

MILAN HODŽA'S EFFORTS TO FEDERALIZE  
CENTRAL EUROPE

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The first impulses for Hodža's federalist ideas came during the time of his studies at a German gymnasium in the Transylvanian town of Hermannstadt (Sibiu). It was there that he established lasting friendships with several fellow students of Rumanian, Serbian, and German nationality.

Hodža's federalistic endeavours developed in three stages.

1. 1903—1914. Before World War I Hodža regarded as his political goal a democratic remodelling of Hungary, which was to take place in close cooperation with the Rumanians, Serbs, Germans and also with democratic-minded Hungarians. This conception motivated Hodža when he accepted the invitation of Archduke Franz-Ferdinand. The successor to the throne was worried by Hungarian separatism and Hodža hoped that he would understand the concerns of the oppressed nationalities in Hungary.

2. 1918—1938. Between the World Wars Hodža had no direct control over the foreign policies of Czechoslovakia. He strove to promote his federalist ideas on the level of the international agrarian movement, particularly in the countries of the „Little Entente“. He desired to fill up the Central European power vacuum with a federation of the states of that region which were united by common political interests.

3. The Second World War. During the time of his political exile, Hodža voiced his ideas of a Central European federation in the United States. He felt that not only the nations of the „Little Entente“ plus Austria, Hungary and Poland, but also the Baltic peoples, the Bulgarians and the Greeks should be included in the common federation. Hodža explained his conception in the book *Federation in Central Europe* and in a long memorandum to the American State Department in which he cautioned against the Soviet „rush to the West“.