

## THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ROMANIAN INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES TO THE SUCCESS OF GREAT ROMANIA

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***Abstract:** The Great Romania was a dream started by Mihai Viteazul, continued by the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza and accomplished by King Ferdinand.*

*There was an impressive blood tribute given by the Romanian people, above one million dead, civilians and military, the country was devastated, the infrastructure was destroyed and so on; but this state of being did not impress the great world powers too much.*

*Instead of being compensated, Romania was left to pay two billion lei in gold; in addition Austrian and Hungarian minorities in Romania were in given exaggerated protection.*

*Nevertheless, the Great Union („Marea Unire”) remains a bright page the history of Romanian people.*

***Keywords:** Great Romania; Romanian intelligence services; Conducting Council; National Guard; Intelligence Office; Military Branch; Hungarian and Soviet guards; massacres; war compensation.*

**T**he Great Romania was a dream started by Mihai Viteazul, continued by the ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza and accomplished by King Ferdinand.

Great Romania had a surface of 295.049 km<sup>2</sup>, and including the Romanians in all Romanian provinces, nowadays it would have got to 30 million inhabitants, so it would have been on the 5<sup>th</sup> position in Europe.

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The large amount of bloodshed by the Romanian people, of over one million people, military and civilians, the country devastated by fights, the ruined infrastructure and the famished population did not impress too much the world's great powers.

At the Peace Conference, Romania was acknowledged as having suffered less than half of the damages, that is, 31 billion lei in gold, as compared to the 72 billion that was actually true.

Great Powers refused to grant Romania compensations from Germany; moreover, Romania was forced to take over 500 million golden crowns of the external debt of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the payment of a billion golden crowns for the Empire's goods and estates left in Transylvania and Bucovina, plus the payment of 230 million francs as freedom quota.<sup>1</sup>

This may have been the tribute for entering the war next to the Great Powers and the huge sacrifices made by the Romanian people.<sup>2</sup>

These were also added the loss of Romanian thesaurus, deposited by the National Bank of Romania in tsarist Russia and confiscated by the new power from USSR.

Beside these unpleasant effects, the above-mentioned author<sup>3</sup> refers also to the fact that the „Transylvania's Union with Romania, endorsed on June 4<sup>th</sup> 1920 at Trianon, comprises special provisions regarding the exaggerated protection of minorities.

The same was true about the peace treaty with Austria.

Even more than that, during negotiations, Hungarian troops intensified their attacks upon the Romanian troops to the West of Apuseni Mountains, but in a few days, troops belonging to the Romanian Army occupied Budapest, which willingly admitted all Romanian territorial demands in exchange for ceasing hostilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Alin Spănu, *Istoria serviciilor de informații/contrainformații românești în perioada 1919-1945*, Casa Editorială Demiurg, Iași, 2010, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Gheorghe Calopăreanu, *Regionalizarea securității în Europa Centrală*, Editura Universității Naționale de Apărare „Carol I”, București, 2011, pp. 42-57.

<sup>3</sup> Alin Spănu, *Istoria serviciilor de informații/contrainformații românești în perioada 1919-1945*, Casa Editorială Demiurg, Iași, 2010, p. 41.

Special issues were also caused by Russian divisions in their withdrawal from Moldova, as they looted and abused Romanian population, resulting in the need to order armed intervention.

An especially significant role in making Great Romania was played by the intelligence / counter-intelligence services, together with some of the politicians of the age.

At the beginning of the war for building Great Romania the Army had within its Headquarters only one intelligence bureau, made up of only 14 military personnel, plus other aids.

This lack of specialists in this vital domain relying on collecting intelligence about the enemy showed its repercussions at the beginning of the campaign in 1916, when there were terrible defeats, certainly, also due to a lack of endowment and preparation adequate for the present circumstances.

The military mission in France made significant amends in this field and thus, on February 20<sup>th</sup> 1917, General Constantin Prezan, Chief of General Staff approved „Instructions for the Organization and Functioning of Intelligence Service, similar to that in the French Army.

At the same time, the covert structure called „Secret Service” was founded, directly under the leadership of General Staff.

Following the founding of Conducting Council, as an administrative entity for Transylvania, it also comprised a Military Section, the equivalent of the Ministry of War, which cumulated the activity of the army and public security under the command of Ștefan Cicio-Pop.

This organization included National Guards and an intelligence bureau necessary for setting up the defense against organized terrorist attacks against Romanian population as well as the support provided for the Romanian army that had started its offensive towards Budapest.

Thus, on December 10<sup>th</sup> 1918, Military Section sent towards territorial structures an order regarding the making and filing a report that was to include:

- the current state of Romanian, Hungarian, and Sasz guards (number, deployment, military value etc.);
- identifying military and food rations warehouses, their state;
- the links with neighboring guards, other events in the field;
- the state of Romanian and allied troops;

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- the state and deployment of officers in the national guards;
- collecting confidential military and political news;
- identifying and pursuing suspect people.

The Intelligence Bureau of Military Section also provided the instruction for intelligence officers that had to answer to the following demands:

- data regarding Hungarian troops: Hungarian guards; Romanian troops, allied troops, Romanian guards;
- movements, transports, concentration of troops etc.;
- political situation and other information necessary in the field.

The General Security Sub-inspectorate in Transylvania was subordinated to the Conducting Council, Internal Affairs (Section 2) and comprised the missions of Police and Security.

The commander was Eugen Bianu.

The functions of this structure were the following:

- control over all foreigners from Transylvania;
- subversive issues (espionage, plotting);
- proposals of expelling dangerous foreigners;
- investigation and pursuit of suspects;
- study of Romanian and foreign newspapers on issues regarding security of the state;
- daily reports or any time needed.

After 1922, all these functions were taken over by the Ministry of Interior and directly subordinated to D.P.S.G. in Bucharest.

We mentioned above that at the beginning of the War in 1916, Romanian Army was not prepared from the point of view of collecting intelligence and counterintelligence.

Following the help given by France, through the new organization, the Intelligence Structure of the Army identified all enemy military units on the Romanian battlefield, between Nistru – Black Sea, namely: army corps (4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 17, 21, 26, 18 German; D 15 Turkish, Tosef Army (Bulgarian); D1, D12 mixed (Bulgarian – German) + D1 Cv.

On April 29<sup>th</sup> 1919 the intelligence structures of the Army were reorganized and at the end of October 1918 the Great General Staff was founded subordinating Section 2 Intelligence, with its two bureaus.

After 1918, Hungary and Bulgaria allotted large funds for the compartments of gathering military intelligence regarding Romania aimed at the following: classical espionage, denigrating Romania's image; revisionist interests; guerrilla operations, terrorist operations (USSR).

Terrorist attacks were conducted especially in Basarabia and Bucovina from the USSR, with violent actions in 1918 – of force crossing the Nistrului in Hotin area – Soroca and not only.

In 1919, 13 terrorist cores were annihilated and 327 people from the USSR were arrested.

In the next year, 22 cores with 202 people were arrested.

On Nistru 3,002 attackers were captured, at the price of hundreds of gendarmes losing their lives besides 800 **grăniceri**, soldiers being killed 31,056 civilians.

Serious terrorist attacks were also made by Hungary in Transylvania.

Even in the presence of General Berthlot in Arad, the Hungarian „Steel Helmets **Căștile de Oțel**” massacred over 300 peaceful people with machine guns.

On September 25<sup>th</sup> 1918, the officers of R7 Infantry Mountain Troops were shot, including the Romanian delegations on the trains to Alba Iulia.

At Beiuș, a team of **secui** Hungarians made Romanian authorities and notabilities dig their own graves and assassinated them.

On January 1<sup>st</sup> 1919, the same lowlifes shot at a train full of soldiers from R16.

Five prisoners of war were maimed.

The commander of Bg 3V was shot by the Hungarians.

On April 15<sup>th</sup> 1919, 18 Romanian soldiers were tortured and killed.

We could go on mentioning such examples of revenge from Hungarian troops...

For instance, there were the atrocities made by Hungarians, as seen from the works „Fapte din umbră” or „*Acțiunile separatiste care vizează România*”<sup>4</sup>; when in 1989, the same Hungarians mocked at the policemen from Harghita and Covasna, and then cut off their heads and played football with them.

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<sup>4</sup> Anghel Andreescu, Colectiv, *Acțiunile separatiste care vizează România*, Editura Rao, București, 2016.

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The Center from Solnoca – one of the towns in Hungary where those who made terrorists acts in Transylvania were trained.

In 1924, Hungary and the USSR made economic treaties as well as treaties regarding intelligence for regaining Transylvania.

After that, during World War 2, Horthy obtained from Hitler, through the Dictate from Wien, that part of Transylvania, which meant renewed revenge acts specific to the ancient migratory peoples.

We should never forget the killing orgies they made in Transylvania, in Trăsnea, Ip etc.

Romanian intelligence /counter intelligence faced enough problems in Bucovina too after it became part of Romania and they even made suggestions for strengthening the Romanian character in the area for countering the subversive propaganda such as:

- sending Romanian schoolteachers who loved their country and people to the places with minority population for educating pupils together with Romanian priests;
- setting up kindergartens with worthy principals that might instill in them the Romanian national spirit;
- preparing and training committed clerks to the purpose above.

If the heterogeneous population in Bucovina accepted the new Romanian government, considered as being temporary, five years after the union with Romania, the town of Cernăuți did not accept the introduction of Romanian as official language.

In the South of Romania, Dobrogea had to suffer most during World War 1, having as administrators the Bulgarian army that forced the population to embrace Bulgarian values through its terrible acts.

Special issues for the intelligence structures were also to be found in Cadrilater, especially in Caliacra and Durostor, where armed gangs terrorized the Romanians in order to force Romania give in this province to Bulgaria.

Maybe this was also a reason why, through a High Royal Decree, the Directorate of Police and General Security (in Romanian abbreviated D.P.S.G.) established four General Sub-inspectorates of Security: in Chișinău, Cernăuți, Cuj, Constanța, in order to identify and annihilate anti-Romanian actions.

These serious issues were mentioned in some important works in the age, such as: „Mișcarea subversivă în Basarabia” – by Zamfir Husărescu, that shows the clandestine crossings, espionage, smuggling, sabotage against Great Romania; „Mișcarea Revoluționară bolșevică de la Tatar – Bunar”, about the Bolshevik attempt to destabilize the Romanian state in 1924 and, last but not least „Mișcarea revoluționară comunistă din România în cursul anilor 1918 – 1926 și legătura cu Internaționala a II-a”, which mentions the ways of acting and neutralizing Soviet agents.

Buzatu, member of Romanian Academy of Scientists, talked about the importance of activity conducted by Romanian intelligence services.

*„This happened first and foremost because Romania did not have ambitions of expansion and world domination, continental or regional, and second of all because there was a need to obtain only data that might contribute to preventing intempestive military aggression and neutralize internal subversive actions that endangered the system of government and the rule of law.”<sup>5</sup>*

An important role in forging Great Romania was played by French geographers, led by Robert Fischeaux, who went to Romania and made notes of mountain villages and towns with Romanians in Transylvania omitted on purpose by Hungary and thus radically changing the quota of Romanian population that was actually a majority in Transylvania.

This led in turn to radical changes of the suggestions made by Hungary to the Great Powers at Paris.

*„Romanians entered in 1918 the world’s lawful state of facts at the moment which determined the Peace Conference in Paris, between 1919 – 1920 to do nothing but validate the decision of Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia, just as it did with the similar decisions made at Chișinău and Cernauți.*

*Therefore Transylvania is an integral part of Romania and this is a given fact beyond any possible discussions.”<sup>6</sup>*

*„The Great Union in 1918 was and still is the most precious page in Romanian history.”<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> Idem pct. 1, p. 110

<sup>6</sup> Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Transilvania. Starea noastră de veghe*, Școala Adeleană, Cluj-Napoca, 2016, p. 12.



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<sup>7</sup> Florin Constantiniu, *O istorie sinceră a poporului român*, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București, 2008, p. 300.