

AUSTRIA-RUMANIAN RELATIONS, 1883-1916

The strategic position of the Kingdom of Rumania at the crossroads of the great trade routes from Asia across the Eurasian steppes of Russia, from Central Europe along the Danube and the Penonian plain of Hungary as well as from the Middle East across the Balkan Peninsula form its strength as well as its weakness. The natural frontiers of the country are formed by a vast circular sweep of the Danube, the Pruth and the Black Sea. The eastern projecting arc of the Carpathian Mountains and the Apuseni (Western Mountains) are considered as an outpost of western Europe standing out as a mighty rampart over against the south Russian steppe. The strategical position on the Black Sea and the Danube sometimes turned Rumania into a pawn in the offensive of western Europe against Russia and Turkey. Any great power in control of Rumania and the inner fortress of the Carpathian Mountains (Transylvania) could assume the domination of the great Eurasian plain, the Balkan Peninsula and possibly that of Central Europe. It is not surprising therefore that Rumania became quite early the stage of the struggle between its powerful neighbours, the Habsburg Monarchy, the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire.

The Congress of Paris in 1856 provided for a joint protectorate of the Rumanian principalities by France, Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, Russia, Piedmont, and Turkey; that the Turkish suzerainty should continue, with local autonomy; that a European commission should regulate freedom of navigation on the Danube; and that Russia should give up the three Bessarabian counties of Cahul, Bolgrad, and Ismail with the mouth of the Danube to Moldavia. The administration of the Danube was now placed in the hands of a commission of riverain states from which Russia was excluded.¹ The question of these three Bessarabian counties and the control of the mouth of the Danube came up for discussion in 1877 and was decided at the Con-

1. N. Iorga, *Geschichte der Rumanen und ihrer Kultur* (Hermannstadt/Sibiu, 1929), p. 314.

gress of Berlin in favor of Russia.² Professor William L. Langer creates a somehow unfortunate impression by confusing the three districts of Bessarabia Cahul, Bolgrad, and Ismail with Bessarabia as a whole when he states that Rumania:

had been obliged by the Congress of Berlin to cede Bessarabia to Russia and take the Dobruja in exchange. No one in Roumania considered the exchange a fair one, even though Prince Gorchakov added insult to injury by telling the Roumanian delegates at Berlin that the cession of the Dobruja was an act of generosity on the part of Russia.³

Professor Arthur J. May does the same thing when he states:

It was intense resentment against Russia for the shabby treatment meted out in 1878, the loss of Bessarabia, and the decisions of boundary commissions set up by the Berlin Treaty that impelled Rumania into the Hapsburg diplomatic orbit.⁴

Rumania, which became a Kingdom in 1881, resented Russia's annexation of the three southern districts of Bessarabia and in 1883 joined the Bismarckian treaty system with Germany, Austria, and Italy. During the decade following 1878 Rumanian politics were dominated by a participant of the revolution of 1848, Ion Bratianu (1821-1891), the son of a Wallachian landowner and the leader of the Liberal party. He played an important role in 1866 when the united liberals and conservatives forced the abdication of Prince Cuza and replaced him with a German prince, Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. Prince Charles was a grandson of Hortense de Beauharnais, the adoptive daughter of Emperor Napoleon I, and on his father's side he was the descendant of a sister of King Murat. His father Karl Anton was a minister in the service of the King of Prussia. In fact King William I of Prussia in his role as the head of the family advised Charles to remain passive and to ignore his election in Rumania. Bismarck, however, who was preparing for a war with Austria, advised him to answer the call and go to the Rumanian Principalities. Going straight towards a map of Europe Prince Charles noted the strategic position of Rumania and decided to accept the offer to rule in the Rumanian Principalities. In April of 1866 Bismarck told Charles "Austria will try everything to destroy your candidacy, however, just from this quarter

2. B. Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy, 1814-1914* (Philadelphia and New York, 1964), p. 184.

3. William L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890* (New York, 1956) p. 331.

4. Arthur J. May, *The Hapsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), p. 281.

there is not much to be afraid of since I am planning to keep Austria busy for a while.”⁵ As a result of this Charles was forced to travel disguised as a salesman in blue goggles with a passport made out to a certain Herr Hetttingen bound for Odessa. He traveled thus second class on a Danube river steamboat to elude the vigilance of the Austrian police. Austria recognized Charles Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen as a tool of Bismarck and as an effort to fence in Austria in the East.

Bratianu and Charles were able to work together closely because both agreed upon an anti-Russian orientation in foreign affairs. In 1869 Charles visited Czar Alexander II in Livadia. There was some talk about a marriage of Charles to the daughter of the Czar, the Grand Duchess Maria Alexandrovna, but this project failed and Charles married instead a German princess Elizabeth von Wied (Carmen Sylva), who was related to the House of Orange and had spent a long time at the court of St. Petersburg.⁶

With the exception of the Crimean War the five important wars that occurred in Europe between 1848 and 1870 were all concerned with either Italian or German unification, or both. In the fifth conflict, the Seven Week's War against Austria in 1866, in which for the first time the Italian and the Prussian forces fought together, the results were speedy and decisive. While Venetia went to Italy, Prussia gained control of all North Germany. Bismarck no longer needed Rumania and Baron Ferdinand Beust (1809-1886) turned the policy of Austria to the appeasement of the Magyars and a rapprochement with the United Rumanian Principalities. Austria started to support the recognition of Prince Charles by the other guaranteeing powers. In fact Prince Charles visited Pest and Vienna to express his gratitude for this support and thus paved the way for a close economic cooperation between the two countries. However, various obstacles stood in the way of a complete rapprochement with the Dual Monarchy. One was the large bloc of unredeemed Rumanians in Transylvania. Another was the fact that public sentiment in Rumania was overwhelmingly pro-French. In fact Count Gyula Andrassy (1823-1890), when he was the Prime Minister of Hungary complained in November of 1868 that Bismarck seemed to support the desire for expansion of the United Rumanian Principalities. In order to stop these fears Bismarck exercised diplomatic pressure upon Bucharest and Ion Bratianu, who was the leader of the anti-Hun-

5. Richard Charnatz, *Geschichte der auswärtigen Politik Osterreichs im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1914), vol. II, p. 82.

6. Iorga, *op. cit.*, p. 323. See also G. Țuțui and M. Popa, *Hohenzollernii în România* (Bucharest, 1962).

garian feelings in the country, was forced to resign in order to pave the way for the state visit of Prince Charles in Vienna in September of 1869.⁷

One of the most serious crisis that Prince Charles faced during his reign occurred during the Franco-Prussian War. Due to the agitation of the pro-French liberals in August of 1870 a revolt broke out in the town of Ploesti where Rumania was proclaimed a Republic. The army remained loyal and quickly suppressed the uprising. However, public opinion was so strong that the jury acquitted the conspirators and their leader, Captain Candiano, was assigned as one of the adjutants of Prince Charles. The following spring a Bucharest mob broke the windows of a hall in which the German colony was celebrating the victories against France. The police made no move to curb the rioters. Charles's position was so difficult that he submitted his abdication, and withdrew it only after the Conservative Party promised full support in the future.

The Rumanians fought on Russia's side in the Balkan War of 1877-1878. The Russians alienated the Rumanian Principalities by supporting Bulgaria on the question of Dobruja frontiers. The Rumanians demanded the inclusion of the key fortress of Arab-Tabia of the city of Silistria on the grounds that it was essential for the defense of the country.⁸ This led almost to an armed conflict with Russia which was settled by the award of Silistria to Bulgaria in 1881.

The discriminatory article of the Rumanian Constitution of 1866 denying the Jews the privilege of naturalization caused the intervention of the Great Powers. The Great Powers were withholding recognition of Rumania as an independent state pending settlement of the Jewish issue. In spite of widespread indignation in Rumania, the assembly in Bucharest decreed that naturalization could be obtained in ten years without distinction of religion as a halfway gesture to appease the Powers in 1879. Only in February of 1880 was Rumania recognized as a full sovereign state. The resentment against Russia tempered the Rumanian animosity toward Austria. The breaking point with Russia was reached when Prince Charles published his memoirs in German with a strong attack upon the Russian policy in Eastern Europe. The Court of St. Petersburg considered that insult was added to injury by the poor timing of the proclamation of Prince Charles as King Carol I of Rumania

7. Charmatz, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

8. Iorga, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

on March 14, 1881, on the very day when the assassination of Emperor Alexander II occurred.⁹

Between 1875 and 1882 there was an economic penetration of Austria-Hungary in Rumania. Approximately 32 per cent of Rumanian exports went to the Dual Monarchy, which was able to cover over fifty per cent of Rumanian imports. This economic subservience of Rumania to a foreign power caused a great deal of concern among the Rumanians. After 1878 Rumanian statesmen attempted to draw closer to Germany. Bismarck was polite towards King Carol I, but he looked down upon Rumania and considered the Kingdom of Rumania as an oriental adventure of one of the relatives of the German Kaiser. He could also not afford to consider a Rumanian alliance worth the risk of alienating the Russian Empire. The alliance between Austria and Germany in 1879, directed against Russian influence in the Balkans, was such a well guarded secret that Bismarck succeeded in 1881 in reviving the League of Three Emperors (Russia, Germany, and Austria) which had first been organized in 1872. This alliance was concluded only for a period of three years with the option of renewal. It was renewed in 1884, and terminated in 1887 when Austria broke with Russia. It was not until the summer of 1883, when the situation in Bulgaria had deteriorated to the point where Russian military intervention was a real possibility that Bismarck opened serious discussions with the Rumanians.¹⁰ A visit of King Carol I was expected in Berlin, and Bismarck in his letter to the German ambassador in Vienna Prince Reuss dated August 19, 1883, had the following to say:

Taking into account the visit of the Rumanian King, I would like to raise now confidentially the question whether it would appear useful and possible to extend our Peace League with Italy towards the East and to lead the politics of Rumania, eventually of Serbia, and the Porte into the right path.¹¹

Prince Reuss answered from Vienna that:

Count Kálnoky just like his predecessors and with the approval of his Kaiser has always maintained the thought of a closer political relation with Rumania . . . Quite the opposite was the position kept there during purely political occasions such as the throne speech of King Carol in 1881 and recently at a celebration in Jassy which have hurt the feelings

9. *Ibid.*

10. Langer, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

11. Bartholdy, A. M. and F. Thimme ed., *Die auswärtige Politik des Deutschen Reiches, 1871-1914* (Berlin, 1918), Vol. I. I, p. 196.

of Austria-Hungary. But in spite of these conditions he, Count Kálnoky is ready even today to adhere to the idea which was suggested by Your Excellency . . . Security means here reliance and this attribute unfortunately is denied to the Rumanians. (Bismarck noted here on the margin: "unfortunately"). The King is too weak even if he certainly would have the honest will to keep his word. His Minister of Foreign Affairs has the good will, but has no influence upon the people; Mr. Bratianu alone could pride himself to have it. This statesman must be won over for this task, because he alone could maybe offer some security for the strengthening of the proposed relations.¹²

Towards the end of August King Carol I came to Berlin in order to become the godfather to one of the sons of Prince William. Bismarck followed the advice of Count Gustav Kálnoky and invited Ion Bratianu, the Prime Minister of Rumania since 1876, to visit him at Gastein. After two meetings with Bratianu, Bismarck found the Rumanian statesman very Russophobe, who tried to blame all the tensions with Austria upon some Russian secret agents. According to Bratianu these Russian agents penetrated into Transylvania disguised as Rumanian agents in order to cause trouble among the Rumanians in Austro-Hungary. Bismarck, however, reminded him of an incident that took place on June 18, 1883, in the presence of King Carol I. Gradisteanu, a Rumanian deputy, got up with a toast for those Rumanians who were absent and said: "They are in their hearts with us; they love you Sire not as the King of Rumania, but as the King of the Rumanians and with the assistance of Your Majesty the precious stones which are still missing from the crown of Stephen the Great will be reconquered."¹³ The Moldavian hospodar Stephen the Great (Stefa-cel-Mare 1458-1504) is known as a fearless fighter who led many campaigns against the Turks and the missing jewels of his crown represent most likely Transylvania which was not under his rule. It was not surprising therefore that Vienna immediately lodged a protest over such a provocative remark. The Rumanian government was forced to apologize. Now Bratianu during his meeting with Bismarck tried to interpret this incident quite differently. According to him these remarks were directed more against Russia than against the Dual Monarchy since Stephen the Great was ruling over Bessarabia and Bukovina. Bessarabia is larger and was acquired by Russia after a war with Turkey in 1812. However, Bukovina, which is much smaller in size was occupied by Austria after diplomatic negotiations with

12. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

Turkey in 1775. Bratianu logically pointed out that since Bessarabia is larger, Russia had a better reason to protest this remark than Austria-Hungary. In the end Bismarck became confused over these detailed and little known historical fine points put forward by the Rumanian statesman. It seemed to Bismarck that Bratianu was thinking along the lines of an offensive treaty and eventual territorial gain at the expense of Russia. When Bismarck mentioned his understanding with Russia, Bratianu became quite concerned about the possibility that Rumania might be sacrificed for better relations with Russia. Bismarck warned him that Germany and Austria-Hungary were anxious to avoid a conflict with Russia, and insisted on a purely defensive pact between Rumania and the Dual Monarchy which could be approved and joined by Germany. Bratianu assured Bismarck that in case of a Russian attack the Rumanian forces would be more effective for the Peace League than in the case of Italy. Bismarck, however, did not quite trust the Rumanian statesman and he wrote the following in his letter to the German ambassador Prince Reuss in Vienna:

The thing I don't like is that Bratianu is going first to Paris from Aix in order to let his son be educated there as he has pointed out. Doing this is very characteristic of him. In Vienna they probably know more precisely how much Bratianu is depending upon Rosetti, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, whose French sympathies and intimate relations with the extreme red parties of France are beyond any doubt.

Also Bratianu's personal past left him with many French contacts.¹⁴

Bismarck was sure of King Carol I, but was also aware of the limitations imposed upon the King by the pro-French opposition, which at one time had forced the King to accept as one of his aides the acquitted leader of the short lived revolutionary Ploesti Republic Captain Candiano. Bratianu was also limited by his failure to get rid of his ambassador in Constantinople, who through his wife was keeping contact with deposed Prince Cuza and Karageorge.

In September King Carol I went to Vienna in order to negotiate a treaty with the Dual Monarchy. Count Kálnoky and Bratianu met in Salzburg and agreed upon a purely defensive treaty of friendship which was sent to Bismarck on September 26, 1883. A clause dealing with political provocations demanded previously by Austria was dropped at the insistence of Bratianu. Bismarck objected to the wording where Russia was mentioned as a possible aggressor and advised that they drop the word "security" mentioned in the introduction. According to Bismarck "La sécurité is a very flexible term which under certain

14. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

circumstances could justify an aggressive war" and would offer a great opportunity for the Rumanian chauvinist and expansion plans of penetration into Bessarabia with the assistance of approximately two million German-Austro-Hungarian troops.¹⁵ Count Kálnoky agreed with Bismarck and since King Carol I insisted that the treaty in order to be valid should be signed by all three powers i. e. Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Rumania, the suggested changes were approved and the new revised version of the secret treaty was signed in Vienna on October 30, 1883.

The Alliance between His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, also Apostolic King of Hungary, and His Majesty the King of Rumania was signed by Count Kálnoky representing the Dual Monarchy, by Demetrius Stourdza, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, representing the Kingdom of Rumania, and by Count Max von Berchen, the Counsellor of the Legation and the plenipotentiary of the German Kaiser and King of Prussia. It provided that the two contracting countries should not enter into alliances directed against one another, that Austria-Hungary should assist Rumania if the latter were attacked without provocation, and that Rumania in return should aid the Dual Monarchy if she were attacked without provocation in a portion of her states bordering on Rumania. This wording was inserted because of the German Kaiser, who insisted that Russia should not be specifically named as the country against which the alliance was directed. Article five stated:

The present Treaty shall remain in force for a period of five years, dating from the day of the exchange of ratifications. If the present Treaty is not denounced one year before its expiration, or if its revision is not demanded by either of the High Contracting Parties, it shall be regarded as prolonged for a period of three years more.¹⁶

Only King Carol I and a few of the liberal ministers were familiar with the content of this Treaty, and it was never presented to the Rumanian parliament for ratification. Secrecy was so well maintained that during the entire period to 1914 only a few party leaders in Rumania were even aware of its existence. Only one copy of the Treaty existed in Rumania and that was kept in the King's private safe. Responsible government officials pledged themselves publicly and in good faith to a policy of neutrality without an inkling of the fact that their predecessors had already concluded a full alliance with the Triple Alliance. Italy adhered to the Triple Alliance in 1888 and it was

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 204-205 n.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 205. See also A. F. Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary* (Cambridge, Mass., 1920), p. 81.

renewed several times, remaining effective until the outbreak of World War I. The international position of Rumania was greatly strengthened by the fact that three great powers guaranteed her against aggression. In March, 1888, Ion Bratianu resigned his office and withdrew from public life. After several months of frequent cabinet changes a stable conservative government was formed in January, 1889, and remained in office until 1895. Most of these Rumanian Conservatives, who were members of the Association "Junimea," were educated in Germany and as a result of this they were also enthusiastic supporters of an alliance with the Central Powers.¹⁷ In spite of this King Carol I hesitated for a few years before he dared to inform the new government about the secret Treaty of 1883. Only in March, 1892, did he inform the foreign minister of the existence of the alliance and, two months later, he took the Premier Lascar Catargiu into his confidence. The Treaty was renewed in July, 1892. With the leaders of both parties informed of the commitment, the Treaty was renewed again in 1896, 1902, and 1913. The last renewal of the Treaty for a period of seven years was signed on February 5, 1913, Germany adhered on February 28, and Italy on March 5, 1913.¹⁸ Rumania resented being merely an appendix of the Triple Alliance, wanting instead to be transformed into a Quadruple Alliance with Rumania as an equal partner. Also at the turn of the century the Rumanian government was concerned with the growing strength of Bulgaria and demanded some guarantee from its allies. In both cases the requests of Rumania were turned down. These failures of Rumanian diplomacy did not prevent the country from remaining tied down diplomatically to the Central Powers until World War I. There was a meeting of minds on some matters, but several French-educated aristocrats viewed with disfavor an alliance between Rumania and Austro-Hungary because the Dual Monarchy had thwarted Rumanian ambitions in the Balkans and in Transylvania. The Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Berchtold, kept Austria out of the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and tried to support Bulgaria because he feared the formation of a Great Serbia. The position of Rumania in this question is well illustrated in a report June 20, 1913, by the German ambassador in Bucharest, von Waldthausen:

The King who received me talked with great determination against the Austrian-Balkan policy with which Rumania could not go along. As Austria is against a Greater Serbia and affirms that it cannot tolerate a Greater

17. Iorga, *op. cit.*, pp. 335-336.

18. Bartholdy, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 399. See also Pribram, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-181; pp. 202, 210, and pp. 260-268.

Serbia because of Serbians residing in Austria, it does not object to a Greater Bulgaria. Rumania is in favor of a balance between Serbia and Bulgaria and cannot tolerate a Greater Bulgaria.¹⁹

Rumania was supported by Germany in its stand against the Balkan policy of Austria, as is evidenced by Gottlieb von Jagow, the State Secretary of the Office of Foreign Affairs 1913-1916, who states the following in his letter of June 26, 1913 to the German ambassador in Vienna:

Also the apprehension of King Karol that Rumania could not tolerate a mighty Bulgaria next door is fully justified. Because placed between the powerful Russia and a very strong Bulgaria Rumania would be paralysed.²⁰

Shortly after Bulgaria attacked Greece and Serbia on June 29, 1913, Rumania, which had remained neutral, entered the second Balkan War against Bulgaria in July. Berchtold, fearing the defeat of Bulgaria, contemplated strong diplomatic pressure in Bucharest and Belgrade and threatened even war.²¹ Germany rejected the idea of a war because it favored an alliance with Rumania, Greece, and Serbia. The defeat of Bulgaria was speedy and decisive. By the Treaty of Bucharest Rumania gained southern Dobruja, from Bulgaria. Adrianople was restored to Turkey and substantial territorial gains were scored by Serbia and Greece, although they fell short of satisfying all the territorial and national ambitions of the victors. The territorial aggrandizement of Rumania at the expense of Bulgaria spurred the movement for the creation of a Greater Rumania incorporating Bessarabia, the Banat, Transylvania, and Bukovina. The split between the royal foreign policy and the pro-French nationalistic elements in Rumania became more acute after the Balkan wars.

In Transylvania the Rumanian National party was organized in 1881. Its aim was reform within the Austro-Hungarian Empire rather than union with Rumania. This political party lasted until 1894 when it was dissolved due to the famous "Memorandum Trial." The Rumanians of Transylvania had prepared a list of their grievances in a memorandum which was presented to Emperor Francis Joseph, who refused to receive the document in order to avoid trouble with the Hungarian government. The Rumanians, however, made this document public and circulated it widely. The Hungarian government arrested the entire committee of the Rumanian National party and put

19. *Ibid.*, p. 559. See also P. N. Efremov, *Vneshniaia Politika Rossii 1907-1914 (The Foreign Policy of Russia 1907-1914)* (Moscow, 1961), p. 161.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 458.

21. A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (London, 1960), p. 497.

them on trial, which attracted international attention to the Rumanian question. This, however, did not stop the policy of Magyarization which was continued and the Rumanians were warned not to form parties on the basis of nationality by Count Khuen-Herdervary, the Hungarian premier in 1910.²²

The Kingdom of Rumania, being bound to Vienna by a secret alliance, was not able to give vigorous support to its hard-pressed brethren in Transylvania. Through King Carol's efforts Rumania entered upon a period of great economic expansion: building of the first important industries, construction of railroads, and establishment of modern economic institutions, largely with German capital. A commercial war with the Dual Monarchy banned the importation of Rumanian livestock due to so-called hygienic reasons. This measure which was instigated by Magyar landed proprietors forced the Rumanian merchants to divert their orders for finished goods to Germany and Great Britain. The reduction of trade with Austria-Hungary and poor harvests were the chief causes of serious revolutionary disturbances in 1888. The economic rift with the Dual Monarchy was repaired by a new commercial treaty in 1891.²³ King Carol I, with the support of the more conservative elements of the aristocracy, pursued his pro-German and pro-Austrian policy. Despite the great peasant revolt of 1907 and the general desire for a broader political basis, the conservative and authoritarian nature of the Rumanian Kingdom remained unchanged. In order to keep the balance of power in the Balkans and to prevent Bulgaria from expanding into Macedonia the Rumanian government spent great sums of money subsidizing the Vlachs (Macedo-Românii) in the Pindus Mountains south of the Danube in the central part of the Balkans. It seems that the Kingdom of Rumania was more concerned with a handful of Vlachs in the Balkans than in the massive bloc of Rumanians in Transylvania. The Rumanians of Transylvania did not look to Bucharest for assistance but rather expected that Archduke Francis Ferdinand would help them. Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Dual Monarchy, was sympathetic to the minorities of the Empire and during a meeting with Kaiser William II at Konopischt from June 12 to 14, 1914, he denounced Tisza, the Hungarian prime minister who opposed any concessions to the Rumanians in Transylvania. The intransigent course of the Magyars influenced to an extent also Berchtold who advocated again an alliance with Bulgaria against Serbia and Rumania.²⁴

22. Leften S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453* (New York, 1958), p. 494.

23. May, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

24. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 516 and Bartholdy, *op. cit.*, pp. 721-726.

The idea of transforming the Dual Monarchy into a federation of sixteen autonomous national states was suggested to Archduke Francis Ferdinand by the Rumanian Professor from Transylvania, Aurel Popovici in 1907. Baron von Eichhoff developed the ideas of Popovici further in 1914, but this idea of a federal state was never implemented in Austria-Hungary due to the assassination of the Archduke at Sarajevo.²⁵

The Rumanian Kingdom proclaimed its neutrality on August 3, 1914. The Rumanian government claimed that since Austria-Hungary was not attacked, Rumania was not obliged to join the Central Powers under the terms of the secret Treaty of 1883. During World War I Rumania was courted by both sides. The sympathies of King Carol I were largely with his native land. Taking advantage of this fact, the minister of the Dual Monarchy to Bucharest, Count Ottokar Czernin, tried to enforce the secret Treaty of 1883 by reminding the King of Rumania that "a promise given allows of no prevarication: that a treaty is a treaty, and *his honor* obliged him to unsheathe his sword."²⁶ In this endeavor Count Czernin was also joined by the German ambassador von Waldthausen and together they drove the aging King to such despair and mental torment that he once broke down and "weeping bitterly, flung himself across his writing table and with trembling hands tried to wrench from his neck his order *Pour la Mérite*."²⁷

Rumania was also wooed by Sazonov, Foreign Minister of Russia, who supported the Rumanian claims to Dobruja after the second Balkan war and encouraged Rumanian ambitions in Transylvania. The Russo-Rumanian dynastic ties were improved by an exchange of royal visits in March and June, 1914, and there was even talk about an impending marriage between the Czar's oldest daughter and young Prince Carol, son of the heir to the Rumanian throne. Sazonov, who acted as chief spokesman for the Entente, offered to the Rumanian premier Ionel Bratianu (1864-1927), in return for Rumania's benevolent neutrality, the guarantee of her territorial integrity and the eventual annexation of Austro-Hungarian territories inhabited by Rumanians. The offer was accepted subject to a reservation that it should not be disclosed to any one in Bucharest, including King Carol I who continued to cling to his German sympathies. It is interesting to note that a Russian official suggested the possibility of bribing the old King. According to a report submit-

25. P. Hugo Hantsch, *Gestalter der Geschichte Österreichs* (Innsbruck, Wien, München, 1962), p. 533.

26. Ottokar Czernin, *In the World War* (New York and London, 1920), p. 102.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

ted by V. Olsuf'ev to the director of the chancellery of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs M. F. Schilling, King Carol I had deposited most of his personal funds in German Banks. In order to cut this link with Germany it was suggested that the Russian government should offer to guarantee the wealth of the Rumanian King which was estimated at about one hundred million francs against an eventual loss. The report concludes with the following statement: "Evidently it profits Russia more to promise its replacement instead of having such a powerful enemy on its left flank."²⁸ This plan was not realized because the King was an old man in delicate health, and the shock of the war was too much for him. He died in October, 1914, and was succeeded by his nephew Ferdinand I. In order to win the participation of Rumania in World War I the Allies offered Transylvania while the Central Powers promised Bessarabia. In the Spring of 1915 Ionel Bratianu almost joined the Allies, but pulled back as soon as he heard about the defeat of Russia in Galicia. Later, however, the failure of the Germans to take Verdun as well as the Russian victories in Bukovina persuaded the Rumanian government to join the Allies on August 18, 1916.

On the Eastern front, the one great name which stood out in 1916 was that of General Alexei Brusilov, Russian Supreme Commander on the southern part of the front, who won lasting fame by his victories over the Austrians. Rumania was promised Bukovina, Transylvania, and a large part of the Hungarian plain by the allies. This along with Brusilov's victories induced the Rumanian government to declare war on Austria-Hungary and to start the invasion of Transylvania. Encountering only a slight resistance from Austrian reserve troops military operations at first were favorable to the Rumanians and within a few days they were in possession of the Cerna valley, the coal mines of Petroșani, Sibiu (Hermannstadt), Brașov (Kronstadt), and the upper Olt valley. Before the end of November 1916, however, two hastily assembled Austro-German armies under General von Falkenhayn, drove the poorly trained and equipped Rumanian troops out of Transylvania and at the same time Bulgarian, German, and Turkish divisions led by General von Mackensen invaded Rumania from the south across the Danube. The capital of the Rumanian Kingdom Bucharest was occupied on December 6, 1916, and all Rumania south of a line between

28. V. N. Vinogradov, "Russko-Rumynskie Otnoshenia v Gody Mirovoi Voiny (1914-1916)" ("Russian-Roumanian Relations During the Years of the World War (1914-1916)") *Novaia i Noveishaia Istoria Rumynii (The New and Most Recent History of Rumania)* (Moscow 1963), p. 234.

the Danube delta and the Carpathians had been lost. The Rumanian government and the royal court were forced to move to the former capital of Moldavia Jassy. Only a quick transfer of Russian troops saved the existence of Rumania in 1916. In fact the Russian Empire was forced to create a new so-called Rumanian front which added 250 miles to the other three fronts held by the Russian army. Thus a new burden was thrust upon Russia making it responsible for a huge front extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Most of Rumania, including her important oil-fields at Ploești, had fallen into the hands of the Central Powers.

On November 21, 1916, the old Emperor Francis Joseph died in Vienna and the peace-minded twenty-nine-year-old Archduke Charles of Habsburg became his successor at a time when morale in the ranks of the Austro-Hungarian armies was on the wane and in the rear war-weariness was increasing all the time. As of the end of 1916 a deadlock was confirmed for both sides, and the slow murderous futility of the war of attrition became more apparent.

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