than that a turn or even a more energetic resistance could be expected in consequence of Teleki's death. In the Sunday Dispatch Mme Tabouis, the famed publicist, added to all this that Teleki's death could not retard the German action. Reports on the increasing numbers of German troops pressing forward, day by day, towards Yugoslavia through Hungarian territory, confirmed The Time in its opinion that it could not have been prevented either by Horthy or by Bárdossy, Teleki's successor. The newspaper held it to be desired that Hungary should at least refrain from getting involved, and should refuse those Yugoslavian territories which had certainly

been offered her as a bait. As reported by the western press, in his address to the House, Prime Minister Churchill announced that Hungary had been promised large territories in exchange for its participation in the aggression against her friendly neighbour with whom she had not long before ceremonially signed a treaty of friendship and non-aggression. Count Teleki killed himself rather than to participate in such a dishonest action. Churchill's announcement was welcomed with applause. He thought Teleki had committed his suicide in protest against the German aggression, and hoped that Hungary would resist both the demands and promises of the Germans. Hinting at a would-be peace conference in his radio talk following Teleki's death, Churchill said – among others – that at the conference table a seat should be left unoccupied for Count Pál Teleki to warn the participants: Hungary had a Prime Minister who had laid down his life for the same justice we, too, fight for.

British politicians failed to recognize – in its reality – the decisive role the revisionist tendencies were playing in the attitude of the Hungarian ruling circles with respect to the Yugoslav situation. At a time when Hitler offered a new opportunity of territorial revision, the western press, warmed up to appreciate Teleki, tended to “understand” rather than to condemn the revisionist policy. For instance, writing about Teleki, *The Times* maintained that with the “Vienna Award” Germany had made Hungary her debtor, but it seemed likely that the more sensible Hungarian aristocrats would have liked another creditor. The Swedish newspaper “*Socialdemokraten*” looked upon Teleki as an incarnation of Hungary's sufferings, in whose soul the same struggle had been going on which characterized Hungary afflicted by Trianon. The newspaper emphasized that he created a scholarly basis for the Hungarian claim to the revision of the Treaty of Trianon, and that he was the designer of all anti-Trianon maps and diagrams, adding that he was also given to live to see the fruits of revision. According to the New York correspondent of the Hungarian Telegraphic Agency, over two hundred American newspapers brought Dorothy Thompson's lengthy article on Teleki which – besides endeavouring to find excuse for the role this incarnation of Hungarian character and honesty had played in regard of the Jewish question – gave an emphatic expression to the unflinching hope that, in spite of the Peace of Trianon, the Hungarians would extend their rule to all what had been theirs, and also expressed that the faith like that of Count Pál Teleki had maintained the country and led it to resurrection. Such articles, whose publication gave evidence of an unparalleled political short-sightedness of the anti-Nazi western press in this respect, were the result of many years of intensive Hungarian revisionist propaganda and of steps the Hungarian political leaders had deliberately taken, by exploiting at every juncture their foreign connections. It did not take more than one or two days that – joining the anti-Yugoslav German aggression and celebrating precisely “the Hungarian resurrection of the Southern Parts” – the Hungarian troops marched into Bácska and Muraköz (ex-Hungarian territories in Yugoslavia) to “annex and re-Magyarize” these territories “to which Hungary has legal claims by thousand-years-old rights”.

Due to Hungary's participation in the anti-Yugoslav German aggression the illusions of the English-speaking world concerning the Hungarian ruling circles faded away. The western press and radio stations sharply condemned the violation of the Hungarian-Yugoslav Treaty of Friendship, the stabbing of Yugoslavia

in the back. In the Hungarian programs of BBC, Professor Macartney himself, who may well be said to have been on friendly terms with the Hungarian ruling circles and who with many of his books and articles widely popularized the Hungarian revisionist endeavours in the west, now severely accused the Hungarian government. Nevertheless, illusions about Teleki continued to be entertained. The BBC still maintained that "Count Pál Teleki, had he been alive, would not have approved of the aggression against Yugoslavia".

Then it was rumoured that the Prime Minister had left suicide notes, whose unknown content might cast light upon the motivations of his fatal deed. It was generally held that the notes would prove Teleki's frantic efforts to resist the Germans, provided they would ever be made public. But even if we admit that Teleki's suicide was really meant to serve as a protest against the German aggression pressing Hungary to violate the treaty and to participate in the anti-Yugoslav war on Germany's side, the question still remains: whom or what was it good for? One eminent member of the Hungarian emigration in America, László Fényes – who had also played a considerable role in the bourgeois democratic revolution of 1918, wrote in *Magyar Fórum*, a Hungarian-language journal in New York, in 1942: "Pál Teleki's death promoted Hitler's plans" and did "not at all" suit "Teleki's intentions that Hungary should not attack Yugoslavia lest the Hungarian nation should be branded as immoral". László Fényes did not entertain illusions about Teleki. In his article, Fényes qualified this characteristic, scholarly-politician figure of the Horthy regime as fascist, and wrote about sins Teleki had committed against the real interests of Hungary, for which the responsibility fell upon his "sensitive soul". Fényes claimed that in the first days of April, 1941, the decisive moment had arrived for Teleki to be of service to his nation: "either if he resigns – with appropriate explanation, or – even more so – if he does not resign but organizes the resistance". But it did not happen so. "Teleki's death was good only for promoting the very thing he had wanted to avoid. Pál Teleki's death permitted the unhindered start of the war against Yugoslavia." Fényes thus summarized his opinion about Teleki's suicide: "Woe to the nation whose leaders will commit suicide when time has arrived for their moral actions!"

Who was, then, Pál Teleki? A resistance fighter or a top political leader, himself guilty of not organizing Hungarian resistance? This question was solved by his self-accusing suicide notes, found among Miklós Horthy's secret papers, which are now included in Hungarian historical sources covering that period. Yet, to understand Teleki's final deed, which – as has been seen – aroused the interest of the whole world at the time, it is necessary to know at least the outline of his career and personality. The reader may thus get an inside view of the problems of that grave period of Hungarian history.

THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CAREER

He was born in Budapest, on November 1, 1879. His father, Count Géza Teleki, a representative of the Liberal Party, Member of Parliament, and – for some time – Minister of the Interior in Kálmán Tisza's government, had estates of 14,000 cadastral acres stretching in the border of Transylvania, historically known as *The Partium*. His mother, Irén Muráti was daughter of a wealthy merchant of Greek origin. Their only child was brought up with solicitous care. His father died in 1913 while his mother in October, 1941, surviving her son. In 1908, Teleki married Countess Johanna Bissingen-Nippenburg, the daughter of a German landowner in the Bánát, who gave birth to two children, a son and a daughter.

Teleki was the offspring of a distinguished historical family whose letters patent of nobility, granted by King Sigismund, dates back to 1409, and the Count's title of the family was earned by Mihály Teleki, the famous governor of Transylvania in 1685. Pál Teleki's policy was often compared to the political line of this particularly esteemed ancestor of the family who had been an outstanding figure of the struggle "between two pagans for one fatherland", i. e. between the Turks and the Germans who had equally menaced Transylvania. In his days, Pál Teleki himself was strongly inclined to apprehend a double – German and Slav – danger. Among the distinguished ancestors, we find art collectors, library founders, writers, poets, scholars, and soldiers, who all inspired their late offspring to pay due reverence to his family's great past. Most outstanding among his famed ancestors were the Chancellor Samuel Teleki, founder of the Marosvásárhely library; József Teleki, historian, the first president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the founder of its library; Sándor Teleki, colonel in the War of Independence in 1848–49, who later joined Garibaldi; a playwright and politician, László Teleki whose suicide in 1861 was referred to by many upon the news of Teleki's similar death; Sámuel Teleki, the famous African explorer, from whose experiences and adventures the young Teleki's interest in geography was said to have originated. His father's – Géza Teleki's – studies in the field of social policy may account for another direction of his manifold interest.

Teleki himself belonged to the Roman Catholic branch of his family which had been religiously divided ever since the Reformation.

He completed his secondary school studies in the Piarist grammar school in Budapest. As regards his interest in sciences and the formation of his scholarly personality, there are many who attach an important role to the influence of Loránd Eötvös, the great physicist, with whom Teleki's parents were on friendly terms.

He attended the Faculty of Law of the Budapest University in 1897–1901, and – as a hobby, as we may today *bona fide* assume – he also took up courses in geog-

raphy. It was in 1899, when he was twenty years old, that his first study, treating the historical periods of explorations in Asia, appeared in print. Published in 1903, his doctoral dissertation "On the question of the formation of the state" was a contribution to political science. To elaborate this topic he had to consider simultaneously the relevant results of history, geography, and ethnography, etc. In the academic year 1901–1902, he took some courses as an auditor at the Agricultural Academy in Magyaróvár, and – in the following academic year – was research fellow under Professor Lajos Lóczy whose influence is generally narrowed down by many to Teleki's personal development as geographer, although the influence was much greater as regards his personality – and his philosophy of life. In his memoirs dated from 1930, Teleki established that Lajos Lóczy "had been the scientist-child of 19th-century materialism, and the dynamism of that age carried him away". Nor could the young Teleki withdraw from the materialist spirit of the age. In his readings – whether on the history of law, philosophy, geography or on the natural sciences – he sought to find ideology as well as scholarly sources of knowledge. Religious outlook could not satisfy him while the development of the natural sciences, particularly that of biology, filled him with hope of understanding all the processes and phenomena of life on the basis of a uniform principle.

His early book reviews show that he attached great expectations to biology not only in exploring the laws of nature but also those of social evolution; he enthusiastically emphasized "the justness of a political and social theory based on biological and anthropological knowledge". It was mainly due to German works reviewed by him that the young Teleki turned his attention to racial theory, immediately discovering its utility "as against the followers of socialist theories". Contrary to Marx, Engels, Bebel, and others, he emphasized that proprietorship was "a natural relationship", and "could not be changed because it was subject to influence of natural instincts and forces". He found this biology-oriented social theory – social Darwinism as it is called – suitable to be contrasted with all such movements of his time which demanded universal political freedom and equality at law: "universal human rights – voiced so noisily nowadays – do not exist, and a proper understanding of human nature will cause the struggle for these rights to give way to a society based on less – but for the talented more appropriate – freedom and on a higher degree of solidarity rather than on equality". In his opinion, "in the course of further development, people will and necessarily must lose much of their freedom", since "many branches of human activities are still at an initial stage, thus e. g. in politics, today every adult man is still regarded as being capable of performing the most difficult functions (elector, juror)". These words clearly show that in the time of struggle for universal suffrage Teleki took a strong stand against the extension of political rights, and deemed it necessary to narrow down the political freedom to a smaller group "mature enough" to deserve it.

We may also witness how racial theory combined with nationalism entered Teleki's mind. Under the influence of his readings, Teleki wrote that phylogeny (genealogy) applied in social science – besides "stimulating and aiding our efforts to improve the race – tends to intensify the feeling of racial solidarity and affinity, thus serving certain patriotic purposes as well". At the same time, his aversion to German racist nationalism, asserting itself to an ever growing extent at that time, is also clearly marked: in connection with L. Woltmann's highly appreciated book he could not help remarking: "From the author's words, one can strongly feel the

German self-assurance, and the tendency to connect practically all remarkable events of world history with Germanic peoples and heroes.”

In 1905; at the age of 26, he also tried the political life. He ranked among the followers of Count Gyula Andrásy, the “dissident”, who then retired from the Liberal Party. Aligned with their political programme, later called Constitution Party Programme, Teleki was elected representative in one of the constituencies in Szatmár county. His election, however, did not go quite smoothly: Teleki’s first mandate was stained with blood of peasants. On this account a representative of Romanian nationality requested him to resign, but Teleki refused to do so, asserting that the gendarmerie had rightfully used arms against a violent group. Anyway, he did not utter a word either in this or in the 1906 Parliamentary Session. In 1910, he did not stand for election but rather engaged in scientific research work and travels abroad.

Besides his travels in North Africa and Sudan in 1907, he toured almost the whole of Europe, doing research work in large libraries in Paris, The Hague, London, Florence, and so forth. Owing to his connections with aristocrats and the scholarly circles, he made many useful contacts with the high society, from which he largely benefited subsequently. In addition to his minor papers appearing in increasing numbers in Hungarian geographical journals from 1906 onwards, his first major work *Atlas a japáni szigetek kartográfiájának történetéhez* (Atlas to the history of the cartography of the Japanese islands) was published in 1909 and earned international recognition. As a first token of international recognition in 1909, the International Geographical Congress in Geneva elected him member of the Committee of Seven on the study of old maps. In 1909–1913, he was research director of the Geographical Institute; in 1910–1923 secretary-general of the Hungarian Geographical Society, and in this capacity in 1911 he appealed to the Hungarian geographers in the matter of Hungary’s cartography; thereafter he came forward with the idea of a geographical museum. He was awarded the Jomard-Prize by the Paris Geographical Society in 1911. Invited by the American Geographical Society in 1912, Teleki, together with Jenő Cholnoky, then professor in Kolozsvár, made a two-month study tour in the United States. The experiences gathered during his tour, inspired him later (in 1922) to bring out one of his most important works: *Amerika gazdasági földrajza* (The economic geography of Amerika). In 1913, he was elected corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, his inaugural lecture, however, was held only in 1917. The lecture was a summary of a major work *A földrajzi gondolat története* (History of the geographical thought) published in the same year.

On the eve of World War I, he became president of the Turanian Society, and wrote the opening address to the first issue of the Society’s journal *Turán*, started in 1913. From this it appeared that the Society and its journal took pattern after the Deutsch Asiatisch Gesellschaft and its journal *Asien*, a tool of Germany’s eastward expansion, and that the Society enjoyed immense support from both state and society when setting it as an objective to enter into competition with the German economic pressure – particularly in the Balkans –, and serving the interests of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the Balkans, to represent Hungarian economic interests more pointedly, first of all, by creating and developing a Balkan-oriented Hungarian export industry. Teleki expected that the Turanian Society – establishing relations with the Turks, Bulgarians and other kindred Tur-

tic peoples – would ensure a leading role for Hungary in the economic field within this family of peoples. To achieve this end, it was necessary “to study these peoples, their customs, languages, history; to study the past and future of their countries; to visit them and to invite them, their young people to come to us; to get acquainted with and appreciate one another; to draw strength from the common memories and relics of the past, as well as from the common interests of the present; making use of our geographical situation, to press forward with our industry”. He hoped that the Turanian Society would permit a host of experts, covering various fields of science and scholarship, “to start out to Asia, to the Balkans, under Hungarian flag”, to acquire scientific information necessary for Hungarian economic progress. It was “a national enrichment built on national science” that he envisaged when hatching this imperialist expansionist plan which, though modelled after the German pattern, was directed against the Germans, and fully imbued with Hungarian nationalism.

In the years of the World War, from 1916 on, the Turanian Society played a really important role as a Hungarian Oriental Cultural Centre. In this re-organized form of the Society, Teleki was one of the vice-presidents only, but had a considerable part in solving certain problems related to the mass education of young people coming from the Balkans into Hungary. All the less was it possible for the Turanian Society to become the supporter of scientific research in the Balkans, a project so much urged on by Teleki. In 1916, therefore, he made a proposal jointly with Jenő Cholnoky to the effect that the Hungarian Geographical Society should set up an Oriental Committee. He also submitted a memorandum to the Balkan and Oriental Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and he personally read the document, proposing a Balkan and Near Eastern Geographical Institute to be organized. In his proposal, the Institute’s task was “to serve Hungary’s great national interest in the East by drawing the attention of the nation’s competent official and economic circles to those areas which – owing to the formation of their respective surface, their natural resources, and to their population – are particularly suitable for Hungarian economic expansion”. This, too, clearly shows how decisively the aspects of economic expansion had effected Teleki’s relationship to the Hungarian Oriental studies. The proposed institute, however, was found unrealizable by the Academy, due to “insufficiency of financial means and shortage of the indispensable intellectual manpower”.

Designing Turanism as a means of economic expansion in the East, Teleki discovered – with dislike – that the movement was becoming a hotbed of fanciful theories concerning the prehistory and origin of Hungarians, and that “the political Turanists would come to believe, without scientific foundations, that the peoples living in the territory stretching from our fatherland and from Lapland to Japan are closely related and have a common ethnic origin”. In his paper *Táj és faj* (Region and race) published in 1917, Teleki had already established that “not all of the peoples that can be or are commonly designated with the adjective “Turanian” are akin in language, and the hypothesis of their origin from a common stock have proved false”. In 1918, Teleki took in his own hand the general editorship of the Society’s journal *Turán*, and in its columns he explained that *Turán* was a geographical concept that covers the desert and steppe regions of Central Asia, the “Lebensraum” of nomadic peoples differing both ethnically and linguistically from one another, and the theatre of their migrations and temporary state forma-

tions. Pointing out that national feeling had always cherished the memory of Hungarian prehistory and origin as a proud heritage, and that in the given time Hungary's economic interest in the East was aroused on sound grounds, Teleki could not approve of the tendency which "sought to find a basis for a political breakthrough in the East, in the community of peoples having a common prehistory with the Hungarians". To wit, since November, 1917, this particular East had become the arena of socialist revolution or come under its influence.

In World War I, Teleki did military service, too, as first lieutenant – with several interruptions – and served as orderly officer in the Serbian and Italian fronts. The long protraction of war gradually turned Teleki's attention to the problems of "social politics", since the increasing devastation of poverty and disease let appear before his eyes the spectre of social movements. As chairman of the Committee on Racial Hygiene, patterned after the German Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene, in August, 1915, during his active service, Teleki initiated that the Committee should submit a memorandum to the government concerning social welfare. It is important to note here that the Society – in addition to various concerns of "racial hygiene" such as the struggle against syphilis, attached more and more importance to "morbus Judaicus" i. e. "the malady of the Judaization of the Hungarian race". This factor must be given due attention from the aspect of the formation of Teleki's ideology.

As to the interpretation of the concept of race, there were differences of opinions within the Society. Some followed the German school of the biological concept of race, while others recognized that in a multi-national Hungary this concept might be disadvantageous for the Hungarians. Teleki was inclined to endorse the latter opinion, himself accepting the concept of historical race, and in the Jewish question, too, he uphold the view of assimilation leading to lasting results. He did not, however, take a stand against the other view, since he thought it desirable that every opinion might be able to come into full display within the Society.

In the 1915 elections, Teleki got a seat in war-time Parliament as representative of the Keszthely constituency. Advocating measures in the field of social policy, Teleki delivered his first speech in Parliament in the spring of 1917. In his statistically well-documented speech, which also gave evidence of his knowledge of the related foreign literature, Teleki touched upon questions of making up for war casualties and of promoting population growth. He proposed rewards and decorations for mothers of many children, and measures for encouraging early marriage. Then he wished that the immigration of Jews from the East should be checked, while emigration to America should be permitted only to the "unwanted elements".

He made his second parliamentary speech in the summer of 1918, already in the capacity of the president of the National Welfare Office for Disabled Servicemen. Besides his parliamentary speech, he also published a booklet "Social politics and welfare organization for the disabled servicemen and their families", giving an account of the state, problems, results, principles, and methods of this social activity. He established that each case should be given separate and careful consideration, primarily supporting those who have many children or who are founding family, because the population's war casualties must be made up for, and priority must be given to the "pure Hungarian", "moral" and, with regard to racial hygiene, "valuable" elements.

Following the victory of the bourgeois democratic revolution of October, 1918, Teleki's principles and methods he had promulgated with so much pride became unmasked. Namely, it turned out that in the Welfare Office, directed by Teleki, some 60,000 documents of welfare cases were left unsettled, some of them for 16 months. From the relief fund of the disabled, Teleki illegally allotted 30,000 crowns to the *Honvéd Ujság* since in the period of the country's military collapse he held it more important to influence adequately the troops through the press than to support the disabled.

In the meanwhile, the critical deterioration of the military situation and the intensification of national and minority movements in the Monarchy set a new task for Teleki. He put his scientific knowledge "into the service of his nation": he made efforts to design an ethnographical map which – after the impending military collapse, and in the serious position of the loser of war – might be serviceable in maintaining the territorial integrity of Hungary against the separatist endeavours of nationalities. This work – from late 1918 to early 1919 – resulted in an ethnographical map, published in 1919 under the title *Magyarország néprajzi térképe a népsűrűség alapján* (Ethnographical map of Hungary according to population density), in which the red colour, representing the Hungarian population, was predominant to such an extent that from that time on it was only referred to as the "red map" (*carte rouge*).

In December, 1918, Teleki became the president of the League of Territorial Defence, an organization seeking to mobilize social forces against the separatist endeavours of nationalities in order to maintain the country's territorial integrity. The manifesto entitled "Appeal of the Hungarian Geographical Society to the world's geographical societies" was his own work. In the first weeks of 1919, Teleki went to Switzerland to make propaganda, on an international scale, for Hungary's territorial integrity. It was during his stay in Switzerland that he received news of the proclamation of the Hungarian Republic of Councils. He hurried to Vienna to contact his predominantly aristocratic friends, among others István Bethlen, who had escaped there from the "Bolshevism" and started organizing the "Anti-Bolshevist Committee" (ABC). Together with them, he made efforts to obtain the support of the Entente Powers – who had been enemies a little before – to overthrow the Hungarian councils' government. When in late May, Count Gyula Károlyi moved his government headquarters from Arad to Szeged, Teleki also joined him, immediately becoming a cabinet member: first he acted as minister of education, then as foreign minister. When on July 12, Dezső P. Ábrahám formed a new government, Teleki again assumed the function of foreign minister. In this capacity, during his repeated consultations in Belgrade, he made efforts to obtain a Serbian support for both the government and the counter-revolutionary activities of the "national army" which was at the time in the process of organization under Horthy's leadership. Besides, in Szeged, too, he was engaged in studies in "the geographical science" serving "the maintenance of the country's territorial integrity": it was also there that he prepared his memorandum bringing forward the hydrographic unity of the Danube Basin and the detrimental consequences of the disruption of this unity as arguments for the preservation of Hungary's territorial integrity. Teleki with his genuinely reactionary way of thinking was one of the most efficient founders of the "Christian and national" ideology, the "Szeged Thought", so called as the counter-revolution was then de-

veloping in that city, even though what he represented was a rather moderate and conservative school of it.

After the overthrow of the Councils' government and the short-lived, ignominious trade unionist Peidl-government, István Friedrich formed a "one-hundred-per-cent" counter-revolutionary government in Budapest. Teleki flew to the capital: as a result of his consultations and talks, the Szeged counter-revolutionary government decided to dissolve and to back Friedrich's government. Horthy's "national army" went over to Transdanubia, and "putting things in order" there, waited its chance to relieve the Romanian occupation army and to enter "the sinful city". To achieve this at an earliest possible date, Teleki kept in touch with the Entente missions in Budapest, and in the best interest of the counter-revolutionary establishment, tried to moderate the white terror of Horthy's crane-feathered troops, although he could "understand" their rage. However, he did not assume ministerial functions either in the Friedrich-government or in the Huszár-government formed after the "national army's" entry in Budapest – he wanted instead to put his scientific erudition in the service of the preparatory works for the Paris peace talks. As head of the scientific department of the office for the preparation of peace negotiations, he displayed feverish activities with his assistants. He produced a wide range of studies, statistical tables, maps, which were later published in four bulky volumes as background material of the Hungarian delegation at the peace conference. As a member of the Hungarian delegation, headed by Count Albert Apponyi, "the fatherland's great old man" as he was called, Teleki furnished new and new "scientific" arguments, ideas, and "defended Hungary's cause with exceptional skill", without any result, though. As against Teleki's "red map", for instance, the Romanians succeeded in "influencing public opinion with the colour effects" of a "counter-map" prepared on the basis of similar considerations and methods.

"At the peace conference we could not achieve much, but we will not renounce our rights; we will do explanatory work, and later on will have the peace revised" – said Teleki as early as December 13, 1919, at a banquet arranged in Szeged in his honour on the occasion that he had accepted candidacy for the Szeged constituency. In this rather select company, Teleki fairly openly explained that the primary task was the restoration and consolidation of the political system rather than the maintenance of the country's territory. "We shall conclude the peace treaty as soon as possible... We must not forget that Bolshevism is not yet completely overcome. Although it is overcome here and there, both home and abroad, still it keeps smouldering, growing apace and haunting. In order to defeat this universal danger home and abroad, it is necessary to achieve a universal peace, because we must join in the extermination of Bolshevism to be carried out on a global scale." At the mass-meeting on the following day, Teleki again made hints at the prospects of the peace treaty, adding that "practically it was no matter how big the amputation would be" since the main point was to restore order. The press must be freed from the destructive elements, teachers must be sorted out relentlessly, and politics must be eliminated from the trade unions. The country had been far too liberal towards the nationalities and Jews. From that time on, "only those who submitted to the requirements of the Christian ideology and national idea would be able to avoid the government's aggressiveness".

Elected as Regent on March 1, 1920, Horthy appointed Teleki for the post of foreign minister in the Simonyi-Semadam government on April 19, 1920. In his speeches in Parliament, Teleki reported on the efforts the Hungarian peace delegation had made against the terms of peace, unacceptable in principle, the signing of which, however, "could not be refused" by the government "under the pressure of the situation". And the signing took place on June 4. In Teleki's opinion, the peace treaty – "acceptable only in the *a priori* assumption of a possibility for revision" – should be received coolly in the belief that the nation would survive it. He also alluded to the government's intention to follow a new line in foreign policy in the interest of revision: he referred to the devil's kitchen of French diplomacy which was hard at work to hatch various plots for an all-embracing European anti-Bolshevist collaboration. It was within the framework of this collaboration that Teleki visualized a reparation of the peace treaty afflicting Hungary. He, thus, advised the Hungarian public opinion not to be sceptical in this particular point as to the leading role of the French, although they had been enemies a short while before. Nor did he tolerate anti-German manifestations: indeed, he proclaimed loyalty to the former world war ally, because Hungary and Germany had a joint interest in revision.

Teleki made use of the mental shock caused by the signing of the peace treaty to call for national unity: "Let there be no parties now. Let there be no classes now, and let there be now no difference between Hungarians." Teleki thought that the main obstacle to any stronger measure to be taken in the interest of the Hungarian population in the disannexed territories was the fact that there were atrocities in Hungary, too. Therefore he spoke up against the most flagrant abuses of the white terror. "Restoration of the internal order is the main prerequisite; therefore every effort should be made to this effect... Once order and western culture have come into full display here, then we shall certainly have the strength necessary to take energetic measures in the outside world as well." However, he continued to deem communism the main danger. He announced that he started negotiations to bring home war prisoners, at the same time took proper measures to prevent "the red intellectual epidemic" from being introduced in the country. "He will see to it – he continued – that the returning war prisoners are individually and mentally transformed, that the soul of these people are thoroughly studied, and that they are placed under further surveillance."

The counter-revolution resulted in the sudden, though temporary, advance of the strata of the gentry, military officers and civil servants who, within the restoration of the pre-revolutionary conditions, tried more energetically to enforce their group interests. Big landowners and capitalists most willingly let them do "the dirty work" of counter-revolutionary terroristic retaliation, but soon realized that time had come again to take the leadership in their own hands, and to set limits to the political ambitions of the above-mentioned social strata. In the background of the political imbalance, secret societies came into being to represent various group interests, imitating the free masonic methods, and even the mysterious ceremonies of the masonic lodge, naturally with an opposite intent. The sudden political advance of the representatives of the gentry, officers and state officials was backed by the *Etelközi Szövetség* (Etelköz Federation), while those belonging to the conservative circles of the ruling classes were massing around the *Egyesült Keresztény Liga* (United Christian League), a formerly secret association, organ-

ized by Károly Wolff, which started functioning publicly only in August, 1920. Teleki belonged to the latter organization which had a smaller membership than the former but its influence was far more greater. The two secret associations created a "brotherly cooperation" in the struggle against communists, Jews, free masons, and liberals, but were all anxious to outdo each other in the struggle for power. Deeming already the consolidation of the situation a necessity, the conservative line wanted to help Count István Bethlen to take over the government, but as a far too prominent representative of this line, he could not gain the support of the Etelköz Federation. The tug-of-war finally resulted in a compromise: on July 19, 1920, Teleki became Prime Minister; as a scholar standing aside from political party struggles he was delusively believed by many "to save Hungary from the abominable dismemberment". Jenő Cholnoky, then a staffer of the press and propaganda section of the ministry of foreign affairs, wrote in the newspapers – to popularize the new Prime Minister – that Teleki was "every inch a Magyar", and that "his aristocratic connections, aristocratic manners, proficiency in languages, tact, as well as his conduct, enabled him to contact the highest circles of the West". Count Teleki – continued Cholnoky – was a veritable gentleman, impressing even Lloyd George and Clemenceau, and his time-honoured historical name would open any door before him.

The new Prime Minister's policy speech was delivered in Parliament on July 22. Using a geological simile, Teleki called 1918–1919 an immense earthquake upsetting the whole Europe, and remarked that "such quake periods were only temporary phenomena, and did not imply that development should not go on in its natural ways". He said that the government would restore "law and order", and would not continue the pre-war political line, because events had hardened the leaders' will and improved their keen insight. He also promised a land-reform to the peasantry which would settle the question "once and for all"; at the same time, he referred to the narrow scope of the reform: "Care must be taken that the proposal will not give rise to demands which cannot be met." He promised that its implementation would be free from party policy and only national interests would be kept in sight. In this respect, he would exempt from the land reform part of the latifundia, qualified as the nation's social backbone, and particularly the medium-sized farms or estates. He also made it clear that he would allot land to reliable elements only, partly in the form of lots for distinguished ex-servicemen, which would become entailed properties. In a demagogical manner, he tried to soothe the working class: "We should not permit the spreading of certain views putting the false complexion on us as if we were opposed to the Hungarian working class at all, as if we were not be looking upon the Hungarian workers as being our own flesh and blood." The workers had been misled, thus they – in their masses – should not be punished but enlightened and led to the right direction. Nevertheless, for the time being – as long as the menace of communism is not eliminated – emergency measures cannot be dispensed with even in respect of the social-democrats: "Everybody should keep it in mind that internationalism is now a sin in Hungary, and he who declares himself an internationalist under the country's present situation, will be dealt with by the country, in the interest of the country's self-preservation, as an offender." The case of the suspended trade unions should be reconsidered: "We welcome any economic organization of the working class, and deem it necessary; they (the trade unions) should be restored as soon as

possible in the function they are qualified for: the work of safeguarding welfare. However, we refuse to give back the trade unions to politics and class struggle." To prevent "abuses", he announced the nationalization of the workers' insurance pay-offices. He also propagated thrift in every respect; announced that the personnel cut in the civil service was inevitable, but promised the control of inflation, guaranteed the supply in kind of officials (food, shoes, clothes, fuel), and the quick building of temporary housing for refugees from occupied territories who then lived in railway trucks. Meant to be a popular action a non-recurrent major tax – "fiscal levy" – imposed on fortunes accumulated during the war-time boom.

A good part of the government programme was concerned with reducing the white terror to institutionalized forms. Teleki qualified the encroachments of the white terror as arbitrary, explained them by the lack of a strong central power, and tried to find excuse for them as having been understandable reactions roused by the red terror. He introduced summary proceedings "to fight down the bolshevik agitation", thus making individual actions "superfluous". "We must not halt at half-measures against those accused of being communist" – he said. He wanted to ensure "quick but adequately thorough" prosecutions, against communists, first of all the so-called commissar trial. As he reported, measures had been taken against the free masons, too, because "they tended to pave the way for the red rule", at the same time, he laid down that no action of the present government would be directed against those humanitarian ideas with which, at the time, free masons started their movement in the West. Then he also mentioned that it would be necessary "to settle in an equitable way by legislation certain consequences in property rights resulting from the actual situation created by the Republic of Councils". Unreliable elements which can be suspected of supporting – even if passively – communism, will be excluded from the national army, and will be organized into separate unarmed battalions of labour service – he stated.

Coming into office, the Teleki government was seemingly very much impressed by two international events: first, the call to boycott the white terror in Hungary, issued by the International Federation of Trade Unions; secondly, "the anti-Bolshevik struggle of the Polish army". Teleki used both events to warn all "endangered" countries of Europe to join forces, forgetting about the wartime hatred, "in order to protect the bourgeois societies in Europe from dangers that everywhere and equally menace them"; to make joint efforts to create a broad basis against communism, bolshevism. He emphasized that it was a common European interest to support the economically, politically, and militarily uniform "Christian and national" Hungary, in the vanguard of this struggle at that time. Criticizing the territorial terms of the Peace Treaty of Trianon, Teleki explicitly stressed that, for want of foresight, it had given a great strategic advantage to Soviet-Russia by weakening Hungary, "this stronghold of European civilization", and that it did so to the detriment of entire Europe. In the bolshevik scheme of world revolution, he emphasized, Hungary was only a minor strategic point since the bolsheviks sought, above all, to overthrow the great European powers. "There are some, namely the French, who have already realized what is at stake" – said Teleki, and declared that Hungary would seek to have its grievances redressed within the framework of a unified European anti-communist policy.

Without going into the details of events that occurred during Teleki's first term as Prime Minister, we only mention his efforts to extradite Béla Kun and other

refugee leaders of the Republic of Council, his repeated pressing through diplomatic channels for the elimination of "the communist fire-trap" in Pécs and Baranya county still Serbian occupation, his endeavours to extend the Regent's authority, to organize "a more effective defence of the political and social system", to introduce corporal punishment, and to pass acts on the introduction of *numerus clausus*, a measure curtailing the rights of Jews. In September, having resigned his function as foreign minister, Teleki concentrated his energy to solve aggravating domestic problems. With regard to the consolidation of the country's internal situation, it was important to pass the bill of ratification of the Peace Treaty, thus settling this hotly debated question to some extent. In his report to his Szeged constituents on October 10, Teleki explained: "I consider the act of ratification nothing but a mere recognition of the fact that we had lost the war. The ratification closes an epoch in which we were the loser, and marks the beginning of a new era in which we shall again appear as a negotiating party." He also tried to convince Parliament that the ratification did not imply "a waiver of rights". On November 3, Parliament carried Margrave György Pallavicini's motion: the national colours should be at half-mast "as long as the empire of the Hungarian Holy Crown is not restored in its integrity". However, bullying armed detachments in the capital tried to take the opportunity of a mass meeting, organized by various political bodies on November 7 with Teleki's consent, to express the unwillingness to acquiesce in Trianon, to raise a bloody turmoil and to prevent ratification. Teleki, thereupon, executed the long-awaited disarmament of the detachments. In this context, there emerged sundry legends about Teleki who – with a walking-stick in his hand – personally called upon the detachments, armed to the teeth, to surrender. In reality, the elimination of detachments was going on under less spectacular circumstances, and not so energetically. Although it turned out that the *Ébredő Magyarok Egyesülete* (Association for Hungarian Revival) was backing the detachments' activity, Teleki kept away from dealing severely with this "patriotic" organization. The enactment of the Trianon Peace Treaty, on November 12, did not go on smoothly, either: Teleki, in order to prove that both the Hungarian peace delegation and himself had done their best, laid an "indictment" against himself. This was dismissed by Parliament, and the whole government, together with Teleki, was ready to accept the responsibility for the Treaty. Teleki offered his and his government's resignation, but the Regent found no reason to accept it.

With his measure against the detachments, Teleki undoubtedly incurred the relentless hatred of the extreme right-wing forces, made implacable by his preventing the adventurous armed action to seize Slovakia in December, 1920, which would have done unwarranted harm to his more far-sighted revisionist policy "conceived in a broad European perspective". But the conservative circles were not satisfied with Teleki, either. For example, Teleki organized a department for social politics within the Prime Minister's Office, but his conception that after what had happened it was impossible to continue the old way of government policy was not endorsed by these circles, since they were very much upset about the land reform bill and the "fiscal levy". Furthermore, when Baron Frigyes Korányi, Teleki's finance minister brought in a bill on setting up a central corporation of banking companies, they succeeded in having it rejected by Parliament. Teleki was very much discouraged by this event, and filed his government's resignation. The Regent, however, commissioned him once again to form a government.

The situation of the second Teleki government, taking up office on December 20, 1920, was further aggravated by the "king problem", a struggle between legitimists and free king electors. Teleki considered the complete elimination of communism and the consolidation of the counter-revolution as a main issue, therefore, he made strenuous efforts to set aside, temporarily though, this problem as one splitting up "national unity". His standpoint, however, met with no understanding, and he was outvoted within the governing party on February 3, 1921. On the following day, the Prime Minister, who had never considered himself a party politician, withdrew from the governing party, followed by forty other personalities.

Adding considerably to Teleki's plight was the fact that in early 1921 strikes broke out among iron-founders and printers. Teleki condemned these strike movements, and took adequate measures to break them and to prevent them from spreading. Fearing a legitimist coup on the one hand, and the revival of communism on the other, Horthy came to distrust Teleki who had become increasingly disappointed anyhow. The sudden, coup-like return of King Károly (Charles) on March 26, put Teleki in a most delicate situation. With utmost respect due to a "crowned sovereign", Teleki tried hard to convince "His Majesty" of how much he had been misled by his councillors as to the timeliness of his return. Referring to serious warnings on the part of the Entente powers and to the country's internal situation, he finally succeeded in persuading the King to leave the country on April 5. This event, however, broke up the government's unity, too, on which Teleki submitted a report to the Regent on April 7. But it was not until April 13 that he resigned cornered in Parliament because on account of his having consented to the publication of the King's announcement in which the King cast light upon the motives of his return, and expressed his insistence on his royal prerogatives.

FROM TRIANON TO THE REVISION

Bethlen, the incoming prime-minister, left all the functions and duties he had performed until then to the withdrawing Teleki. Thus, Teleki became president of the National Bureau of Refugees, an organization engaged in such problems as the accommodation of Russian emigrants, who had escaped from the bolshevik rule, in addition to those masses of population coming from the disannexed territories of former Hungary. He also took over from Bethlen the presidential function in the *Társadalmi Egyesületek Szövetsége* (TESz – Federation of Social Associations). With this, a most important agency of the social organization of the irredentist propaganda fell into his hands. He had earlier been elected president of the *Keresztény Nemzeti Liga* (Christian National League) whose programme was: “struggle against communism, against the Jewish free-masonry, for the creation of a Christian, national Hungary”. He was commissioned by the government to study the problems of national minorities both in Hungary and in the neighbouring states. In June, 1921, he carried on talks with Beneš in Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně). In the Budapest University’s department of economics, which had been organized by him, he took over the chair of Geography, reserved for him from January 1; he was three times elected dean; he also became the leader of the college and university fraternal societies; as curator of the Eötvös College, he was able to control the education of subsequent generations of the Hungarian intellectual élite. In summer, 1922, at the Williamston University in the United States, he delivered eight lectures outlining Hungary’s geographical situation, history, economic development, nationality problem, thus starting the propagation of the Hungarian revisionist claims abroad under the cloak of science. His lectures were later published in an English-language volume, *The Evolution of Hungary*, New York, 1922. In the same year, with Bethlen’s help, he was re-elected member of Parliament with an independent programme.

His relations with Turanism became formal for the most part. After the war, the Hungarian Oriental Cultural Centre split up into three parts: in the Turanian Society, re-organized under Gyula Pekár’s leadership, Teleki became a co-chairman; in the Hungarian Turan Association, founded by Jenő Cholnoky, he did not play any part; but it was under Teleki’s chairmanship that the Kőrösi Csoma Society was formed to serve Hungarian interests in oriental studies. Since this society, too, failed to offer opportunity for doing a large-scale work by combining various forces, and the society’s journal, the *Kőrösi Csoma Archivum* increasingly developed into a philological periodical, Teleki was gradually drawing away. As committee member of the Ethnographical Society from 1920, he strongly supported its activity: “Ethnography – he stated – is an important tool of the nation’s renaissance, by which we mean the revival after the revolutions, and it is a discip-

line of nationalism rather than internationalism". In 1923 he had resigned his post of secretary-general in the Hungarian Geographical Society, and from that time on he acted as vice-chairman. New and new foreign geographical societies honoured him with honorary membership; in 1925, the Section of Natural Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences also elected him honorary member. Teleki became member of the Academy's Department of Philosophy and History as early as 1913, when he was only 34 years old.

One of the most peculiar events in Teleki's career was his becoming the leader of the scouting movement in Hungary. Scouting started in Hungary in 1912, patterned after the movement initiated by Lord Baden-Powell (1908). The scouting was built on a voluntary basis, not meant to be a mass movement but rather an élite organization of young people trained in a strongly national, soldierly, and religious spirit, with due regard to the characteristics of age-groups, and the playful, though earnestly exploited, dispositions of children communities. Teleki was acquainted with scouting through his son, who – like his father at the time – was studying in the Piarist grammar-school in Budapest, and was member of the school's boy-scout troop. Teleki found this way of educating young people exceedingly clever, ingenious and effective, and thought that in the post-revolutionary and Trianon-afflicted Hungary, this movement would be able to supply a healthy new generation for the establishment. He used to say: "Hungary's future is running about in shorts."

Re-organized on September 21, 1919, the Hungarian Boy Scout Association joined the International Boy Scout Association on the occasion of the London Jamboree in 1920. With its organization built up, the Association won over Pál Teleki to assume the top-leadership, the function of Chief Boy Scout. With this, they wanted to acquire a historical name and the moral support of a highly influential personality, and were pleased to see the 42-year-old former prime minister flinging himself wholeheartedly into scouting. In October, 1923, Teleki resigned as Chief Boy Scout to remain honorary Chief Scout. His successor, Count Károly Khuen-Héderváry, however, proved a person of no significance in this respect, while Teleki and scouting was completely intertwined in the public mind. Later he resigned his honorary title, as well, and acted simply as troop officer of the Boy Scout Troop No. 2 (Piarist) of Budapest, but remained, all the time, ordinary member of the National Executive Committee, and he was looked upon by all as "the Hungarian Baden-Powell". With a high degree of devotion, Teleki nursed the international relations of the Hungarian scouting movement as a major possibility of revisionist propaganda. In the years of the "Weimar Republic", he had very close relations with the German scouting movement whose anti-marxist and anti-socialist role was particularly appreciated by him.

The scouting movement played a significant covering role in circumventing those resolutions of the Trianon peace treaty which limited the strength of the armed forces. The army's tents and some other military equipment were saved from confiscation under the pretext of their use for scouting purposes. With the development of training in short-wave transmitting and in sail-planing, Teleki provided for a certain preliminary training of would-be signalmen and pilots within the framework of scouting. In building up civil defence, he also relied on scouting.

In 1924–25, Teleki as geographer was given an important commission by the League of Nations: together with a Swedish and a Belgian expert he was entrusted with the task of examining the frontier debate between Iraq and Turkey concerning the status of the Mosul oil fields. On the results of their field studies, they submitted a report to the League of Nations, in which Teleki recorded a number of scientifically valuable geographical and ethnographical observations. From a Hungarian aspect, the significance of his commission lay in the fact that as a scholar and politician, representing a country that had been loser in the great war, he was the first to be selected for a task by the League of Nations. As Teleki established in his speech in Parliament on October 29, 1925, the League of Nations was an organization unduly promoting the interests of the winning powers. Participation in the League of Nations was important for Hungary from the viewpoint of the country's financial stabilization. On the other hand, Teleki held it as a grievance that in relation to Hungary the League concerned itself mainly with the surveillance of the disarmament implemented and the *status quo* resulting from the peace treaty maintained, and that it showed not too much willingness to scrutinize the complaints of Hungarian minorities in the disannexed territories (supported and even instigated by the Hungarian government). Standing to the losing side, Hungary had no say in the Council of the League, only in the general assembly. The structure of the League, its secretariat's decisive influence on the operation of the whole organization, rejection of issues pertaining to Hungary or – at best – their reference to the council where Hungary had no representative, – all this gave Teleki as an independent member of parliament an opportunity to recommend the consideration of withdrawal from the League. After the Locarno talks, there was a chance that Germany – “Hungary's greatest ally” as Teleki then put it – would join the League of Nations, and would have a seat even in the Council with the right of veto. Teleki attached great expectations to this possibility, although he had doubts about Germany's “being able to be strong enough” in the actual atmosphere of the organization, “and to start actions leading to results in a short time”.

In his opinion, “we must know the fatherland better if we want to be governed in accordance with the standards of our times, and this requirement is all the more imperative if we strive after a territorial reintegration”. In 1924 and 1926, therefore, he obtained proper measures as to the setting up of the Sociographic Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and of the Institute for Political Sciences of the Hungarian Statistical Society. Under Teleki's leadership and by a coordinated division of labour, the two institutes started collecting data “to cast light upon the political and social systems of Hungary and the neighbouring states from various aspects”. The material thus collected was processed and made easily accessible and manageable in the form of a card catalogue. The catalogue, which 10–12 years later contained over 800,000 records, gave information to the government for several decisions. The conception of the revisionist policy was formulated and developed in the mentioned institutes; in them details of various recommendations and projects were elaborated, some of which sooner or later formed the basis of concrete political decisions and diplomatic steps.

Teleki also played an important role in directing and controlling the Hungarian revisionist propaganda abroad. As a “man of European intellectual horizon”, Teleki was very much annoyed at seeing that Hungarian authors tended to discuss

the cause of Hungarian revision from a narrow Hungarian aspect; they were not able to adjust adequately their arguments to the different ways of thinking and viewpoints of foreigners. Therefore, Hungarian revisionist policy rather preferred famed foreign scholars and experts of the minority problem to write about the Hungarian affairs; and Teleki, carefully selecting these experts, supplied them with rich information and source material, on the basis of which they elaborated their articles, books or statements so as to meet his intentions. This proved to be a really effective method, but cost a good deal of money. It also consumed immense amounts of money to finance secretly jurists of international fame who would support – in the League of Nations and in international relations – the cause of indemnification of the Hungarian owners of large estates expropriated in the course of the land reforms in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. In this action, too, it was Teleki who pulled the strings. They sought to raise the funds necessary to these “patriotic” purposes by means of forging French franc notes. On Teleki’s advice, the forging workshop was set up in the State Cartographical Institute. Burst out in December, 1925, the franc forgery scandal created a big stir, and the government found itself in a delicate situation. Through mediators, Bethlen and Teleki managed to persuade the participants in the forgery to hold their tongues about the role of the prime minister and of “the government commissioner appointed to control the national propaganda”; in return, they might expect a mild sentence, exceptional treatment, prompt amnesty, financial compensation, and moral rehabilitation. Thus both Bethlen and Teleki rode out the storm.

Teleki did not run for the parliamentary election of December, 1926; he became member of the Upper House, representing the faculty of economics of the Budapest university. Particularly characteristic among his speeches was his protest, on March 13, 1928, against a bill aiming at the easing of the *Numerus clausus* Act. Teleki stated that the chances of Hungarian youth to find employment were limited by the Jews, and that the nation was in the process of Judaization. He defended the anti-Semitic movement of the Christian students, even though he qualified the brawls as regrettable. In his dispute with Bishop Baltazár, he explained that he was not willing to judge the Jewish problem from the viewpoint of a kind of general human equality. He emphasized: “Here a racial fight is the matter in hand. Jewry is a race.” It is not blood, that is the biological factor, that is decisive for their racial affinity, but the historical factor: the Jews lead a rather exclusive life, the proportion of Christian-Jewish mixed marriages is small; owing to their excessive number in Hungary and to their continuous immigration, the Jews are not able to assimilate. And the background of the Trianon tragedy is that the Hungarians were not able to assimilate the non-Hungarians at the same pace as the foreign settlers had been growing in number after the Turkish devastation. He quoted from one of his lectures, held in Berlin in January, 1926: “The Jewish question is a question of assimilation. For centuries, we have had a nationally thinking and valuably working Jewry in the process of assimilation. Over the past decades, however, the ratio of immigrants from Russia, Romania, and Galicia has multiplied. The unassimilated, unnational or even anti-national Jewry became predominant, first numerically, then in certain professional lines, such as the press and literature. Its flexibly combatant cosmopolitanism has undermined the way of thinking of intellectuals, and started destroying the pillars of the state. And in the

years subsequent to the World War, the cohesive force of the Jewish thought proved to have been stronger than the national thought."

Teleki effectively supported Bethlen's government of a decade; he emphasized that no one could better appreciate Bethlen's results in the field of consolidation than he who had been Bethlen's predecessor as prime minister under exceedingly difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, it appears from his speeches and articles that Teleki was not too much impressed by Bethlen, this great master of political tactics. What Teleki wanted was "re-organization of society"; he preferred exploitation of social resources to an exaggerated reliance on state bureaucracy, the system of state subventions and the excessive centralization which was paralysing municipal autonomy. He condemned wasteful, blustering patriotism which was neither creative nor willing to make sacrifices; he recognized that the political system was under the pressure of unsolved problems, and that reforms were needed in many fields. But he held only conservative-minded reforms possible; his guiding principle was: every institution must be developed along the traditional lines; he wanted to make the casinos (clubs) the forum where the necessary reforms should be discussed. As president of the National Casino, he initiated there an exchange of opinions "about problems affecting, for the time being, the nation and the middle classes". In his opinion, "this would give rise to carefully considered, deeply rooted, veritable reforms – implying reforms that would stem from existing roots, and not reforms that would eradicate everything". His conservatism and adherence to traditions counterposed him to views that proposed simply to adapt external examples: "When we adapt, we shall not imitate in a servile manner, but absorb... It is ourselves that we must show to the foreigners, instead of their poor copies."

He held a peculiarly reactionary view about democracy. "We should free ourselves from the conception, according to which democracy is understood as political democracy" – wrote he. He spoke of "social democracy", meaning that each social class or stratum "should freely live its own way of life" and fulfil its social duties. He took aristocracy under his protection against the repugnance to accept its leading role – "someone's being a count does not necessarily imply one's being a moron", – anyhow, aristocracy "is not brain but a gyroscope in the nation's body"; it is not its duty to lead, its mission is to show the way, and to indicate immediately any possible deviation from the right direction. To this directing role, Teleki thought it necessary that aristocracy should be "rooted in the land", and spoke with nostalgia of those whose – like his – roots were pulled up. His estates were in territories under Romanian rule; the land reform had left him just a few hundreds of yokes around his castle at Pribékfalva where he habitually went for a couple of weeks to rest. Besides his apartment in the city, he also rented a villa on the Szabadsághegy (Liberty Hill). The costs of his living, commensurate to his rank and his role in public life, were covered from his income deriving from his membership in the board of directors of the *Hazai Bank* (National Bank) and the *Pesti Hazai Első Takarékpénztár* (First National Savings Bank of Pest), and also from his chairmanship in two minor companies, although he sometimes complained about the inadequacy of his income.

He was deeply concerned with the generation problems of the counter-revolutionary system. He found it a good thing that "in this country, too, the development and life of the alumni of certain schools tended to become lively...

Generation after generation will bring a fresh common atmosphere. This atmosphere, provided the school is good, is full of national enthusiasm and religious fervour. Thus in the span of subsequent generations, differences between young and old, which are sometimes so detrimental to the whole of society, will be bridged over" . . . In scouting, too, Teleki initiated reforms which would maintain a lively relation between "man-scouts" or "old scouts" and the young scout generations, thus enabling the movement to fulfil evenly its mission – to ferment a more public-spirited society – without any generation conflict.

Ever more frequently did he emphasize that materialism and liberalism, whose dangerous destructive effects had been so markedly manifest in the past revolutions, met with failure, and mankind would try to find something new. To achieve this, he thought it necessary to sharpen "the struggle against the materialistic world outlook which still is predominant in the unenlightened public". He also criticized his own materialistic world concept of his youth; refused to admit equality between the various philosophical trends and ideologies, and the possibility of tolerating their coexistence; he announced that Hungarians are inseparable from religious fervour, an ancient characteristic feature of Hungarians. Teleki's attitude of a "confessor" aroused the interest of the ecclesiastic circles and the political leaders of Catholicism who would have welcomed Teleki to appear as leader of a Catholic political party, "taking in his hand a more ostentatious banner of practising religion". Teleki, however regarded the denominational aspects as harmful in politics, and strictly followed the "Christian and national" line as clearly shown by the fact that he gave up his belonging to no party and joined the governing party in 1926.

The formation of the *Magyar Revizió Ligája* (Hungarian Revisionist League) in 1927 was already based on Teleki's conception that priority must be given to the material and moral support of the society rather than of the state whose overt revisionist policy "would be hindered by a whole range of foreign policy considerations". As he put it: ". . . the substantial, long-lasting contribution of wealthy people and economic enterprises is what really matters. Sponsors, major and minor, and social initiatives are needed here. This is practical nationalism. We must create an active society." Following Teleki's directives, the Revisionist League implemented a widespread propaganda action, both home and abroad. Secretariats were set up in London, Paris, Berlin, and Rome; a journal was published in English, French, German, and Italian; a huge amount of propaganda material was diffused through foreign and domestic press organs or in other forms of publications. The publication *Justice for Hungary*, the poster representing a crucified Hungary, as well as Teleki's "red map" with its 17 editions became known all over the world. Teleki was inexhaustible of ideas when it came to design clever new data collections, cartographic or graphic representations. He carried on the revisionist agitation under a scholarly cloak to overcome aversion to this kind of propaganda. At the same time, he subordinated also scientific projects to the purposes of propaganda. He stated, for instance, that the statistical service cannot be independent of the government: "The statistical office must sometimes carry out tasks which are not initiated by it, and must frequently do works which it perhaps does not think to be well-founded scientifically." He felt necessary a propaganda, well supported by a data basis, capable of giving information even on details, since "the stereotype complaint has nothing but a deterring effect". He would have

been most inclined to examine each student going abroad on a scholarship, each delegate of companies, state and social organizations before they leave "on what every Hungarian is supposed to know of his nation and fatherland".

The slogan of preserving the country's territorial integrity was changed – after Trianon – into one of revision of the peace treaty which, in principle, was made possible by paragraph 19 of the Treaty. Hungarian revisionist endeavours invariably set up a claim to an "integral revision", to the restoration of historical Great-Hungary, even though – for tactical reasons – the problems of those parts of the disannexed territories which had Hungarian majority, were put into prominence. The action of Lord Rothermere, the "British press baron", supporting this narrower revision, met with spectacular success, though it also brought about a stiffened opposition on the part of the neighbouring countries against the revision. From 1928 on, Teleki therefore placed more emphasis on the protection of minorities, urged on setting up a university institute for minority rights, where adequate training might be given to the would-be experts of the minority problem. In the minority problem, he did not apply equal standards. He demanded extensive rights for Hungarian minorities as "forced minorities" in Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia, while in the case of a great part of national minorities in Hungary as "voluntary immigrants", he was not so generous in respect of minority rights.

Besides Rothermere's action, the Szentgotthárd gun-running case, too, made a very bad impression on the League of Nations which insisted upon preserving the *status quo*. Therefore, in summer, 1928, Teleki once more put the question of whether it would be a sound decision if Hungary withdrew from the League of Nations? "We do not identify ourselves with the way of thinking now predominant in the League of Nations" – he stated – "still the withdrawal is not opportune, because it would be a positively valuable step only if by this we were given a free hand"; on the other hand, "our further participation has at least the advantage that we can see what is going on there, even though we are chagrined at it". After all, we do not at all feel to be committed by our membership in the League; "we may deny any paragraph of the Peace Treaty the very moment we feel like doing so"...

Teleki examined the picture of "European politics" in consideration of the strengthening Soviet Union, "this great menace of Europe": "One may feel despairing to see that the European bourgeois society does not have leading statesmen. There are states, two or three states, which have, but Europe has none. Europe has not such statesmen which would be at least able to keep abreast with the world in order to save the bourgeois society and its institutions. Those who oppose the European bourgeois society are advancing at a more rapid pace, while we discredit the system of the European bourgeois society by endless compromises and similar procedures."

"Massing Europe" was a favourite idea of Teleki who always emphasized that the European regions of the Soviet Union were not fitted into his concept of Europe, and made it clear that this massing was aimed at a "defensive" coordination of capitalist countries in Europe against the homeland of Bolshevism. He maintained that in the interest of an anti-Soviet European unity it was necessary to solve those problems which momentarily divided Europe. By this he primarily meant the circumstances created by the Paris peace treaties. Briand's project for

the unification of Europe, based on maintaining the *status quo*, was on this account held unacceptable by Teleki; in the same way, he rejected Hodža's plan which, reviving a former Tardieu-project, wanted to create a closer economic co-operation of the countries of the Danube Basin to serve as a basis for a Danube Confederation. In a series of papers and articles, both home and abroad, Teleki explained that the economic cooperation of the Danubian countries, whose importance was so much underlined by problems emerging in these countries during the great economic crisis, could not be accomplished without a political settlement. However, Teleki had not in mind to achieve this settlement through negotiations with the Danubian countries, but through an "all-European revision" of the actual situation, in the course of which the pressure exerted by the great powers would force the neighbouring countries to meet the demands of the Hungarians. The "European *Lebensraum*" by itself formed a "unity of several *Lebensräume*", and for Europe, it was a "biological necessity" to restore the unity of life in the Carpathian Basin to its former condition, justified by a history of thousand years. Teleki thought that the Hungarian revisionist endeavours would be put in a more favourable light and perspective as part of a joint anti-bolshevik scheme within a European framework. "Revision is not only a Hungarian problem, but is a matter of life or death for the entire Europe! A great and all-embracing revision is needed in which Hungary, too, will have its due." As he emphasized, such a "European revision" cannot go on otherwise than that the individual countries will reconcile themselves to a certain restriction of their sovereignty: In the reconstruction of Europe, we, too, will have to make sacrifices and to give up certain things, even territories, which we have never renounced voluntarily. This is dictated by our sobriety, a characteristic of our ancient political nation. With this, we want to serve the peace, stability, and consolidation of Europe. But this is precisely the price of achieving it. What Teleki was driving at was to make hints at Hungary's willingness to renounce its claim to Burgenland to Germany's advantage, at a time when the Germans expected the "Austrian *Anschluss* from the European revision", and also to Croatia in which Italy was particularly interested, on the condition that Hungary would regain its territory as it had been prior to 1918.

In the years of the great economic crisis, Teleki found that, essentially, an "immense structural change" was taking place: "The crisis, now referred to as economic crisis, is much more than that. We are witnessing a great period of mankind's development to come to an end, and a new one to take shape. The economic crisis forms only the external, apparent manifestations of this immense change in the spiritual, intellectual, ideological, social and financial structures. First of all, the structure and social establishment of the states are in crisis and are changing. In his opinion, a virtually unavoidable process was going on which had started just after the world war and by the early thirties came into full display throughout the world; this process was characterized, among others, by the advance of the idea of collectivity, the state's interfering with economic life, planned economy, and by the prominence of the *ethos* of work. This process manifested itself both in the capitalist countries and in the socialist Soviet Union – though in basically opposite directions. In Teleki's view, Mussolini's fascism on the soil of capitalism, furthermore Salazar's Portugal, Germany's development after Hitler's coming to power, and Roosevelt's New Deal seemed to have proved the "structural change".

This development of capitalist countries – mostly in the direction of fascism – was considered by him as a process discharging immense forces that had been hamstrung by the political and ideological remnants of liberalism. Speaking of his impression and experiences he had gathered during his lecture-tour in Germany in December, 1933, he said: “I have seen in many places what will and faith can achieve. For instance, in public education, several ideas have been realized which were partly overdue, but have not been, until now, permitted to be solved by those systems which originated from the false freedom conception of liberalism and which raised so many difficulties all over Europe. Particularly in the social field, in charity, I saw what it means if a trustful organization, consisting of young people and concentrated on one task, is working, instead of the unceasing talks of committees and councils and endless compromises.” Speaking of the winter relief action (*Winterhilfswerk*), he stated: “The underlying reason for the success and dimensions of this action is that it is backed by the unselfish corporate work of the SA and other organized young people. As I have convinced myself once more here, it is faith itself and dutifulness, which emanate from the performers of the action to the whole public, that explains such successes. The discipline and trust, which characterize such unselfish organizations, can achieve such results as were not even dreamt of by the 19th-century charity of committee and societies. To be sure, the tasks in this field also did increase immensely.”

The Nazi party newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* then wrote about Teleki as follows: “He has a very good name here; he is one of the few statesmen who already showed interest towards us at a time when national socialism had not yet come to power, and who sought to establish relations with the leading personalities of our movement. Count Teleki took interest in the national socialist movement because what he, as leader of the Hungarian youth, found in national socialism was that kind of youth-movement whose mission is to give the renewing world thoughts and leading ideas. In his lecture, Teleki expresses such thoughts which are so close to ours as if this Hungarian statesman were one of us.”

Undoubtedly, in several traits of the German “national renewal” Teleki saw a justification of his own endeavours to create an “active society”, to “solve” the social problems in a more lively and energetic manner, lest they should be used by “unnational” forces for their own purposes. Beyond doubt, he, too, considered Bethlen’s political line inadequate in this respect, and supported Gömbös who became Prime Minister after the provisional government of Count Gyula Károlyi, both as regards the establishment of relations with the Hitlerite Germany and the elaboration of his “national programme”. At the same time, he was among the first to warn against those dangers which were menacing Hungary on the part of Hitler’s Germany. On the one hand, he defended Gömbös against parliamentary attacks pursuant to his tour in Germany; on the other hand, he warned Gömbös not to risk “the solid foundations”, rooted in traditions, of the Hungarian counter-revolutionary order for economic and other advantages expected from closer ties with Germany. In his speech in the Upper House on June 26, 1933, he outlined the problem: “What a political danger is involved in the situation we are in when in our immediate vicinity a strong power is looming up in place of the internal conflict-ridden Germany of the Weimar Republic.” “In this dangerous situation, we must be alert” – said Teleki, and explained Gömbös’s trip by his efforts to “assess this power” on the spot. The information Gömbös has given in this respect

in Parliament was laconic and approved of by Teleki: "I frankly state that I am for secret diplomacy. I am not, have never been, and shall never be for the open treatment of important problems." On his part, he wanted to emphasize that Hungary should not follow the slogans of the German national socialism; she should solve her own problems by herself and according to her own ideology: "It needs no particular explanation what it would involve if we lost in the intellectual field, too, and if our intellectual problems were solved by others for us. We also need a national renewal. It is necessary to join the national forces which reside in people, but beyond this, it is necessary to join and conserve those forces which are inherent in the ancient institutions, because without this we cannot hold out" ... He demanded that "the nation's uniform political force should be maintained for the distant future".

Teleki – though highly appreciated the German results – wanted to carry out the Hungarian "organization of society" "in a manner meeting domestic requirements", and in this tradition-minded "modernization", he invariably wanted to give a leading role to scouting, contrary to the Hitlerite method of eliminating this movement. It was under his leadership that in 1933 the fourth Jamboree was organized at Gödöllő, which he also used – to a large extent – for propagating the Hungarian revisionist endeavours. This event, too, clearly showed Teleki's organizing power; the Jamboree, whose arrangement in Hungary, so important "from the national aspect", could only hardly be attained by Teleki owing to the country's difficult financial situation, brought in 1,600,000 pengős as against the administrative costs of 23,000.

Now it is not merely out of fear of Bolshevism that Teleki pointed to the dangers following from the economic and political disintegration of the geographical unity of the Danube Basin, but he increasingly emphasized the possibility of a German intrusion. During his lecture-tour in Germany in December, 1933, he did not at all conceal his conviction that "the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, a political and economic unity, was an idiotic act, indeed a crime against Europe". Back in Hungary, in the Upper House, he also maintained that "the Monarchy had been a much more favourable solution, after all, than anything which could be given to replace it". Speaking of plans of a Danubian Confederation, he said: "I always have the impression that a vase was dashed to earth and now they try to stick it together. The difference in value is just as great as the difference between an unbroken and a glued vase." As regards Hungary: its dependence on Austria within the Monarchy cannot be compared to the conditions of the independent Hungary after the disintegration of the Monarchy which enwomb a higher degree of dependence than what we have ever been in ... Teleki, naturally again, considered "European revision" as the only possible way out, within which Hungary would have to regain its original territories as prior to 1918, because – so went his arguments – the Central Danube Basin is a geographically homogeneous region, and, according to the lessons of history, can only be filled up politically by one single country, and this country is Hungary. He expected the great powers to initiate a "European revision", accordingly he attached great hopes to the four power pact of Germany, France, Great Britain, and Italy, concluded on Mussolini's advice in July, 1933.

Events, however, took another direction. A great part of Europe was astonished at what was going on in the internal life of Hitler's Germany. Germany's

withdrawal from the League of Nations in October, 1933, was a threatening phenomenon from the viewpoint of European peace and security. Set up in 1922 by the League of Nations and having Hungary, too, as its member, the Commission Internationale de Cooperation Intellectuelle arranged a conference – organized by the section – on “The present and future of European intellect” in Paris in the same month. The conference, establishing that “Europe, which had achieved a great deal in the intellectual field, could not adequately apply its achievements to its political life, and often remained barbarous in the political communication among peoples”, focussed attention on the theme of “saving” European intellect. Joining Bertrand Russel, Paul Valery, Aldous Huxley, Jose Ortega y Gasset and other speakers, Teleki also expounded his – extremely conservative – views which, however, showed his opposition to the statement that Europe “in the social struggle should forge and use more and more barbarous weapons both in the internal politics of nations and in international communication”. He warned against preferring quantity to quality, and against giving priority to mass education over the education of an élite, and explained that the lack of élite education in the political field would create favourable conditions for dictatorship. In the education of élite, Teleki attached particular importance to scouting. In 1934, on the basement of the premises of the National Casino, he set up a Scout Casino under his chairmanship to serve the regular and instructive meetings of scout leaders and “old boy scouts”. In an interview at Christmas, 1934, in the newspaper *Pesti Napló*, he again and again referred to the role the élite played in the British society which he held exemplary: “I wish we were able to introduce the British example in our public life!” As he put it, “the British empire at its height was governed by a generation educated in classical culture at the Oxford and Cambridge universities”; the representatives of this élite – as he was able to observe in British colonies – were conditioned to promote the interests of the British Empire in a uniform way in faraway places and under various conditions. In the above-mentioned interview, he also said: “Several Germans have already asked me when national socialism will arrive here. To this, I have replied that it is superfluous here.”

Teleki, who permanently criticized the League of Nations and repeatedly raised the question of Hungary’s withdrawal from it, now, after Germany’s withdrawal, stated that it was gradually becoming a useful organization. One year later, however, at Christmas, 1935, he made the following statement to the newspaper *Nemzeti Ujság*: “It is very harmful to hope that Europe will admit the injury that had been done to Hungary. If the whole picture of Europe changes, then perhaps justice will prevail. It is possible that revision will arrive sooner this way than on account of the rightfulness of the Hungarian claims.” In other words, Teleki – despite his apprehension of the German danger and his adherence to “European” connections – started to reckon with a forceful changing of the *status quo* by Germany, thus creating more favourable conditions for Hungary’s revisionist aspirations. Even amid cherishing hopes of a Hungarian revision connected with Germany’s “dynamism”, Teleki urged on the cultivating and furthering of intellectual relations with France and Britain. From 1931 to 1938, he was chairman of the editorial board of the French-language Hungarian journal *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie* and acted as chairman of the friendly society of the journal (Société de NRH). He also became committee member of a similar society of the English-language *Hungarian Quarterly*, started in 1936. Both journals were financed by

TÉBE (short for *Takarékpénztárak és Bankok Egyesülete* – Association of Savings-Banks and Banks). Teleki was particularly active in directing and editing the French-language journal, himself contributing several articles and studies to it. In 1937, he participated in the work of establishing an English reading room and club on certain premises of the National Casino with the help of the British Council. Teleki had an important role in inviting French and English guests to Hungary on behalf of the societies organized around the above-mentioned journals, trying thus to win them over to the Hungarian revisionist endeavours. To achieve this end, he did not shrink back from inviting well-known leftist personalities as well. On one occasion, for instance, when the chief of the Foreign Ministry's cultural department raised objection against the invitation of Professor Célestin Bouglé, director of the *École Normale Supérieure*, Teleki announced: "We knew that Bouglé was a leftist, and consequently a free mason, we knew that he was a friend of the Little Entente, but it was precisely for this reason that we invited him." Teleki would have liked to coordinate properly the invitation of foreign guests by various bodies, and wanted to establish an Institute of International Relations after the British pattern (Royal Institute of Foreign Affairs). Deserving special mention among various conferences organized in Hungary by Teleki himself, with the participation of foreign personalities, was that arranged in Budapest in June, 1936, with the consent of the Permanent Committee on Literature and Art of the League of Nations, on "The role of humanism in the cultural education of modern man". Teleki built up friendly relations with all foreign participants in the conference, arranged excursions to the Esztergom excavations where he delivered an interesting lecture on Medieval Hungary. The International Commission of Intellectual Cooperation, working under the aegis of the League of Nations, recompensed Teleki's services of this type by inviting him to fill a place in the Commission, after the authoress Cecil Tormay, leader of the counter-revolutionary women's movement and a member of the Commission had died in 1937. Further, he became member of the European Committee of the Carnegie Foundation in 1938.

In the meanwhile, Teleki performed also his duties as a university professor. As a result of a reorganization in 1934, the Faculty of Economics of the Budapest University, where Teleki acted as professor of geography, was transferred to the József Nádor University of Technology and Economics, where Teleki continued his educational activities. In 1937–1938, he was elected rector of that university. In 1932–1936, he was chairman of the Scholarship Council and, in 1936–1937, of the Council of Public Education. In 1936, he was appointed chairman of the board of trustees of educational and cultural institutions called *Collegium Hungaricum* working abroad. In 1936, he was awarded the Corvin-Chain, the highest decoration for outstanding scientific, literary, and artistic achievement in the counter-revolutionary era. From 1936 on, he was holder of the title "Hungarian Royal Privy Councillor". He was elected honorary doctor of several foreign universities and honorary member of various geographical societies. After Albert Berzeviczy's death in 1936, he was nominated for chairman of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences but he refused to accept this post. In 1934, he published a selection of his lectures and articles, delivered or published home and abroad, serving the cause of the Hungarian revision, under the title *Európáról és Magyarországról* (On Europe and Hungary). His chief geographical work, A

gazdasági élet földrajzi alapjai (The geographical foundations of economy), appeared in 1936, which is considered even by recent marxist geographers as a positive work in several respects: though many of his statements, particularly his geographical determinism and biologism provoke criticism, he still deserves credit because "it was he among the contemporaneous Hungarian geographers who reckoned with the social factors to the relatively largest extent", and explored "the relationship between natural factors and production" in a manner worthy of attention even today. But Teleki – regarded as "the founder of economic geography as a branch of science in Hungary" – deserves particularly severe criticism for his activities in the field of political geography. True to say, he tried to separate his views from the German geo-politics, stating that "the latter served political objectives rather than truth in a scientific sense"; still Teleki's "political geography" performed essentially the same function in the service of the Hungarian revisionistic endeavours.

His statements in the Upper House in the time of Darányi's government showed that his awareness of the German danger grew more acute. "I know that we are united with Germany by bonds of old, time-tested friendship; I also know that in the present, too, we are on friendly terms with Germany, and the German government assured the Hungarian government of Germany's friendly feelings" – said he in his speech on June 24, 1937. At the same time, he declared: "Unfortunately, I see danger from both aspects, national and Christian, to the Hungarian objective." He referred to the fact that the impending German danger had already been pointed out by many, but it was perhaps useful if it (the danger) was asserted by persons who had very close connections, for several years, with Germany and with German leaders. From the national aspect, Teleki pointed out, as dangerous phenomena, the south-east-bound economic expansion of Germany, as well as the Nazi agitation among the German minorities in Hungary which was sponsored by the German Empire, and from the Christian aspect, the "neo-paganism" and "anticlericalism" of the German national socialism which was not in line with the exceedingly important role assigned to religion and church by the counter-revolutionary system in Hungary. Teleki thought the Rome Pact would be instrumental in counter-balancing Germany: "Under the situation, the friendship and relation that binds Italy, Austria, and Hungary is, at any rate, a comforting circumstance." Still he felt that "the danger of the great European problems would continue to exist". As he said: "We are in the danger zone of Europe", therefore the well-known scout greeting "Be prepared!" has its meaning in the foreign policy field, too. In his opinion, "directing and changing things in Europe did not depend on us", therefore, he recommended "the policy of wait and see, and of defence".

In relation to the external danger, he was increasingly worried about the internal danger, namely because the aggravation of the break-up of the political unity of the counter-revolutionary system with rightist movements, oriented towards Fascist dictatorship, especially German national socialism. "Throughout Europe, we see signs of striving after a policy other than one insuring an undisturbed development; we see us surrounded by various systems of dictatorships. Obviously, to see them, to see their successes and to feel their effects do not make the government guidance of Hungarian society easier. What I mean is social guidance, because I refer not so much to the individual facts, measures, laws as to the guidance

of the frame of mind of the whole society.” He stated: “When we deal with our immediate tasks and our tasks in the near future, we must not forget about the distant future, and must take care of the body of nation as an eternal great asset. This can be achieved by education. But what I mean here by education is not only school, but education in everything and for every-body”; i. e. “national education”, and as it appeared before long, it was precisely in this field where Teleki set himself most important personal tasks.

According to his above-cited speech, Teleki found it dangerous from the viewpoint of an extreme rightist breakthrough that the revisionist endeavour could not produce results: “Despite the fact that we have friends, dawn comes only slowly to us, although we have expected short-term historical events. Unfortunately, this is the nature of Hungarians” – said he. Giving the impression, under the pressure of necessity, that our “national goals” – departing from the original objective of restoring the one-time Great-Hungary – would be reduced to regaining only territories with Hungarian majority or to a mere protection of minority, this would give rise to dissatisfaction and massive disappointment in the revision. The thought of revision was an important means to work off social tensions; and “if (society) will not find an impetus in this, it will seek to find impetus in another thing, and this particularly applies to the youth”. Pressing to speed up the pace of revisionist endeavours, Teleki recommended a remedy for the extreme rightist advance which fatally increased the difficulties. To be sure, he declared: “We want to serve and accomplish the revision exclusively by peaceful means”; and called upon the great powers, having decisive influence on the League of Nations, to deal with this problem on their own initiative, – but at the same time, he added: “We must develop our armed forces, we must be prepared, and if it is impossible to find a solution by international agreements and by ways and means as are permitted by documents of the League of Nations, then we must find one by those means which would be used by everybody else in a similar situation.” Those means which Teleki hinted at were Italy’s aggression against Abyssinia in autumn, 1935, and the occupation of Rhineland by Hitler’s Germany in March, 1936.

TELEKI IN THE "DANGER ZONE"

The first shocking event in a series of fatal developments in "Europe's danger zone" was the "*Anschluss*": in March 1938, Germany occupied Austria, thus becoming Hungary's neighbour, and with this the German danger became immediate. In his article in the March 20 issue of the newspaper *Függetlenség*, Teleki tried to calm public opinion by pointing out that this development had been foreseeable, and criticized people who – "partly eager for change, partly trembling – were watching those who would work wonders in three days or those to whom they could sell our honour abroad". He pointed out that against weak-heartedness we must draw strength from Hungary's past of a thousand years; we cannot be pros on either side, but as the title of his article reads: "Let us be Hungarians!" His article, recommending "to learn sobriety from the village people", was taken over by practically the whole Hungarian press.

When Darányi's government, which had been bargaining with the Hungarian nazis, had to resign, Teleki became minister of education in Béla Imrédy's government incoming in May. He accepted the portfolio not because he gave in under some kind of pressure, but because he felt that under the circumstances nothing but his conceptions on national education "was able to save the nation". His first acts as minister of education were related with the Eucharistic Congress, the spectacular and huge international meeting of the Catholics of the world, arranged in Budapest in late May, 1938. In the May 22, 1938, issue of the newspaper *Budapesti Hírlap*, he greeted the Congress with his article *Vágy Isten felé* (Longing for God), stating that our age "was the age of perverted mass movements". Neither communism, nor national socialism was to make us happy. "Affection for God, conforming and returning to Him" constitute the real way of development; "we must serve as the sanctuary lamp; this is why the Holy Communion was ordered for us". Anyway, German Catholics were not permitted by Hitler to participate in the Budapest Eucharistic Congress.

Teleki took over his office as minister of education with the following words: "It was some 17 or 18 years ago that I was a minister. Now the veterans have been called up, and the reason for it is that things must be handled severely and hardly. It is not so much a departmental minister but rather an old Szeged campaigner that has now come here". He made it one of his most important duties to isolate the youth from the influence of extremist agitations, both from the left and the right, – and to expel party politics from schools of any kind or level. At the same time, he emphasized that secondary school students, and particularly university students, were rightly interested in political problems, since "it was their duty to prepare themselves for public life". They, then, should not be isolated from the problems of the time, but "should be educated in a national spirit beyond and

above any party politics". Those who had hoped that Teleki would bring the anti-Semitic fraternities under regulation were gravely disappointed: the new minister of culture referred to the fact that the "*numerus clausus*" act had been enacted under his prime-ministership, and his views had not changed since then. He did not conceal his close ties to these societies: he was professor-chairman of SzEFHE (*Székely Egyetemi és Főiskolai Hallgatók Egyesülete* – Society of Székely University and College Students) for 19 years, besides, as dean – three times – of the Faculty of Economics and as rector of the University of Technology and Economics for one year, he always collaborated with the leaders of the fraternities. He found it sufficient to keep them apart from party politics. He underlined the importance of the cooperation of Christian denominations as exemplified by the joint work of *Americana* and the *Protestant Students' Association*; took a stand for the ecclesiastic schools which strengthened the ties to church and religion. These – in Teleki's view – were not less important than the ties to the state. The more manifold the tie, the safer the political system. Particularly warmly did he speak of scouting, underlining that by its voluntary and élite character it was favourably distinguished from the compulsory *Levente*, a paramilitary youth organization.

In his statements and acts as minister of education, Teleki – in a rather conservative manner – turned a deaf ear to the requirement of developing schools in a practical direction; at the same time, expressing his insistence on schools giving humanistic education, he also put forward several, partly sound, theorems as to the possible one-sidedness of a practice-oriented education. "Not the soul of a *chauffeur* but that of a citizen should prevail" – he said. He expounded numerous remarkable thoughts concerning the interaction of elementary, secondary, and higher education, the relation between school and family, the secondary school final examination, the university entrance examination, the system of examinations, the doctoral degree, the relation between training teachers and researchers, as well as the improvement of foreign language teaching, fellowship and study tours, home and abroad, mass sports, leisure-time activities, and so forth. Naturally, all this was discussed from the viewpoint of the requirements of the counter-revolutionary system. For instance, to raise education to a higher level, he thus argued for classes of small number: "It is in the nation's interest that the less able children should be turned out roughly and unconditionally so that the teacher may fully attend to the able ones." He objected to the ideal that "everyone should be freely admitted to school", because such a freedom "would involve the country in danger". For – he argued – "children come from a too narrow educated stratum to higher schools, and this will bring about a certain intellectual proletariat". It was under German pressure that he took steps to settle the educational problem of national minorities. He tried hard to avoid German influence in this field, was unable to find any solution free from the poorly disguised intent of Magyarization.

One cardinal point of his policy toward the middle-class was that its members should be made acquainted with the Hungarian "popular mind". Frequently and willingly did he mention that they "may learn from the sober, conservative, slow, quiet, unhasty, and philosophical frame of mind of the uneducated peasantry". As he said: "Their natural rural philosophy is more valuable than the undigested knowledge which so often makes the mind of the so-called learned people similar to a haberdashery." He often mentioned that "civilization, with all the movies, newspapers and the like, now scattered like machine-gun fire at the people will

tear apart, fritter away the calm sobriety of people living in tranquillity". To exemplify the inborn intelligence of the village people, Teleki referred to István Nagyatádi Szabó, minister of agriculture in his first government. "He did not learn a lot of things, still was one of the brightest men, having the best judgment, I ever met. He was a cultivated man" – he said. Teleki drew attention to the conservative disposition "moral character" and piety of land-owning peasants, and condemned those village sociographers and sociologists who explored the dreadful plight and tormenting problems of a good part of the peasantry. He had already been experimenting for years with starting a village exploration "on a strictly scientific basis" as against these "dilettante" village sociographers.

Teleki planned to organize village exploration as a complex research project, involving the experts of different branches of science and scholarship, ranging from agro-geologists to folk-musicologists. He wanted to engage some 200 to 300 young experts to make explorations and investigations in 8 to 12 properly selected regions of the country. To direct and coordinate their work, Teleki, in collaboration with ethnographer István Györfly and Zoltán Magyary, professor of administrative sciences, set up the *Magyar Táj-és Népkutató Intézet* (Hungarian Institute for Regional and Ethnographical Studies) in 1938. He was to be the Institute's director. However, owing to his appointment as minister of education, he could only superficially control the work of the Institute; so it happened that the work of the enthusiastic young staff went far beyond Teleki's conservative conception. Between November 21 and December 6, 1938, they organized an exhibition to show the results they had achieved until then, where maps and other graphic representations threw into prominence the stifling role of large estates and the big capital. At the exhibition, some of the captions were also agitating in nature. Therefore, Count László Somssich, president of OMGE (*Országos Magyar Gazdasági Egyesület* – Hungarian National Agricultural Association), on the part of the large estates, and Károly Lamotte, general manager of the *Pesti Magyar Kereskedelmi Bank* (Hungarian Commercial Bank of Pest), on the part of the big capital, filed a protest with Teleki against the tendency of the exhibition. Teleki summoned his pupils, who had arranged the exhibition, and, flying into a rage, he rebuked them for – as he put it – their swerving from the right path of objectivity, involving politics in the subject, thus bringing discredit upon him in the eyes of both himself and others. He declared that they had put the cause of regional and ethnographical studies on the slippery slope of "swindle and humbug", therefore he did not want to see them any more. The exhibition was closed, and the institute itself came to a crisis.

Although Teleki acted as minister of education in Imrédy's government, a good part of his activities was directed to fight out the first success of the revisionist policy. "The Czechoslovak crisis" in May, 1938, already indicated that Hitler's Germany would sooner or later break up the *status quo*, and would afford possibility for a Hungarian revision in Czechoslovakia. At the same time, the conduct of Great Britain and France confirmed Teleki in his opinion that the Hungarian revision cannot rely solely on the Germans, but these great powers should also be won over to this cause. Hitler offered the whole "Upper Northern Hungary and Sub-Carpathia" to the Hungarian government on condition that Hungary would be willing to participate in military operations against Czechoslovakia. Teleki most decidedly refused the offer, and got in touch with Lord Runciman, who was then

studying the Sudeten German question in Czechoslovakia on behalf of the British government, to draw his attention to the situation of the Hungarian minority, which could only be solved by a re-annexation. Teleki wanted to regain the territories with Slovak and Carpatho-Ukrainian majority by a plebiscite to be held under the control of great powers, on the basis of the right of peoples to self-determination. He promised them autonomy in case they voted for their return to Hungary. He made efforts to prepare their decisions to this effect by bribing their politicians and by various means of "secret diplomacy".

In autumn, 1938, Hitler was not yet able to carry out his planned military action against Czechoslovakia; thus he had no choice but to enter into negotiations. On September 29, the Munich Agreement gave Germany parts of Czechoslovakia with Sudeten German population on the ethnic principle; on the same principle, Hungary was enabled to enter into direct negotiations with Czechoslovakia concerning the Hungarian-inhabited territories. Should it so happen that the negotiations proved unsuccessful, the four participating powers, Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy would have the task to make the final decision. On the direct negotiations carried on in Komárom on October 9-13, the Hungarian delegation was led by Teleki and foreign minister Kálmán Kánya. Their inflexible, rigid attitude, however, excluded the possibility of an agreement, and the Hungarian government reported to the Munich powers on the failure of negotiations. Britain and France refused to deal with the matter any longer, thus, finally, on November 2, the Vienna Award of Italy and Germany established the first success of the Hungarian revision.

On November 6, on the ceremonial taking possession of Komárom, Teleki showed up in boy scout uniform, greeting the boy scout team of the Benedictine gymnasium of Komárom, who staged demonstrations for the Hungarian delegation while the negotiations were in progress. The Regent awarded Teleki the Grand Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit for his successes, especially for his having made good use of the results of his revisionist efforts of many years at the negotiations preceding the Vienna Award. These efforts were based on the principles he had laid down during his preparatory works for the peace treaty as early as 1919, further, on data and factual material collected and plans elaborated by the Sociographical Institute and the Institute for Political Sciences. With this, "the ice broke up": the annexation of territories of Hungarian majority met with success; however, Slovaks and Carpathian-Ukrainians had already obtained their own autonomy within Czechoslovakia in early October, thus the Hungarian plan of winning them over by promising autonomy through plebiscite came to a failure. Teleki, however, did not put up with this development, and did his best to extend the Hungarian rule, first of all, towards Carpatho-Ukraine, i. e. to the historical border formed by the Carpathians. In this way, it was thought, Hungary and Poland becoming immediate neighbours would be able to form a Rome-Budapest-Warsaw Axis as a solid counterpoise to the Germans. The Rome-Berlin Axis Powers, however, did not tolerate their award to be ignored, besides, the Germans opposed even the idea of a common Hungarian-Polish border. They made the Hungarian government strongly feel their grudge for its unwillingness to cooperate closely with them while underestimating the territorial gains.

Teleki, who from August, 1938, had been again a member of Parliament as representative of the Tokaj constituency, played an important role in the background

of home affairs in autumn, 1938. He held the view that the government should carry out reforms – of a conservative nature, though – in order to take the wind out of the sails of the ever more intensive extreme rightist movements. He opposed those who were unwilling to admit the necessity of reforms; he supported Imrédy's "reform policy". In the land reform Teleki was more moderate, while in the "Jewish question" he was more radical than Imrédy. From Nagyatádi-Szabó's land reform, implemented during his first prime-ministership, he drew the conclusion that no land should be allotted to those who had no adequate financial means to manage it, and again brought forth "scientific arguments" to justify – from the viewpoint of production – the necessity of maintaining large estates and creating medium-sized estates, the extent of which would vary according to geographical regions. His standpoint in the "Jewish question" was a further development and extension of the principles of Haller's "numerus clausus" act passed also during his first prime-ministership. As against Teleki's conception, who wanted to further curtail the role of Jews in the economic and public life, Imrédy considered Jewry, a nationality which should be given minority rights. Imrédy's conception was meant to make "the separation of Jews from the Hungarian nation's body" more acceptable for the Western powers. Teleki held it intolerable that, on a nationality basis, Jews might have a political party and representation in the Parliament in Hungary when this – in his view – should consistently be denied to the nationalities in general. In the council of ministers, Teleki managed to have Imrédy's conception rejected and to enforce his own. He tried to keep back Imrédy from fulfilling the German demands concerning the German minorities to an undue extent, and made efforts to narrow down the activities of the Volksbund, organized in November, 1938, to those of a cultural association.

He was also at variance with Imrédy who was rather inclined to depart from the traditional methods of governing. Yet Teleki took a strong stand for Imrédy when, having been outvoted in an unparalleled manner in the history of that era, a massive, coup-like withdrawal from the government party created an exceedingly critical situation. It was he who organized a student demonstration for Imrédy, and who recommended Imrédy to the Regent to be appointed Prime Minister once more. Teleki indignantly condemned this "leftist coup" which – under an increasing German pressure and amidst more and more intensive Hungarian (fascist) movements – shattered the government and deprived the governing party of its absolute majority in Parliament. He was afraid that Imrédy's opposition which, massing around Bethlen, aimed at coming to power in the spirit of "the national concentration", would provoke a German intervention resulting in the replacement of the existing political system by a national socialist regime. On this account, – although in principle he disagreed with Imrédy's standpoint that, to push through certain reforms, the government should rely on a movement organized by itself –, he admitted the justification of the so-called *Magyar Élet Mozgalom* (Hungarian Life Movement), labelled by Imrédy's name. His efforts, however, were mainly aimed at organizing new elections to enable the governing party to regain its lost majority. And then Imrédy's above-mentioned movement, which was rightly objectionable from the constitutional point of view would become superfluous and negligible.

The prolongation of Imrédy's prime-ministership was not a token of confidence but the result of necessity. His nervous inconsistency, ill-balanced conceptions,

and mainly his dangerous manoeuvring by which he tried to find support against his opponents with the Germans whom he succeeded to win over by certain gestures and concessions, necessitated his dismissal at the first given chance. For this the easing of the German pressure was needed, which, however, did not take place before February, 1939. Teleki expressed his repugnance to the pretext under which Imrédy was compelled to resign, namely that "he had Jewish blood in his veins". Though Teleki expressed his aversion, it is beyond doubt that for the Germans, urging on the "solution of the Jewish question", it was an irrefutable argument that the Hungarian Prime Minister, who put the Jewish act in issue in Parliament, could not be a Jew.

After Imrédy, the choice fell on Teleki, mainly because he was acceptable for foreign as well as domestic policy, and had a clear conception of what was to be done. Undoubtedly, he was the best qualified statesman of the regime, having great authority both home and abroad, and a certain popularity unsought for. His many-sided expertise, statesmanship, and especially his cool-headed deliberateness seemed to be badly needed. Teleki was fully aware of the difficult situation under which he took over government. He was not striving for power for power's sake, but he thought his qualifications and wide intellectual horizon made him capable of facing the highly intricate problems, of determining a sound line for both foreign and domestic policy, consolidating the results achieved so far and preparing for further steps in revision, keeping off foreign influences, and of developing and establishing a modern Hungarian ideology – based on traditions – in the service of national unity.

The new Prime Minister's "political portray" was presented by Géza Szüllő in the newspaper *Pester Lloyd*. He held it as Teleki's best quality that "he was skilled in balancing"; he underlined that "Teleki did not believe in the totalitarian conception of the state". According to a brochure published to popularize his personality, when he took up his post, he was "unflinching in defending what was essential, and flexible in selecting the means to serve sublime aims". At the same time, it was emphasized that "he had been a racist for thirty years in a *hic et nunc* sense and a nationalist of the noblest kind".

To dispel suspicion on the part of the Germans, Teleki emphasized that neither the composition nor the political line of the government had changed. It was only later, gradually and inconspicuously that Teleki strove to carry out changes in his government, giving ministerial posts to personalities who were not ready for a one-sided orientation, and who "were above any party politics".

To prove the unchanged political line of the government, Teleki, right at the beginning of his term of office made Hungary join the Anti-Comintern Pact, which move had already been promised at the time of the crisis of Imrédy's government. As to this step, Teleki did not feel any anxiety, because he thought he might make anti-communist, anti-Soviet gestures on the side of the Axis Powers, as well: "Europe will accept such things." He did not attach too much importance to the fact that, on announcing Hungary's adherence to the Pact, the Soviet Union had immediately broken off diplomatic relations with Hungary; the more did he take offence at the unwillingness of the signatory powers to demonstrate their solidarity with Hungary, on the ground this would hamper their economic negotiations with the Soviet Union.

Following the signature of the protocol of adhesion, so to speak under its cover, Teleki banned the extreme rightist Hungarian movement and party, creating therewith a big stir both home and abroad. This was preceded by a statement emanating from competent German state and party circles, aimed at allaying fears caused by the overstrained German pressure in the East European countries, according to which Germany did not wish to support movements regarding themselves as national socialist in other countries against their governments. Teleki – even though he doubted the sincerity of such declarations – seized the opportunity to take such measures safely at the given moment. He did not permit any extreme-rightist radicalist movement, except one party: this led to the formation of the *Magyar Nyilaskeresztes Párt* (Hungarian Arrow-Cross Party). He wanted to leave them in legality, thus ensuring a possibility for controlling them; he would have deemed their forcing into illegality impossible and even dangerous with regard to the role of national socialism in Germany.

Teleki's position in the field of domestic policy was consolidated to a large extent by a new revisionist success achieved in March, 1939, for Hungary regained now the whole of Carpatho-Ukraine, realizing the common Hungarian-Polish frontier. In the second wave of the German aggression against Czechoslovakia – while the Germans occupied the Bohemian and Moravian territories establishing there a German protectorate – Hungary, now hardly pressed by the Germans, but with independent military operations and "on the basis of a historical law" annexed Carpatho-Ukraine, a territory having become "no man's land" following the disintegration of the Czechoslovak state. In his article *Magyar feltámadást élünk* (We are living the resurrection of Hungary) in the Eastern issue of the newspaper *Függetlenség*, Teleki greeted the big event, outlined the related tasks to be performed, the enforcement of "St. Stephen's concept" to govern non-Hungarian peoples with a tolerant policy towards nationalities in the Hungarian "empire" now in the process of restoration. At the same time, he virtually acquiesced in Slovakia's becoming an "independent republic", a German satellite.

Thus German "dynamism" had been successfully utilized in the interest of revision; Europe did not protest, and the Soviet protest "did not count". This is the summary of Teleki's standpoint of foreign policy concerning the annexation of the Carpatho-Ukraine. He made a new gesture towards the Axis Powers: on April 11, Hungary announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations, which, too, had been promised during the crisis of Imrédy's government. In a full knowledge of the changes in Teleki's standpoint relative to the League of Nations, this step cannot be considered as having been against his "better judgement". According to the related provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the withdrawal would come into force one year after its official notification. Contrary to unfounded expectations, he pushed through the Jewish act in both houses of Parliament in a most resolute manner, and with these "good scores", he and Csáky went to see Hitler. In the course of negotiations, he averted German demands concerning the economic exploitation and political organization of Carpatho-Ukraine, remarked on phenomena showing that – contrary to promises – extreme rightist movements in Hungary were receiving support from the Germans. At the same time, he promised that during the elections he would deal severely with the left-wing, and would smuggle a few representatives of the Volksbund in Parliament on governing party ticket.

During the preparations for elections, Teleki, who under the effect of the coup in the previous autumn expected danger primarily from the left, put Bethlen and the “dissidents”, from the outset, in such a position that they could not get back to Parliament; at the same time he also took energetic steps to impair the position of the Smallholders’ Party and the Social-Democratic Party. In pursuance of the electoral law passed during Darányi’s government, now the elections had to be carried out by secret ballot. Teleki “constitutionally stuck to it, but did not hide his candle under a bushel: “Only the open ballot suits the straightforward character of the Hungarian people.” He did not realize the actual dimension of the rightist danger before the electoral campaign, when it turned out that the Germans supplied the arrow-cross men, i. e. the Hungarian Nazis, with a considerable amount of money and propaganda material. In his pre-election-speech in Debrecen, he protested against the “rolling Marks”, stating that it was not a Hungarian worth this name who reached his hand for foreign money. In his article in *Nemzeti Ujság* on the day preceding the elections, he already turned primarily against the right-wing. He explained that “the genuine rightist movement is national in character”, and cannot be imported from abroad. The Italian fascism, German national socialism are fitted to “the particular mental constitution and traditions” of the respective nations. As he wrote, “in the same way, nationalist were the Spaniards who had fought the Reds under national and church flags”. He required adherence to the Christian and national emblems of the Hungarian, counter-revolutionary system, and “to the country’s thousand-year-old constitution”.

The Whitsun elections of May 28–29, returned the governing party with an overwhelming majority, so that it became, once more, an invincible power that could not be voted down. The Hungarian Life Movement was no longer needed, it had withered away. The governing party had already assumed the name *Magyar Élet Pártja* (Party of Hungarian Life). The Smallholders’ Party and the Social-Democratic Party came off weaker from the elections, while the extreme rightist parties, having run in a unity of action, advanced to an unexpectedly large extent. On June 1, Teleki evaluated the results of the elections under the title *Magyar út* (The Hungarian road) in the government party newspapers. He declared that the elections resulted in a “desirable shift to the right” in the whole domestic policy; but within this, it was necessary to remain “on the Hungarian road” in sharp contrast to the anti-national ones. To be sure, the arrow-cross men got into Parliament in an unexpectedly large number, but “against the low-spirited, I believe and profess that it is better to discuss openly and clarify the ideas than to behave in an underhand way” – wrote he. Then he explained that the epoch was in a process of fermentation, development could not go on without shocks, larger or smaller; nevertheless he believed that it would lead to a better Hungarian life. Publicly he never admitted that “in his electoral policy, he made a serious mistake”, for which he was blamed by the left-wing. Indeed, he emphasized that had he to begin anew, he would do it again in the same way. However, there are some who maintain that inwardly he pondered a great deal over this problem, and was aware of his responsibility.

In summer, 1939, the Polish crisis grew dangerously acute. Germany was about to launch an attack against a new victim, in which he wanted to make Hungary interested. Teleki – who at the time of the liquidation of Czechoslovakia had been

very cautious in taking measures, preserving the appearance of Hungary's independence of the Germans to enforce revisionist demands – was now most determined to reject any kind of cooperation with the Germans. He flatly refused to accept the offered opportunity for gaining territories in the northern piedmont of the Carpathians: "Hungary does not make claim to territories beyond the Carpathians." Besides, the Poles were Hungary's ally in the action against Czechoslovakia, and the idea of Polish-Hungarian friendship had been vividly alive in both nations. Hungary might not stab Poland in the back: this would be incompatible with Hungary's "national honour". In his letters to Hitler and Mussolini, he made it clear that any military action against Poland on Hungary's part was out of question; in case of a general conflict, the Hungarian government would identify itself with the policy of the Axis Powers; but this could by no means "curtail Hungary's sovereignty" (for example, by "compromising itself with the aggressor" by letting German troops pass through Hungary); and could not raise "difficulties in realizing Hungarian national goals" (i. e. adherence to the Axis policy could not prevent the Hungarian government from trying to take advantage of the conflict to re-annex Transylvania). Personally, Teleki held it untimely to put the Transylvanian revision on the agenda: in the administration of territories that had been re-annexed to Hungary until then, there arose serious problems which induced him to advise the council of ministers on August 17 as follows: "As long as profound changes fail to take place in this field, the country must not strive after re-annexing new territories." What he thought essential was to consolidate conditions in the re-annexed territories, and to keep a tight hand on the extremely chauvinistic attitudes towards the nationalities. Without this, he deemed any open effort to regain new territories hazardous. Yet he gave in to those who were longing for new revisionist successes.

Teleki's letters were received by the German government with such an indignation that they had to be withdrawn. With reference to the pro-Polish atmosphere in Hungary and to the attitude of the Hungarian government, war material supplies were suspended. After the German attack on Poland on September 1, Teleki took emergency measures in an effort to paralyse organizing works on both the left and the right. At the news of the declaration of war on the part of Britain and France, he wanted to declare neutrality, but the Germans kept him back, dropping the hint that with such an act he would have his hands tied in the Romanian question, too. In reality, the Germans were afraid that a Transylvanian conflict between Romania and Hungary would open a new front-line sector in a world war, therefore they prevented Hungary from making any actions for the re-annexation of Transylvania. The German demands for the use of Hungarian railways for military transports were rejected by Teleki. On the other hand, he admitted masses of Polish refugees to the country, and enabled a part of them to go to France to join the Polish Legion then in the process of organization. Fearing a German occupation, Teleki called Hitler a gangster, and made up his mind that – should the Germans invade Hungary – he would instantly go abroad, provided he would still get a plane.

Teleki, who had based his policy on an anti-Soviet European unity, got into an awkward situation. In August, Germany and the Soviet Union concluded a non-aggression pact, and Britain and France became enemies of Germany in September. In the second half of September, the Soviet Union liberated the Ukrai-

nian-inhabited territories of Poland, and the common Polish-Hungarian border, which became a reality only not long before, was replaced in a sector of 150 kilometres by a Hungarian-Soviet border. However, the very correct good neighbour policy of the Soviet Union and the re-establishment of diplomatic relations, which had been broken off in February, were not able to ease Teleki's anxiety about the "red danger". He directed all his efforts to convince the Germans: it is not Britain and France that are the real enemies to be defeated – instead, seeking to reach an agreement with them at the earliest possible date, a united front should be formed against the Soviet Union. To both Germans and their enemies, Teleki tended to justify the Hungarian revisionist efforts to regain Transylvania by pointing out that it was necessary to bring the whole range of the Carpathians under Hungarian rule in the interest of keeping off the bolshevik danger.

The Germans' dissatisfaction with Teleki provided an opportunity, first in autumn, 1939, for his opponents to make an attempt to turn him out of office. The governing party's right-wing began to be organized around Imrédy, and considered him as Teleki's potential successor. The Hungarian military leaders were prompted by the embargo imposed on war material by the Germans to attack Teleki sharply, and since the speeding up of war preparations against Romania required further orders of war supplies, they showed uncommon willingness to meet the German economic demands, which Teleki had received with a high degree of aversion. In order to get the upper hand, Teleki finally gave up resisting, and consented to signing the required economic agreement in exchange for the lifting of the embargo on war material.

In the Christmas number (1939) of the newspaper *Magyarország*, Teleki recommended a "political introspection", extending it to himself as well: "Whether it is ourselves that know better or best the tasks to be done in the interest of the common good?" He felt he could not act otherwise, and nobody else could do better. He felt to be a more severe critic of himself than the outsiders: "The rootlets of the inner sense of responsibility, unless they have decayed in someone, are much more ramified and much deeper than the superficial and sometimes selfish logic of others." He was a responsible leader, though he failed to find ways to the popular masses to rely on; he disapproved that people "unqualified for leadership" might express their opinion and deal with politics: in his opinion, it is like when "the gear, the lever, the driving-rod are all concerned with the possibility of reconstructing the machine, with the transformation of its operation, instead of turning, levering or driving in their proper place".

Teleki, "the father of revision", got more and more involved in a situation when he had, repeatedly, to take a stand against forcing further revision, because he recognized that it would lead to a one-sided commitment to the Germans. "It is not adventure but sobriety, not conquest but maintenance" that must form our political line, which "must be free from hunting for immediate successes and withering laurels, since it would sacrifice the future generation for the present one, and endanger thereby, the whole nation". His revisionist programme "was not the one of the unruly and impatient but one of those reckoning with a century". The revisionist results have to be accepted by the entire Europe, but this is possible only if Hungary will be able to retain its sovereignty. "Our policy must be a European policy, as well" – he wrote on December 31, 1939, in *Függetlenség*. "In the

European war, any new initiative implies a responsibility for the whole, and is – and will be – considered as such in the end."

The Transylvanian revision was made "timely" by the fact that – after liberating the Ukrainian territories in Poland – the Soviet Union might well have been expected to raise the question of Bessarabia, then belonging to Romania, and this moment was held to be opportune by the partisans of the Hungarian revision to enforce the Hungarian claims to Transylvanian territories. Although personally he was convinced that incorporating and consolidating the territories regained until then were preferable to any attempt at a further territorial increase of the country, Teleki adopted the view that, in case of a concession made by the Romanians to the Soviet Union, Hungary could not suffer any discrimination either. A cooperation with the Soviet Union, however, must not be taken into account, because "Europe would never forgive it", and it would be dangerous for Hungary, too. What Teleki had in mind was a diplomatic or perhaps military action, simultaneous with, but independent of the Bessarabian question, though he considered such a military action risky. To carry out an independent action in this line, he wanted to obtain the consent of the Axis Powers, as well as the understanding of the western powers.

Watching, with excited suspicion, the expectable Soviet step against Romania, the German government made preparations in spring, 1940, to occupy the Romanian oil fields, the possession of which was thought necessary for the continuation of the world war. This, again, raised the question of passing through Hungary, to which Teleki had from the outset denied his consent, since it would have demonstrated the loss of Hungary's sovereignty in the eyes of Europe. Reckoning with the possibility of the country's occupation by the Germans or with a new government willing to meet the German demands, Teleki raised funds for an emigrant Hungarian government working abroad: on March 17, 1940, he commissioned János Pelényi, Hungary's minister in Washington, to take over 5 million dollars and to deposit them safely.

Teleki – who, encouraged by the Italians, had refused to permit the transport of German military supplies through Hungary in September, 1939, and who found a basis in Italy's neutrality, at the time of the outbreak of the world war, on which to prevent Hungary from getting involved in the war – under the pretext of a private trip, arrived at Rome on March 23, 1940, without escort, to ask for Italy's help in the present situation, too. According to foreign minister Ciano's diary notes, Teleki "did not conceal his sympathy for the western powers and that he feared a German victory like the plague". Mussolini, however, dashed Teleki's hopes. As Ciano put it down in his diary, at the conference of March 26, "the Duce explained that he would not remain neutral for good, but at a certain moment, he would take sides with Germany. Teleki received this statement with moderate enthusiasm". In his notes for the following day, March 27, Ciano thus wrote: "At luncheon, Teleki unexpectedly asked me: 'Can you play bridge?' 'Why?' 'For the day when we shall be together in the concentration camp in Dachau.' Such is the real state of mind of this man." Ciano's diary, on March 28, continues like this: "A new talk with Teleki. No change. He opens me his anti-German heart. He hopes for Germany's defeat, not for a complete defeat, though, it would involve too strong shocks, but for a defeat to the extent that Germany's teeth and claws would be nicked for a long time".

Teleki's absence in Rome was used by the governing party's right-wing, massed round Imrédy and supported by the arrow-cross movement, to attack him sharply, reproaching him with his not pursuing an unambiguously pro-German policy. On the session of the Council of Ministers on April 11, Csáky demanded that the question of the revisionist claim to Transylvania be raised to the Germans in a resolute manner, while Teleki was of the opinion that "for the time being it was still too early to stake the whole country on Transylvania". The German pressure was increasing: in addition to such grievances as the subsequent expulsions of German citizens, the rejection of the Volksbund's claim to the organization of German minorities with exclusive right, or the activities of the legitimists planning to restore the Hapsburg-Monarchy, the Germans took offence primarily at the government's policy of cultivating relations with France and Great Britain, as was reflected by the press, too. The attitude and tone of the Hungarian press in connection with the German occupation of Denmark and Norway were qualified by the Germans as explicitly hostile. To parry the second attack aimed at his overthrow, Teleki promised Hungary's full solidarity with Germany in its economic warfare with Britain.

On April 8, Teleki sent his confidential follower, Lipót Baranyai, president of the National Bank of Hungary, to Rome to give the Italians the following information: "The German chiefs of staff try to win over the Hungarian chiefs of staff. Under the pretext that Russia will soon march in Bessarabia, Germany plans to occupy the Romanian oil fields, and asks for free passage through Hungary. The price of this permission would be Transylvania." As Ciano recorded in his diary, Baranyai and Villani, the Hungarian ambassador in Rome, "were for the resistance, and hoped for Italy's help". Mussolini, however, proposed the German offer to be accepted. "This answer was neither expected nor hoped for by the Hungarians. They went as far as to ask if they could count on Italy's help in the case of an armed resistance. Mussolini smiled: 'How can you imagine this - he answered - when I am Hitler's ally, and want to remain so?'"

On April 17, Teleki wrote a letter to Hitler asking for a German-Italian-Hungarian negotiation concerning the Balkan problems, "in order that all the three states should be prepared for every emergency, lest they should be taken by surprise or confronted with accomplished facts". He emphasized: "The negotiations ought to cover the subject of those emergencies, too, which cannot be settled through routine diplomatic channels, furthermore, the related important political, economic and traffic questions." Hitler replied only on May 14, pointing out that Germany did not intend to start military actions in the Balkans, and did not consider it timely to discuss the Balkan problems in the proposed form. This letter eased the anxiety caused by a possible German demand for military cooperation against Romania, at the same time, however, it also excluded the feasibility of an independent Hungarian military action aimed at the re-annexation of Transylvania. Teleki's reply of May 20 assured Hitler that Hungary would suspend its independent military action to enforce its territorial claim to Transylvania during the war.

The great western campaign of the Germans was going on in full swing from May 10, 1940. Their subsequent victories appalled Teleki, and encouraged his opponents to carry out their third attack. Under the circumstances, on May 21, Teleki suspended, and on May 25, withdrew the measures he had taken to provide

for the financial basis of an emigrant government. In early June, demanding a more resolute and energetic foreign and domestic policy conforming to the "spirit of the age", Imrédy requested Teleki to resign, who, however, making further important economic concessions on the transportation of mineral oil to support German military operations, succeeded in strengthening his position. The arrow-cross movement offered itself for the Germans by presenting a bill concerning the settling of the nationality questions in Hungary on principle of the minority rights. Until then, the arrow-cross men's demands to grant autonomy for the German minority had been refused by Teleki. Now he was willing to give special rights to the German minority at the expense of the other nationalities. In return, the German government tolerated Teleki's campaign against the arrow-cross men, which very seriously affected them.

The fact that Italy gave up its neutrality and entered into war on Germany's side on June 10, 1940, was an awful blow to Teleki's policy. That very Europe, which he wanted to see united against the Soviet Union, split up into two hostile camps in 1939, and in 1940, got under German influence, except Great Britain. There was hardly any chance to evade the German danger, at the same time, the German successes emboldened the extreme rightist forces in the country. After the fall of Paris, the Hungarian extreme right exulted. In the June 16 issues of newspapers, Teleki called upon the Hungarian society, objecting to the propagation of celebrations, feasts, receptions: "We had better celebrate later, when it behoves all, and when everyone may." Not being able to speak more openly, he tried to present his call as if he had wanted to protest against feast and carousals with respect to the poor. He could not evade making mention in Parliament of the German military successes, but he did it in a way that, in connection with the surrender of Paris, he spoke about the failure of the Paris peace treaties.

In a note of June 26, 1940, the Soviet government requested the Romanian government to cede Bessarabia and North-Bukovina to the Soviet Union, which cession took place a few days later in pursuance of the agreement of June 28. Teleki immediately made it clear that he would not tolerate any discrimination against Hungary: Romania must meet the Hungarian demands on Transylvanian territories. He also notified that he was willing to make some kind of compromise: instead of the whole Transylvania, he would be willing to rest content with North Transylvania and the Székely land, and put a question of the German government, inquiring after Germany's response in case Hungary "would be compelled to intervene by force" in Transylvania. On July 10, in Munich, Hitler, in the presence and with the collaboration of Ciano, prevented the Hungarian government from starting any independent military action which might have led to a major conflict jeopardizing even the Romanian oil fields working for the Germans at that time, — instead he proposed direct bilateral negotiations between Hungary and Romania. These negotiations, held in Turnu-Severin on 16–24 August, were unsuccessful. Teleki announced: "For 21 years, the Hungarian nation cried: 'No, no, never!' Today we may not tell the nation to cry: Yes, yes, forever! Thus, the die is cast." The Hungarian government notified the Germans that it was considering an immediate armed intervention. With this, the Hungarian government succeeded in squeezing out of the Axis Powers — who tried to maintain a standstill in the Balkans at any price — the second Vienna Award of August 30, 1940. The

second decision was, by and large, in conformity with the territorial claims proposed by the Hungarians as a “compromise”.

In the country celebrating the new success of revision, “the father of the revision” was on the brink of despair. The spirit of revision, which he had been nourishing for two decades, passed through the whole country, imbued masses, got the better of any other consideration, and dominated the whole political line. Nobody could desire the revision more than Teleki, but still did not want “revision at any price”. He agreed to a revisionist campaign against Romania since he thought it a nonsense not to take advantage of an opportunity for revision, but what he wanted was an independent action instead of an award, on the ground of which the territories were recovered through Hitler’s help. He also deemed it important that the act of revision should be asked for by Romania rather than by Hungary. The leading military circles, however, did not care much about Teleki’s anxieties. According to the information Henrik Werth, chief of staff, had given to the Germans, it was Hungary that applied for an award. Teleki participated in the conference as an observer only, and as Ciano recorded: “Csáky was sober”, Teleki behaved “inimically”, and shook his head when they put the preliminary question if Hungary was willing to accept unconditionally the award as if he had felt that the “gangsters” had the preparation of a surprise in mind. However, having received the consent of the council of ministers on the phone, Csáky said yes. After the award was pronounced, the anxiety about a possible denial of the Székely land’s re-annexation was eased. “Radiant with joy, the Hungarians were not able to control themselves when looking at the map” – recorded Ciano. The surprise – that had been kept from the Hungarians until then – was the announcement that the powers participating in the award would guarantee Romania’s borders as drawn in Vienna thus, in principle, the Hungarian claim to the whole of Transylvania was frozen. Simultaneously with the signing of the document of the award, Csáky had to sign an agreement which made the Volksbund the exclusive legal representative of the German minority in Hungary, and expressed the freedom of propagating a national socialist Weltanschauung among them, frustrating all the efforts Teleki had made so far.

In early September, in two long letters to Horthy, Teleki cast light upon a whole series of actions which the military leaders, ignoring the government intentions had made; at the same time he proposed to resign and continue as government commissioner of the regained Transylvanian territories. Relying on adverse experiences gathered in the formerly re-annexed territories, he feared, in advance, the brutality of the military administration to be established in Transylvania. The military circles took the standpoint of expelling rather than “nursing” the nationalities; under the pretext of security reasons, they forced Teleki, in early August, to set aside his plan concerning the autonomy of Carpatho-Ukraine, which he had taken much trouble to elaborate as an important model of the policy towards nationalities of the country becoming again a multi-national state as a result of revisionist successes, and which he had submitted to Parliament as a bill. Horthy insisted on Teleki as Prime Minister, and Teleki, in addition, also acted as government commissioner in Transylvania. “Remembering the extraordinary services he had made to the fatherland”, he was awarded the highest decoration, the Grand Cross of the St. Stephen Order.

The fourth major extreme-rightist attack against Teleki took place in autumn, 1940. Imrédy's followers and the arrow-cross men, who detached from the governing party to form an independent extreme rightist party, the *Magyar Megújulás Pártja* (Party of the Hungarian Revival), declared Teleki unfit for representing the Hungarian revisionist interests in relation to Romania. For, following the second Vienna Award, a change took place in the regime in Romania: an authoritarianist system was formed in which the Romanian national socialist Iron Guard became an important factor. Besides establishing the closest possible relations with Nazi Germany, the new Romanian regime openly declared that it would not acquiesce in the loss of Northern Transylvania and the Székelyland. To parry the attack reproaching him with the suppression and persecution of national socialism in Hungary, Teleki had Szálasi – who had been imprisoned since 1938 – released, granting him amnesty, vainly hoping that this would give rise to division rather than unification in the arrow-cross movement; he also abrogated provisions checking the arrow-cross organizatory work, and tried to replace them by secret orders. After several months of silence, he took a stand for the implementation of the agreement on the German nationalities, although the charge that he tried to obstruct it, was true; he admitted the necessity of a third Nazi-type Jewish act which would already be based on the biological-racial concept; set to elaborate a comprehensive reform of the constitution, keeping "the requirement of the *Zeitgeist*" in mind, which amalgamated the representative and corporative systems. He wrote in the *Keleti Újság* (Eastern newspaper) in Kolozsvár as follows: "Hungary will, soberly, with Hungarian self-esteem, but also with Hungarian cleverness, adjust itself to the modern-day development of Europe, to its gradual building up, to the cautious-clever construction of Europe which, under the guidance of the two Axis-Powers, will lead Europe through the present great crisis of mankind, mainly of European mankind, without bloody revolutions and turmoils".

His brochure *Magyarország az új Európában* (Hungary in the new Europe), containing two speeches delivered in December, 1940, in Parliament, also clearly shows that what Teleki propagated was a "cautious-clever" alignment instead of resistance. "Independence in the absolute sense is nowhere in the world, the states may retain independence in the relative sense only" – he said in context of foreign policy. As to the internal order of society, within leadership, he wanted to ensure a major role to competence and authority, he regarded the German pattern of dictatorship as alien to the nation's character, while he found the Italian and mainly the Portuguese model much more instructive. He had Salazar's book on *Peaceful revolution* translated into Hungarian, and had an introduction supplied to it, in which Teleki, figured as the "Hungarian Salazar", as the "nation's priest", who kept the traditional values, but also developed them in a "modern" way, and led the country through a dangerous period of history without revolutionary shocks. Teleki's notion of bourgeois dictatorship was, however, unreal from the outset. Considering the influence of the leading military circles in Hungary, nothing but a military dictatorship could have been possible, and Horthy as "commander-in-chief" actually wielded a good part of the power of this dictatorship.

The country's sovereignty was most conspicuously impaired by the fact that Teleki – who in September, 1939, decidedly rejected the German demands on the transportation of troops through Hungary, and even in spring, 1940, he wanted to

resist similar requests – in autumn, 1940, already permitted the transportation of German troops sent to the Romanian oil fields by rail through Hungary. But he sought to find a formulation to facilitate obscuring the importance of this concession, in an endeavour to prevent its possible unfavourable consequences from coming into play in the field of foreign policy. Therefore he tried to explain his consent by stating that he had not been in the position to deny “the transportation of German troops asked by the Romanians themselves to help them in updating the training of their army”. That Horthy and Teleki, in token of their protest, would go abroad to form an emigrant government – was already out of the question; they found it appropriate to stay: it was in their opinion the only way to protect the Hungarian counter-revolutionary regime at that time from the extreme rightist, national socialist, and later from the leftist, communist danger, which would in all probability arise at the end of the war. It was not in his own personal interest to retain his power, but in the interest of maintaining the regime at any price, that he made increasingly important concessions to the Germans, in order to thwart the attacks of the extreme right. He thought that – owing to Hungary’s geographical situation – the Germans must not be left out of consideration, and even if their temporary predomination would cease as a result of the war – which was in Hungary’s interest – Hungary might still need the German help in the expectable chaos in a post-war Eastern Europe.

Nor was it out of mere necessity that Teleki put off the claim for further territorial revision to the end of the war, but also out of the consideration that then there would be no German predomination to check independent Hungarian actions. At the same time, he might have supposed that Germany would have a certain weight even at the end of the war; therefore he deemed it necessary to obtain Germany’s consent beforehand to independent Hungarian land acquisition during the last phase of the war. It was with this end in view that he was the first to sign Hungary’s joining the Three Power Pact on November 20, which precisely with its reference to a possible participation in the post-war “re-arrangement” of Europe aroused the interest of the Hungarian government. During the negotiations on Hungary’s joining the pact, Teleki strongly emphasized that Hungary had claims to Yugoslavian territories, too. Since, however, he regarded the re-annexation of Southern-Transylvania as a more urgent task, he wanted to ensure a friendly, neutral attitude on the part of Yugoslavia. The chief motivation of the Hungarian-Yugoslav friendship pact, signed on December 12, was to neutralize Yugoslavia for the time of the armed action of Hungary against Romania in Southern Transylvania. Without referring explicitly to territorial problems, the formulation of the pact expressed Teleki’s intention that Hungary and Yugoslavia should settle always through negotiations “the problems they were mutually interested in”. Teleki thought that – resigning claims to Croatia – he would be able to come to an understanding with Yugoslavia concerning certain, comparatively minor territories to be returned to Hungary in a peaceful manner, and thus would be able to bring about a Budapest-Belgrade Axis which would become the nucleus of an intermediate group of powers between Germany and the Soviet Union. With her thousand-year-old traditions and with the experiences of her counter-revolutionary system, “St. Stephen’s Hungary”, having regained its “*Lebensraum*”, would play a leading role in this group.

Strivings for concluding a Hungarian-Yugoslav friendship pact were approved by the Germans since they tended to attain Yugoslavia's adherence to the Three Power Pact through the mediation of Hungary. However, the coup in Belgrade on March 27, 1941, thoroughly upset Teleki's calculations. Events put Yugoslavia into prominence, although he wanted to achieve revision in Romania first, since he thought: as long as Southern Transylvania was not recaptured, the northern parts could not be secured, either. As he had anticipated, Hungarian chauvinism was raging in Northern Transylvania, there were atrocities in quick succession which had a very adverse effect from the viewpoint of further revisions. Teleki, therefore, did not want to proceed before a consolidation was achieved. To Yugoslavia, with which he had far-reaching plans, he solemnly promised friendship and peace in order that he might employ force, independently, however, against Romania. Yet now, the Germans demanded that Hungary should enforce its claim to Yugoslavian territories and that in cooperation with the German troops.

THE FATAL DILEMMA

On March 27, 1941, the news of the anti-German turn-about in Belgrade came upon the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs like a thunderbolt. How will Hitler react to it? He cannot relax his hold on Yugoslavia because this would create an insecure situation in the whole Balkan peninsula. Undoubtedly, the most energetic diplomatic or perhaps military steps can be expected. And with this, Hungary will get into an unenviable predicament. How much do these unexpected events affect Hungary's recent treaty of friendship? What attitude should Hungary show towards Yugoslavia or towards the Germans who may lay certain claims?

All this ought to have been instantly discussed with the Prime Minister. Teleki, however, was out of town; on that day he delivered a speech at Szatmárnémeti. His speech covered a number of subjects, mainly based on the following arguments: Let us make bold to be Hungarians; the Hungarians should not be waiting for the plums to fall into their mouths, but they should primarily trust in themselves; and the country may only achieve lasting results if not relying on foreign assistance. He pointed out that in the previous two years the country had considerably augmented its territory, "having an incredible and amazing luck", almost "far too easily". Now the task is "to fill with soul" "the framework" thus gained, otherwise "what one receives instead of obtaining it oneself is short-lived".

While Teleki was speaking in the country, the atmosphere in the ministry of foreign affairs grew over-excited, since Döme Sztójay, Hungarian ambassador in Berlin, notified that he had been summoned by Hitler at 1 o'clock for a talk of 15 minutes, and having finished it now, he would instantly go home by a special plane, placed at his disposal by Ribbentrop, personally to deliver the Führer's message to Horthy. It was beyond doubt that under the circumstances Teleki should be immediately informed and asked to interrupt his trip in Szatmár county, and to return to the capital without delay.

The Prime Minister's motor train, "Lél", started at about 4 o'clock p.m., and arrived in the evening hours. Sztójay had arrived after 5 p.m., and had already a talk with Foreign Minister Bárdossy, and had waited until Teleki arrived in order to go together to the Regent. There, with an excited enthusiasm, Sztójay reported on his unexpected reception by Hitler. The "leader and Chancellor" told him that he was preparing for an armed action against Yugoslavia, and "under the given circumstances, it would be appropriate, if Hungary, too, were to take certain military measures". And added: "If it comes to a clash, Germany will not place obstacles in the way of the Hungarian revisionist claims." Then he made it clear that "the situation has offered an unparalleled opportunity for achieving a revision for which — otherwise — Hungary ought perhaps to wait for years. But in the

actual situation the revision could be carried out by the armed assistance of Germany". It is no great matter at all: "militarily, Yugoslavia does not pose any problem".

Sztójay, who had already announced to Hitler that "he was convinced that if it came to a clash, Hungary would participate in it", urged Horthy, who became quite enthusiastic over Hitler's message, to accept the offer instantly. However, Teleki – who had announced not long before, in the morning, at Szatmárnémeti that "nothing but our own soul would be able to bring about a further augmentation of the country", and that "the country's augmentation did not consist of territories alone", after all, but "mainly and primarily" of an augmentation of the spiritual resources, i.e. of the indispensable understanding of the fact that the territories re-annexed until then, inhabited for a substantial part by non-Magyar populations, could not be retained and dominated by a wild Hungarian chauvinistic spirit – the same Teleki was now astonished at the unexpected turn of events, which, contrary to what he thought to be the primary task at the given moment, i.e. retention, consolidation, lasting and organic assimilation, put again the new territorial claims into prominence, not giving time even to take breath. But, it was precisely he, who had devoted all his life to the cause of Hungarian revision, that more than anybody else was able to recognize this turn as a new and immense opportunity in the process of the gradual restoration of "St. Stephen's empire". If we hesitate to take over the territories offered, and only the Germans will march in there, can we ever hope them to be returned? On the other hand, if we take them over, in case of an adverse outcome of the war for the Germans, would not these territories, given to us by the Germans, be contested? In the morning, at Szatmárnémeti, he was just explaining that what the nation is given as present cannot be as lasting as what it obtains by itself. Besides, from the new territorial acquisitions we could draw the conclusion that for the present we have to pay dearly in the future: since it makes us committed. Nor would the Germans be willing to give us the rich food reserves of Bácska, the mineral oil fields of Muraköz; and as regards the Bánát, so densely populated by Germans, they would perhaps keep it for themselves. Or they would offer it to the Romanians whose mouth waters for it, anyway. Apart from this, would not a deterioration of the German-Hungarian relationship, or even a certain alienation which the rejection of the offer would involve, put Romania in a more favourable position, considering that Romania does not at all make it a secret that it does not acquiesce in the loss of Northern Transylvania, and is ready at any moment to take advantage of the defencelessness of the new borders and the alarmingly unconsolidated state of territories now under Hungarian rule?

It is impossible not to accept Hitler's offer, though it involves an immense risk. Although the German military plans, and in this context, the details of their demands to be made on Hungary are not known as yet, it is highly probable that they would require permission for free passage for their troops. In the previous autumn, the Hungarian government permitted the transportation of German "training troops" by rail to Romania, and the formal request to what end was made by the Romanian government. That case was not without any danger, either, from the viewpoint of the Hungarian relations to Britain, but the British government still shut its eyes to the "unfriendly act directed against it" – as it was qualified – considering that it was nothing but a mere transportation through the

country, and – “understanding Hungary’s difficult position”. At the same time, the British government made it explicitly known to the Hungarian government that “inasmuch as the Hungarian government would let Great Britain’s enemies have the Country’s territory for use as military base from where to launch attacks on Britain’s allies, then Britain, to its regret, would be obliged to break diplomatic relations with Hungary”. Teleki wanted to avoid this anyhow, since he was convinced that lasting revisionist results could be achieved only if the results were acknowledged by countries outside the sphere of – or even opposing – the Axis Powers. But from the very resolute announcement of the British government in the previous autumn, Teleki knew that, in the case of an active military cooperation with the Germans, the declaration of war might be an impending danger. At the same time, he also knew that the country’s involvement in war at the given moment, when its outcome was unclear, would be extremely risky. Until the last phase of war, the strength must be spared to secure internal order, to retain the new territorial acquisitions, and, at the decisive moment, to re-annex those territories of the one-time Great Hungary which still are under foreign rule.

Despite these grave anxieties and considerations, any refusal of Hitler’s offer seemed to be impossible to Teleki, too, even from the aspect of domestic policy. The government would have to face the revisionist national public opinion, which had been deliberately instigated by the government for two decades, and which, growing bold, ever more impatiently cried now the slogan “All lost parts be returned!” What would be the destiny of not only the government, but of the whole regime, if it turned out that it does not dare to make use of the offer, i.e. to seize the opportunity of regaining territories? The rightist forces, as early as autumn, 1938, had blamed the government for its having achieved only a partial result with the first Vienna Award – owing to its keeping away from a close cooperation with the Germans – although the whole “Northern Hungary and Carpatho-Ukraine” could have been recovered at once. In autumn, 1940, too, on the occasion of the second Vienna Award, they attacked the government, stating that at the cost of a closer adherence to the German empire and a “modernization” after the Nazi pattern, the country might well have deserved the whole Transylvania! If we reject the German offer, Teleki thought, thus upsetting their plans of operations, will they not help the extreme rightist forces, Imrédysts, and arrow-cross men to come to power, who then would unscrupulously and “totally” surrender the country to the Germans?

The four politicians’ discussion over these problems went on late into the night. Sztójay fervently insisted and kept urging on the acceptance. Tormented by his dreadful dilemma, Teleki was pondering over his anguishes aloud. Horthy again and again visualized a new territorial acquisition, and nervously responded to the anxieties; he was in an irritated mood because of the difficulties, obstacles and intricacies. Bárdossy’s thin face turned to and fro, he, too, like Teleki, tried to find a compromise. But in spite of Sztójay’s insistence, they could not come to an agreement as to the reply to be given to Hitler.

In the following morning, they continued the discussion, now with the participation of military leaders. Headed by Henrik Werth, chief of staff, the military leaders took a strong stand for the acceptance of Hitler’s offer. The idea of a close military cooperation with the Germans had long been cherished by them, and now they found that time was ripe for its implementation. The recent territorial acqui-

sitions were – as Teleki himself put it in his speech the day before – too easy. The army – maintained the military leaders – is impatient to recapture, by arms, the lands Hungary had been robbed of which can be stuck to the homeland by blood only. The British should not be feared since they are just bluffing. The outcome of the war has already been decided for the invincible German army. The frontiers of the “New Europe” will be drawn by Hitler; it is he whom the resurrection of Great Hungary depends on. We should not look high and low, we should pursue an unambiguously pro-German policy. We had been allies in World War I, we were struggling against what the humiliating peace treaties imposed on us, and without their help, the dawn of our better future would not have come. It is commanded by our common fate to manifest our loyalty, to give evidence of our unshakeable friendship, especially now, when these “dirty Serbs”, instigated by British and bolshevik agents, committed an infamous treason: they turned against the Three Power Pact which they had signed solemnly only one day ago in Vienna. We cannot maintain friendship with such a “gang”, thus our pact – which was violated by them with their coup in Belgrade – no longer imposes obligations on us. Our Hungarian brothers on the annexed territories have suffered enough under the Yugoslav yoke: now they cry for our help.

Resting his clenched hands on the arm of his seat, Horthy was ever more resolutely looking around the participants. His opinion was written on his face: That’s the Hungarian word! They are speaking after my own heart. This must be done!

Teleki was not surprised that Horthy much more willingly heeded his chief of staff than his Prime Minister: it was a frequent occurrence. After several bitter experiences, Teleki had the impression that the country had, in fact, a double government: a civil leadership represented by his government, and a military one which – in a whole range of crucial problems – differed in opinion from the government’s intentions. On account of this, in the council of ministers, he even broke out into bitter words: “The army cannot be a state within the state!” But whenever he protested, Horthy invariably supported the army. In the previous autumn, it was mainly for this reason that Teleki wanted to resign, but Horthy did not accept it, saying that he trusted nobody else but Teleki, and could not imagine the country’s government to be in better hands than his. In spite of this, everything remained as it had been, and the army’s influence steadily increased under the aegis of Horthy.

In the days of the long, seemingly close and even friendly relations between Teleki and Horthy, the two statesmen fundamentally disagreed on the interpretation of the respective scope of authority of the head of state and the Prime Minister. Teleki more than once found it necessary to emphasize before Horthy – with the greatest respect, though – that it is the Prime Minister who is responsible for the guidance of the country’s foreign and domestic policy, and that the Regent should not interfere with these matters; his person should not be involved in the contingencies of practical politics; the head of state should symbolize the eternal existence of the Hungarian state, independently of political changes. In Horthy’s opinion, however, the only task of the government was to implement the Regent, a decisions by its own measures.

These decisions of the Regent were particularly dangerous in the field of foreign policy. Teleki was well aware of how little sense Horthy had to consider the problems of foreign policy coolly and many-sidedly, to what a great extent he

was conditioned by his service in the Navy of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and by his experiences during the First World War, how the recent German military successes effected him, how much he was impressed by Hitler's method of having taken the top military leadership in his hands. He also saw that Horthy was more and more inclined to a one-sided affiliation, and that the military circles ever more effectively encouraged him in this respect. Horthy, in turn, felt that it was not the government but the military leaders that really supported him.

Horthy regarded Hitler's demand on Hungary's participation in the military action against Yugoslavia as an issue, in the discussion of which he would give his Prime Minister and foreign minister a hearing, but it was only he, the "Commander-in-Chief", who was entitled to make a decision. The unambiguous stand the military leaders had taken confirmed him in his determination: he would send Hitler an answer containing his consent in an enthusiastic tone. Teleki and Bárdossy, however, underlined the necessity of a formulation which, later – in full knowledge of the German demands – would provide opportunity to evade certain, possibly dangerous obligations. This, again, gave rise to a dispute, because Horthy's draft-reply started with the sentence: "I feel to be united with Germany for life and death." It was only with difficulties that they succeeded in persuading Horthy to soft-pedal his text by inserting that the Hungarian nation will support the German empire "in accordance with its power", by leaving out a few terms which would cause difficulties later, and by including a reference to Hungary's being compelled to take into account the Soviet and Romanian danger, too. The letter admitted that Hungary "kept up" claims to Yugoslavian territories, and that those claims "awaited enforcement", and expressed "the Regents satisfaction" with Hitler's proposal concerning the establishment of relations between the two general staffs.

Sztójay's plane had been already on the way to Berlin, when the council of ministers gathered in the afternoon. On the session, Foreign Minister Bárdossy informed the ministers about the Yugoslavian turn on the preceding day which "brought to power Hungary's old enemies, the followers of the policy that had led to the World War of 1914". He also pointed out that the Croatian separatist endeavours were expected to be more intensive, and "therefore a process of disintegration like in the case of Czechoslovakia was to be reckoned with". He reported that in connection with the developments in Yugoslavia, "the German government would have to make important decisions in the near future", then reported on Hitler's message and on the Regent's reply. The minutes of the council of ministers do not make mention of the discussion over the foreign minister's report, but it is known from the diary of Hóman, minister of education, that nobody raised objection to it; while several ministers – among others, Hóman himself – argued that Hungary should take an active part in the action, because "we would have much less moral foundations for the further retainment of territories regained without employing our own force than in the opposite case". We also know it from Hóman's diary that at the end of the ministerial meeting of March 28, Teleki announced that he would hand in his resignation to the Regent on the following day. Although he agreed with a joint action with the Germans, yet he was afraid that he would not be able to safeguard the Hungarian interests with adequate power in this respect. Among the reasons for his resignation, Hóman wrote, he strongly emphasized the lack of understanding of his policy on the part of the

government and the administrative authorities, and further "the continuous mis-interpretation and sabotage" of his measures in the field of national minority policy which were of vital importance from the aspect of retaining the newly acquired lands. Then Bárdossy and all the other ministers started asking Teleki to abandon his plan, emphasizing as a most important argument that "a cabinet crisis would involve serious consequences both in foreign policy and domestic politics as a result of the related guesswork on the part of public opinion and propaganda". According to Hóman, "after a longer persuasion, the Prime Minister admitted that it would be wrong to resign", and the ministers left the room with the impression that Teleki would undertake to continue to govern. "Our military action against Yugoslavia was definitely and irrevocably decided on March 28" – as Bárdossy and Werth unanimously reported on this session of the council of ministers which was presided by Teleki for the last time.

Hitler took over Horthy's letter from the returning Hungarian ambassador at 7.30 p.m. He was satisfied with the reply, and expressed his hope that Hungary would be content with the major revision resulting from the elimination of the Yugoslavian conflict. It was not difficult from him to foresee that the Hungarian government – even though it would perhaps play for safety – would not refuse this enticing offer but would give its consent to establish contact between the general staffs; therefore, on his order, Colonel Kinzel, chief of the oriental department of the German general staff, had already carried on preliminary negotiations with the Hungarian chief of staff in Budapest, in the course of the day. He had taken general Halder's letter with him, demanding the mobilization of five army corps, two motorized and two cavalry brigades from Hungary. Negotiations on the merits were fixed for March 30.

The following days were nerve-racking for Teleki. He tried what was impossible and what he himself could not believe, namely to find a kind of solution that would permit the armed occupation of the territories offered, without, however, breaking off relations with Great Britain and getting involved in the war. In other words, it should be brought home to the world that the government could not deny the passage of German troops through Hungary without running the risk of the country's occupation. Hungary, too, was mobilizing, without, however, the intent of aggression, but in order to be prepared for every emergency, thus, e.g., to be ready to protect Hungarian minorities in Yugoslavia from possible atrocities. The mobilization, therefore, could not be performed in such dimensions as demanded by the Germans. The Hungarian army might join in the action only in the phase when Yugoslavia had already disintegrated owing to the German attack and the proclamation of the independent Croatia, bringing about a vacuum in the state power in the ex-Hungarian territories. The Hungarian troops participating in the action should not become subordinated to the Germans. Teleki held these stipulations indispensable in order that the cooperation in the action might be disguised. He tried to convince Horthy, the military leaders, and the ministers, of all this. By Bárdossy's help, through diplomatic representatives, Teleki started to send out feelers to see if his misleading manoeuvres had any chance of saving – as he put it – "the nation's honour".

With his own hand, he wrote a long secret letter to György Barcza, Hungarian minister in London, giving him instructions how to represent "the Hungarian cause" before the British government. He emphasized: Hungary seems to have

completely surrendered to the Germans, but this is only the appearance, in reality, (Hungary) "has never given in as regards the essentials". Then he listed, in 16 items, the political and economic demands he had rejected, announcing that he was determined to defend the country's sovereignty. In his memoirs, Barcza thus wrote: "In his letter, then, Teleki confidentially complained that the permanent struggle against the German demands would gradually ruin his nerves, but as long as he lives, he would never give up the country's rights and would not submit himself to the Germans slavishly."

On March 30, General Paulus, deputy chief of staff of the German army, continued his negotiations with Henrik Werth, his Hungarian colleague, and Colonel Dezső László, chief of the operational staff. Owing to the excessive "attentiveness" of the Hungarian negotiations, the Germans easily came to an agreement with them on all the essential questions of a military cooperation, but this agreement paid no regard at all to Teleki's important stipulations. It insisted on a large-scale mobilization, thus making it impossible to make "the unprovoked offensive preparations" appear as defensive measures. The dimensions of mobilization, at the time of important agricultural works in springtime, when floods considerably deteriorated the harvest prospects, threatened with alarming consequences anyhow. It was one important stipulation of Teleki that the Hungarian military operations should by no means extend to Croatian territories, since in appearance, the Hungarian army had nothing to do with the Croatian-case, and its marching in Yugoslavian territory was to serve the defence of Hungarians there. Similarly, it may not go beyond the one-time border of Hungary, i. e. to Serbian territory. In spite of this, the agreement between Paulus and Werth reckoned with Hungarian military operations in Croatian, and if need so arose partly in Serbian territories. The fact that, by virtue of the agreement, the German headquarters delegated an operational liaison staff to the Hungarian army, made it impossible to keep up even the appearance of independent Hungarian military actions. Erdmannsdorff, German minister in Budapest, is said to have tried to put pressure on Teleki by announcing that Germany had asked Romania, too, for military help, and it remained to be seen who would give more: this would finally decide the fate of Transylvania.

Werth submitted the agreement of the general staffs to the Supreme Council of Defence on April 1. Here Teleki, seconded by Bárdossy, succeeded in attaining a certain compromise: Throughout the process of cooperation, Horthy's role as commander-in-chief of the Hungarian troops will be strongly underlined; preparations will be made for mobilization of the required dimension, but the issue of the order of mobilization, the right of which lies with Horthy, will depend on further developments. The start of Hungarian military operations were timed after the proclamation of Croatia's independence, but the government wished to retain its complete and immediate freedom of action "in the case of an attack or provocation which implies the possibility of the persecution of Hungarians living in the annexed territories" on the part of Yugoslavia. The Hungarian army should not enter either Croatian or Serbian territories. But all this still needs to be discussed with the Germans.

On this occasion, too, Teleki was the last to speak, and – although he expressed his anxiety about the exceedingly delicate and dangerous implications of this un-

dertaking – from him, too, as Hóman recorded, “we heard the convincing motivation of why we must do so as to meet the points laid down in the decision”.

After the session of the Supreme Council of Defence, Teleki felt he had succeeded, to some extent, in casting light upon the necessity of being very cautious in order to avoid the dangerous consequences. In his heart he remained extremely alarmed, but externally, he tried to show self-possession. He wanted to seem self-confident so that he might set the people’s mind at ease. On April 2, his whole day was devoted to behaving so that he would seem “radiant with quietitude”. At noontime he appeared in Parliament where he gaily chatted with the members of parliament. In the afternoon he – as so often at other times – visited his wife in the János Sanatorium, then participated – as every year – in the pre-Easter religious exercises for boy-scout officers in the chapel of St. Stephen’s Basilica. There he listened to the sermon, went to confession exemplarily, like the others, and promised to partake of the common Holy Communion the following morning.

On this day, he started to write autograph letters: one to his son Géza, who was a university professor in Kolozsvár, confidentially informing him about the developments of the previous few days, the other – which remained unfinished – with a similar content was meant for his personal friend, Gábor Apor, Hungarian minister in Vatican City, asking him to advise the Pope of its content as far as possible. “This Yugo’ affair has put us into a most dreadful situation”, he wrote in his letter. He described the Regent’s enthusiasm on receiving Hitler’s message delivered by “that Nazi Sztójay”. Horthy wanted to stand by the Germans with heart and soul, but he and Bárdossy made strenuous efforts to convince him: “If we attacked the Yugoslavs, we would lose our face before the world.” He outlined the resolutions adopted by the Supreme Council of Defence, and also his efforts to put limits on the mobilization. “But my position is a very difficult one, because the Regent, the army, half of the government, and the majority of Parliament are all against me.”

However, it soon turned out that all his efforts – to manage that Hungary’s joining the action against Yugoslavia could not be qualified as a joint attack with the Germans but as one of defence of Hungarians endangered by the German attack in Yugoslav territories, and as an act of re-annexation, on the basis of thousand-year-old historical rights, of territories which now became no man’s land from the aspect of suzerainty – were doomed to failure. Coming from St. Stephen’s Basilica, he called on foreign minister Bárdossy, in whose office a telegram from György Barcza, minister in London, had been awaiting him. Having fulfilled the foreign minister’s request to make inquiries, Barcza confirmed that in case of letting the Germans have the country’s territory for use as military base, the break-off of diplomatic relations, and in case of joining in the German attack, a declaration of war should be reckoned with. As he underlined, “the strongly emphasized specific Hungarian reasons and motives will hardly be understood here, and if either of the mentioned exigencies arise, the whole Anglo-American world will charge us with breach of treaty and possibly with attacking our new friends from the rear”.

Having read the telegram, Teleki desperately walked to and fro in the room: “I knew that it would result in this! I have done all I could! I cannot do any more!” Bárdossy tried to calm him: maybe this is nothing but Barcza’s private opinion, or perhaps mere diplomatic threats. But Teleki’s depression was increasing. He

asked for a copy of the telegram to produce it to Horthy the following day, and at about nine o'clock at night he left the building of the foreign ministry.

Returning to his office, Teleki received, in all likelihood, several pieces of information of fatal significance: it must have been reported to him that German troops had already started to press forward through Hungary. Another report may have been on anti-Hungarian atrocities in Yugoslavia, from which he might concluded that the Hungarian military action "to defend them" would be started at once. Someone, in turn, may have warned him that the reports on atrocities were trumped up. Again, it might have been reported that the arrow-cross men were giving out handbills, and in some districts of Budapest, under cover of the night, were painting on the walls: "we want war!"

Thus the fatal events had started, and Teleki saw no way to curb them. His attempt at undertaking cooperation with the German aggressors in the interest of an additional extension of the country's territory and at maintaining at the same time relations with anti-Hitlerist powers, did not prove feasible. He had to recognize that this undertaking, to which he had given his consent in spite of his doubts, was to lead to a one-sided affiliation, placing the country in contraposition with the other, and ultimately stronger part of the world. The new territorial gains would certainly be unblessed on account of their being qualified as aggressive conquests, and would certainly jeopardize the earlier re-annexations, too. He recognized that, giddy with the unexpected sensation of the possibility of a new territorial revision, the country had departed from the probably longer, yet – in his opinion – the only sound, secure, and purposeful road of revision, and it was primarily he who ought to have prevented it to do so. But fearing certain consequences in both the foreign and the domestic political fields, he failed to resist Hitler's enticing offer, and now everything he had achieved during all his lifetime was about to collapse. The revisionist policy, to which he had devoted practically his entire life's work, was directed to make Hungary's territorial claims acceptable for all, and to insure the results against any objection. He had been directing, for decades, a propaganda work covering the whole world, and had tried, by all means, to propagate and to make appreciated the battle he had been fighting for doing "justice" to the Hungarian nation. The world's "public opinion" is an immense force, and now Hungary, charged with violating its treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia, will certainly lose its face before the world. He is guilty, and from this he has to draw the final conclusions as to the work of his life exacerbated long ago and made now irretrievably unbalanced and meaningless.

In his suicide-note, written in the small hours, he wrote: "Your Serene Highness: we have become pact violators – out of cowardice – as against the eternal friendship based on the Mohács speech. We have taken sides with the scoundrels – because there is not a word of truth in the trumped-up atrocities! Neither against Hungarians nor against Germans. We shall be robbing a corpse!, we, now a most abominable nation! I did not keep you back. I am guilty. April 3, 1941. Pál Teleki." Then, apparently out of fear that should his suicidal attempt fail, the aggression, bringing disgrace on the nation, would be performed in his name, he added the following lines: "Your Serene Highness: if my act were not completely successful, and I would happen to survive, I resign herewith. April 3, 1941. Respectfully, Pál Teleki."

Teleki's suicide-note unambiguously shows that his suicide was closely connected with the breach of the Hungarian-Yugoslav Treaty of Friendship. From the note it appears that the violation of the treaty had been decided, and the supreme decision in this matter had been made. Although Teleki had expressed his anxieties, he did not prevent Horthy from taking this serious step. Ultimately, Teleki's note as well as his suicide was not a protest against the breach of the treaty, but rather the admission of his guilt, of his being an accomplice.

Teleki did not think of resistance which, anyway, would have been impossible without relying on the masses. The counter-revolutionary system oppressed and misled the popular masses; for over two decades it systematically persecuted and killed the progressive forces which – more than anything – would have been able to mobilize the people to defend their country's independence. There ought to have been at least a symbolic resistance or a far-sounding protest. But Teleki was not able to do this, either. His suicide-note to the Regent, copies of which were to be forwarded to the members of the council of ministers as well, was not a call inspiring resistance, but a bitter confession and self-accusation to be hidden in dusty archives. What we know about Teleki's life, activities, his ideas and endeavours, the mental conflict and despair, all seems to provide a satisfactory explanation of his fatal act, and proves, at the same time, that his act was not meant to be a protest in the eye of the world. With his act, he appealed to that narrow circle of leaders with which he had to share responsibility: on his part, he chose to end his struggle at a stage of utter frustration, but Horthy and the others might do what they will. As Bárdossy put it: "When he felt that he was no longer suitable for leadership, he stepped aside irrevocably and for good."

It is his stiff opposition to the country's progressive forces and his almost instinctive anti-Soviet attitude that isolated him completely; on the other hand, as it turned out when he tried to find a "subtle and highly intricate solution", he could no longer rely on those politicians with whom he was collaborating in the leadership of the counter-revolutionary system. It might have contributed a great deal to his mental conflict that the cause of revision that had been dominating rather than serving the counter-revolutionary regime, obscured the insight of leaders when it came to judge the dangers threatening the whole system. It would have followed from his conception of honour that to those who strove after "revision at any price" he should have cried his own truth: "the regime at any price, even at the price of revision!" But "the father of revision" was not able to do so – instead, accusing himself, he drew the final conclusion. Beyond and above the mental conflict of a violator of a treaty, we may witness the tragedy of a politician who was buried in the ruins of his own life's work. When we attach a social significance to his personal fate, we must declare: he lived for the counter-revolutionary regime, and his death expressed his despair of the future of this system.

NOTES, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

This work is a slightly abridged version of the original Hungarian edition (L. TILKOVSKY: *Teleki Pál. Legenda és valóság* [Pál Teleki. Legend and reality]. Budapest, 1969. Kossuth Könyvkiadó), concentrating on the life of this scholar politician and statesman, and omitting a more detailed presentation and analysis of the portrayal of Teleki and his contemporaries, as seen today. SINCE LESLIE C. TIHANY's annotated bibliography (*Post-Armistice Hungarian Historiography, American Slavic and East Review*, VI. 1947 Nos 16–17. p. 166.) refers to only one planned, but actually never published book (K. KISS: *Miért halt meg Teleki Pál?* [What caused Teleki's death?]. Budapest, 1954. Müller Károly), not counting this work, there is only one monograph on Teleki (*Gróf Teleki Pál élete és munkássága a magyar revízió szolgálatában*) [Count P. Teleki's life and activity in the service of the Hungarian revision], compiled by DR. G. MATOLAY. The biographical part is compiled and partly written by DR. R. MUDRINSZKY. Budapest, 1941, K. Halász, but this is not searching enough, its historical approach is obsolete and mainly one-sided, giving an over-simplified, static portrayal of an unconditionally pro-German politician. Relying on a wider – though by far not complete – basis of contemporaneous sources, and on the recent source-material publications and monographs of Hungarian historiography, particularly as regards the period between 1938 and 1941, now more fruitful efforts can be made to present a reliable Teleki portrayal.

A comprehensive bibliography of the scientific and political works of Teleki, which are inseparable, was published by K. SÉDI (in *Földrajzi Közlemények*, 1939, pp. 516–525) and another one by J. KERTÉSZ (in *Magyar Közigazgatás*, December 21, 1941). His political writings were collected in a minor book by B. KOVRIG: *Teleki Pál: Magyar politikai gondolatok* [P. Teleki: Hungarian political thoughts], Budapest, 1941, supplied with a biographical outline. DR. B. MÁDAY collected a good number of citations, picking out of context arbitrarily (*Merjünk magyarok lenni! Idézetek Teleki Pál gróf beszédeiből és írásaiból*) [Let us make bold to be Hungarians. Quotations from the speeches and writings of Count P. Teleki], publ. by Fialat Magyar Szövetség, without date. Recommendable for scholarly work is the two-volume collection of Teleki's parliamentary speeches (abbr. as OB) edited by A. PAPP (no date and imprint).

The basic biographical facts and data are available in the subsequent volumes of the *Magyar Országgyűlési Almanach* [Almanac of the Hungarian Parliament] and *Magyar Tudományos Akadémiai Almanach* [Almanac of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences], these, completed and evaluated on the basis of other sources, are published in *Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon* [Hungarian Biographical Encyclopedia], Budapest, 1969. Vol. 2. by the author. Information on the landed estates of Teleki's father can be found in *Magyar Gazdacímár* [Hungarian Directory of Landowners], ed. by GY. RUBINEK. Budapest, 1911., and of Teleki's own finances in Leonhardt-Compass, LXVIII. (*Finanzielles Jahrbuch*, 1935). Biographies focussing on and popularizing his political personality and career were published on the occasion of his first term as Prime Minister by JENŐ CHOLNOKY (in *A Hét*, 1920, No. 23), on the occasion of his second term by G. SZÜLLŐ (in *Pester Lloyd*, February 17, 1939) and also by the press department of the prime minister's office (*Gróf Teleki Pál m. kir. miniszterelnök*. [Count Pál Teleki Royal Hungarian Prime Minister], Budapest, 1939). After his death, apart from countless obituaries, some high-level memorial speeches, obituary notices, and even thorough studies were devoted to Teleki to cast light upon his life and activities from various aspects. These have been referred to in proper places in this paper. However, mention must be made here of papers commemorating Teleki in No. 5 of *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie* (NRH), Vol. 1941, as well as a portrayal by E. PRESZLY (*Teleki Pál lelkipélvája* [P. Teleki's inner life] in *Katholikus Szemle*, 1941, pp. 257–261) and by B. WITZ (*Teleki vallásossága* [Teleki's piety], Budapest, 1943).

The *Introduction* reviews the press reaction to Teleki's death on the basis of the April (1941) issues of the mimeographed Home Information Bulletin of the Hungarian Telegraphic Agency, now available for use in the press archives (K. 428) of the Hungarian National Archives, containing the cited re-

ports from London, New York, Geneva, Stockholm, and so forth. L. FÉNYES's cited study appeared in *Magyar Fórum* (New York), Nos 3, 5, 6, 1942.

The first phase of the career: Correspondence concerning the Teleki family and Teleki's childhood and youth can be found in the respective manuscript departments of the National Széchényi Library (Pol. Hung. 1811) and the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MS. 288). Relevant to the topic are also memoirs by Countess M. BETHLEN (in *Pester Lloyd*, April 5, 1941). G. VOINOVICH's article refers to Teleki's ancestors excelling in science, scholarship and literature, and also treats L. EÖRVÖS's influence on him (*Graf Paul Teleki und die ungarische Wissenschaft*, in *Pester Lloyd*, April 27, 1941). Teleki speaks of Lóczy as his example in a memorial paper (*Lóczy Lajos, az ember és a professzor* [L. Lóczy: a man and scientist] in *Földrajzi Közlemények*, 1935; pp. 101–105) Teleki's enthusiasm over social Darwinism is shown by his writings in *Huszadik Század*, Vol. 1904: *Társadalomtudomány biológiai alapon* [Social science on the basis of biology] (Vol. IX. pp. 318–322), *Politikai emberian* [Political anthropology] (Vol. X. pp 73–75), *Az emberi természetről* [On human nature] (Vol. X. pp. 241–243), and so forth. His relations to Turanism are best shown by his own works in the Turanian Society's journal *Turán: Bevezető* [Introduction], 1913. No. 1., *Táj és faj* [Region and race], 1917, No. 1, *A Turán földrajzi fogalom* [The Turan as a geographical concept], 1918, No. 1–2; of his role in the encouragement of political-minded oriental studies, a detailed account is given by Gy. NÉMETH (in *Kőrösi Csoma Archivum*, Vol. III. No. 1). Manuscripts concerning the Committee on Racial Hygiene are to be found in the MS Department of the National Széchényi Library (Quart. Hung. 2453 and 2454/2). Besides Teleki's book "*Szociálpolitika és hadigondozás*" [Social politics and welfare for disabled servicemen], Budapest, 1918, his speeches on the same subject-matter in OB. Vol. I, pp. 7–41. A criticism of Teleki's activities in this field is by I. BOGNÁR in *Levéltári Közlemények*, 1966, No. 2, p. 309. For his counter-revolutionary activities and his holding of the office of the foreign minister in the Szeged government, see the newspaper *Szegedi Új Nemzedék* (citations from the December 16 issue, 1919). His activities as a peace delegate are reviewed by I. PRAZNOVSZKY (in NRH 1941. No. 5. pp. 392–397). His speeches as foreign minister in the Simonyi-Semadam government in OB. Vol. I. pp. 45–87. On secret organizations: *Páter Zadravec titkos naplója* [Secret diary of Father Zadravec], (ed. and introd. by Gy. BORSÁNYI. Budapest, 1967, p. 133 ff.) His first term as Prime Minister is reviewed by E. HALÁSZ (in *Ujság*, February 19, 1939); for more details see D. NEMES's monograph (*Az ellenforradalom története Magyarországon* [The history of the counter-revolution in Hungary], Budapest, 1962.) Teleki's introductory address and his speech concluding the debate on the government program: in OB. Vol. I, pp. 96–116 and 121–134. His cited electoral speech in Szeged on the problem of ratification in *Népszava*, Oct. 12, 1920. His consent to Pallavicini's proposal: in OB. Vol. I, p. 167; on the disarmament of detachments: pp. 171–193; ratification and indictment: pp. 195–200. For the prevention of the adventurist action against Slovakia, see: P. PRÓRAY's diary (*A határban a halál kaszál* [Death reaps in the fields], ed. and introd. by Á. SZABÓ AND E. PAMLÉNYI, Budapest, 1963, pp. 226–227). Teleki and the king question: in OB. Vol. I. pp. 157–162, 225–226, and 241–243; strike movements: pp. 244–252, and 260–261; the king's coup and Teleki's downfall: pp. 263–271.

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ral Horthy. – Teleki's plan for the amendment to the constitution: *ibid.* Doc. No. 53. – On the newer – Transylvanian – re-annexation, and on the cautious fitting into the “New Europe”, TELEKI: *Erdélyi feladatok* [Tasks in Transylvania] (in *Keleti Újság*, September 22, 1940). On the situation and the expected perspectives: also TELEKI: *Szent István birodalma 1941-ben* [St Stephen's empire in 1941], Budapest, 1941.

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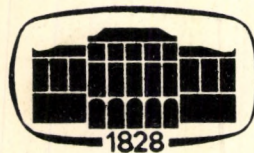
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