

SUMMARY

F. Pölöskei; Problems of the form of government and "constitutionality" at the turn of 1919—1920

Nearly four months passed after the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic when the victorious powers of the Triple Entente disposed of the legitimist Friedrich government through the mission of the English diplomat Clerk, withdrew the occupying Rumanian royal troops and the so called "concentrational government" was formed. The peace conference in Paris ordered the new Prime Minister Károly Huszár in early December 1919 to send his deputies to Neuilly. And on 25 January 1920 the parliamentary elections were to be held.

The problems concerning the state, and above all those of the form of government came naturally to the forefront. The parties and other political trends of the counter-revolutionary regime stood for the monarchy keeping legal continuity in view and saying that the republic had become identical with revolution. The old "idea of the holy crown" gathered new strength, being enriched not only with the idea of counter-revolution, but also with that of territorial revision.

As the powers of the Entente were against only the restoration of the Habsburgs, and considered the decision between the monarchy and the republic a matter of Hungarian inner policy, it was beyond doubt that the Hungarian ruling classes would choose the former.

There were naturally many other points of debate between the two big parties of the late 1919, the Party of Christian National Unity and the Smallholders' Party, they themselves being also far from unified in all questions. By the end of 1919 the disagreement of those wanting to bring Charles IV back to the throne and those wanting to choose a new monarch freely were sharper again. Among the royalist we find beside the upper clergy, the members of the old parliament and the traditional ruling classes also part of the middle-classes and the petit-bourgeoisie. The other party had the support of the landed peasants demanding a certain degree of liberalization in the regime, that of some followers of Horthy and some well-known representatives of the traditional ruling classes who realized the demands of a modern foreign policy. To this latter group belonged István Bethlen and count Pál Teleki, too.

Several distinguished lawyers tried to reconcile the two opposing views. Huszár himself sought compromise, and Horthy was continually putting off final decision. Thus the post of a provisory head of state, a governor (or a regent) needed to be defined and the governor elected in the National Assembly.

The only candidate was, beyond doubt, Horthy. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, and had the greatest actual power. He himself helped to spread the movement of nomination including the municipal boards and the parties, too.

Concerning parliamentary law, the sphere of authority of the provisory head of state, i. e. the statute serving the "restoration of constitutionality" sharp disagreements occurred. Out of the earlier ones, the parliamentary law of 1908 was finally accepted. The sphere of authority of the new head of state was, however, made much narrower than that of a monarch, not granting much of the royal prerogatives. (Legislature, however, later changed this fundamental law, giving greater power to the governor.)

The election of the governor took place on 1 March 1920, under conditions very unusual in the history of the Hungarian parliament. Military detachments surrounded the Houses of Parliament, intruding even into the session-room itself.

On 1 April 1920 the high command ceased to function and its role — the actual command over the commandos was taken over by the chief of staff under the Regent.

Zs. L. Nagy: Parties and organizations of the liberal bourgeois opposition 1919—1944

As an introduction the author outlines some over-all characteristic features of the political system in the counter-revolutionary regime from the point of view of the parties. The fact that the Communist Party was deprived of the possibility of legal activity resulted in a biased scale

of values among the parties. Once getting into Parliament, for the first time in its history, the Social Democratic Party became the only legal representative of the socialist movement, but was at the same time the most left-wing party of the Hungarian Parliament with the liberal bourgeois opposition parties at its side. The paper points out the problems coming from the independent party existence of the extreme right wing. The principles of how the various social classes, groups, and political trends were organized into parties is contrasted with the situation in this field before 1919.

Further on the changes in the position of the liberal and democratic urban petit-bourgeois, bourgeois, bourgeois-intellectual political groupings are characterized after 1919. The paper stresses that the political parties of the liberal opposition had their roots only partly in the political soil of the dualist era, they partly grew out of the counter-revolutionary regime itself. Analyzing the various opposition parties, their programmes, and the changes in their organization, the author emphasizes that their social basis is actually the same together with their aims in politics. She does not, however, neglect the differences between them, either, and points out that while in the 1920's Vázsonyi's Democratic Party was a very significant one among the liberal parties of the country, its leading role was taken over in the 1930's and after by Rassay's party, the Kossuth Party losing gradually the possibility of independent political action.

We get acquainted also with the difficulties of the parties in educating their new generation, with the slackening attraction of the liberal idea, and with the growing influence of the Smallholders' Party as a consequence.

In connection with the allies of the liberal parties the reader is informed of the problems of the Social Democratic Party, the changes in the liberals' relationship with it, as well as of the royalists, the Christian socialists of Giesswein, and the Smallholders. It is also pointed out why the attempts at establishing a unified bourgeois liberal party failed.

The rest of the paper is concerned with the liberal parties' organizational activity and their social connections. Although these parties were mainly club-like groupings, they did not only bring about a proper organizational form, but also tried to fill it with regular programmes. Besides introducing the party organizations and their activity, the paper speaks about the various social, professional and sports organizations and societies in which the bourgeois liberal opposition played a significant or leading role, e. g. the Cobden Society, the Hungarian Fabian Society, etc., and those movements which had no such strict organizational form, such as the Pan-Europe movement, the Free Masons, and the coffee-house table societies.

J. Fejes: Remarks on the Hungarian—German economic and political relations at the turn of the 1920's and 1930's

The first part of the paper gives a survey of the political situation of Hungary and Germany in Europe, their political ideas and aims.

The basic purpose of *Hungary's foreign policy* was the revision of the Trianon borders. Prime Minister István Bethlen expected the realization of this aim from Germany through a German—Italian—Hungarian revisionist bloc. It was in Bethlen's concepts that *territorial revision and orientation towards Germany* became combined and turned into a decisive factor in everyday political life. The German orientation was in general — and still more emphatically after the economic crisis began to be felt — supported by economic necessity. Hungary as a primarily agricultural country could not dispense with the German market where she could sell her surplus of live stock, animal products and grain. Thus from the end of the 1920's Bethlen considered the concluding of the Hungarian—German commercial treaty and the establishment of closer political ties his most important task.

From the appearance of Brüning in the political arena, Germany's foreign policy seemed to go beyond Stresemann's policy in being more straightforward and outspoken in matters of revisionism, and though it did not abandon the basic political aims, it can be considered something new in methods and attitudes. Brüning adapted Stresemann's long-term aims in foreign policy to his more rigid ideas, making use of the mobile international political situation created by the great depression, and wanted to realize them with new methods. Stresemann did not go beyond the confines of the Versailles system, but wanted to secure the greatest possible freedom of action for Germany within it. Brüning, however, wanted to throw up this system, making best use of the possibilities created by Stresemann.

Germany's growing interest in the Southeastern European agricultural countries followed partly from her claims to regain her former positions as a Great Power, and partly from economic needs. The idea was gaining ground that through taking advantage of the difficulties of these countries in exporting their goods Germany can strengthen her influence in Southeastern Europe traditionally belonging to the German sphere of interests. Economic intrusion to the territory did

not, however, become a definite programme at the turn of the 1920's and 1930's, its realization being hindered partly by the actual economic possibilities of Germany, partly by the disagreements between the agrarian and industrial circles within the country. The first steps were, however, taken — though in a very inconsistent way — in the form of commercial treaties with all Southeast European countries.

The *talks of István Bethlen in Berlin in 1930* — analysed in the second part of the paper mainly on the basis of German archival material — meant a decisive step towards concluding the commercial treaty between Hungary and Germany.

I. Pintér: Effects of the Munich Pact and the First Vienna Award on the policy of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party

The Trianon Treaty, taking two thirds of the original Hungarian territory, had always been a good basis for Hungarian reaction to arouse nationalism and chauvinism, and to make the nation accept aggressive aims of foreign policy against the neighbouring countries as “national interest”. The Munich Pact and the ensuing First Vienna Award — i. e. the annexation of the southern Slovakian territories to Hungary — were hailed by the majority of the Hungarian people as the first step in making up for “the damage to the nation's reputation”, immensely enhancing the influence of Hitlerite Germany in the country.

The paper analyzes the effect of these agreements on the Social Democratic organizations, and the causes of why a great part of the organized working class got also under the influence of this nationalist trend. It tells us the opinion of the MSzDP (Hungarian Social Democratic Party) on the Trianon peace treaty at its establishment and in the following decade and a half. We learn that the MSzDP took a basically correct stand before 1938 by keeping its organizations far from nationalism and by wanting to take amends for the unjust decisions of Trianon in a peaceful way, through talks with the neighbouring countries.

The events of 1938 changed the views of the MSzDP. The German influence after the Anschluss, Imrédy's attempt at a totalitarian domestic policy, the Munich Pact and the prospects to solve the Hungarian territorial problems all pointed towards the suspension of the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions and demanded a very high price for legality. Munich, the opinion of the Socialist Workers' International wanting to reach agreement, and the nationalist fraction within the MSzDP finally made the leadership change their former views. The paper analyzes this process in detail. First the aims of the MSzDP were to slacken German role in territorial matters and to promote peaceful agreement. After the failure of this policy, nationalism took the upper hand within the party. Part of the leadership even proved willing to “suspend class antagonism” in order to get new territories and to keep legality. After the Vienna Award, however, the party leadership and the workers were forced to realize that situation had not turned for the better as regards the future of the country and of the MSzDP. Foreign and domestic policy in Hungary became more and more a follower of Nazi aggressive purposes. This makes the nationalistic trend in the party lose much of their influence, and the party leadership turns back to its former, more or less correct views on territorial matters and the peaceful relationship with the neighbouring peoples.