

PLANS FOR SLOVAK AUTONOMY IN THE POLICY OF HUNGARY, 1918 – 1920

MIROSLAV MICHELA

MICHELA, Miroslav. Plans for Slovak autonomy in Hungarian politics 1918–1920. *Historický časopis*, 2010, 58, Supplement, pp. 53-82, Bratislava.

The study is devoted to the plans of the former Hungarian political elite for the inclusion of “new born” Slovakia in Hungary. Several such plans arose immediately in the period 1918 – 1920, when the “Slovak question” was regarded primarily as a solvable task on the way to renewal of the integrity of the historic Hungarian state. This fact was also reflected in the activities of the Budapest government circles, which established their own irredentist organizations and supported movements, which tried to undermine the idea of Czecho-Slovak statehood. Especially the groups of emigrants, who had voluntarily or involuntarily left the territory of the emerging Czechoslovak Republic, became substantially engaged in this direction.

History of Slovakia 1918 – 1920. Autonomy. Trianon. Hungarian foreign policy. Irredentism. Revisionism. František Jehlička. Andrej Hlinka. Viktor Dvortsák. Slovak – Hungarian relations.

The revolutionary governments in Hungary and their conceptions for solving the “Slovak question”

The long maintained and presented loyalty of the population to the Monarchy was seriously affected by the conditions of war. Towards the end of the war, the worsening military, internal political and economic situation strengthened the current among the Slovak elite, which supported the creation of a common Czecho-Slovak state. The famous Fourteen Points of the American President Wilson announced on 8 January 1918, declared the freest possible autonomous development of all the nations of the Monarchy. This introduced a new and important principle into international law. However, a real change in the situation came only in spring 1918. After betrayal of the secret talks of the young Emperor of Austria-Hungary Karl with the Entente, the Monarchy was forced to declare its loyalty to Germany and the hopes for a separate peace disappeared. However, at that time, the Czecho-Slovak struggle in exile already had an important trump card in its hands, namely the legions fighting on the fronts of the First World War. On 29 June 1918, France recognized the Czechoslovak National Council as the political body representing the future Czechoslovakia. The representatives of France promised the new state independence within its “historic frontiers”. On 9 August 1918, Great Britain did the same and on 2 September 1918 so did the USA. Thus, the new state was recognized before it was actually created.¹ The effort of the Vienna Court to save the situation with

1 KLIMEK, Antonín – KUBŮ, Eduard. *Československá zahraniční politika 1918-1938. Kapitoly z dějin mezinárodních vztahů*. (Czechoslovak Foreign Policy 1918-1938 Chapters from the history of international relations). Prague : Institut pro středoevropskou kulturu a politiku, 1995, p. 15-17; HRONSKÝ,