

## SUMMARY

The theme of the present, special copy of the *Történelmi Szemle* (Historical Review) is the history of World War II in Central- and South-Eastern Europe. The conference on „Historiography of World War II in East-Central Europe”, organized by the Hungarian National Committee of the History of World War II under the auspices of the International Committee of the History of World War II, was held in Budapest between September 27 and 29, 1973, with the participation of sixty-eight historians from nineteen countries. Our journal contains the Hungarian papers read at the Conference, works submitted from other countries in writing, and a selection of contributions to debates in the three sectors (political and diplomatic history, history of resistance, and military history). Other studies on the subject, not written for the Conference, have also been included in the copy.

The principal paper of the Conference was read by György Ránki under the title „Issues of Historical Literature on World War II in East Central Europe”. In the introduction emphasis is laid on the justification of regional research and also on its relegation to the background in studies to date. Actually, the demands of regional investigation have not been satisfied by its treatment parallel with the history of the peoples and countries of the region during World War II, or by comparison of these nations from a certain *single* viewpoint — integration into Hitler's system of alliances, relationships to allied powers, or military operations to liberate the area.

With reference to new sources, Ránki compares the countries of the Danube valley from two angles in the second phase of World War II: relations to Germany and, with decisive weight, the policy of the Allied Powers in the Danube valley, on the basis of material from British archives, going into landing on the Balkan Peninsula and the feelers thrown out by satellites in this connection in efforts at separate peace. In dealing with the first question it is stated that the narrow-minded policies of the countries of the Danube valley, their mutual accusations though causing certain difficulties, offered Hitler opportunities for turning to his advantage their antagonisms by following the policy of playing off one against the other. A few moves of Hungarian, Rumanian, of Czechoslovak and Yugoslav politicians in exile provide concrete examples.

As regards the policy of the Allied Powers in the Danube valley and its cardinal issue, appraisal of the possibility of landing on the Balkans, Ránki accepts the opinion put forward by recent British literature, relying on the work of M. Howard, namely that the military and political significance of landing on the Balkans should not be underestimated, and even if it can not be compared to invasion in the west, it would have been a severe blow to the axis. The view that the British High Command did not work out any operational plan for invading the Balkans is also acceptable. However, the argument that it would have complemented the western invasion is rejected by Ránki who believes that it was much rather an alternative preferred by Great Britain. Soviet, still more forcible American, objections, and failure of the Italian campaign may be taken to have been the reasons why the project favoured by Churchill was dropped. The much debated question how far Great Britain's intentions were influenced by the aims of the war against Hitler, the role played by the political objectives of post-war arrangements, and the future representation of British interests in the region are given discriminative, time-factor-considering answers in the study. In 1943 Churchill still regarded the Balkan invasion as the correct strategy to hasten achievement of the primary goal: military victory over the Germans. In the summer of 1944, when this plan was taken up again in a serious form as an alternative to landing on the south coast of France, the political intentions of Great Britain were quite clear, notably to retain her position in the Balkans while gaining control over Austria in the first place and partly also over Hungary.

However, at the time the Red Army was already massed at the borders of Rumania and Hungary and no decision could be made against the will of the Soviet Union; the less so since the USA had shown complete indifference to the area until the autumn of 1944, when the conclusion was reached that no political or military question lay outside the sphere of the United States' interest. In the clash between British political ascendancy and interests to be safeguarded by post-war arrangements and the need to maintain the allied antifascist coalition, it was invariably the latter which prevailed. For the same reason the plan of a Balkan confederation was also wiped off the agenda in 1944. Great Britain and the USA were not in a position to carry out a project which lacked the support of the Soviet Union.

Great Britain's attitude to exploratory talks initiated by the satellite countries to sound possibilities of peace negotiations should, in the author's view, also be assessed by the shifting of stress which ensued during the war in British policy. In the years 1942—43 anti-German cooperation was the predominant element of British policy; but, in the final analysis, later, too, every issue became subordinate to the interests of maintaining the coalition.

Attempts at negotiations of peace are treated in the study with reference to documentary evidence of Anglo—Hungarian relations, refuting the onesided statements of historiography along two lines; first, works which draw mainly on memoirs of Hungarian politicians in exile, overestimating the significance of talks with the Allied Powers and wishing Hungarian foreign policy to appear in a light of complete Anglo—American orientation; secondly, exaggerated views, actually deriving support from the very same source and imputing to the Western Powers in their Danube valley policy the endeavour to ensure their Balkan positions against the Soviet Union and to preserve the reactionary governments and social order of the region in the service of their interests.

According to recently exposed documents, fresh negotiations were started in British initiative in spring, 1944, on a more flexible interpretation of unconditional surrender. The latter was partly accepted by the Soviet Union, and, in fact, applied in connection with Rumania, but it was flatly refused by America. Analysing the reasons why Hungarian feelers for peace failed, the author points out whereas in 1943 Hungary was in the van of diplomacy in taking steps to contact the Allies, in the new military situation emerging during the first eight months of the year 1944 — the rapid advance of the Soviet troops and the occupation of Hungary by the Germans — Anglo—Hungarian talks came to a deadlock. In this connection, compared to the bulky and thorough literature available, the record of conversations by László Veres, an official of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in March, 1944, is a new document: since the Germans did not consent to the withdrawal of the Hungarian armies fighting in the Soviet Union, Hungarian official circles weighed the idea of simultaneous surrender by all Hungarian forces to the Soviet army.

Indeed, it was exactly the position of Hungary which was attributed crucial importance from certain aspects in holding on the Central European positions by British policy which became active in the summer of 1944, as remarked before in connection with the Balkan invasion. However, the military situation which developed by September, 1944, made it clear that in this area British policy had no choice but to come to terms with the Soviet Union. This was the purpose of Anglo—Soviet talks in October, 1944, when the Allied Powers disagreed, among others, regarding Hungary, but the liberation of South East Europe by the Soviet army by that time implied that the countries of the region would be supported, e.g. in changing their social-economic structure, that their foreign policy would be determined by the security of the Soviet Union, furthermore ... in the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers the area could not become a primary source of conflict unless a radical violation of the evolved compromise were to occur."

In the first part of his paper on works dealing with the Hungarian political and diplomatic history of World War II, Gyula Juhász mentions significant results produced by research into diplomatic and economic history: series of source publications, studies, and books have appeared. Yet a long time elapsed until the exposure of domestic political thinking in Hungary during the war; before proceeding to this stage, questions of the interwar period had also to be elucidated, a task still waiting to be fully accomplished. To gain insight into the correlations of Hungarian foreign and home policy in the given period is of great importance, and so is explanation of the peculiar function of foreign policy, without which the role of Hungary in World War II can not be understood. These questions are answered by the study of Juhász in a new spirit.

The revisionist trend in itself, frankly exposed and shown to have been a decisive factor by literature on the subject, does not explain foreign policy without a careful analysis of home politics. The alliance with Germany was concluded not by right extremist forces, but by the traditional set of the system, the groups that seized power through the consolidation of Horthy's rule. In Hungary, besides seeking revision of the Versailles Peace Treaty, foreign policy had

an additional function, notably to maintain the peculiar, prevailing domestic imbalance of power and social conditions by means of foreign policy. Here we do not simply allude to the function which is essential in the foreign policy of every state: protection of the social order, but to the preservation of the mastery of an exclusive, specific, counterrevolutionary structure. The Hungarian counterrevolutionary system had traits counting as unique in the whole of Europe: it *reestablished* the might of the ruling classes after the realization of proletarian dictatorship, and built up an unparalleled, exclusive regime, sealed off to the left, while open only up to a certain limit to the extreme right. Therefore the Hungarian extreme right could pin its hopes of coming into power only on a change in the international situation; the Horthy regime, on the other hand, regarded political immobility as the only guarantee of its existence and survival. These special features reveal why each successive government from the early thirties started with more moderate domestic and foreign policies than its predecessor and ended with a more marked shift to the right, in home and foreign affairs alike.

With the growing economic, political and ideological pressure of German orientation, flowing from reactionary territorial aspirations and accompanied by increase of the strength of the Hungarian extreme right, the "system-protecting" function of foreign policy, maintenance of the traditional regime, was also commensurately reinforced. From 1939 preservation of the system in postwar Europe became the principal programme of foreign policy besides territorial revision, later, after the turning-point in military events, even at the expense of revision. As stated by the author, under such conditions in no other country of Eastern Europe was foreign and domestic political elbow-room restricted so narrowly as in Hungary by changes in international balance of power, though their impact was a decisive factor everywhere. After entry into the war the role of the "unwilling satellite" seemed to serve best the preservation of the system; later, when the tide had turned, integration in the sphere of Anglo-American interests was the sole alternative. Thus the correlations of domestic and foreign policies underwent a change during the war, foreign policy becoming subordinate to home policy.

In the next part of Gyula Juhász's study, the failure of Hungarian attempts in 1943 at backing out of the war and concluding separate peace — moves discussed in their international relations by *Ránki* — are analysed with due consideration of the changed conditions and in the light of the peculiar, exclusive structure of counterrevolutionary rule whose characteristics have been described in the foregoing. In the autumn of 1943, when Hungary was planning defection simultaneously with the capitulation of Italy, the terms of a preliminary armistice were handed over by the Allies. At the time there was no Allied Army anywhere near Hungary, while defection would have brought immediate occupation by the Germans, and active fighting against Germany could not but be included among the terms; the Horthy regime did not want, and did not dare, to accept these terms.

The break with Germany would have made a domestic change indispensable, but anti-fascist and leftist forces were not numerous and strong enough to carry out such a coup. Moreover, there were many who harboured illusions that such a turn-about could be managed under the leadership of Horthy. Execution was made still more difficult by the existence in parliament of a right-wing extremist opposition of the Hungarian government, consisting of parties with a rather wide basis in Hungary, allied to Hitler. Hence a turn-about involved the danger of civil war. So Hungarian foreign policy found itself in an impasse: fettered by a double reflex of self-defence while labouring under the lesser dread of German occupation and power passing into the hands of the right extremists, as well as under the worse fear of Soviet victory, appearance of the Red Army, and the inevitable collapse of the regime, it adhered still more closely to Nazi Germany.

Finally, — emphasis is laid on the importance of research into the history of social-political thinking *in the area under review*, where national and progressive antifascist ideas could not unite so unequivocally as in Western Europe, owing to intricate problems of nationalities and other, social factors.

The work of István Pintér sums up the results of historiography dealing with the Hungarian resistance and draws attention to the blank spots which call for further study. Besides relations to similar activities in other countries, the specific features of the Hungarian resistance movement have also to be investigated: the peculiar connections with Nazi Germany and the neighbouring countries; the unorganized state and weakness of revolutionary and progressive forces; widespread, intensive nationalism aroused by the Peace Treaty of Paris. Similarity is demonstrable chiefly in organizers and drive having come from parties of the working classes, from Communist parties in the first place. A survey of historical literature on the subject is followed by the statement that in the early 'fifties work was hampered by a severe lack of sources; in consequence of their nature, movements of resistance leave few written documents behind and even of the small material much has been lost. In the early- and mid-sixties archives opened their doors to research workers; numerous volumes of memoirs have been published both in

Hungary and other countries, and so have historical studies and synopses using the former as source material. At present there are still noteworthy themes waiting for elaboration, such as definition of the concepts of antifascist resistance and partisan warfare, the differentiation of antinazi attitude and antifascism, the motivation of armed partisan action, investigation of the social background of resistance fighters, a more accurate picture of bourgeois groups of resistance fighters, shedding light on the social content of resistance movements. In connection with all these issues Pintér sees the principal problems in the loose, not adequately scientific interpretation of certain concepts, as well as in not always apposite criticism of sources.

The military role of Hungary in World War II is the theme of a study by Sándor Tóth. The introduction gives a brief outline of the country's military participation. In the attack against the Soviet Union, in 1941, only the Carpathian army group consisting about 44 000 people — took part. After the Battle of Moldavia German demands on the armed forces of the satellite countries steadily increased. The Second Hungarian Army advanced to the river Don where it was crushed by Soviet action in January, 1943. After this devastating defeat the Hungarian government resumed its military-political attitude of the period preceding entry into the war, namely to support the German war effort chiefly with financial means. Until the German occupation on March 19, 1944, it did not come to sending new combatant units to the eastern front; nine light divisions served as an occupation army.

After the German occupation the First Hungarian Army was sent to the front, after the defection of Rumania the Second and Third Armies were set up. The peak of Hungarian military involvement was reached in the autumn of 1944 when the Red Army crossed the frontier; at this time over a million soldiers were under arms in twenty-seven divisions. By March, 1945, only five divisions were fighting on the side of Hitler, because most of the men, predominantly from reserve and second-line-reserve age groups, armed with obsolete equipment, surrendered or deserted.

Passing on to historical writings on the military role of Hungary in World War II, the author ranges works on military history into five groups. Those published in the Soviet Union, forming the first group, deal mainly with the operations which liberated Hungary. Group II comprises works written by historians of the Western Allied Powers who take hardly any notice of Hungarian participation. Of the works which appeared in the German Federal Republic (Group III) memoirs have been found to devote much attention to the role of Hungarian troops, while historical writings have more to say about battlefields in Hungary. The fourth and largest group is that of products from the hands of Horthyist emigrants, intended to prove that the entry of Hungary into the war was a preventive step against the Soviet Union; the Hungarians were loyal allies and discharged duties far beyond their strength, while the German High Command was distrustful and failed to meet its obligations to the Hungarians. Lately Hungarian military historians have become more active in the past decade, actually ever since they overcame the dogmatic attitude — claiming that it was not important to treat the history of Horthy's army — and archives have been made accessible. So far results have appeared chiefly as publications of sources.

Historians of the German Democratic Republic, W. Schumann and A. Wappler, have reported in their paper on research pursued in their country into the history of World War II and on published works. Of the latter, books which have appeared in the series *Kleine Militärgeschichte*, of source publications *Anatomie des Krieges*, *Anatomie der Aggression*, furthermore *Griff nach Südosteuropa* are named as the most significant. The latter contains documents from the archives of Reichsgruppe Industrien and of its South-Eastern Europe Committee, of the South-Eastern Committee of I. G. Farbenindustrie A. A., and material from other concerns. Previously latent documentary evidence on East-Central Europe is to be found in the collection of documents published by Drechsler—Bess—Hass under the title „Europapläne des deutschen Imperialismus im zweiten Weltkrieg“.

In his study the Polish historian K. Yonca goes into the theory of „völkerrechtliche Grossraumordnung“, quoted as the basis of national socialist imperialism and German Great Power aspirations, and into its application to countries of the Danube valley and the Balkans. It is shown how Hitler and his German lawyers, to realize expansionist policies contrived to make use of the German-speaking populations of the implicated areas by concocting such concepts as „ethnic group rights“ and „Grossraumordnung“ justified by „popular German + ethnic group rights“.

The Soviet historian J. I. Korabiev appreciates the significance of the new type of armed forces built up in the countries of South-East Europe and the contribution of the Soviet Union to their development. The Polish, Czechoslovak, Hungarian and Rumanian military units set up during the war years with Soviet cooperation played a decisive part in anti-Hitler struggles and later in changing their respective countries into people's democracies; the same applies to the Bulgarian and Yugoslav Peoples' Armies, reorganized and rearmed with the help of the

Soviet Union. Soviet historical studies in the setting up of these armed forces concentrate on the following principal points: the theoretical and political principles of Soviet contribution to the development of these armed forces, including disapproval of exporting the revolution; victory of the Red Army as a decisive factor in the liberation of the area and in post-war revolutionary struggles; various forms and specific features of international aid by the Soviet Union to satellite countries.

The papers of Rumanian historians (Zaharia, Unc, Ilie, B. Iani) written for the conference state the viewpoints of Rumanian historiography in connection with the history of resistance movements. The opinion of Rumanian historians is summed up on the character of the war and the role of Rumania in the war. Rumania failed to form a neutral bloc in the autumn of 1939; thereupon the Third Reich, taking advantage of the protest and panic roused by the Second Award of Vienna on August 30, 1940, compelled Rumania to introduce military-fascist dictatorship. The roots of Rumanian resistance in the years 1940—44 go back to 1933 when Hitler seized power. From 1940, from the presence of German troops, resistance of gradually intensified activity was led by the Rumanian Communist Party which owed its success to devising strategy and tactics appropriate to the historical period by setting itself the target of creating a popular-national front.

In 1943 the anti-Hitler Patriotic Front was founded, to be followed from April, 1944, by concerted action of the Social Democrat and Communist Parties; the United Workers Front dates from the close of 1943, and early in 1944 resistance activity began to develop into an extensive mass movement. Joining antifascist forces on a wide scale in June, 1944, by the foundation of the National Democratic Bloc, including the royal palace, made it possible for the whole Rumanian army to cooperate in the uprising of August which marked an epoch in Rumanian contemporary history. The tasks facing historiography are a thorough investigation of the domestic and foreign preconditions of Rumanian resistance movements, comparison with similar movements in the other countries of South- and East Europe, furthermore study of the active contribution of the Rumanian army to the liberation of its own country, of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Austria.

The paper of Chr. Mihova and V. Toskova deals with the pre-war and war-time diplomatic relations of Bulgaria. The most closely studied problem of historiography is the accession of Bulgaria to the Tripartite Pact, with parallel analysis of the Balkan policies of the Western Powers and the Soviet Union. Relations with Rumania, Hungary, and the respective puppet governments of Serbia and Greece were determined by envy and the maxim to wring from the Germans all that could be got at the expense of other allies. From the spring of 1944 Bulgarian foreign policy was guided by the will to preserve the regime; so feelers were thrown out to find contacts to the Western Powers and the Soviet Union. Talks on Soviet—Bulgarian relations are treated by historians as particularly important, since Bulgaria had declared war only on Great Britain and the USA while continuing to maintain diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

The study of J. Marianovic gives an account of works by Yugoslav historians on the war and the revolution. Source publications are exceedingly plentiful: to date the Yugoslav People's Army Institute for Military History has issued 150 volumes. Yugoslav history of World War II may be divided into two periods. The first ending in the mid-fifties, is marked by subjective attitudes, ascribable to the proximity of events and consequent lack of perspective. The second, when historians had a command of wider sources as a result of access to Italian and German archives, is of scientific character. Isolation of various republics may be mentioned as a mistake to be avoided, for historical works should be embedded in the history of the whole Balkan Peninsula, of the whole of Europe.

In his paper A. Faltys has evaluated historiography of the Czech border region in the period between 1938 and 1945. Czechoslovak historical studies go into economic and cultural changes which affected the political and economic interests of the German bourgeoisie — particularly of elements representing bourgeois nazi policy — furthermore into the situation of anti-fascist forces after the Munich Agreement. From aspects of the Third Reich annexation of the Czech border region afforded opportunities to Germany for trying in practice special German methods of administration. It is shown how important economic key positions of certain areas were acquired by the Germans, to the great disappointment of Sudeten German national socialists who were forthwith denied the role they arrogated for themselves in the Third Reich as well their claim of power over Bohemia and Moravia. The Sudeten German bourgeoisie was let down in economic fields too: the Germans were interested not in the manufacture of consumer goods but only in war industry, in arms production. Thus heavy industry of the Czech Protectorate attracted closer attention than did Sudeten German factories.

In the first part of his paper M. Pacor discusses the part played by Italy in World War II, describing also the most important source publications and memoirs. Of course, Italian historians are more deeply concerned with Balkan countries belonging to Italy's traditional sphere of inter-

est, particularly Yugoslavia, than with states of the Danube valley. Some attention is devoted to projects of forming a bloc of South-Central Europe under Italian leadership, intended to counteract German pressure. There are also works on the Danube valley: Collotti: *L'occupazione nazista in Europa*; Carlotti: *La politica dell'Italia nel settore danubiano-balcanico, del patto di Monaco al armistizio italiano*. In his work „*Pagine d'istoria diplomatica contemporanea*” Toscano examines the tentative moves at rapprochement by Turkey, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary in the spring of 1943 with the aim of bringing together an anti-Soviet Balkan—Danube Bloc. Toscano sees the action as a British manoeuvre launched by Great Britain with the idea of allowing to Turkey the role of persuading these three countries to break away from the Axis.

In her contribution Zsuzsa Boros discussed the history of French prisoners of war who fled from German captivity to Hungary. Compared to the number of Polish refugees admitted into Hungary, that of the French prisoners of war was negligible; about 1000 found shelter in the country to the end of the war. The extremely favourable treatment accorded by Hungarian, more or less illegal, official organs notwithstanding German remonstrances is fairly representative of the “other line” of official Hungarian foreign policy: it also brings to light conflicting views in connection with the issue inside the Hungarian administration.

Professor C. A. Macartney (Oxford), addressing the Conference on the studies of György Ránki and Gyula Juhász, expressed disagreement with a few minor issues. Starting from the viewpoint of the other side, that of official British policy, he dealt with the questions under discussion from another aspect. He thought that in Central Europe it should always be taken into consideration that British policy in the region was fully dependent on the war against Germany, also in the last phase of the war. Macartney outlined the political attitude of Great Britain to Hungary during the war not primarily as a historian, but as an eye-witness and active participant of events, having conducted war-time BBC programmes broadcast in Hungarian. In the thirties sympathy for Hungary spread to ever wider circles; in the first stage of the war it grew stronger and in many parts of the world of British politics a moderate territorial revision in favour of Hungary was thought to be justified. After Hungary's declaration of war the atmosphere naturally changed, yet instructions to the British peace delegation still left the door open in relation to Rumania. Macartney emphasized that Great Britain, always a faithful ally, never acted behind the back of the Soviet Union. An illustrative case in point was Hungary's search for peace; at every step she was advised to turn to the Soviet Union and Moscow was informed of every move made by Hungarian diplomacy. In his opinion agreements among the Allies during the war applied only to military operations and areas of occupation; decisions concerning Allied Control Commissions in no way forestalled the demarcation of post-war spheres of interest. Finally, rejecting views stated at earlier dates and not at the Conference, Macartney refuted allegations that Great Britain had endeavoured to preserve the Horthy regime or ever wished to interfere in or tried to influence Hungarian domestic policy.

The Polish historian A. Konieczny has chosen for his subject the resistance of foreign forced labour in the war economy of the Third Reich. The use of economically important forced labour, Poles, Russians and people of other nationalities, laid down in Generalplan Ost, provided also for the systematic elimination and displacement of certain ethnic groups. East- and West Germany, American, Czech, and Polish works on the theme have the common shortcoming of omitting investigation by comparison, thus failing to take into consideration differences in the treatment of various nationalities, analysing the role of forced labour only from economic aspects, without mentioning resistance. On the proof of documentary evidence presented by the author, arrests for refusing to work and for attempts at flight greatly increased in number (June, 1941, 6357; June, 1942, 12 623; June, 1944, 41.224) at the so-called “training labour camps” set up by the Gestapo, which were really concentration camps. So far 88 of the latter have been found by localization and identified.

The Yugoslav historian *J. Mirnić's* study on activities of the Volksbund during the Hungarian occupation of Bácska County, though not written for the Conference, has a bearing on its theme. After having been joined by the Germans of Bácska County (173.000 heads), the Hungarian Volksbund represented the most populous German ethnic minority in Europe. In addition, their importance surpassed even their ratio, because 96 per cent of Bácska County Germans having been organized, they became the most active members of the Volksbund. This was clearly demonstrated at the recruitment of volunteers by the SS, approved by interstate agreement. The policy of the Volksbund, utterly servile to the Hitler system, without any reservation, and especially SS actions perpetrated with open terrorism aroused a certain variance of views even among the Germans of Bácska County, but it did not come to any form of resistance. The Volksbund, which did not recognize Yugoslavia as a federal state, fought the partisans of the region. In the meantime the Germans developed into a closed ethnic group. They obeyed the decree of resettlement with self-imposed discipline and, according to approximate calcula-

tions, about the half of Bácska County's German population left the country voluntarily before October, 1944.

Ferenc Glatz has taken up in his summary outstanding debated points of political and diplomatic history. The first major field of this sector may be summed up under the title of foreign and domestic policies during World War II. The correlations of foreign and home policies in Hungary have been analysed by Gyula Juhász. In his inaugural address the Soviet academician Zsilin showed general aspects of the subject in connection with the war as a whole, treating events of military history of the region as virtually symbiotic manifestations of foreign and home policies. Peculiar traits stemming from dissimilar economic, social and political systems of various countries are accentuated, disproving thereby the claim that social change was brought about by the presence of Soviet forces in East-Central Europe. In fact, where interior preconditions were absent the change did not take place despite the presence of Soviet troops, and vice versa.

Understandably, profound attention was devoted in debates to national and national minority problems of the area. Several speakers mentioned the economic relations of the Great Powers and East-Central Europe, each voicing the demand that besides disclosing the facts of the region's economic usurpation by the Germans, the hierarchic system of German economic policy as a whole should also be exposed, marking out the respective places of the implicated countries in Germany's new order. As for the Allies, the economic interests of the Anglo-Saxons were also to be taken into consideration. Schröder, a historian from the German Federal Republic demonstrated the conflicting economic interests of America and the United Kingdom in the region, as well as the American intention to dislodge the Soviet Union by bringing to bear the principle of „open door” policy.

György Ránki didn't share Schröder's opinion in every respect; in his view a chronological limit should be recognized: it was only in 1944—45 that the USA began to evince economic and general interest for South-East Europe. Subsequently both Ránki and Henri Michel, chairman of the International Committee of the History of World War II, suggested the idea of calling together a narrower circle of historians for a conference on the economic and social problems of World War II.

The problems presented by the justification and methods of regional research and by geographical demarcation of the region arose as central issues at the Conference. Recognizing in general the justification of regional investigation, in their contributions historians recommended looser interpretation of the region, from which it would be wrong to exclude the Danube valley. It was declared to be of eminent importance to see the significance of a region in World War II in its true light.

The Polish historian Madajcik outlined the situation of the region in the whole of World War II. In his reply György Ránki admitted the possibility and need of regional research into certain problems, particularly when the region is faced not with a casual, momentary problem of history, but one that arises as a result of a certain lengthy social-economic process, while questions of foreign and domestic policy are controlled, notwithstanding existing peculiarities.

The most animated debate of the Conference developed in connection with the appraisal of the Balkan policies of the Great Powers. All controversialists agreed that solution of the Balkan question was determined by three factors, notably, first the victory of the Soviet Army and the liberating operations of the Soviet Union in East-Central Europe; secondly, by a certain coordination of the Allied Coalition's policies; thirdly — of course, chronological order did not come into play here — by inner forces seizing the opportunity provided by the victory of the Soviet army to carry out social-economic changes which had been due for a long time. There was equal concurrence of opinions concerning assessment of Germany's Balkan policy. Divergence of views appeared in estimation of the Balkan policy of the antifascist coalition. Ránki's study and the historians who went into the subject in their contributions did not differ on the point that from the viewpoint of the course of the war it was reasonable to open up the second front in the west. They even agreed that invasion of the Balkans — in 1942—43 as an alternative of landing in the west, in 1944 as a parallel operation with the latter — was an important object of British policy, in Great Britain's special interest which clashed with the interests of the coalition as a whole.

Differences of opinion emerged in the evaluation of British policies. With reference to available documents and works, the Soviet historian A. Puskás declared the need to emphasize the efforts of British policy to acquire Balkan positions suitable for the realization of practically colonial control over the region. In his answer to this argument György Ránki, referring also to the contribution of Mihály Korom, made it perfectly clear that notwithstanding special interests of the United Kingdom and elements of inconsistency within the Allied Coalition, in the final analysis British policy was invariably governed by the objectives of the Coalition as a whole. It was compelled to take this line because Churchill regarded the German menace as the main, primary issue, and in compliance with the principles and might of the Coalition.

As at several other conferences before, the evaluation of British policies in the Balkan region drew attention to important questions of methodology. In this connection, as pointed out by György Ránki, experience has shown that the foreign policy of a country can not be appraised on the strength of certain documents picked out; single documents should be attributed a significance commensurate to reality; moreover, differences between certain countries in social structure and the consequently varying methods of foreign politics should also be taken into consideration, distinguishing between principal and side lines as well as between declared principles of foreign policy and everyday conduct of foreign affairs.

The Hungarian historian János Jemnitz gave examples of differentiation between official and non-official foreign policy, of the significance of such distinction, particularly in connection with the aspirations of the British Labour Party's foreign policy. The presented arguments opened eyes to numerous methodological lessons to be learnt, while directing attention to the mechanism of foreign politics. Miklós Lackó, the discussion-group leader, and György Ránki were the first to join in the debate. Reverting to the relationship between domestic and foreign policies, Miklós Lackó stated that the mechanism of foreign policy was determined by the specific features of the social-political system of the country in question; furthermore, there were tremendous differences in this respect between a great power and a small country. Practically homogeneous mechanism and narrow elbow-room were characteristic of Hungarian foreign politics. In support of these postulates Ránki cited British foreign politics as a concrete example: foreign politics where the conduct of foreign policy and decisions are not centralized, where the mechanism of previous decisions affect the final decision, call for a different approach in the method of investigation and in assessment than does a centralized mechanism of foreign politics of quite different type. The study of official and non-official lines of foreign policies is ranged into the category of foreign policy mechanisms, but the need is emphasized to distinguish between the two lines within official policies.

Several Hungarian and foreign historians (Zsuzsa L. Nagy, Tibor Hajdu, Károly Vigh (Hungary) and H. Steiner (Austria) went into the significance of emigration from South- and East-Europe and some touched on the idea of a South-East-European federation launched from various quarters. In reply to contributions dealing with schemes of federation, György Ránki laid stress on the economically high justification of such plans arising from rightful claims and the wish to settle national and national minority problems of the region. Put forward and advocated by widely varying — democratic, conservative and monarchist — forces, springing from however correct subjective intentions, in the existing situation they would have had to assume an objectively anti-Soviet role; therefore, understandably, the Soviet Union is opposed to every form of confederation.

In the opinion of Tibor Hajdu projects of confederation and attempts at defection failed not because they were planned or executed inadequately, but because the policies of the great powers did not provide plans on a long-term and thorough basis for such contingencies and discord between certain involved countries did not conduce to their realization. The question of sources was, understandably, brought up several times at the Conference. The hope was expressed by several participants that archives still closed would soon open their doors to research workers. H. Michel announced that French archives of documents on World War II would be made accessible to historians from the year 1975.

In his closing speech to the Conference H. Michel spoke about present historiography on World War II which, in his view, has struck the right track. György Ránki's summary of recent research, contributions and debates at the Conference have proved that strictly circumscribed, well defined details of World War II can be studied with appropriate thoroughness. As stated candidly by Sándor Tóth, even by starting from the history of a small country which was unable to act independently or play a decisive part in the conflict. H. Michel found it heartening that Hungarian historiography had reached the stage of a clear evaluation of the respective roles of the Great Powers whose strategies, cooperation and divergences of opinions, whose post-war objectives determined the course of the war. The presentation of a question in a new light was treated with special emphasis: starting from a strictly Hungarian issue, Gyula Juhász had raised a problem of outstanding general significance, notably the time and conditions which made it possible for occupied and satellite countries to change sides with success. The conclusion to be drawn is that in the history of a people an important role has to be attributed to moral factors too. As an excellent case in point Michel mentioned the Paris revolt of August, 1944, which did have political importance, but received its principal significance from moral factors.

Even apparently negligible happenings in the history of World War II may reveal important connections. This is evidenced by the contribution on the French prisoners of war who fled during the war to Hungary. The fate of hardly more than a thousand men hung in the balance; nevertheless, their history throws a rewarding light on the peculiar traits of Hungarian foreign and home policies of the time on the one hand, and on a few characteristic features of

the Vichy government, on the other. Michel appreciated it as one of the most remarkable results of the Conference that the significance of analytical investigation was again proved and vindicated by documents, though, of course, every historian has to study the history of his own country the most intensively. However, there is no reason for self-complacency, for history is a ceaseless succession of recommencements whenever a new study appears and calls into question earlier publications, when new sources — as pointed out by Miklós Lackó — require rereading and reassessment of documents in the light of new knowledge. In conclusion Professor Michel outlined the long distance covered in twelve years by the International Committee of World War II and historians of various countries in cooperation and mutual understanding, in throwing off dogmatism and various taboos.

In the Publications column Gyula Juhász has contributed five diplomatic documents in connection with which facts are for the most part known but the documents of the events have not appeared or are not available in Hungarian; comparison of five of the newly published specimens with those known formerly make it possible to correct the familiar picture and render it more accurate, all the more so as data from several divergent — German, English, American, Hungarian — sources referring to the same events have become accessible. The documents in question are records of Miklós Horthy's talks at Klessheim on April 16—17, 1943, and of Miklós Kállay's negotiations in Rome on April 1, 1943. In the introductory study Juhász presents the two conversations in conjunction with the incipient disintegration of the axis which grew noticeable early in 1943. At the meeting in Rome ways and means of getting out of the war were discussed by Mussolini and Kállay; the former suggested that Germany should conclude peace with the Soviet Union, the latter advocated peace with the Western Powers. The same question was taken up at the Klessheim meeting as the principal accusation against Horthy by Hitler who spoke in a new, threatening tone, to stop the fatal process of disintegration. Upon analysis of the documents it can be detected with approximative precision how much the Germans knew and through what channels they learnt about Hungarian peace moves.

In the second part of the introduction an account is given of the response shown by the Allied Powers — Great Britain in the first place — to feelers for contact by Hungary. Summing up, the author states that even if the Allies did hold different views in this respect, as regards lack of confidence toward the Horthy system they were in full agreement and insisted on a sweeping change in domestic policy as the precondition before any settlement could be reached. Therefore advances of the scientist Albert Szent Györgyi, representing another political line, were given a better reception and preference over the tentative steps of rapprochement by official politicians of the Hungarian government.