MILAN HODŽA'S EFFORTS TO FEDERALIZE CENTRAL EUROPE

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Before his death Michal Múdry-Šebík prepared a study on the political regionalism of Milan Hodža. That paper was planned to be directly connected with the following essay on federalist elements in Milan Hodža's politics. As both themes are so closely connected and since there is little to be gained from publishing Múdry's unfinished outline, this introduction will try to summarize Múdry's opinions on Hodža's regionalism.

One finds a good expression of Hodža's regionalism before the First World War in the political program for which he wanted, with the help of other non-Hungarian politicians, to enlist the support of the designated successor to the throne, Franz Ferdinand. Múdry stressed that this program did not envisage any federalization of Hungary. Instead, the program allowed for a limited regional self-government of the different provinces. Franz Ferdinand, for his part, intended to limit the power of the Budapest government with the aid of non-Hungarian elements of the population which was then in Hungary. On the other side he did not agree with the kind of a nationalistic federalization which, for instance, was preached by many Czech politicians at that time. At the time of his so-called Belvedere Politics, Hodža's regionalism was closer to the ideas of the „memorandists" from Turčiansky Sv. Martin and their concept of the „Area populated by the Slovaks" (Slovenské okolie), than to František Palacký's Austroslavism.

In the first years of the Republic Hodža was usually taken, at least from the ideological point of view, for a supporter of the „Czechoslovak" camp. He himself added to this view by writing his book, The Czechoslovak Dissension *(Československý rozkol). But Michal Múdry collected considerable material in support of his thesis that Hodža's policy even at that time had its regionalistic aspects. From the beginning Hodža not only approved the concept of a division of the country into „counties" (župy), but he even supported the idea of so-called „union of counties" (župné zväzy). In 1925—26 he fought for the self-government of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia and the Subcarpathian Ukraine. As prime minister in 1937, he was politically responsible for the government resolution of February 17 which gave a positive answer to some justified regionalistic demands of the German minority. In the spring of 1937, on Hodža's initiative, debates started on the possibility to give the so-called land presidents and the land councils enlarged competences. The aim was not only to extend Slovak self-government but also to give gradually an autonomy to the Subcarpathian Ukraine, as had been stipulated by the peace treaty. In the summer of 1938 the political cabinet of*

Hodža's government agreed on principles for a decentralized settlement of internal affaires which also forsaw a limited but definite legislative power of the land councils. Hodža's quarrels with Beneš during the Second World War, which Michal Múdry himself witnessed on the side of Hodža, resulted mainly from their different evaluation of the legal character of this cabinet agreement. For Hodža it was a fundamental demand that the Czecho-Slovak Republic be rearranged as a regionally decentralized state after the Second World War.

But Hodža was always quite pragmatic in pursuing his political aims. That is why his regionalism took on various „colours" and changing tactical accents, all depending on his evaluation of the given political situation. On the other side, Múdry asserts, regionalism always remained an integral element of Hodža's political philosophy. Múdry summarized his opinion in the following points:

1. Regionalistic viewpoints seemed to have been of substantial consequence to everybody who was interested in politics in old Hungary. This was also the case in Czechoslovakia. But regionalism was mainly concerned with nationality and minority problems. Hodža, as far as he was concerned, found in regionalism also an answer to a number of general problems of modern democracy. He stressed that centralistic tendencies can be found in all political systems of the world; they are thus not only a product of the Budapest or Prague style of government. Of course he knew that it was necessary to fight those tendencies systematically because they „concentrate in a few hands the power to which all hands are stretched out in a democracy". According to Hodža centralism of any shade and conviction is undemcoratic. Regionalism strives to limit it by means of a regionally structured right to take political decisions.

Múdry understood this standpoint of Hodža as one of the key theses of the latter's political philosophy. In fact Hodža expressed the same idea, R. Michels formulated as an „iron law of oligarchy".

2. Michal Múdry presumed that in Hodža's understanding of democracy the regionalistic principle has a similar importance as democracy itself accords inter alia *to the principles of universal suffrage, majority rule and the right to recall elected officials. Múdry's view on Hodža could be summarized by the following — even if it is difficult to find direct applicable quotations in Hodža's publications: As regionalism completes the division of legislative, judicial and executive powers by means of regional decentralisation of political decisions in a democracy, it also extends the potential of direct democracy by allowing for the latitude that is necessary for the active participation of more citizens in public affairs. It helps to make political power more humane and puts thus obstacles in the way of its psychological alienation. Regionalism strengthens the democratic recognition of the rights of various geographically defined minorities. It introduces new group of interests into the system of checks and balances, by which democracy is defending itself against the omnipotent concentration of power in the hands of a limited number of people.*

3. According to Hodža, regionalism does not result only from the prerogatives of national independence. Compared to the Slovak autonomist position, regionalism is a more universal notion, both from the material, as well as from the poli-

tical-geographic and socio-evolutionary point of view. Regionalism allows for full political self-government in the legislative, the judicial and the executive domain, but it could also be applied only within the limits of partial self-government.

As far as basic regional units are concerned, Hodža, in different periods of his political activity, focused his attention to the „lands" (Slovakia, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia), the autonomous territory of Subcarpathian Ukraine, to the counties, „unions of counties" and „minority territories". In the end he tended to precondition the practical application of this regionalistic principle on the existence of evolutionary factors, which explains why he branded premature demands for self-government as political radicalism and censured the unwillingness to modify the given political system in step with the degree of social evolution as reactionary.

4. In this connection Múdry emphasized the importance of the fact that though Hodža explicitly acknowledged the notion of the „national identity" (národná samobytnosť) of the Slovaks he never deduced from this any consequences in the sphere of constitutional law (for instance, in the extreme case, the right to form an independent state). Instead Hodža favored legislative action that could be passed without constitutional modifications. Hodža's attitude on the question of national self-determination was quite flexible and pragmatic; he was, however, against the automatic claim of the right to form an independent state simply on the basis of national particularity. He usually stressed in this context how small the Slovak nation was and reminded his adverseries of Slovakia's difficult geopolitical situation in East Central Europe. Hodža took it for granted that in the future the Slovaks would join European Federation together with the Czechs. He thought that only with the Czechs could the Slovaks be strong enough to defend their own political and economic interests.

The main theses of Múdry on Hodža could be summarized as follows: Hodža's regionalism is based on the practical recognition of the very same democratic principles in the vertical direction down to the smaller social units which — if extended in the opposite direction to bigger social units — are defined as federalism. In Hodža's way of thinking both the request of Slovak self-government in Czecho-Slovakia and the demand for Czecho-Slovak self-government within the framework of a Middle-European Federation would be expression of regionalism.

B. Štefánek

In the area between Germany and Russia, bounded by the Baltic Sea in the north and the Adriatic in the south, which in this study shall be called Central Europe, there is a great conglomeration of small and medium-sized nations. Powerful countries have fought each other through the ages for power spheres in this area, sometimes for the complete domination of Central European countries.

The tragedy of these countries, given the constant attempts of their big neighbors to dominate them, has been their chronic disunity caused by old jealousies. The greatest tragedy perhaps was that after the Battle of Moháč (1526) the Czechs, the Slovaks, the Poles and the Magyars passed up a good opportunity to form a strong political union. Wehn they all came under the domination of Austria's

Habsburg dynasty, the Habsburgs perhaps could have welded them into a permanent geographic entity but unfortunately, in their scheme some of the nations were „more equal" than others, and the others did not see that a satisfactory solution. For them, the only satisfactory solution would have been a federation.

The first attempt Central European nations made at a federation was at Kremsier (Kroměříž) Constituent Assembly in 1849. A proposal was submitted there for an extensive autonomy of the individual nations of the Habsburg Empire. The Czech historian and politician František Palacký suggested that the Empire be divided into eight administrative regions of which one would have been the territory inhabited by the Czechs and Slovaks. That was the first proposal in modern history for Czech lands and Slovakia to be united and form a single political entity [1]. But neither Emperor Francis Joseph I nor his ministers had any sympathy for such a proposal; nor did they understand what Palacký wrote to the German National Assembly at Frankfurt in his letter of April 11, 1848, in which he declined the Assembly's invitation to represent the Czechs of Bohemia in the Assembly: „Certainly, had not the Austrian state been here from way back, in the interest of Europe, nay, of the whole mankind, wo would have to make haste to create one [2]." And they also could have hardly understood Palacký's prophetic words in 1865 when he warned the imperial court against the conclusion of the Austrian-Hungarian Ausgleich (settlement) of 1867: „We were here before Austria and we shall be here after ist."

Another attempt at federalizing the nations of Austria-Hungary was the monarchy's reform plan which was being prepared by the heir apparent, Francis Ferdinand, from 1906 to the time of his death in 1914 in cooperation with the representatives of the Empire's non-Magyar nationalities. It now appears that had his plans materialized, the map of Europe would probably look quite different now. But on July 28, 1914, Francis Ferdinand was killed at Sarajevo by an assassin's bullet and his death dashed all hopes for an eventual restructuring of the Empire.

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[1] Thus constitutional union of these two nations was not invented just in 1918.

[2] In this letter, the prophetic historian Palacký also says to the Frankfurt delegates: „You are no doubt aware that in the south-east of Europe, along the Russian border, there are many nations whose origins, languages, history, and customs differ marvelously from each other — Slavs, Romanians, Magyars, and Germans, — not to mention Greeks, Turks, and Scipetars, none of which nations by itself is strong enough to resist its all-powerful Russian neighbor with success for all future times. That they can do only if they are united and firmly tied to each other. The real lifeblood of this necessary union is the Danube; therefore, should it be a useful and a lasting one, its center must never move too far from that river. When I thus gaze beyond the Czech border, reasons both natural and historical make my eyes turn not toward Frankfurt but toward Vienna to seek such a center capable, nay destined, to insure and protect my nation's peace, liberty, and justice."
It is noteworthy that more than half-a-century later the Slovak Milan Hodža thought in exactly the same terms as the Czech historian Palacký and that he, too, envisioned a „necessary union" of nations with the Danube river as its „real lifeblood" as one that would be able to „resist the all-powerful neighbor with success for all future times".

It was an Hungarian state holiday, March 15, 1894, and at the Šopron high school (gymnasium) all students sang in unison Isten áld meg, the Hungarian anthem. All but one: a tall youth with a crew-cut. He remained silent. He was watched with disapproval by his teachers and his fellow-students. Who was this „traitor"? He was a sixth-grader named Milan Hodža.

Hodža was destined to play an important part in some of the efforts to establish a viable Central European federation. He was also destined to get into more than one confrontation with the authorities of Austria-Hungary and, as a result, often to land in jail. But this time he still got off rather lightly. He happened to be an excellent student, a first rate editor of the student paper *Gyorsíró Lapok* and, moreover, the first-prize winner in a national Hungarian shorthand competition. But by refusing to sing the anthem he had committed a „crime" which in Hungary of that time was not easily forgiven. And so his punishment was consilium abeundi [3].

As a result, he was forced to enter the seventh grade in a German gymnasium at Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in Transylvania. That, however, turned out to be a godsend for the subsequent cooperation of non-Magyar nationalities of Hungary. In his new school he found some very good friends among the Germans, the Romanians, and the Serbs. And out of these friendships later on grew his cooperation with non-Magyar democratic elements among Hungary's ethnic groups with whom he made a common struggle for the democratization of Hungary.

When Hodža later entered the University of Budapest he found there some of his former Romanian and Serbian fellow-students and together with Michael Popovici and Ilario Chendi founded the Association of Ethnic Students. Its members were Romanians, Serbs, and Slovaks and it further fostered cooperation among non-Magyar nationalities. On October 6, 1897, at the suggestion of the barely nineteen-years-old Milan Hodža, the non-Magyar students issued a resolution in which they expressed the desire that „those who are at the helm of our oppressed nationalities, develop a common program of action, through which our oppressed nationalities could, as soon as possible, achieve an improvement of their situation" [4].

Milan Hodža was not a dreamer even in his youth. He was already then a practical politician. This was what the situation of his Slovak people looked like at the end of the last, and the beginning of the current century: there were a few hundred intellectuals — potential leaders who, though, looked down on the common people or despaired of its economic and cultural level. They were headed by the good-natured Svetozár Hurban Vajanský [5] who in his patriotic enthusiasm

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[3] S. Mikula in her unpublished dissertation: Milan Hodža and the Slovak National Movement 1898—1918 (Syracuse University 1974), writes in part: „For this refusal he was punished but not expelled." — But the fact is that the consilium abeundi meant that after concluding the academic year the student was not allowed to return to the same school, and that he was, therefore, in fact expelled.

[4] Hodža, Milan: Články, reči a štúdie [Articles, speeches and studies]. Vol. 1. Prague 1930—1934, p. 4.

[5] Svetozár Hurban Vajanský (1847—1917), son of Jozef Miloslav Hurban, who led the Slovak revolution against Kossuth in 1848; writer who expected salvation of the Slovak nation from Russia.

expected salvation of his people from „Batyushka" the Czar. And into this passive somnolence in Slovakia suddenly thundered the words: „If we Slovaks are to accomplish anything, we must rely on nobody and nothing, except our own work and brains!" Thus Milan Hodža introduced his own newspaper *Slovenský Týždenník* (Slovak Weekly) on July 4, 1903. He wrote that Slovaks cannot dream of freedom to come from Slavic Russia, because — what kind of Slav Czar is it who keeps ten million Poles in prison ?

Hodža aimed his journalistic activity, first of all, against Slovak passivity, at a national and political awakening of the masses of Slovak peasants, workers, and artisans, against magyarization and Magyar chauvinism, and against the aristocracy which oppressed the nationalities and exploited the common man. In this struggle he found a common ground with the Social Democrats. He wrote:

„It goes without saying that if the socialists have understood that we have the same interests, then we, too, must understand it. All of us together form one camp, the camp of the poor. It is necessary that the callous hand of the peasant join the hard palm of the worker in a single fist aimed at our common enemy [6]."

For his journalistic activity, Hodža was frequently sent to prison and heavily fined. Thus he lost all the property and money he had inherited from his mother and his uncle. But it was not for nothing. The eyes of the Slovak people were opened. And what they saw, among other things, was Milan Hodža as a potential leader of the national awakening. In the 1905 elections, they elected the barely 27-years-old Hodža as their deputy from the Kulpin District (near Nový Sad) in the Hungarian Parliament. A year later, seven deputies of Slovak nationality were elected to the Parliament, among them once again Milan Hodža [7].

The Romanians then had fifteen deputies in the Parliament, and the Serbs four. Together with forty Croatian deputies, this was a sizeable opposition faction, the total number of the Hungarian Parliament then being 450. The 26 Slovak, Romanian, and Serb deputies voted to form a parliamentary club. And the hard-working Hodža became its secretary.

The club was to become a respected opposition group. It was soon noticed by the Belvedere, the seat of the heir apparent Francis Ferdinand. Francis Ferdinand disliked certain strata of the Hungarian gentry for their separatist tendencies. He

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[6] Slovenský týždenník [Slovak Weekly] 4 (1906) No. 18 of May 4. — Peroutka, Ferdinand: Budování státu [Building the State]. Vol. 1. Prague 1933, p. 395, states: „It was feasible to find even some traits, which connected Hodža then with marxism." — But Hodža never was a marxist — he was a populist!

[7] Slovenský týždenník helped a lot at the election. At that time it was being published in more than 14,000 copies. Later on it surpassed this figure by far.
The Kulpin district was in Bachka in southern Hungary (present province of Vojvodina in Yugoslavia) and Hodža was elected there with the aid of Serb votes. — S. Mikula in her dissertation about Hodža was in error when she said in footnote 25, on page 68, that: „The first and second Slovak members of the parliament Ľudovít Štúr, 1847—48, and Paulíny-Tóth, 1869, have been elected from there." — Ľudovít Štúr was an Ablegat — an appointed member of the Diet for the city of Zvolen (See: Osuský, Samuel Š.: Filozofia Štúrovcov [Štúr's Philosophy]. Myjava 1926, p. 65, and Jaššák, Štefan: Slovensko v Dobe Uhorského Feudalizmu [Slovakia in the Era of Hungarian Feudalism]. Bratislava 1932, p. 138, etc.).

considered his uncle Francis Joseph's settlement with the Hungarians of 1867 a catastrophy for the unity of the Empire. He was impressed by the work of the Romanian political writer Aurel Popovici *Die vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich*, published in 1906, in which — as indicated by the title — the author proposed the reorganization of the Empire into a sort of „United States" of Austria, composed of many nationalities [8]. Francis Ferdinand assembled around himself a few enlightened politicians and statesmen, at first only from the German circles and from that Catholic Hungarian gentry which was attached to the monarchy. Among them was Austrian-German Social Democratic politician Karl Renner, who had caused a stir under the assumed name of Rudolph Springer already before Popovici's book with his study *Der Kampf der österreichischen Nationen um den Staat* (Struggle of the Austrian Nations about the State). It was a comprehensive study which proposed changing the Habsburg Empire into a „Commonwealth of national self-governments" [9]. Among others who followed Popovici and Social Democrat Renner, was the Social Democrat Dr. Otto Bauer, whose *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Racial Problem and Social Democracy) offered an interesting interpretation of the marxist view of this problem. Renner and Bauer based their views on the Congress of the Social Democratic Party, held in 1899 in Brünn, whose resolutions concerning a fair settlement of conditions of the nationalities in the Empire were also accepted and signed by the Austrian Socialist Party [10].

Although Francis Ferdinand carefully followed these developments, and all reform efforts, royal blood had not ceased flowing in his veins. For a rather long time, he kept at a distance the reformists who saw a possibility of improvement in Hungary solely in such reforms as universal suffrage, or a land reform. However, it appears that his resentment of the separatist Hungarian ruling nobility was even greater than his dislike of these reforms. He saw Hungarian separatism as enemy number one of the unity of the monarchy. Francis Ferdinand found Popovici, and those who had formed the opposition club in the Budapest parliament, to his liking. Not because he was particularly sympathetic to the Romanians, Serbs, or Slovaks, but because „those boys" had more courage to stand up against the haughty Magyars than his uncle, Emperor and King Francis Joseph. What they had said pleased him immensely and it suited him fine.

After Popovici's study came a parliamentary speech of the Romanian deputy Dr. Vaida-Voivod. Hodža and Vaida were spokesmen for the club of non-Magyar deputies, and the club authorized Vaida to deliver the speech during a debate on the military budget. Vaida was an accomplished speaker and when on February 5,

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[8] According to the 1910 census, the non-Magyar nationalities represented 52 % of the population in Hungary (including Croatia), and the Magyars 48 % — and these were the figures of official Hungarian statistics which tended to favor the Magyars.

[9] Karl Renner was considered the best political brain in Austria in the years 1905—1908. After World War I, he became Austria's first Chancellor and again after World War II.

[10] Regarding Renner's cooperation with Hodža see R e n n e r ' s article in: Milan Hodža, publicista, politik, vedecký pracovník [Milan Hodža, Publicist, Politician, Scientific Worker]. Prague 1930, pp. 573 f.

1907, he delivered his speech for the unity of the army and, most of all, against its magyarization in Hungary, he was met with the wrath of the whole House. Hundreds of fists moved menacingly towards his face, but Vaida and the other opposition members of parliament remained calm. Vaida's speech was heard as far as the Belvedere Palace. Francis Ferdinand ordered his assistant, Major Alexander Brosch, to go to Budapest, where he was to give the Archduke's warmest greetings to deputy Vaida and to tell him he had been granted an audience. This was the first breakthrough in the mental reservation of Francis Ferdinand against the „reformists" of the minority club of nationalities in Budapest. He received Vaida-Voivod with open arms and with such kindness that the whole Belvedere was surprised. After the conversation, Vaida asked the Archduke for an audience for the Slovak representative Milan Hodža and the German Edmund Steinacker (from the Banat). Shortly thereafter, Cornelius Popovici was likewise received at Belvedere. But Dr. Vaida did not stop urging the Archduke to receive also „that wise Slovak", Milan Hodža [11].

Hodža writes, it was rather difficult for him to get to see Francis Ferdinand [12]. His personal friend and collaborator Vaida-Voivod aroused the Archduke's curiosity with what was closest to the heir apparent's heart — defending the unity of the Austrian army. And it had been a well thought-out move by the minority club to get the attention of the heir apparent. But how to interest him in what Milan Hodža preached? To interest him in universal suffrage, land reform, in a constitutionally guaranteed democracy, and the equality of nationalities? This, indeed, was not too close to the Archduke's heart. Maybe still that equality of nationalities — the devil with it! — at least those haughty Magyars will get tamed a bit. But to have the heir apparent, who considered himself the first aristocrat in the realm, vote side by side with mere peasants and workers, to make even that part of the nobility which he still loved and protected pay taxes proportionately with the plebeians, and to deliver their lands into the hands of the peasants, that was far from the heart of the Archduke. And this was what the Slovak was preaching, whom Vaida-Voivod had recommended and had even called „wise". Moreover, this „wise" Slovak was only a 28-year old youth and, in addition to that, a Lutheran!

Francis Ferdinand reflected for a long time, and as late as autumn 1906, was not yet quite sure about universal suffrage. Major Alexander Brosch, chief of the military office of the heir apparent, who, according to non-Magyar politicians in Hungary belonged to the élite of the Austrian general staff, was convinced that universal suffrage would diminish the aristocracy's influence in the political life of the country and bring about a reconstruction of the whole Empire together with the unification of the army. He, therefore, recommended to his commander that he invite Milan Hodža to an audience as soon as possible.

„Finally, after the mass murders in Černová," wrote Vaida-Voivod, „I re-

[11] Alexandru Vaida-Voivod: „There once were Milan Hodža and the Romanians" — quoted from: Milan Hodža, publicista 622—627.

[12] H o d ž a, Milan: Federation in Central Europe: Reflections and Reminiscenses. London 1942, pp. 40—42.

ceived a letter from aide-de-camp Brosch, who in the meantime had been promoted to the rank of colonel, asking me to tell Hodža that he was directed to appear at an audience before the heir apparent. Shortly thereafter, it was also the turn of Steinacker. Thus a small ‚non-Magyar camarilla' was created and began operating around Francis Ferdinand, which was organized by himself. Hodža and I worked together until the death of Francis Ferdinand in good comradeship with almost all the nationalities [13]."

After the unprecedented bestiality of the murders in Černová [14], Hodža submitted an interpellation in the parliament, directed at the Minister of the Interior. There followed a scene reminiscent of the one witnessed by members of the non-Magyar club on the occasion of the speech of Vaida-Voivod concerning the military budget. The Magyar deputies threatened Hodža, cursed, and wanted to attack him physically. And the Minister of Interior protested: „I am surprised deputy Hodža dared to submit such an interpellation in this matter!"

This interpellation by Hodža — like the preceding speech of Vaida for a unified army — was also heard at the Belvedere. Francis Ferdinand immediately summoned Milan Hodža to an audience, so as to find out more about what had happened in Černová. Hodža asked his close friend Anton Štefánek to get detailed information about the crime in Černová and write a precise report on it for the heir apparent. Štefánek did so and Hodža submitted the report to Francis Ferdinand [15]. Hodža indicated later that when Francis Ferdinand got the report, he exploded in anger at the atrocity of the Magyars. Hodža got three audiences with the Archduke in connection with the Černová affair.

Hodža's correspondence with Francis Ferdinand was facilitated by major, later colonel, Alexander Brosch through whom the heir apparent invited Hodža to audiences. They were quite frequent and very cordial. Hodža's perhaps closest collaborator, Anton Štefánek, wrote, that „Milan Hodža enjoyed exceptional confidence and respect of the heir apparent" [16]. Francis Ferdinand came to like

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[13] Vaida in the book: Milan Hodža, publicista 624.

[14] Poor villagers in Černová, near the city Ružomberok, had built a church, with their own money, and did not want it to be consecrated by an unsympathetic priest. The district administrator (Slúžny) ordered the gendarmes to shoot into the crowd. There were 9 dead immediately on the spot, three poeple were dying, 13 heavily and 80 lightly wounded. — See: Botto, Julius: Slováci: Vývin ich národného povedomia [Slovaks: Evolution of their National Consciousness]. Vol. 2. Turčiansky Svätý Martin 1923, p. 140.

[15] Milan Hodža, publicista 106.

[16] Dedijer, Vladimir: Sarajevo 1914 (Translation by E. Čierna and J. Širácky, Epocha), p. 149: „The leader of the Slovaks — Milan Hodža was in continuous contact with Major Brosch and to a lesser extent with the Archduke. However, he did not submit memoranda about reforming the Monarchy, only informative-political reports about what the politicians were saying in parliamentary lobbies."
This remark of Dedijer is more than tendentious when one considers Hodža's relations with the Archduke, as described above on the basis of historical documents, and if one takes into consideration Hodža's own admission of how difficult it was for him to convince the Archduke of the necessity of universal suffrage.
Rev. Andrej Hlinka's case is a good evidence of Hodža's influence in Belvedere. Bishop

Hodža so much that he took into consideration his opinions about election reform in Hungary. Count Gyula Andrássy, Hungarian Minister of the Interior, also drafted an election reform bill. But his proposal was a mockery of all that in a democracy is considered universal suffrage. It guaranteed an absolute majority for the aristocracy and the Hungarian ruling class. Milan Hodža stated all his objections against Andrássy's proposals in a Memorandum he sent to Francis Ferdinand. Thus, Hodža contributed to an open critique of Andrássy's proposals.

Francis Ferdinand continued to refuse receiving Andrássy. He did receive him only at the direct order of his uncle, Emperor Francis Joseph. But Andrássy probably lived to regret that audience. The very next day, the heir apparent summoned Hodža. He spoke to him openly, describing his ‚audience' with Andrássy which had lasted only a few minutes. „Please tell your friends", said the Archduke to Hodža, „that the audience was of no political significance at all. If it had been, the Count would not forget what i told him for the rest of his life . . . I am telling you, that fellow got out of here with a face as white as this cuff [17]."

Hodža won the Archduke's trust to such an extent that he was eventually able to bring up also the potential usefulness for the heir apparent of establishing contacts with the Czechs. Francis Ferdinand was particularly reluctant to admit the importance of a cooperation with the democratic representatives of the Czech nation. He considered them to be „Hussite rebels" [18], but it is interesting to note that he did not find Hodža's own protestantism, and his family's protestant traditions, objectionable. „Why should I try to get on with Kramář, who thinks that he is going to bring about an Austro-Russian friendship? If that is going ever to happen, I myself will do it", Francis Ferdinand told Hodža. „I know Kramář. One minute he behaves as if he were the foreign minister of Austria and the next as if he were the foreign minister of Russia. If I wish to see the Czechs, I have only to send for my brother-in-law [19]."

Hodža thought the Archduke's attitude a mistake. He found it hard to understand why the heir apparent was willing to work on the reform of the Empire with even some of the radical elements — such as Hodža himself— and with the Austrian Socialists while he was unwilling to seek support from democrats in Bohemia which, as far as democracy was concerned, was the most progressive part of the Empire. Instead, the Archduke spoke of sending for his brother-in-law, meaning the aristocracy. But the aristocracy was of almost no importance any more as a viable social class in Bohemia and Moravia. By that time Hodža himself was

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Sándor Párvy (1848—1919) suspended priest Andrej Hlinka (1864—1938), a great Slovak patriot, from his office. At his audiences, Hodža asked the Archduke to intervene on behalf of Hlinka, who was suspended only because of political reasons. He asked Francis Ferdinand to write directly to the Pope. This he did, and only as a result of that direct intervention Hlinka won his dispute with bishop Párvy. It is certainly a unique case in the history of the Roman Catholic Church that the Pope intervened in favor of a priest against a bishop. This was Hodža's great achievement.

[17] Hodža: Federation in Central Europe 46.

[18] I b i d e m 45.

[19] Ferdinand's wife was the Bohemian noblewoman Sophie Chotek.

already in touch with a number of Czech politicians and wrote for Czech newspapers.

Ferdinand's contemplated reforms were probably the last chance the Habsburgs had to save themselves and the Empire. The transformation of Austria-Hungary into a federation could at that time have meant the beginning of a peaceful evolution of a Central European community of nations. When later in Sarajevo Francis Ferdinand was shot dead, it was clear to those knowledgeable of conditions in the monarchy that this meant the end. Mrs. Irena Hodža (Milan's wife), while reminiscing about her husband's cooperation with the Archduke, told me Hodža's immediate reaction was: „This means war. The rotten Austria-Hungary will fall apart and we must build ‚a commonwealth of liberated nations' on its ruins [20]."

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Some students of Hodža's relations with the heir apparent ask themselves what actually Hodža hoped to accomplish with the help of the Archduke for the economic, political and social betterment of Slovakia? Francis Ferdinand was, after all, no democrat. And Milan Hodža knew it. He said and wrote it often enough. Was he then a dreamer? Was he being unrealistic? As evidenced by his whole political career, Hodža was more of a realist than any other Slovak politician of his time.

Then how as a realist, could he have expected any thorough-going reforms of the monarchy from the Emperor's successor? Could he, as a realist, believe that „universal manhood suffrage, implemented in order to provide a more powerful, authoritative government" [21] might help to democratize Hungary? There are two answers to this question.

1. Hodža saw the greatest evil of the Empire in its „dualism". How the Magyars in the Hungarian part of the Empire treated the non-Magyar nationalities was of no concern to the Austrian half. They could do as they pleased. Hodža fought this dualism in his speeches and articles long before he got the opportunity to discuss it with Francis Ferdinand. A revision of this dualist structure of the Empire became a political program, not proclaimed publicly by Hodža and his Romanian friends, but nevertheless one they were steadily working for. It is true that Hodža, while persuading Francis Ferdinand of the need for a universal suffrage also used the argument that it would diminish the political power of the separatist Hungarian aristocracy and increase the central power of the monarchy. But that does not mean that he — a wholehearted democrat — wanted to make Austria safe for absolute monarchy. The abolishing of dualism would bring on also closer contacts with Czechs.

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[20] Múdry, Michal: Milan Hodža v Amerike [Milan Hodža in America]. Chicago 1949, p. 219.

[21] S. Mikula may have not thoroughly analysed Hodža's intentions when she wrote in her dissertation (p. 133): „It was not realistic to expect that social and economic reform would have followed from Francis Ferdinand's plan. Universal manhood suffrage implemented in order to provide a more powerful, authoritative central government was hardly democratic reform."

2. In his view, it was necessary to try to get universal suffrage from the heir apparent even at the price of temporarily strengthening the central power of the monarchy. In the end, though, he reasoned, the universal suffrage was bound to lead to a universal democratization and to social reforms which in developed countries are borught about by evolution and in the backward ones by revolution.

Whenever Hodža went to the Belvedere, he discarded any appearance of the radical and put on a mantle of moderation in the belief that during the course of history even the most rigid monarchies were in time forced to accept democracy up to its fullest political, economic and social consequences. Therefore, if Francis Ferdinand had in mind federalizing the Empire, then for the Slovaks the division itself would mean a loosening of their chains. And the principle that all the powers of the government are derived from the people, rooted in universal suffrage, in the end would lead to a universal democracy. If Hodža was talking about a strong monarchy, he was thinking about it as about a strong opponent of the magyarizing ruling class; otherwise he would not have fought during his whole life against centralism and for regionalism, declaring that „centralism concentrates in a few hands the power for which all hands are justly reaching in a democracy" [22]. After all, a federal system itself is anticentralist. If the heir apparent really thought about a federation, then an effort for it had to be made [23].

Hodža was too sobre a politician not to know that Francis Ferdinand, — despite listening to, and studying, the most diverse proposals for rebuilding the Empire — was not a democrat. We have already mentioned how long Francis Ferdinand agonized about universal suffrage and what a difficult task Hodža had to explain to him the importance of this basic democratic right for the democratization of the realm. Hodža, when it was necessary, did not hesitate to say harsh, threatening words even at the Belvedere.

During the Balkan wars (1912—1913), oppressed Macedonia broke away from Turkey. „Bad times are falling upon Macedonia ... For some time, the Macedonians have been breaking away from their oppressors ... Turkish Macedonia has fallen, now only Hungarian Macedonia stands" [24], wrote Hodža; and, in even stronger words: „Nations are impatient, and they can rise just as they did against the Turkish empire — but if there should be struggle, let it be struggle and no empty words. Let us then conduct politics after the Balkan model: if in Vienna they don't understand our gentle Slovak, let us talk Serbian [25]."

Such truly revolutionary and militant words were not for Francis Ferdinand who was terrified by what had happened in the Balkans, and who was probably surprised by what Hodža had written, the sensible Hodža! Yes, Hodža alterna-

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[22] M ú d r y : Milan Hodža 102.

[23] In a speech delivered in Detroit, Mich., on May 17, 1942, in which — while reporting about negotiations with the heir apparent — he said that he was actually asking, together with his collaborators, from Ferdinand: „Democratization of the state, meaning universal suffrage, free expression of one's will, freedom and equality of all individuals. — Whether this concept was right, let history judge." (M ú d r y : Milan Hodža 130).

[24] Slovenský týždenník, February 14, 1913.

[25] I b i d e m , August 8, 1913.

ted moderation with radicalism. When Vienna was willing to introduce reform, Hodža made constructive proposals, but when they forgot about reforms and promises or kept postponing things indefinitely, his radicalism came to the fore. As in this instance. But the Magyar Courts understood Hodža's „gentle Slovak" and sentenced Hodža for it — and for the two articles in which he had urged the Slovak children go to Czech schools — because Magyars did not permit any Slovak schools — to eight months in a state prison and one month in a municipal prison [26] (These sentences were increased after appeal during the war to 18 months).

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We may call Hodža's caucus with the Romanians and the Serbs in Budapest the Smaller Entente. In the Hungarian parliament it was the only center of the national idea, democratism, and social progress. Historical evolution carried it right into that ideological current which later stirred up Europe in World War I and dominated international politics in Central Europe. The Slovaks in Budapest were close to the Czech representatives at the Imperial Council in Vienna, the Croatian-Serbian coalition provided a certain link with Belgrade, and the then Romanian Consul General in Budapest Derussi, who became Minister of foreign Affairs after the war, cleared the way to Bucharest. During the war it was even more necessary for the representatives of various nationalities to meet in person at times. That was done in Vienna. There, conferences were attended also by Vaida-Voivod, and sometimes even by first lieutenant of the artillery Iuliu Maniu.

At the beginning of 1917, Emperor Charles started efforts for a closer relationship with Paris. Hodža and Vaida were one day directed to appear at an audience with the Emperor. Both were in military uniform. They knew what it meant — what consequences would be ascribed to it not only at home but especially abroad. Hodža and Vaida let it be understood that as soldiers they would obey orders, but they could not speak for or represent any political parties or factions. The audience did not take place. But at the beginning of 1918, president Wilson's Fourteen Points alarmed the government in Vienna, and once more it tried to have Hodža and his Romanian confrères issue a declaration that would have disavowed the actions of their compatriots abroad on behalf of their nations' freedom and which would have asserted the non-Magyar and non-German nationalities of Hungary expected a just solution of their disagreements with the monarchy within the framework of the Empire. But the representatives of the Romanian-Slovak caucus refused to do so. And so it can be justly said this was where the Little Entente was beginning to hatch, out of the shared political successes, defeats, and humiliations of the pre-World War I epoch, though legally the Little Entente became a reality only well after the war.

The big powers' struggle for spheres of influence in Central Europe (that is

[26] Mikula, on page 111 of her study objectively and justly writes: „The facts must be established before analysis can be attempted. The lack of such a comprehensive survey has led to the perpetuation of some basic errors. As one example, a number of historians, František Vnuk among others, believed that Hodža was never imprisoned under the Hungarian Kingdom, which error affected their evaluation of him."

roughly the territory once encompassed by Austria-Hungary), and the constant disputes among its nationalities, is one of the recurrent leitmotifs of modern European history. Responsible statesmen were for ever trying to find an answer to the difficult question: how to make the local peoples live in harmony with each other within the Empire — and if that was impossible, how to parcel the Empire into individual states? But if the Empire would be broken up, what direction then would the political development in the new Central European countries take? Whose influence would finally become preponderant in this strategically and economically important region?

It is interesting to note that the solidarity and cooperation of the leaders of the non-Magyar nationalities — even while many of them were in uniform and were being watched by the secret police — was very similar to that of those politicians who represented the same nationalities in the West. Thus already in February 1916, T. G. Masaryk in a memorandum to French prime minister Aristide Briand recommended a partial federalization of Central Europe: „. . . an independent Bohemia with Poland and Greater Serbia [27]."

I don't want to anticipate some of the events to be discussed later, but I have to note right here that the American president Woodrow Wilson pondered these problems for a long time before deciding to opt for the dismemberment of the Austrian Empire and the establishment of a number of small countries on its former territory. He made the decision in May, 1918.

On September 15, 1918, a large meeting took place in New York's Carnegie Hall, at which the main speakers were Thomas G. Masaryk and Ignacy Paderewski. At this meeting the „Mid-European Democratic Union" was founded at the suggestion of prof. Herbert Adolphus Miller [28] by the leaders of Central European nationalities in the USA with the aim of coordinating their struggle for independence during the war and for insuring the closest possible cooperation among their future countries after the war. For none of them would be strong enough to stand by itself. Their ideas quickly gained popularity and in no time at all, there was talk of a Central European federation. It seemed to have become one of the unofficial aims of the war. The meeting's slogan was „The will of the People of Austria-Hungary".

On September 20, 1918, Wilson received the representatives of the Union at the White House. Their spokesman was the Union's chairman, T. G. Masaryk. He presented to Wilson a resolution which demanded dismemberment of the Austrian Empire and envisioned a possible federation of the liberated nations on the Empire's former territory. Its author was prof. H. A. Miller who even attached a little map to it to show the American public exactly how the anticipated federation might look.

This idea well accorded with Wilson's intention to „make Europe safe for democracy". And when October 23—26 of that year the representatives of the

[27] Prchlík, Karel: Zahraniční odboj 1914—1918 bez legend [Resistance in Exile 1914—1918 without Legends], p. 175.

[28] Herbert Adolphus Miller was a professor of political science and sociology at Oberlin College in Ohio.

Mid-European Democratic Union met at a large festive gathering in the Independence Hall in Philadelphia to sign a Declaration of Common Cause of Independent Nations of Central Europe, its first signer was Masaryk. A highly pleased Wilson wrote to Masaryk that according to his opinion, the declaration was „admirable alike in substance and in temper", that he considered its principles and ideals to be his own, and that he would „deem it a privilege to cooperate in their realization" [29].

Point 5 of the Declaration states: „That we believe our peoples, having kindred ideals and purposes, should coordinate their efforts to insure the liberties of their individual nations for the furtherance of their common welfare, provided such a union contributes to the peace and welfare of the world." And among other things, the Declaration emphasized: „It was difficult to defeat the German-Austrian autocracy and it will be no less difficult to establish a new way of life upon its patrimony." This makes it very clear what goal the Union had set for itself — a federation.

It is interesting that when Masaryk was about to sign the Declaration, he dipped his pen in the inkwell — and then momentarily paused to think before he signed his name: it was as if he wondered, anticipated difficulties. And those were not slow in coming. That very November, Paderewski informed Masaryk the Poles would no longer cooperate with the Union due to the Ukrainians' occupation of Lwow and Przemysl; and two weeks later, Grškovič informed Masaryk Yugoslavia was also quitting because of its dispute with Italy over their Adriatic territories. And thus the tender roots of Mid-European federation began to wither right there, and the idea gradually faded away.

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As late as 1909, even Thomas Masaryk hoped conditions in Austria-Hungary could eventually be settled to the satisfaction of all its nationalities [30]. And the doctoral thesis of Eduard Beneš, written in Paris in 1908 under the title *Le problème autrichien et la question tchèque,* was inspired by the same hope. At that time Beneš was still unknown to the Czech public. It was his activity during the First World War that brought him to public attention as the secretary of the revolutionary organization Czecho-Slovak National Council in Paris, at a time when Milan Hodža was already a well-known journalist and political figure carrying on a spiritual struggle for democracy with the „ruling class" in the Hungarian Parliament where his life at times was literally threatened while he was delivering his speeches.

Eduard Beneš was a teacher at commercial school until 1915 when he managed to leave for Switzerland. From there, he proceeded to Paris. In Paris he became acquainted with Milan Štefánik, a fortunate circumstance for Beneš since

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[29] Zelenka Lerando, Lev: Prohlášení nezávislosti čs. národa. Národní kalendář 1928 [Declaration of Czechoslovak National Independence, National Calendar 1928]. ČSA. pp. 18—71. — Mamatey, Victor: The United States and East-Central Europe. Princeton N. J. 1957, pp. 316—317, 342—343.

[30] Ibidem 17 f.

Štefánik, a Slovak, and a naturalized French citizen, enjoyed a considerable scientific reputation in France and had friends in its highest political circles. He provided an *entrée* into those circles for both T. G. Masaryk and Eduard Beneš (it was Štefánik who introduced Masaryk to Briand). Hodža, right after the outbreak of the war, had to report to his regiment at Trenčín from where he was taken at bayonet point by the Hungarian gendarmes before a military court in Pressburg [31].

The diplomatic successes which Beneš achieved during the war both with the help of Štefánik and on his own — he was a methodical man, paying meticulous attention to every last bureaucratic detail — gradually won him a reputation of a diplomat at home. T. G. Masaryk named him his Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government in Paris. And so a paradoxical situation developed later because, though E. Beneš was Foreign Minister, the head of the Czecho-Slovak delegation at the Peace Conference was Karel Kramář. But negotiations at conferences were conducted by Dr. E. Beneš and sometimes also by Štefan Osuský [32].

Eduard Beneš was Foreign Minister of Czecho-Slovakia continually until December 1935, when he became president of the Republic. The nation believed it had found in him a diplomat of the Talleyrand class. Beneš liked to pride himself on his diplomatic successes especially in the League of Nations. Under the protection of Masaryk, he gained a reputation of being irreplaceable at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And the ambitious and industrious Beneš also made a name for himself at the League of Nations. He was several times its president; in 1932 he was general rapporteur at the Disarmament Conference; and in 1935, president of the Assembly of the League of Nations. He played an active part in the League's acceptance of the *Geneva Protocol*, a major breakthrough in European politics of

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[31] The government in Budapest attempted to have Hodža tried for some of his pending journalistic offenses by a military court, and charged him with treason, but the alert defense proved that such trials did not belong before a military tribunal. Thus he avoided the military court, although the military command sent him to Veszprém where there was not a single Slovak. Only after a year was he transferred to Vienna where he then frequently met with Czech representatives in the Imperial Assembly, in spite of being constantly followed by Hungarian as well as Austrian detectives.

[32] Štefan Osuský (1889—1973), former attorney in Chicago, Illinois, was sent by the Slovak League, an organization of American Slovaks which morally and materially supported the Czecho-Slovak action abroad, to seek out Masaryk. Because Osuský was well versed in the Magyar language, he spent a lot of time during the war in Geneva where he compiled reports from the Hungarian press and from other sources which he then sent to T. G. Masaryk in London. After the war he was for a certain period of time Czecho-Slovak envoy in London and then continually, until 1939, envoy in Paris. After Hitler's occupation of Czecho-Slovakia, Osuský refused to consign the Czecho-Slovak Embassy to Germans, and started to organize in Paris the second Czecho-Slovak foreign action, and concluded an agreement with the French government according to which Czechs and Slovaks abroad had the right to organize their own army. After the fall of France he came to England. For a period of time he worked there in Czecho-Slovak resistance, for a short time was even a member of the exile government, but he never recognized Beneš's leading role in the resistance. Like Hodža, Osuský too was against Beneš's pro-Soviet orientation.

reconciliation with Germany. The Protocol was an ambitious attempt to secure international peace and justice by submitting all controversial issues for international arbitration. The League accepted the Protocol, but the only state that ratified it was Czecho-Slovakia. After that failure German Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann declared that Germany was prepared to guarantee, in the form of a *Rhine Pact*, the inviolability of its western borders and also to conclude agreements with its other neighbors. But Stresemann did not sign an agreement guaranteeing the borders of Czecho-Slovakia. That for farsighted political leaders, and especially for Milan Hodža, was a memento. He warned:

„We must always take into consideration that there is coming into being in our neighborhood a huge 70-million imperial entity, whose cultural and economic production surpasses the capability of the other European nations. In the face of that we can not be satisfied with taking care of only our local Czecho-Slovak affairs[33]."

Hodža thus stressed cooperation with all of Central Europe, both with Poland and the southern neighbors of Czecho-Slovakia; and at a meeting of agrarian students in Prague he declared: „We generally tend to be a little cocky and look down on others. Do not think that we are the most progressive of all. Progress grows horizontally from west to east. But we must move closer to each other along a vertical axis, too, from north to south[34]."

Furthermore, Hodža recommended the „coming of the classes closer to each other" and the „narrowing of gaps between legal codes" of Central Europe. He pointed out: „Germany and Austria are doing the same thing: they are mutually adjusting their legislation, their civil and criminal codes, adapting common principles of their communications, fiscal and cultural policies. Formally there is no *Anschluss*, yet it is being prepared ... If we should one day be faced by such *Anschluss* of Vienna to Berlin it would mean a two-third encirclement for us in Czecho-Slovakia, and for Poland another moment of psychological uncertainty and danger. It would mean that we, the Poles, and other Slavs [note of the author: here Hodža meant Central European Slavs] would have let slip by the first twenty years after the war without creating conditions for cooperation, for getting closer to each other and uniting our national forces[35]."

And how did Hodža recommend Europe to be organized? He did not believe any kind of a pan-European federation to be feasible yet. For that there were still no preconditions. Europe as a whole was still not ripe for it. In Hodža's words: „First there has to be an organized Central Europe. It will then arrange its relationship with Germany and the rest of Europe, and then with America[36]."

No doubt Beneš, too, was not indifferent to Stresemann's attitude on the German-Czechoslovak border question. He, too, must have known the problem of the Sudeten Germans, with 70 million brethren right at the other side of the border, could one day become the most burning problem of his young country. „I believe that the Czech-German question is the most important one", president

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[33] Hodža: Články, reči a štúdie. Vol 4, pp. 428—429.
[34] Ibidem 160.
[35] Ibidem 161 f.
[36] Ibidem 163.

T. G. Masaryk declared already in 1922 in his New Year message in which he also stressed the importance of a friendly coexistence with the Weimar Republic. Mindful of the importance of the problem of the Sudeten Germans, Beneš strove for a closer relationship with representatives of Germany and was greatly relieved when Bernard von Bülow, who after Stresemann's death had become State Secretary of the German Foreign Ministry, formulated German revisionist demands without including a claim to the territories inhabitated by Germans in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. According to the German-Czechoslovak arbitration treaty signed on October 16, 1925 as part of the Locarno Pact, all controversies between the two states were to be settled by international arbitration [37].

In September 1926, when Beneš was president of the League's Assembly, Germany was accepted as a member and given a seat in the Council as well. This effort of Beneš to bring Germany into peaceful international cooperation was not inspired by any pro-German sentiments on his part. He merely realized that Czecho-Slovakia, by virtue of its geographic position, simply had to try to live in peace side by side with its powerful German neighbor, on the basis of international treaties. But he did not consider cooperation within the framework of a Central European federation. The latter was being urged by Milan Hodža. In such a case, Hodža reasoned, Germany and a group of its smaller neighbor states could coexist as equals — „I'm my own master — you're your own master", as the saying had it.

As it turned out, international treaties could, but did not have to, be observed, and they could also be brutally violated. In this case they were a poor guarantee for Czecho-Slovakia.

The first shadow falling upon Czechoslovak-German relations was the German proposal for a German-Austrian customs union, made in 1931. The International Court at the Hague decided (by the majority of a single vote) that such a customs union would endanger the independence of Austria and would contradict the stipulations of the peace treaties which prohibited an *Anschluss*. The same point of view was taken by the signatories of the Geneva Protocol of October 4, 1922: Great Britain, France, Italy, and Czecho-Slovakia.

Until that time, relations between Germany and Czecho-Slovakia had been correct. But the proposal for a German-Austrian customs union provoked alarm in Czecho-Slovakia, mainly because its German circles were at the same time speaking of an *Anschluss*. Was it only an economic question or also, and principally, a political one? Hodža said: „*Anschluss* is not an economic policy but primarily a politico-commercial expression of a national policy ... The Germans work methodically, and their proposed *Anschluss* would be their crowning achievement, of which the well-developed German nation is capable ... We must accept facts as they are, we must not lie to ourselves by saying that if we succeed in delaying *Anschluss* today, then that is the end of it [38]."

Hodža's belief that it was not only an economic matter was borne out by a

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[37] Bruegel, J. W.: Czechosolovakia before Munich. Cambridge 1973, pp. 93 f.
[38] Hodža: Články IV, 428.

letter sent on January 20, 1931, by the Secretary of the German Foreign Ministry Bülow to the German Ambassador in Washington which reads, in part: „It is quite possible that it [the German-Austrian customs union] may lead to political conflicts, although we will dress the matter up in a Pan-European cloak (Obwohl wir der Angelegenheit ein paneuropäisches Mäntelchen umhängen werden) [39]." And then in a letter to the German envoy in Prague, Walter Koch, Bülow states: „Once the German-Austrian customs union becomes a reality I believe the pressure of economic necessity will compel Czecho-Slovakia within a few years to adhere to it too, one way or another. I would regard it as a beginning of a development which would be likely to lead to the satisfaction of vital German interest difficult to satisfy in other ways . . . [40]."

And as much as Beneš tried to maintain the post-war order, guaranteed by peace treaties, the defeated, but essentially healthy, strong, and industrious Germany continued to grow and gradually started claiming a more important role in world politics, while France was living on its laurels in the belief that the Maginot line was its impenetrable protective shield. Characteristic of the period of the gradual rising of German national selfconsciousness is a letter written by German Ambassador in Prague Walter Koch to his ministry in Berlin in 1930 in which he justifies the gradually mounting German aversion against Beneš as follows: „Germany cannot so easily forget that in all the incidents which have caused the difficulties to the Reich over the last eleven years Beneš had faithfully backed France and that he is and always has been the main obstacle, not only to the *Anschluss* but also to a Central European economic alliance under the leadership of Germany [41]."

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It would be difficult, in this brief essay, to describe the subsequent development of German-Czechoslovak relations. However, it can be said in brief that Beneš became the man who „caused the difficulties to the Reich over the last eleven years", and who was always without reservation faithful to France. In other words a man who with his little state was to play the role of France's policeman in Central Europe.

But no less resolutely did Hodža oppose the *Anschluss* and German intentions to get Central Europe under its control. We have already noted that he thought the German-Austrian customs union and the German demand of an *Anschluss* a warning. But unlike Beneš, Hodža did not see security for his country in great powers guarantees, pacts, and various agreements. Although at that time he could not intervene in matters of foreign policy, he nevertheless often spoke out on it within his party organizations. But Beneš was immensely jealous of his comments on the subject.

„Then, as a Minister of a rebuilt state, I had to fight very many of my own friends who were too jealous to sacrifice the illusion that small countries placed between colossal neighbors would be able to preserve their sovereignty without

[39] Bruegel: Czechoslovakia before Munich 99.
[40] Ibidem 100.
[41] Ibidem 97.

establishing a relationship of cooperation and solidarity among themselves" — remarks Hodža, more or less at the address of E. Beneš [42].

We have already mentioned Hodža's cooperation with representatives of the non-Magyar nationalities in Hungary in 1903—1914. And when, in 1919 in Paris, Nikola Pašić, Take Ionescu, and Štefan Osuský signed the first common agreement regarding Hungary, they thereby laid the foundation of the *Little Entente*. But by so doing they were not starting to organize an artificial diplomatic structure. They only put into a new framework the old, proven cooperation which had demonstrated its viability in old Hungary. When on March 14, 1920, Beneš concluded an agreement with Yugoslavia and then on April 23, 1921, another one with Romania whereby the Little Entente formally came into being, Beneš received great credit for this accomplishment. Hodža greeted this event with great pleasure but also hastened to note that it meant formal confirmation of „community of friendship" whose foundation had been laid already by Michal Miloslav Hodža (Milan's uncle) and his collaborators, in the revolutionary year 1848, and by himself before the First World War [43].

The Little Entente became an essential part of the international legal system after World War I. But for Hodža the program of the Little Entente did not suffice. Right after its creation Hodža stressed the need for its expansion: „Little Entente will fulfil its mission only then when it has all the political and economic attributes of a firmly locked-to-gether international group [44]." He was convinced that, much as the secession of the non-Magyar nations from old Hungary was necessary, it should never have closed the door on their past cooperation. And, moreover, they should cooperate with the new Hungary and Austria as well. Hodža did not hesitate to say it publicly: „If I were a Magyar boasting the favoured central position in the Danube valley, I would not hesitate to call for a conference of representatives of all the new Danubian countries, to be held in Budapest, for the purpose of defining clearly our mutual positions in respect to cooperation in all those economic matters which should be recognized as constituting a common interest [45]." In Hodža's opinion common defense against Hungary had not to be the final goal of Little Entente. Therefore, Hodža welcomed the conclusion of treaties between Czecho-Slovakia and Poland and Austria as a good basis for the expansion of the Little Entente, and reminded also France, the then closest guarantor of new Czecho-Slovakia, of the importance of such a Central European regional entity even for France itself, as well as for the whole of Western Europe [46].

But the Hungarian ultranationalistic circles, stunned by Trianon treaty were

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[42] H o d ž a : Federation in Central Europe 6.

[43] H o d ž a : Články IV, 222 f.

[44] Zahraniční politika [Foreign Policy] 1 (1922) No. 1.

[45] Hodža's interview with the editor of the Hungarian economic periodical Pesti Tözade-Kereskedelmi Lapok, quoted in H o d ž a : Federation in Central Europe 74.

[46] „The French-British agreement, although it can become more cordial, will nevertheless always rest on compromise, because Great Britain is also concerned about Germany and about lively trade relations with Germany and Russia." (From Hodža's lecture at the Société ďétudes exterieures in Paris — quoted from H o d ž a : Články IV, 227.)

unable to concentrate on cooperation for the future. And so, instead of a Danubian cooperation, there came the Hungarian Bolshevik attack against Czecho-Slovakia. In March 1919, Count Mihály Károlyi suddenly discovered that he was unable to continue maintaining the balance between Hungary's radical bourgeoisie on one hand, and the Communist-oriented working class on the other. Here we must note that the peasants, a stabilizing element in the Danubian countries, had been too badly neglected by the aristocracy to assert themselves at the critical moment. Thus Budapest was taken over by the Bolsheviks in March 1919, and they were supported by workers who thought themselves oppressed by the *ancien régime*.

Did they take over the government? Not exactly. In February 1919, Quai D'Orsay was informed by the Budapest government that West European indifference to the mutilation of Hungary had forced the Budapest government to open the door to the big power to the east. This experiment, or rather this revenge of Károlyi on the West, ended tragically for the count himself. In the end, he had to flee the Bolsheviks. He and his wife found refuge in Prague where the Czecho-Slovak government treated them in a friendly manner. Károlyi had been the wealthiest nobleman in Hungary. But his lands were confiscated by the „new ruling class". He finally went overseas to lecture.

Conditions in Hungary later improved, but the nationalistic feelings of Central European countries were then at their peak and they were probably also the reason why the Central European countries did not make use even of those advantages which were given them by the peace treaties: commercial preferences for five years; the St. Germain peace treaty in article 222, the Trianon peace treaty in article 205.

In those chaotic conditions after the war, Hodža arrived in Budapest to secure the departure of Magyar troops from Slovakia. As a practical and flexible politician, mindful of the fact that the Czecho-Slovak state could not defend itself militarily, Hodža intentionally protracted the negotiations. At times he even tactically retreated. Knowing he was more familiar with the Magyar mentality than anyone in Prague, he acted rather independently and often ignored his instructions from his government which was far away from the scene. He was concerned lest the relatively strong Magyar army on Slovak territory commit blodshed. His negotiations and tactical manoeuvers stirred controversy in Prague, but owing to his negotiations the Magyar troops were recalled from nine tenths of Slovak territory. Those in Prague who were not familiar with these conditions, often reproached him for his attitude and criticized him. Naturally, it was first of all Foreign Minister Beneš who was then still negotiating Czecho-Slovakia's statehood at the peace conferences and from that position was no doubt scrutinizing the man who, as he must have known, already long before the war had been building a political bloc from the non-Magyar nationalities in Central Europe. Was it again somebody from among the Slovaks interfering with matters which he considered his own domain [47]?

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[47] General Janin, Maurice: Moje účast na Československém boji za Svobodu [My Participation in Czechoslovak Struggle for Freedom]. Prague 1928, p. 125, writes that Dr. Milan R. Štefánik laid a claim to the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs. But Masaryk gave it already in exile to Beneš and named Štefánik Minister of War. Close

Beneš was not mistaken. Hodža really did intervene in Czecho-Slovak foreign policy. He did not do so directly, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but mostly through international agricultural organizations which became, in Central Europe and even in some states in the west, Hodža's base for organizing economic and political cooperation between their states.

As already mentioned, Hodža had proposed in a Hungarian newspaper right after the birth of Czecho-Slovakia, the convening of a conference of the Danubian states including Hungary and Austria. He repeatedly stressed the need for trade conferences of the Little Entente states and states connected with them, Austria, Hungary, and especially Poland. Most of all, he stressed that, as far as he could see, there was no reason why Czecho-Slovakia could not establish as close ties to Poland as possible. Hodža emphasized that foreign policy could not be just official or only artificial. (This no doubt was aimed at Beneš.) Foreign policy, according to Hodža, had to follow equally from common interests and from common moral and social aspirations of the peoples within the individual states. (Beneš rarely observed the life of the peoples within his own country. Mostly he did so from abroad. This had to manifest itself as a shortcoming in his foreign policy.)

There are certain forces operating within nations which can unite but also divide them, for example nationalism, religion and church politics, sometimes socialism, and so on. Hodža did not discern in the postwar years any signs that any of these forces could contribute to the advancement of his idea of international solidarity between the Baltic and the Adriatic. But he saw a really homogeneous ideological current in agrarism which had already proved its power in narrowing some of the gaps and could lead to mutual understanding between peasants of all the states of Central Europe. Thus after the Bulgarian negotiations of Stambulijski with Yugoslavia, Hodža's visit in Warsaw in 1925 (he was then Minister of Agriculture) brought about the settlement of some customs-political disputes. In a speech before deputies and senators of the Polish party *Piast* on June 21, 1925, Hodža said: „We would not acquit ourselves well before the tribunal of history, if we were to fritter away just this decisive time of our freedom with quarrels and controversy and were not to clear away from the path of our nations all that which still forms an obstacle to their cordial mutual understanding [48]."

At the all-state congress of the Republican (Agrarian) Party in Prague on September 5—6, 1925, Hodža quite openly expressed his opinion on Czecho-Slovak foreign policy, basing his right to do so on his function as Minister of Agriculture because „the peasants of our state are united in their views on certain questions which move the world".

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to the end of the war Štefánik — already a French general — did not get on well with Beneš, and Masaryk in one letter he sent to Beneš from Prague to Paris, even asked: „What should be done with him?" — meaning Štefánik. Sad fate freed them of this worry. General Štefánik perished in an air crash while returning to his native country, on May 4, 1919, in the neighborhood of Vajnory (near Bratislava). — It is evident that also Hodža's ambition was to become Foreign Minister.

[48] Slovenský denník (Slovak Daily) 8 (1925) No. 142, June 26.

He delivered his speech at a time when the Treaty of Locarno was in a preparatory stage, a treaty which he did not consider to be a sufficient guarantee of peace [49]. And at the same agrarian congress Hodža reminded Beneš, not expressly but indirectly, that „a realistic politician must reckon with the fact that real security for a state is only that one which is based on its own moral and material strength, that our real guarantee is not in a written treaty, a signed piece of paper, but in a firm, unshakeable community of all those who have the same interests as we have... Therefore I believe that the main direction of our policy — apart from the spirit of all the Geneva protocols — must be to give our formal agreements a soul, a content, so that they will not remain an empty slogan and a word, but that solidarity of the small nations from the Baltic to Aegean sea becomes a fact and is resolutely expressed also in international politics. With this solidarity we shall be strong enough to defend ourselves against oncoming shocks, be they Bolshevik or imperialist, which threaten peace [50]."

Hodža based his idea of a Central European federation on the common interests of the peasant classes of all nations of Central Europe and their close cooperation with workers and artisans. We must not forget that at that time the population of Czecho-Slovakia and Austria was up to 40 % agricultural, Hungary 56 %, and the population of the other states in this area was as much as 70 % or more agricultural. Hodža was building a common movement which he named „peasant democracy", because he wanted to create from the peasantry a middle class that in developed countries is the foundation of democracy.

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The idea that what an individual cannot accomplish by himself can be accomplished by several individuals in a cooperative, Hodža also transplanted into his Central European policies. The little states deluded themselves if they thought they would be able to stand up for long to big powers' pressure. Divided, they were wasting their strength and defending their bare lives, — in vain. United, they could deal with the great powers as equals according to the saying „I'm my own master, you're your own master". But Hodža was careful to emphasize the necessity to cooperate on friendly terms with Germany and Russia, as well as with England, France, and America.

The official Agrarian Bloc of six Central European countries could not fail to attract the attention of European statesmen; Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Czecho-Slovakia together were a bloc of nearly one hundred million people. No political thinker could underrate this possible new factor. With Austria and Greece, it might have been a geographic unit of over 110 million inhabitants.

Whenever Hodža spoke of a Central European federation he always stressed cooperation with Germany, on the basis of equality. He never made a secret of

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[49] Š. Osuský in his speech at the tenth anniversary of Hodža's death, on June 24, 1954, said in New York that Hodža „was against the Locarno Treaty".

[50] Hodža: Články IV, 348—350.

believing with Palacký (and also with latter-day Masaryk), that „a Russian political domination of Central Europe would be a crime against civilization" [51].

The idea of cooperation took different shapes in different areas of Central Europe. One, as already mentioned, was the Little Entente. Another was the idea of a customs union of Germany, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, and Hungary. This was publicized by Austrian economists. At the Geneva conference in February and March of 1930, five agrarian states of Central Europe concluded an agreement. There followed several agrarian conferences and German publicists started to advertise the project of a commercial and political drawing together of Germany, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. Germany did not limit itself just to urging it. It made a formal offer of preferential treatment to Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. Then came the agrarian conference in Paris, where France countered by offering preferential treatment to Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Hodža saw in the German offer a move for a political *Mitteleuropa* under German leadership. He again rejected any hegemony in Central Europe, and offered just cooperation.

Later Hodža repeated that Czecho-Slovakia was willing to agree upon principles and practice of a Central European policy with both parties to the „Rome Protocol". On January 17, 1936 [52], he had a conversation with Austrian Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg, who promised to be an intermediary between Prague and Budapest. On April 2, 1936, a new commercial agreement was concluded between Czecho-Slovakia and Austria. On February 20, 1936, Hodža negotiated in a friendly atmosphere in Belgrade. In Rome and Berlin Hodža's offerts to unify Central Europe evoked agitation. But Hodža did not give up. He knew that time was running short. On July 13, 1936, he hurried to Vienna to find out, two days after the conclusion of the Austrian-German egreement, what chances there remainded for cooperation with Austria. He then had talks with Chancellor Schuschnigg and Romanian politician Rudolph Brandsch. On October 21, 1936, Hodža met in Prague with Schuschnigg's confidant and with minister Marek, in order to describe to them once more the main principles of his plan. He then again emphasized that his reorganized Central Europe would not be against, but for cooperation with Germany. In September, Hodža won a promise from the Little Entente that its economic section would consider in detail the founding of an industrial and financial central office for the entire Danubian area; and in December, this plan was formally approved. But a November meeting of the Rome bloc took a negative view of Hodža's plans, and only Schuschnigg emphasized the need for closer ties with Czecho-Slovakia. In March 1937, Hodža again met with Schuschnigg. But before the meeting he invited the German Ambassador in Prague Ernst Eisenlohr, to explain to him again his view of the Central European situation and of

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[51] Š. Osuský, in a speech delivered in New York on June 24, 1954, on the 10th anniversary of Hodža's death. — „Bolsheviks are not on the level of human civilization" — said T. G. Masaryk in his Making of State (Quoted from T. G. Masaryk by Machotka, O.: Cornell University. Washington 1950, p. 29).

[52] He was at that time for a short period also Minister of Foreign Affairs (December 18, 1935 — February 29, 1936).

the possibility of cooperation of a united Central Europe with Germany. When Hodža did not find enough understanding in Berlin and Rome, he expressed his willingness — at a Bucharest meeting of Prime Ministers of the Little Entente on June 17, 1937, — to let Germany and Italy participate in the first stage of the talks about cooperation in Central Europe. They were to receive the guarantee of a fair share of Central European trade. But Berlin and Rome turned a deaf ear even to this proposal.

After the meeting of Chancellor Schuschnigg with Hitler on February 12, 1938, in Berchtesgaden, tension between Berlin and Vienna reached a peak. Hodža then again tried to meet with Schuschnigg. But the latter let him know it would not be good time. It might be sensationalized by the press. He also informed Hodža he was ready to intervene in Austria against any disturbances. But Schuschnigg was unable to carry out his promise to „intervene" against Nazi superior force. On March 13, 1938, the *Anschluss* materialized — Austria became Germany's *Ostmark*.

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When Milan Hodža was prime minister, he briefly also took over the ministry of foreign affairs. Štefan Osuský, Czecho-Slovak ambassador in Paris, informed him in February 1936 that Hitler had decided to occupy the Rhineland [53]. Though Czecho-Slovakia was not a signatory of the Rhine Pact, Hodža immediately went to Paris, and there on February 12, 1936, he met with French government officials and told them Czecho-Slovakia would back France all the way if France would resist the annexation of the Rhineland. And he promised to spare no efforts to make the other members of the Little Entente, Yugoslavia and Romania, take the same stand. French prime minister Albert Sarraut and foreign minister Pierre-Étienne Flandin replied, however, that there was no need for haste, because Hitler would not do anything before the Olympic Games which were scheduled for August of that year.

On March 17, 1936, Hitler occupied the Rhineland. France remained passive, and thereby gave Hitler time to build the Siegfried line in the Rhineland and thus cut off Czecho-Slovakia and Poland from any potential French assistance.

For Hodža, that was the strongest possible notice he had better put thing in order at home: eliminate conflicts between Slovaks and Czechs, between Czechs and Sudeten Germans and Subcarpathean Ruthenians. But time was short. What had been neglected during the first 15 years of the Rupublic's existence could not be rushed through in what little time it had left. *And so Hodža's attempt at a Europe where France and Germany would coexist with a new Central European Federation — a constellation upon which he wanted to build European peace — went to naught.* Munich destroyed all Hodža's hopes for a federation of Central Europe. On the morning of September 22, 1938, eight days before Munich, he resigned from the office of Prime Minister and went into exile, to France by way of Switzerland.

The civil servant government of General Jan Syrový and President Beneš

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[53] Š. Osuský, in a speech delivered in New York on June 24, 1954.

received the Munich ultimatum at 2 a. m. on September 30, 1938. And that was the end of the Republic. On March 15, 1939, Hitler occupied Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Slovakia, blackmailed by Hitler's threat he would hand the Slovaks over to Hungary, proclaimed Slovak „independence" on the 14th of March [54].

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In exile, E. Beneš and his political followers maliciously accused Hodža of having engineered the Munich capitulation; he allegedly had asked the French ambassador Delacroix to pressure the Czecho-Slovak government by indicating that if Czecho-Slovakia would not accept the Munich *Diktat*, neither France nor Britain would come to its assistance. Hodža denied this accusation at least twice. Once in a letter published in *Europe Nouvelle* (Paris) of October 19, 1938, and then in a conversation with J. W. Wheeler-Bennett in 1941. In the end Beneš himself sent him a letter of apology on July 17, 1943, in which he wrote:

„I sent you a message that I had a conversation in Washington with a French personality who had been in a position of responsibility at the Quai d'Orsay in September 1938, and who gave me some further details about Munich. Among other things, he revealed the instructions Delacroix got from Bonnet for the conversation he was going to have with you. It turns out you were to be provoked into making a statement which would have been used against our Republic and which would have served Paris to throw the responsibility for the non-fulfillment of the treaty on Prague. The plot did not succeed and the responsibility could not have been put on Prague. Berlin was listening to that conversation. It is only right, I think, that you should be informed about it, not only because of the differences this matter has caused between us, but also because of its importance. The truth about Munich is being slowly revealed and one day will be fully known. Wishing you a fast recovery I am, sincerely yours, Dr. Eduard Beneš [55]."

Beneš and Hodža took pains in exile to maintain a correct relationship, at least outwardly. But Beneš tried to get rid of Hodža at any cost. One reason was their different opinions on the internal structure of Czecho-Slovakia. (Beneš was a centralist, Hodža a regionalist and in exile an outspoken autonomist.) But the main reason was their different opinions on the post-war structure of Europe. Hodža insisted on a Central European federation. Beneš, in the first few years after Munich, hesitantly went along with the idea, but later abandoned it because the Soviets did not like it.

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[54] B r u e g e l : Czechoslovakia before Munich 306.

[55] B r u e g e l : Czechoslovakia before Munich (p. 280, footnote 3) writes that L v o v á , Míla, in ČČH 3 339—349 quotes Beneš's letter to Hodža in 1943, and states: „ . . . Alexis Leger, previously the leading official in the French Foreign Ministry, told Beneš in Washington that he was able to testify to Bonnet's telephone conversation with the French Minister in Prague charging him to call on Hodža and to provoke enquiries so that it could be said that the request for the declaration that France would not fulfil her obligations had come from the Czechoslovak Prime Minister." Thus Lvová states who informed Beneš in Washington: Alexis Leger. That means that in Prague archives among the documents on Beneš's presidency there are also more detailed entries about the unjust accusation of Milan Hodža. (The Beneš letter to Hodža is in the possession of the author of this study.)

In exile Hodža developed his federation plans for Central Europe more fully and worked much more tenaciously for their realization than ever before. In London in 1942 he published his book *Federation in Central Europe*, in part an account of his political activity in Austria-Hungary and in Czecho-Slovakia, in part a reminiscence about his negotiations for the autonomy of Slovakia and for the settlement of the Sudeten German issue in the most difficult years and months of the Republic, — as well as a perfected program for federation of Central Europe. Hodža spoke of his plans also in an interview published in the *New York Times* on December 7, 1941, right after his arrival in the USA. In this interview he deliberated:

As small nations were falling, one after another, victims of aggression, a lively debate started in the West as to whether it was advisable to safeguard these nations a future independent existence. Hodža argued that from the standpoint of democratic political philosophy there was only one answer: every nation, whether large, or small, has an equal right to live. No power, however strong, has the right to destroy a nation, however small. The democratic principle of the defense of the weaker could not be applied only to individuals, it had to be acknowledged also in relations between nations. After all, the fate of small nations was only a question of justice and human rights. Every nation, large or small, had to be preserved, and would be, if it was able to make valuable moral and material contributions to mankind. Useless nations had not survived the period of the „national revival". Useful and capable nations did survive it, and there was no power so strong as to destroy them, unless it would physically annihilate them.

The right to nationhood is of course, one of the tenets of nationalism. But in Central Europe, nationalism is generally accompanied by another phenomenon, what one might call the democratic idea. Reasons for that might be found in the history of Central European nations: the enemies of their freedom and independence very often in recent times happened to be also their class enemies, social antagonists. Most big landlords and industrialists, the so-called „ruling class", belonged to ethnic groups which have for a few past centuries dominated the Central European Slavs. They were Austrians and Magyars, and thus were seen both as national oppressors and as exploiters. This identity of social conflicts with national ones gave birth to self-protective nationalism always closely tied to a desire for a more democratic society. Hence it can be said that at the beginning of the Second World War Central European nationalism was already permeated with democratic tendencies.

On December 4, 1943, Ferenz Göngör published in the Hungarian newspaper *Az Ember* in New York an interview with Hodža. In this interview Hodža underscored the necessity of strengthening democracy in all Central European countries, especially in Hungary. He said:

„Without democracy the Danubian region will disintegrate and become the victim of external intrigues. Democracy ceased to be an internal affair long time ago . . . The interest of the people is identical with peace and progress. Only an integral democracy is able to exterminate the dictatorial and imperialistic groups which linger in the national organism of the countries of Central Europe. — I speak

of integral democracy on purpose because democracy must penetrate not only the methods and institutions of the representative government but also the social and economic affairs of the masses... If democracy is unable to gain strength from the economic satisfaction of the people the folly of demagoguery will prevail. Let's be frank. In 1922, land reform in Hungary was thwarted. The solid Hungarian peasant did not become land owner. In consequence, a great danger threatened the European community. Bolshevization becomes dangerous when armed with the explosive of misery at home. When the flame catches the proletariat of one country it will not ask for the visa to enter other countries and the whole of Central Europe will be in danger... Democracy is not an internal affair, but a vital international concern common to all of us who do not wish that Europe should die."

Editor Göngör then told Hodža that in Budapest he was known as an „arch-enemy of the Russians" and that his (federation) concept was apt „to thwart those whose activity could well bring Central Europe under a Russian protectorate".

Hodža replied: „That's interesting they consider me an arch-enemy of the Russians now when once I was reputed there to be a Russophilic, panslavistic traitor. The truth is only that I never was an admirer of the tzarist regime; and today, as all through my life, I believe our common destiny and our future can only be secure in an honestly democratic Central Europe. While Russia will remain Soviet, a statist socialistic regime, we shall remain democrats... Every nation must derive its form of government from its psychological and historical predispositions and from the social stratification of its people. The Russian form of government is autocratic even today though it now has a certain populist content... Those speculations about me in Budapest I consider groundless. My thesis is: no spheres of influence, no protectorates but a cooperative community of sovereign states which would discourage attackers, and where the security of individual sovereign states would rest on common action and common responsibility. Thus, neither a Russian sphere, nor an Anglo-Russian sphere, but a common and indivisible sphere and a cooperation of all."

Göndör then asked Hodža: „What is your opinion about the Jewish question? What do you think of Tuka's, Tiso's, and Mach's terrible persecution of Jews and Magyars?"

Hodža replied: „The allies did not recognize the governments resulting from the German occupation and the nazification of Central European countries. This means in principle a political and legal continuity of those countries as they existed before the war. The so-called Jewish laws were imported by Hitler, and will be thrown out with him. As far as Czecho-Slovakia is concerned, there never was a Jewish question in our country, and there never will be one. The Slovak names you mentioned are interesting in a way. Forgive me if I'll tell you now that in 1910 census all those who bear those names, without an exception, designated themselves as Magyars, not Slovaks. It is natural the Magyars will not be overjoyed to hear this. But it is neither their nor the Slovaks' fault. About half-a-century ago, a couple of representatives of the people's party started to damn the Jews. But responsible leaders of our people, Hlinka included, knew better than that.

Apart from that, there never was an autochthonous anti-Semitism in Slovakia. Between 1918 and 1938, Jews had the same legal and political status as everyone else. My own Agrarian Party always had its Jewish section, always ran Jewish candidates for offices, and always had at least one Jewish Parliament deputy for a given percentage of votes. The same goes for our Social Democratic Party. — In the social and economic spheres, the Jews were free to act according to their own wishes and capabilities, that is, the way they do in a liberal society. — While I was prime minister, I myself took the Czech-Jewish economist Bitterman out of the private sector and made him a department head ... When in the early days of our Republic, the Orthodox Jews asked the government for Hebrew schools, I agreed without any hesitation. But this, of course, was not due only to my personal world-view, but to the moral wellsprings of the Czech and Slovak liberal attitudes. Political crises naturally cause upheavels and then some of the worst elements of a society surface. The Czecho-Slovak débacle was no exception. Criminal, murderous agents from the near-by Vienna had managed to inject the Nazi poison already into the atmosphere of the October Slovak Autonomy in Žilina. This explains the humiliation and the persecution of Jews in Slovakia. The Nazis found some more or less gangsterish allies in every country, and Slovakia was no exception. I deliberately say ‚was', not ‚is', because in the meantime this epidemic has been checked, so that now the ‚Jewish policy' is the policy of but a few very visible so-called ‚statesmen' who will be made responsible for it. Human compassion has been awakened and the churches, too, have done their duty. The truth is, too, that prisons and concentration camps are full of humanitarian leaders. The result? Our democratic humanitarian instincts will unify us. Czecho-Slovakia will continue faithfull to its old honest ways."

Central Europe naturally is, and will always remain, a neighbor of Germany, said Hodža, and one had to reckon with it. And this was how this eminent political realist saw the future economic relations of an eventual Central European Federation with Germany:

„Economic collaboration between the Central European states to the point of establishment of a customs union between them so that they could act as one large economic unit, means that they could enter into trade relations with neighbouring powers on equal footing ... There is no question of impairing natural economic relations with a future Germany incorporated into the framework of the fair European economic cooperation. But what will be achieved is the reintroduction of normal trade relations with Germany, relations which are the immediate reflection of the wants and needs of consumers."

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When Hitler attacked the Soviet Union and Russia became an ally of the Western power, the idea of Central European federation started to lose ground. At the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944, the fortunes of war, after previous victories of Hitler, started to turn in favor of the allies. There followed the period of honeymoon between the Western allies and Russia. The Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement of friendship, signed on December 12, 1943, during Beneš's visit in Moscow also

falls within this period. It was believed then that cooperation with the Soviets would be possible even after the war. The name of Soviet Russia rang out with promise in America. Soviet propaganda was then so effective that it won over the hearts of the good-natured Americans. It was then very unpopular in America to say loudly that the Soviets would trample under their feet, right after the war, that which they had signed in the Declaration of te United Nations. Anyone's warning against the communist imperialistic expansion was considered breaking the rules of the game; the cooperation and unity of the allies, the all-out war effort, and the chances of ending the war quickly — that was the aim.

But Hodža never concealed his deep distrust of communism, and he could hardly dissociate Soviet Russia from it. In 1918—1919, he had watched a gradual take-over by the communists in Hungary. It was his opinion that „you could yield power to the communists and help to build up the might of the Soviet Union only at the peril of your life and of human civilization [56]." This attitude toward communism Hodža never concealed in his lectures in America and in his articles, and even less after Beneš concluded the 1943 Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement. Some journalists in America attacked him then — most of all the *Overseas News Agency*, but also some Czech and Slovak newspapers, sympathetic to Beneš's pro-Soviet policies. The *Overseas News Agency* wrote that inquiries about Hodža at the Czecho-Slovak Legation in Washington were answered in a cold and reserved manner, and that „an indication was made to the effect that Hodža was the leader of the Agrarian Party which at the decisive moment . . . took a stand against Beneš", and that the Agrarian Party „was only a little less reactionary than the fascist party of Hlinka's Guardists, and had made any opposition to the Munich betrayal impossible . . ." [57]. And the *Chicago Sun* of August 12, 1942, added the following: „The Agrarians were for the Munich Pact . . ." In a letter dated September 1st, 1942, Hodža wrote to Beneš: „One radio commentator declared me to be ‚the former pro-Nazi prime minister'. From what he already had confessed to, it is one hundred per cent certain that he had received this ‚information' from our Legation . . . It is, of course, well known, — and Dr. Papánek had himself boasted of it, — that he had denounced me (to the U.S. authorities) [58]."

Naturally, then, the American authorities were closely watching Hodža. A memorandum submitted to the State Department by DeWitt Poole of the Office of Strategic Services (the forerunner of CIA) stated that the „representatives of president Beneš in this country headed by Dr. J. Papánek [59], . . . vigorously combat Hodža's efforts to win the backing of American Slovaks for his ideas".

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[56] During his diplomatic mission in Budapest after the World War I, Hodža's own life was endangered by the Hungarian Bolsheviks. See H o d ž a : Federation in Central Europe 77, footnote 1.

[57] Věk Rozumu, November 20, 1941.

[58] Photographic copy Hodža's letter to Beneš is in the ownership of the author of this study.

[59] Ján Papánek was the Czecho-Slovak consul in Pittsburgh/Pa. and after the Munich catastrophy he entered the service of Beneš, and later he became the head of the Czechoslovak Information Service in New York. Czecho-Slovak minister in Washington/D. C. was Vladimír Hurban.

But it also said: „On his arrival in the United States Dr. Hodža immediately became the target of what may be described as a ‚smear' campaign. The *Overseas News Agency* described him in press releases as the leader of a reactionary party which was not far from being Fascist and in any case was anti-Semitic. It was alleged that he maintained close contact with Tibor Eckhardt and the Archduke Otto as well with a German military clique. There were also rumors about financial irregularities in his past, and stories were circulated to publicize his extravagance with funds obtained by peculation, together with accounts of his reputedly immoral private life. Dr. Hodža charges that the originator of these rumors was Dr. Papánek, acting on instructions from Beneš in London . . . [60]."

This was a real smear campaign — without quotation marks. Just to illustrate „the extravagance with funds obtained by peculation", it would be useful to mention this episode: Jaroslav Stránský while in Beneš's service during the first Republic accused Hodža in his newspaper *Lidové Noviny* of bribery and peculation in the so-called Koburg-Eisler affair. Hodža sued him and Stránský apologized publicly. — Jan Stránský, the son of Jaroslav Stránský, told me in New York how Beneš incited his father to attack Hodža, and promised him documents that would prove the accusation. When the day of the trial came, it turned out Beneš had none. And so Stránský lost the case against Hodža.

The memorandum also said: „It is known that Dr. Papánek contacted a Chicago newspaperman in an effort to keep him from writing anything about Dr. Hodža's federation plan on the ground that Hodža was an evil influence sowing discord among the Czechs and Slovaks [61].

But in another memorandum, dated October 1, 1942, the representative of the same Office of Strategic Services, DeWitt C. Poole, does not mention „an evil influence sowing discord among the Czechs and Slovaks"; he writes about a „support which Dr. Hodža seems to have won in the United States to a considerable extent" [62]. And it is not without interest that the same DeWitt C. Poole wrote on June 30, 1951, an exellent program about Hodža for the Radio Free Europe.

Because of his anti-communist attitude, Hodža was called by some American newspapers „Russia-hater-and-baiter". The memorandum quoted in fact, resulted from an official investigation of Hodža due to accusations that he was „interfering with the American war effort". — Such was then the atmosphere in America, and so was received every concept foreseeing the communist danger for post-war Europe and future Soviet imperialism.

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After the Teheran conference of the Big Three and the Treaty of Alliance between the Soviet Union and the Czecho-Slovak government in exile, Hodža became alarmed at the implications of the rumoured zones of military administrations or influence allegedly carved out between the allies in the heart of Europe.

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[60] The National Archives, Record Group No. 17934, Washington/D. C.
[61] I b i d e m.
[62] Department of State: Communications and Records, October 10, 1942.

In the winter of 1944, he submitted a long *Memorandum to the American Secretary of State Cordell Hull.* There he enumerated all the Soviet aggressions and annexations of foreign territories from 1939 on. He warned against the nuclei of so-called friendly governments reared in Moscow, i. e. the Poles Kornejcuk-Vasilevska, the Bulgarian Dimitroff, the Yugoslav Tito, whose task it was to establish communism firmly in their respective countries according to a Kremlin master plan. And he admonished against the same danger looming in Asia too.

A clear evidence of Soviet plans for Europe was the so-called *Manifesto of a Free Germany,* issued in Moscow at that time. This Manifesto was quite openly against an unconditional surrender of Germany, a policy proclaimed by the West and accepted also by the Soviets. The Manifesto plainly expected Germany to accept the so-called „friendly government" in Moscow.

About the relationship of communism to Russian nationalism Hodža wrote in the Memorandum: „It would be dangerous to count on a difference between Russian communism and nationalism. Communism has accepted nationalism as the most useful emotional element in the mentality of the masses of the Russian people. Russian nationalism can not remain indifferent when overwhelmed by the prospect of dominating Central Europe, Slav and non-Slav."

Further, Hodža tried to persuade Cordell Hull not to abandon his plan for an all-allied military administration of liberated territories and not to allow anywhere an exlusive Soviet one, even temporarily. He states in the *Memorandum:*

„Instead of ‚spheres of interest' a firm stand must be taken by the Big Three on international cooperation by equal sovereignties, including joint decisions and joint responsibilities. It is only inside the framework that Russia can become a partner of the United States and Great Britain now and after the war. Stalin's challenge to democracy should be met by all the methods and institutions which constitute the prerequisites and weapons of democratic organizations of Europe immediately after the cessation of hostilities. A free expression of the people's will must be obtained in all countries, provinces or regions in question, if necessary under the joint protection of the Big Three and possibly their military units. The application of the general principle of democratic procedure may require special methods in some European countries."

„The free elections and plebiscites in Central Europe" — insisted Hodža in the Memorandum — „based on an universal franchise will demonstrate the desire of all Central European countries to enjoy the friendship and help of the USA and the United Kingdom and also the wish for good neighbourly relations with Russia — without acceptance, however, of the economic and political system or of her interference with their internal affairs." He pleaded further: „Russia's security does not depend on an artificial conquered ‚security belt' of neighbouring nations, but on international solidarity in the framework of the Big Three and the United Nations."

About Czecho-Slovakia Hodža writes: „It may or may not be true that the master of Prague is the master of Europe [63]. At any rate, as the Czecho-Slovak

[63] German Chancellor Otto Bismarck after his victory over Austria in 1866 allegedly declared: „Whoever is master of Bohemia is master of Europe. Europe must, there-

government in exile has entered the Soviet sphere, Prague is going to become instrumental in Moscow's communistic *Drang nach Westen.* A Slav nationalist should be enthusiastic about an unheard-of expansion of Slavic thought or sphere as far as Prague, a traditional center of Slavic cultural and political efforts. As a matter of fact, however, Slavic civilization sprang up and focussed upon ideals such as humanitarian democracy, liberties of the individual and the nations and freedom of thought and conscience. It was to these ideals that so many Czech leaders from Jan Hus, Comenius, Palacký, up to T. G. Masaryk dedicated themselves. Moscow's Slavism may be fundamentally different. Slav romanticism was being used for propaganda purposes by some of the Tsar's diplomats. So it is now . . . It is however, precisely the history of the Slav nations that offers the most tragic evidence against the division of Europe into spheres of interests. Poles and Czechs and Slovaks and all Yugoslavs have been victims of the power-and-spheres policies for centuries. So it was with satisfaction and indeed enthusiasm that all these nations, except the Czechs in exile, hailed the post-war scheme of international organization based upon equal sovereignties of all nations large and small . . . Mr. Beneš however publicly made an attempt to explain his special-sphere policy by indicting the western democracies for the betrayal of which Czecho-Slovakia became the victim in 1938. In fact, it was Mr. Beneš himself who during his long personal experience with the League of Nations could not fail to learn the object lesson that no special betrayal was needed to let down our country in 1938. It certainly was the absence of European solidarity against aggression that ripened a violent revival of German imperialism . . . There was an inadequate system which had become a hot-bed of those wicked and which carried by itself the elements of divisions and conflicts. It is not only the French sphere that was doomed to dissolve into thin air, influential as France might have been in 1919. No sphere is strong enough to silence the rest of the world, or even only the rival's sphere. Small nations did not succeed in being protected by France and they will not enjoy their protection by Soviet Russia in spite of the magnificence of Russian achievement . . . Final victory means collective victory, collective war aims, and unconditional loyalty and discipline. — I am sorry to point out that official Czecho-Slovak policy obviously relinquished this imperative requirement of all allies' . . ."

Then in Chapter IV of the *Memorandum* Hodža asks whether Beneš was entitled „to help the Soviets in creating a sphere, a ‚security belt' in single-handed action, outside the framework of the Big Three". „Formally, he was" — answered Hodža — but he disputed Beneš's „right to commit our people and the state to any fundamental internal or international issues."

From what Hodža wrote in the Memorandum, it is clear that he was seriously alarmed at the prospect of communism swallowing up the whole of Central Europe.

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fore, never allow any nation except the Czechs to rule it, since that nation does not lust for domination. The bounderies of Bohemia are a safeguard of European security and he who moves them will plunge Europe into misery." (B e n e š, E.: Address to the Congress of the United States, May 13, 1943. Published in: Czechoslovak Sources and Documents, No. 4, August 1943, by The Czechoslovak Information Service in New York.)

He considered it a most gloomy prospect from the point of view of his country, but also very much against the interests of stable, law-abiding forces in Europe, pitted against the danger of communist expansion and dynamism. The old „European concert", the balance of power and the principle of compensating any great power for territorial aggrandizements of another great power in Europe, were long ago discarded as absolete. Hodža wanted to maintain the Central European area free, in order to federate it and thus to recreate a balance of power on the European continent which would prevent Soviet Russia from over-running it. — Unfortunately he did not succeed. And dying on June 27, 1944, he could not yet see all that caused his fears and apprehensions materializing all over Central Europe. But the fact is that he was a European statesman of great vision.

Hodža concluded his Memorandum by the words which are still a memento for the world: „Without a free Central Europe there is no prospect of preventing a totalitarian imperialism from engulfing all of Europe and, maybe, even some of its neighbours overseas." (What a resemblance with the alleged Bismarck dictum of 1866! — See footnote [63].)

Political representatives of Czecho-Slovakia and Poland in exile agreed in 1940 on a close cooperation. This was to a large extent due to the Milan Hodža's old connections and cooperations with his Polish Agrarian friends. They agreed to create a real Polish-Czechoslovak union, in the hope that other Central European nations would also join it. Hardly anybody else rejoiced at this agreement as much as Hodža. — „What I wish to emphasize is that the Union of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia is to be assessed as the steping-stone to a federated Central Europe", said Hodža, and, stressing once again an all-Central European union, he went on: „This war would be an irreparable loss for mankind if it were not recompensed by material guarantees for adapting national aspirations, aggressive as they are. Victory means also consolidation of its results [64]." The final declaration of the Polish-Czechoslovak confederation was signed on January 21, 1942, in London.

In the years that immediately followed Munich, even Beneš began to realize the weakness of the small countries that had come out of World War I. He admitted it openly in his speech to the Czechoslovak State Council in London on December 11, 1940, when he condemned the West's unwillingness „to defend the international legal system of Europe" and the concessions that were being made to dictatorships „mostly at the expense of small countries" [65]. In fact, already in August 1939, he said in a message he sent from London to Prague: „We desire order, unity, and we intend to come to terms even with Poland and to cooperate loyally with it now that we are fighting on the same front [66]." And later, speaking to the home front over radio from London, he said: „We want above all to continue our current Czechoslovak-Polish negotiations ... In these preparatory arrangements we are leaving the door open to other Middle-Eurpean countries to embark upon a com-

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[64] Hodža: Federation in Central Europe 179.

[65] Beneš, E.: Tři roky druhé světové války [Three Years of the Second World War]. Týdeník Čechoslovák [Weekly Čechoslovák]. London 1942, p. 115.

[66] Ibidem 24.

mon road with us [67]." In May 1941, before the Council on Foreign Relations in Chicago, he said: „To my mind the idea of confederation is a sound and fruitful idea for the nations of the European continent. The members of our government believe, too, that our confederation with Poland will benefit our Polish neighbors no less than ourselves [68]."

But immediately after that, in December 1943 on his visit to Moscow, he apologized for the Czechoslovak-Polish Declaration in the talk with Molotov saying that he signed it under pressure of the British, so as to get their recognition of his government in exile. „We needed recognition from the British, but they laid down a condition, we shall not recognize you, if you do not come to an understanding with the Poles. They pressed for a federation. The Poles too. Under this pressure we negotiated and I refused categorically from the beginning to accept a federation", explained Beneš to Molotov, and added: „It will not be a federation, at most it can be a confederation ... it will be a confederation *sui generis*". And when Molotov asked him what a confederation *sui generis* was, Beneš readily replied: „I did not want it to be talked about as simply a confederation, because that has a certain connotation in international law ... That is why I added that between us and the Poles it was going to be a confederation of a special kind, *sui generis*, the nature of which had to be determined in further negotiations [69]."

For those negotiations Beneš laid down further conditions: „a/ There shall be nothing between us and Poland, if there will not be friendly relations between Poland and the USSR; or b/ if border issue between ourselves will not be resolved in a friendly way; c/ there will be no confederation if there is no basic change in all internal conditions in Poland; d/ I shall not sign anything outside our borders, we can only discuss matters, only the nation at home can dicide [70]." (It is certainly interesting that while telling Molotov, that „only the nation can decide", he was signing a treaty with Soviet Russia without asking the nation's permission.)

But Molotov remarked that the Soviets were mainly against the Declaration of January 21, 1942. Beneš simply declared: „As of today, it is null and void. We said to ourselves that we were stopping the work, and I told Mikolajczyk that I did not consider myself bound by this declaration ... I told all that also to the British. Now our agreement [Soviet-Czechoslovak] means that all that was agreed upon about the confederation is no more valid [71]."

But in this conversation with Molotov Beneš tried to go even further to meet the Soviets. To avoid any suspicion that Czecho-Slovakia might be considering a Danubian, ar Central European federation, that is an attempt to realize Hodža's plans, Beneš took a very clear stand regarding this question: „I should like to mention the Danubian federation and assure you that in this respect we have undertaken no commitments, nor shall we do so; a/ In questions of organizing Central Europe we shall do nothing without agreement with you; b/ We are for the inde-

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[67] Ibidem 72.
[68] Czechoslovak Sources and Documents, No. 4, August 1943, p. 54.
[69] Quoted from review: Svědectví 47 (1974) 486 f. (Transcribed from J. Smutný's Archives).
[70] Ibidem 487 f.
[71] Ibidem 487.

pendence of Austria, and we are convinced that Austria can live by itself . . . [72]."

Beneš fatally undercut Czecho-Slovakia's cooperation with Poland and the envisioned Central European federation. Professor Vojtěch Mastný wrote that „the president knew exactly what he was doing and, at least in that his actions were always perfectly thought through, he was an equal of Stalin" [73]. And Beneš's chancellor Jaromír Smutný simply called Beneš „the greatest Machiavelli of our time" [74].

We have already mentioned the pro-Soviet mood in America after Hitler's sudden attack on Soviet Russia. Some American journalists called Hodža a „Russia-hater-and-baiter" and often viciously attacked him. But it certainly cannot be said that all of America became uncritical vis-à-vis the Soviets. Its suspicions of communism and its No. I. representative, the Soviet Union, were just temporarily restrained.

The great majority remainded cautious and reserved. Even in government circles, opinions were divided. For the ailing president F. D. Roosevelt it was easier and more comfortable to trust, rather than not to trust, Stalin. The Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, was more cautious. The same was true of his assistant Secretary Adolph Berle, Jr. — on the other hand, undersecretary, Sumner Welles, was a typical representative of the conciliatory policy toward the Soviets. (This was not out of any sympathy for communism or the Soviet system on his part, but simply because the USSR was an ally.) The main thing was to end the war as quickly as possible and, as is always the case in any war, to bring the American soldiers back home as soon as possible.

It is certainly worth notice that on August 10, 1943, just before the meeting of F. D. Roosevelt with Churchill in Quebec, the former American ambassador in Moscow William C. Bullitt sent President Roosevelt a 14-page memorandum in which he suggested the allies should open a European front in the Balkans and thus prevent the Soviets from entering Central Europe. „Stalin, like Hitler, will not stop, he can only be stopped" — Bullitt warned Roosevelt, and he added: „our political objectives would be the establishment of British and American forces in the Balkans and Eastern and Central Europe. Their first objective should be the defeat of Germany, the second, the barring to the Red army of the way into Europe [75]."

Sober voices in America and elsewhere in the West saw no good omen in Beneš's 1943 trip to Moscow. Some political thinkers and writers held to Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement to be an invitation to the Soviets to enter Europe [76]. The British government tried for a long time to dissuade him from making the trip, and in America, where he went in summer 1943,— that is long before his departure for

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[72] Ibidem 490.

[73] Mastný, Vojtěch: Benešovy rozhovory se Stalinem a Molotovem, Svědectví 47 (1974) 476.

[74] Ibidem 468 f.

[75] Raymont, Henry: Bullitt Letter to Roosevelt. N. Y. Times, April 26, 1970, p. 30 f.

[76] Voigt, F. A.: Constants in Russian Foreign Policy. Nineteenth Century and After 134 (1943) 246. See also the relevant passage of Hodžas Memorandum to the State Department.

Moscow — he evidently did not get a clear-cut approval either [77]. The fact is, though, that during his talks with representatives of the USA in Washington Beneš made no effort to win any promises that America and the Western allies would be directed toward uniting the Central European micro-states. Beneš's trip to Moscow, and the commitments he made there on the behalf of future Czecho-Slovakia, were a death-blow to Hodža's federation plans, as well as to the plans of the Polish government in London.

There are moments in life that one never forgets. One of such moments in my life was when I visited Hodža just after Beneš and the Czecho-Slovak government in exile declared publicly that the security of Czecho-Slovakia was to be based on the closest possible cooperation with the Soviet Union. Never before had I seen Hodža so downcast. Hodža's fears were confirmed also by the secret despatch sent to Beneš in London by the head of the Czechoslovak Information Service in New York Ján Papánek, in which he described the meeting of DeWitt Poole of the American Office of Strategic Services with Hodža. When Poole asked Hodža if he would not go to London, Hodža answered no . . . saying that he „does not agree with Beneš's policy, especially vis-à-vis the Soviet Union" [78].

True, the Soviets were then posing before the Western world as democrats, they had even disbanded the Comintern and were promising friendly cooperation after the war. But Milan Hodža did not trust them and, though discouraged by this turn of events, did not stop warning of the Soviet danger. This was the time when he wrote the above mentioned *Memorandum* to the State Department, which will always remain a testimony to Hodža's far-reaching statesmanlike vision.

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Milan Hodža wrote, and many times also said, that he had dedicated his whole life to the effort of unifying the nations of Central Europe. What a long life?

He was born in Sučany (near Turčiansky Svätý Martin) in Slovakia on February 1, 1878, and died on June 27, 1944, in Clearwater, Florida, USA, in exile. He was born to Ondrej Hodža, a Lutheran pastor in Sučany, and his second wife Mária Plechová. Milan's father was among the literary followers of L'udovít Štúr, and his uncle, Michal Miloslav Hodža, also a Lutheran pastor (in Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš), was one of the most steadfast defenders of the Slovak literary language in the 1840's. He was also one of those who sought from the Emperor equality for all nations in the Austrian Empire, in other words, a federation. Francis Joseph promised a lot of things to the Slovaks and even donated 1,000 Guilders for the founding of Matica Slovenská, a Slovak cultural organization, but after the settlement with the Magyars in 1867 he „swallowed his promises", as Hodža used to say, „just like oysters before lunch". Thus the idea of a federation as proposed by František Palacký at the Kremsier Diet in 1849, in which Slovaks and Czechs were to form a single Czecho-Slovak state, fell through.

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[77] „After talking to Roosevelt and to those at State Department he (Beneš) told me that opinions at the State Department were divided, but that Roosevelt had no objections", wrote Ján Papánek in the review: Proměny 13 (1976) No. 4, 34.

[78] Otáhalová, Libuše / Červínková, Milada (eds.): Dokumenty z československé politiky, 1939—1943. 2 Vols. Prague 1966, here vol. 1, p. 392.

And so, the son of that Ondrej Hodža and nephew of Michal, repaid His Majesty for those „swallowed oysters" in one of his harshest articles entitled *Again at the Expense of Our Hides, Your Majesty*[79]? in which he asked Slovakia not to rely upon the dynasty, but „upon the strength of the nation and ... an alliance with all parties which honestly desire general suffrage". That was Hodža's preparation for an alliance of non-Magyar parties with Magyar democratic and socialist parties, which came into being in 1906—1908. Hodža tried to realize the Federation hopes of his forefathers; and his own efforts can be divided into three periods:

1./ 1903—1914. — In this period Hodža's aim was, to democratize Hungary through universal suffrage, land reform, and an equal status for the non-Magyar nationalities which outnumbered the Magyars. To that end he started to cooperate very closely with the Romanians, Serbs, and democratic Germans, as well as with the democratic Magyars in Hungary. From the equality status for all the nationalities in Hungary, and in the entire Habsburg monarchy, Hodža expected a total restructuring of the Empire: it would necessarily become a federation, though temporarily one ruled by a strong monarch and thus something similar to what František Palacký had proposed. That was why Hodža and some of his Slovak confrères started talking to the successor to the throne Francis Ferdinand who wanted to tame the separatist dualism of the Magyars and whom Hodža and his Romanian and Serbian fellow-participants in these contacts expected to put the monarchy on a federal foundation. But the sudden death of Francis Ferdinand clearly signalled to Hodža: Now war is coming. Austria-Hungary will fall apart and on its ruins a „commonwealth of liberated nations" will be created. During the First World War, between 1915—18, Hodža undoubtedly planned with Czechs in Vienna, — in secret, of course, — a common state of the Czechs and the Slovaks.

2./ The period of 1918—1938. Although Hodža had only few opportunities to influence directly the foreign policy of Czecho-Slovakia, he used powerful agrarian organizations to urge the formation a Central European federation, which might include Austria and Hungary, and to call for the closest possible union with Poland. He did not believe in the great power guarantees. Nor did he believe in the Treaty of Locarno. He trusted only Central European self-help. And he especially did not want Czecho-Slovakia to act as policemen for any power in Central Europe. He thought that only a united Central Europe could act as an economically and politically equal partner of both the neighboring and the distant great powers. When the German-Austrian customs union was formed, and the *Anschluss* announced, Hodža began to negotiate feverishly for the unification of Central Europe. He tried to correct what the Versailles Treaties had neglected to point out to the nations of the area. Namely: You are free. You have your own states, small states. But you must unite, you must form a federation which would be able to resist pressure from whatever direction. But it was too late. Hitler's armies were already on the march.

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[79] Slovenský týždenník 3 (1905) No. 28, July 7. — Here Hodža protested against the Habsburg-Hungarian reconciliation then being negotiated.

3./ During World War II Milan Hodža expanded his concept, as well as the area of a potential Central European federation. He then spoke not only of the states of the Little Entente, and Austria, Hungary, and Poland, but added the Baltic states, and quite logically also Bulgaria and Greece. The federation was to be located between Germany and Russia, and between the Baltic and the Aegean seas. British politicians understood Hodža's concept. They pressed Beneš's government in exile to start forming a federation, first with Poland and then to go on from there. America, although itself a federation, did not quite understand the importance of such a formation in Central Europe. It was no longer the era of Woodrow Wilson who knew precisely what Central Europe needed and who, like Lincoln, believed in the principle „E pluribus unum." One can call it an era when the United States succumbed to Soviet blundishments and friendly smiles. In spite of his failing health, Hodža made a great effort to convince the shapers of foreign policy in America that Stalin was not to be allowed to enter Europe. He explained very clearly why in his extensive *Memorandum*, but to no avail.

Perhaps the Almighty was merciful to Hodža in not letting him see what was happened Europe after the war. What befell his native country and the whole of Central Europe was exactly what he had warned the Western democracies against, but without success.

Cordell Hull, American Secretary of State during World War II, apparently just put Hodža's *Memorandum* (about the Soviet threat to Europe and the world) in his drawer. President F. D. Roosevelt left in his own drawer a similar warning from his own ambassador and friend W. C. Bullitt. Such were the times. Only Joseph Stalin was smiling under his moustache, waited, — and lived to see his plans realized. Not until ten years after Hodža's death came another Secretary of State, the wise and farseeing John Foster Dulles, who did Hodža justice. Dulles wrote about him: „He was a statesman whose practical understanding of the interdependence of nations was far ahead of his time. He is being honored for his constructive contribution to the cause of European unity and international understanding. May his wisdom for a union of sovereign and equal peoples in free association for mutual security and greater prosperity continue to inspire freedom-loving men on both sides of the Iron Curtain [80]."

What a tragedy that an American Secretary of State came to understand this only ten years after Hodža's death!

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MILAN HODŽAS BEMÜHUNGEN UM DIE MITTELEUROPÄISCHE FÖDERATION

Ihre ersten Impulse bekamen die föderalistischen Bestrebungen Hodžas in der Zeit seines Studiums am deutschen Gymnasium in der siebenbürgischen Stadt Herr-

[80] John Foster Dulles on the 10th anniversary of Hodža's death (New York, June 24, 1954).

mannstadt (Sibiu). Dort knüpfte er eine dauerhafte Freundschaft mit mehreren Mitschülern rumänischer, serbischer und deutscher Nationalität. Später gründete Hodža mit einigen von ihnen — z. B. mit Michael Popovici und Ilario Chendi — einen Verein nichtungarischer Studenten an der Budapester Universität. Sie bekundeten schon im Jahre 1897 in einem Vereins-Beschluß die Absicht, ein gemeinsames Aktionsprogramm auszuarbeiten, das die Verbesserung des Loses der nichtungarischen Völker Ungarns zum Ziel hatte. Man kann die föderativen Bestrebungen Hodžas in drei Zeitabschnitte einteilen:

1. 1903—1914. Vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg sah Hodža sein politisches Ziel im demokratischen Umbau Ungarns, der in enger Zusammenarbeit mit den Rumänen, Serben, Deutschen und auch den demokratisch gesinnten Ungarn erfolgen sollte. Die Durchführung des allgemeinen Wahlrechtes, die Agrarreform und die rechtliche Gleichstellung aller Nationalitäten schienen ihm geeignete Mittel zu sein, dieses Ziel zu erreichen. Die föderalistische Neuordnung sollte diese Bestrebungen krönen und die Lösung der nationalen Probleme nicht nur in Ungarn, sondern in der ganzen Monarchie ermöglichen. Diese Vorstellungen beflügelten Hodža, als er der Einladung von Erzherzog Franz-Ferdinand folgte. Der Thronfolger war durch den ungarischen Separatismus beunruhigt und Hodža hegte die Hoffnung, daß er Verständnis für die Belange der unterdrückten Nationalitäten in Ungarn zeigen werde. Die Ermordung Franz-Ferdinands und der Erste Weltkrieg machten Hodžas Bestrebungen gegenstandslos.

2. 1918—1938. Zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen hatte Hodža keinen direkten Zutritt zur auswärtigen Politik der Tschechoslowakischen Republik. Er bemühte sich, seine föderalistischen Vorstellungen auf der Ebene der internationalen Agrarbewegung zu fördern und zwar insbesondere in den Staaten der „Kleinen Entente". Er mißtraute dem Vertragssystem mit den westlichen Demokratien, das die Grundlage der tschechoslowakischen Außenpolitik bildete. Er wollte das mitteleuropäische Macht-Vakuum durch eine Föderation derjenigen Staaten füllen, die in diesen Raum gehörten, und die durch gemeinsame politische Interessen verbunden waren. In den bäuerlichen Schichten, die im mitteleuropäischen Raum lebten, sah er einen wichtigen Träger vieler ökonomischer und gesellschaftlicher Gemeinsamkeiten.

3. Der Zweite Weltkrieg. Während der Zeit des politischen Exils in den Vereinigten Staaten verbreitete Hodža seine Raumvorstellungen von der mitteleuropäischen Föderation. Nicht nur die Staaten der „Kleinen Entente", Österreich, Ungarn und Polen, sondern auch die baltischen Nationen, die Bulgaren und Griechen sollten in die gemeinsame Föderation einbezogen werden. Hodža unterstützte die Initiative zur Bildung eines tschechoslowakisch-polnischen Bundesstaates und kritisierte Benešs Politik der engen Allianz mit der Sowjetunion, die den föderalistischen Bestrebungen zuwider war. Seine Vorstellungen erläuterte Hodža im Buch *Federation in Central Europe* und in dem langen *Memorandum* an das amerikanische Auswärtige Amt, in dem er vor dem sowjetischen „Drang nach Westen" warnte.