

KING CAROL II - NICOLAE TITULESCU ONE OF THE STILL UNRESOLVED CONTROVERSIES OF THE INTERWAR PERIOD¹

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Abstract: *In a period when the rise of the personal power of the most unpredictable monarch of the Kingdom of Romania, despite spectacular economic progress and the flourishing of an effervescent artistic and cultural life, there are political turmoils that lead to surprising and difficult to understand decisions in the context of those times. The present article proposes a documented analysis of the evolution of relations between the monarch and the exceptional politician Nicolae Titulescu, a prominent figure of the interwar political life, who was twice elected president of the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Why this aversion? Readers will learn the author's arguments in a passionate read complemented by numerous documentary and bibliographic references.*

On August 29, 1936, following a government reshuffle of the cabinet headed by Gheorghe Tătărescu, Nicolae Titulescu was released from the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs² or, as the writer-diplomat, Elena Văcărescu, said, kicked out of his post. He was replaced by his government colleague, Victor Antonescu, also with old states in diplomacy. According to Nicolae Iorga's testimony, only a few days after landing, on September 2, 1936, Ion Inculeț, former Minister of the Interior and, from August 29, 1936, vice-president of the Council of Ministers, told him: "how the ministerial change took place with the removal to Titulescu", explaining to him that "he

¹ In the assertions below, I also highlight an interesting point of view expressed by the historian Narcis Dorin Ion, general director of the Peleş Museum, in his monumental work: *Carol II of Romania – A controversial king*

² See Ion M. Oprea, Nicolae Titulescu, Bucharest, Scientific Publishing House, 1966, p. 341-366; *Titulescu și strategia de pace (Titulescu and the Peace Strategy)*, coordinator Gh. Buzatu, Iași, Junimea Publishing House, 1982, chapter XI, entitled *Eșecul păcii globale. Demiterea lui N. Titulescu (A Failure of Global Peace. The Dismissal of N. Titulescu)*, p. 275-326.

had been looking for a long time to get rid of him. But he needed a situation that would not give him a platform"³. The suggestion of the great historian, who had not been an admirer of the Romanian diplomat for several years, was the following: "I tell him that at least one should make a joke of asking him to join the party that demanded a strictly homogeneous government. He regrets that they didn't think..."⁴.

Such credible statements are more and more numerous, also clarifying the glorious ascension of the monarch to the throne of Romania. From 1934, the controversial king felt eclipsed in his totalitarian aspirations and manifestations by Titulescu's diplomatic success. And not only because of this the king was disappointed. The minister's critical attitude towards the royal clique and towards His Majesty's mistress, Elena Lupescu, caused him the greatest annoyance. It is generally known that after returning from Montreux, on July 11, 1936, Nicolae Titulescu submitted his resignation, through a letter (transmitted, in copy, to the king. He explained his gesture by the fact that "for some time now, various internal facts have shown me very clearly that I can no longer remain responsible for the development of our foreign policy on its essential principle, namely, good understanding with all nations without distinction. On the contrary, they have shown me that I cannot even take responsibility for maintaining the results achieved so far".⁵

"I am Romanian - said Titulescu -, born of Romanian parents, raised at the school of Take Ionescu and Vintilă Brătianu, and therefore Romanian nationalism is a dogma for me, both inside the country and outside. That's why I ask that no one from outside the country interfere in our internal affairs and that the guiding principles of our internal policy are purely Romanian". At the same time, Titulescu told Prime Minister Gheorghe Tătărescu, a docile tool of the monarch, that his concern was to "remain faithful to our alliance treaties, but also to establish the best possible relations with all our neighbors, maintaining, of course, our integrity territorial and national interests, that he did not conclude any assistance treaty with the U.S.S.R., respectively he never "assumed a commitment

³ N. Iorga, *Memorii. Sinuciderea partidelor politice (Memories. Suicide of the parties)* (1932-8), vol. VII, p. 353.

⁴ *Ibidem*

⁵ Nicolae Titulescu, *Politica externă a României (Romanian Foreign Policy)* (1937), edited by George G. Potra, Constantin I. Turcu, Ion M. Oprea, Bucharest, Enciclopedică Publishing House, 1994, p. 37-38 and further up to p. 56.

regarding the passage of Soviet armies through Romanian territory, such a matter never even being discussed".

In his memorial work entitled *Politica externă a României (Romanian Foreign Policy)* (1937), to which we refer below), Nicolae Titulescu admits that Tătărescu, Inculeț and, above all, Victor Antonescu insisted on withdrawing their resignation, reaching the signing of the well-known minute of July 14 1936, through which the three expressed their approval of the foreign policy led by the head of foreign affairs. That Gheorghe Tătărescu was working at two ends can be seen from the memorandum he sent to King Carol II, on July 11, 1936, in which from his perspective of Prime Minister, if Titulescu resigns, it is not due to a conflict between the two, but to some factual situations that go beyond passing contingencies. And after the reshuffle of August 29, 1936 - he should also note that "in the difficult situation that Mr. Titulescu created it abroad personally, through attitudes and exaggerations whose responsibility he cannot share with anyone: conflicts with officialdom and Italian public opinion; conflicts with Polish officialdom and public opinion, conflicts with part of French public opinion; tightening of relations even with some of the political leaders of allied and friendly countries - all these facts created an atmosphere of opposition for Mr. Titulescu, in which the action of his lordship can no longer be carried out freely and which sometimes gives him very embarrassing moments. The latest incident with the Italian press is one of the outbreaks of this difficult situation".

At the same time, the head of the Romanian government informed his sovereign that he is "sure that Mr. Titulescu is aware of this atmosphere; it is certain that his lordship is aware that this atmosphere has a detrimental effect on the country and its interests, and that is why he considers it necessary to withdraw, even if only temporarily". Gheorghe Tătărescu also specified that "to this external case, another internal case is added. Mr. Titulescu must be aware that some exaggerations of his lordship - in speech and in attitude - in the matter of relations with the U.S.S.R. they alienated a good part of the sympathies of the Romanian public opinion, refractory to a policy that would go beyond the framework of only external relations with our neighbor from the East. His lordship, not being able to recover neither from the acts committed nor from their consequences, can no longer acquire what he feels he has lost and therefore must consider the solution of withdrawal as the only one that would give him the possibility of restoring his popularity". We can easily see in Tătărescu's gesture that of Pilate from Pontus.

To these "essential causes", the prime minister also added "the collapse of some of the illusions that our hearty collaborator had placed in the systems and practices of international politics, in the elaboration of which he collaborated with passion".⁶



King Carol II and Nicolae Titulescu visiting Great Britain (1936)

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 798.

It was obvious, under the conditions in which the German rise in European politics became more and more pressing, that Nicolae Titulescu could no longer officially represent the policy of adaptation to the realities of the time, which Romania tried in the years 1937-1940, forced to is getting closer economically and militarily to the Third Reich, which has become the master of Europe. The conclusion of the report submitted to the king was that "in this cycle of facts are found the origins of the decision taken by Mr. N. Titulescu to resign from the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs".

Although he expressed his regret for "separation from a man endowed with so many elite qualities", Gheorghe Tătărescu took "this resignation into consideration without concern", even though he was aware that "for international public debates, for the solution of general, European and world problems, Mr. Titulescu's absence will be a difficult gap to fulfill". "However, for Romanian interests - the prime minister emphasized in the report sent to the monarch - the withdrawal of his reign, without causing any danger, will be, on the contrary, an occasion for necessary relaxation in the relations with some of the allied or friendly states, against which the incidents provoked, willy-nilly, because of his rule, they created stressful situations for us".

At the same time, the President of the Council of Ministers considered that "this withdrawal will also give us the opportunity to proceed with a review of the bodies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its propaganda tools, which in today's situation, in many centers, only work within an action personal and constitute dangerous anomalies in the action to defend the general interests of the state and the government". And that scenario was implemented, so that after the elimination of Titulescu from the formula of the new reshuffled government, until the end of 1936 many plenipotentiary ministers were recalled from their posts, being considered to be very close to the former head of Romanian diplomacy, whose policy was not she was still wanted in Bucharest, but offering them other diplomatic missions.

Analyzing the consequences of Titulescu's resignation, Gheorghe Tătărescu also took into account the fact that "the interpretation that will be given, perhaps, by a malicious press and an uninformed public opinion - and according to which Mr. Titulescu's departure means a new orientation in foreign policy of the country - will be quickly refuted by the future acts and attitudes of the government, which will prove that nothing has changed in this policy".

Everything was in vain, because, unfortunately, the prime minister and the king of Romania did not correctly estimate the influence that Titulescu had in the Western diplomatic circles and the completely unfavorable echoes of his removal from the government, the European press putting on the wallpaper exactly this interpretation of a change in Romanian foreign policy. The change will occur, but not in the summer of 1936, but only in the summer of 1940, during the regime of monarchical authority, when pressed by the territorial claims of our revisionist neighbors (the U.S.S.R., Hungary and Bulgaria, copiously helped by Germany and Italy), will shatter the territorial integrity of Greater Romania in the summer of 1940.

Precisely to reassure European diplomatic circles, the head of government informed Carol II that "the replacement by Mr. Victor Antonescu, a traditionalist of our foreign policy, will be, on the other hand, in the first moments of confusion, an additional guarantee and a call to order for all foreign public opinion". The assessment of the President of the Council of Ministers did not turn out to be true. Western and Soviet chancelleries interpreted it exactly the opposite! Noticing this, in order to manage the susceptibilities of the Soviet Union, Prime Minister Tatarescu will make, on September 26, 1936, the following statement to Mihail Semionovici Ostrovski, the Soviet plenipotentiary minister from Bucharest (1934-1938): "The reorganized cabinet will continue Titulescu's policy, which is a traditional policy of the country, less flashy, but more methodical and energetic. Romania's only enemies are Germany and Hungary. (...) Relations with the U.S.S.R. not only will they not change, but the government even has a plan to strengthen and deepen these relations"⁷.

The oddity of history is that Ambassador Ostrovski will be sent to the Soviet Gulag because he "contributed to the removal from office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, N. Titulescu".

Despite all these assurances given by the head of the Royal Romanian Government, following the replacement of Titulescu as head of Romanian diplomacy, Maxim Litvinov, his counterpart in Moscow, informed him, in September 1936, that he no longer considered the draft treaty, initialed at Montreux on July 21, 1936, in which the principles of mutual assistance between the Kingdom of Romania and the U.S.S.R. were

⁷ *Dokumentî vneşnei politiki S.S.S.R.*, vol. XIX, doc. nr. 279, apud Ioan Talpeş, *Diplomație și apărare. Coordonate ale politicii externe românești (Diplomacy and Defense. Coordinates of the Romanian Foreign Policy)*., 1933-1939, p. 167.

established, based on mutual respect for territorial integrity, because they interpret Titulescu's dismissal as a change in Romanian foreign policy. Nicolae Titulescu's mistake was that he did not bring to the knowledge of the king and the prime minister, neither then nor later, the content of this document that he had initialed with Litvinov, creating great suspicions, which also contributed to his removal from the new government .

Because Titulescu had not notified the Romanian government, officially, about the content of the pact - he reasoned, in a letter to the king, from the end of 1939, that he "conformed to Litvinov's wish, who did not want me to enumerate the act, but to - I will bring it to Your Majesty's attention myself" -, Litvinov telephoned the former head of Romanian diplomacy, in September 1936, to ask him: "Have you submitted the document of July 21 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? No, I replied in good faith. I submitted to your wish and ceased to be a minister before I could communicate it, personally, in Bucharest. Then, Litvinov answered me, don't submit it anymore, because the act of July 21 has no value between us, because we consider that your dismissal, under the known circumstances, is equivalent to a change in foreign policy"⁸.

In May 1937, Litvinov will personally tell Titulescu, at the meeting in Talloires, that he had already communicated to Victor Antonescu, the new foreign minister, that "Romania has changed its foreign policy. So we have to defend ourselves against the documents that Titulescu made us sign. I have only one regret. That of having made the map of Europe out of precious stones, in such a way that Bessarabia entered the Romanian territory. I tried to correct my mistake by adding an old map, in which the territory of Bessarabia is hatched"⁹.

In fact, as Armand Călinescu rightly intuited, after meeting with Titulescu in Paris on April 30, 1937, he wrote: "It seems that the Russian did not have the authorization of his government. In connection with this

⁸ Viorica Moisuc, *Premisele izolării politice a României. 1919-1940 (The Premises of Romania's Political Isolation. 1919-1940)*, București, Editura Humanitas, 1991, p. 329.

⁹ George G. Potra, *Convorbirile Nicolae Titulescu-Maksim Maksimovici Litvinov de la Talloires. 28 mai 1937 (The Talks Between Nicolae Titulescu and Maksim Maksimovici Litvinov from Talloires. May 28, 1937)*, în lucrarea George G. Potra, *Titulescu. Neuitarea geniului. Culegere de studii, articole, conferințe (Nicolae Titulescu. The Oblivion of Genius. Collection of studies, articles, conferences)*, vol. I, p. 316.

agreement, there had been rumors in the country that the passage of Soviet troops was authorized in case of war. He shows me the text, which is annotated by Litvinov. In reality, it was said that the Russian armies will only pass with the authorization of the Romanian government and will be forced to withdraw as soon as the Romanian government asks for it"¹⁰.

An additional argument for rejections from the Soviets was the fact that, at the end of 1936, King Carol II personally decorated Stanisław Poklewski-Koziell (1868-1939), a Russian diplomat of Polish origin, was envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the Tsarist Empire in Bucharest during the First World War. The gesture of the Romanian sovereign - which expressed the gratitude of the Romanians for the role of the Russian diplomat - was interpreted, forced, by the Soviet mass media, obviously at the order of the Kremlin, as a manifestation of anti-Soviet policy on the part of the Romanians, which is completely false and interpreted in a tendentious way. On July 20, 1937, the newspaper "Pravda" published a special article, titled Politics of Adventures, in which it was mentioned that "the Romanian government demonstratively emphasizes its anti-Soviet tendencies. So, for example, at the end of last year, the former plenipotentiary minister of tsarist Russia, with a resonant name, Poklewski-Koziell, was decorated. This fact, in itself, has a humorous character. But the speech given by the King on the occasion of this important event, without a doubt, was aimed at giving this decoration the character of an anti-Soviet political demonstration"¹¹.

A well-versed "zoon politikon", Tătărescu also exposed to the king the possibility that "if Mr. Titulescu wants to make his resignation a platform for agitation and a weapon at the service of a party, it could disturb our internal political field. However, I reckon that his lordship will not commit this mistake, which would jeopardize his return to international activity and make his relations with other political parties impossible".

¹⁰ Armand Călinescu, *Însemnări politice. 1916 - 1939 (Political Notes. 1916 - 1939)*, edited edition and prefaced by Dr. Al. Gh. Savu, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1990, p. 348

¹¹ "Pravda", no. 198 of July 20, 1937, apud Nicolae Titulescu, *Opera politico-diplomatică (Political-Diplomatic Works)*. January 1, 1937-December 31, 1937, volume edited by George G. Potra, collaborators Delia Răzdolescu, Daniela Boriceanu, Ana Potra, Gheorghe Neacșu, Part II, Bucharest, Titulescu European Foundation, 2007, p. 898, note 1.

Under these conditions, the prime minister left the decision to eliminate Nicolae Titulescu in the hands of Carol II: "However, Your Majesty will decide as it sees fit, taking into account the superior interests of the country, and I submit to its decision beforehand." As is known, the king's decision - instigated, of course, also by Elena Lupescu, whom the great diplomat virulently criticized - was to reshuffle the Tătărescu government. In these conditions, on August 29, 1936, in the new cabinet, Victor Antonescu, former member of the National Liberal Party, deputy (since 1901), former Minister of Justice (1914-1916, 1933-1935) and of Finance (1916-1917, 1935-1936), but also former minister plenipotentiary in Paris in several times: 1917-1918, 1918-1919, 1922-1924¹².

On July 20, 1936, participating in Montreux, at the Straits Conference, during which he gave a speech, Nicolae Titulescu will go to his residence in Cap Martin, located on the Cote d'Azur, in the south of France, from where he sent several telegrams to Sturdza Palace. Here he will learn, on August 29, 1936, about the reorganization of the Tătărescu government, of which he will no longer be a part. In Nice, Titulescu told the newspaper "Le Figaro": "I did not learn about the formation of the new Romanian Cabinet, which is made up of all former ministers, except me, until after it had been formed. The new government no longer needs my services. It is his right. I would have preferred, however, to have been informed of his intentions beforehand, for I am not the man who would have tried to impose his presence. For the moment I refrain from any assessment and I will not specify my future political attitude"¹³.

Being in charge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for more than a year, Victor Antonescu will continue the efforts to normalize relations with the Soviet Union, meeting with Maxim Litvinov in Geneva on September 19, 1936. King Carol II, who obeyed everyone to the rumors coming from the Romanian diplomatic and political circles, he came to see in Titulescu a great conspirator against his regime. "It is true that the great chancellor cannot swallow that he is no longer in the Government and, through his

¹² Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți* (1916-1938), p. 130; *Organizarea instituțională a Ministerului Afacerilor Externe. Acte și documente*, volumul II. 1920-1947, pp. 544-545 [*Governments and Governors* (1916-1938), p. 130; *The Institutional Organization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Acts and Documents*, volume II. 1920-1947, pp. 544-545]

¹³ "Le Figaro", from August 30, 1936, apud Nicolae Titulescu, *Documente diplomatice* (*Diplomatic Documents*), p. 814.

many friends, he is making intrigues" - Carol wrote in his diary, on May 3, 1937, recording several news received from Dinu Cesianu, the Romanian minister in Paris and friend from the king's youth: "He warned the Government about these agitations, but it did not take any measures. He has continuous contact with the Country, through emissaries. All the people who go abroad, even H. Catargi, went to see him at St. Moritz; apart from Argetoianu, he has contact with everyone. In order to collect internal and external weapons, he has contact with Stelian Popescu. On May 3 he saw Știrbey, at the Ritz, between May 6-7 he continues contacts with some from Foreign Affairs; Cantemir, Niculescu-Buzești, Hiott, Athanasiu give him copies after telegrams". Our conclusion is that Titulescu was being spied on by Carol II around the clock. It is not known if, concretely, he ordered the transition to measures to suppress him, nor does his personal secretary Sergiu Nenișor mention such a thing in his evocations. Instead, he mentions the names of his friends: Edvard Beneš, Edouard Herriot, Anthony Eden - the current foreign minister of Great Britain -, Paul-Boncour, the former foreign minister of France, Léon Blum, the former president of the Council, and among those who passed in the world of shadows: King Alexander of Yugoslavia, the late Atatürk, Louis Barthou, Austen Chamberlain, Robert de Flers, Politis, the great professor of international law, whose disciple he was and others. Not missing from the gallery of his friends – Litvinov. Of course, on his policy, Carol II also noted a statement by his great rival, Barbu Știrbey: "I do not recognize King Carol and I will never recognize him; however, the thought of what will happen when it's gone worries me."¹⁴

When he noted this premonition of the former intimate adviser of his parents, Carol II in no way suspected that, in only three years, his policy would lead him to lose the Throne. Cleverly, Titulescu had declared to Georges Masidel, knowing that it would reach the sovereign's ears, that "I have never agreed with King Carol to such an extent: he doesn't want me, I don't want him". In fact, what irritated the sovereign was not only the diplomatic success of his former minister of foreign affairs, still received in Paris as an active head of Romanian diplomacy, but also the statements he made that were in disagreement with the new official foreign policy line coordinated directly by him.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 178.

Although he was no longer the head of Romanian diplomacy, Nicolae Titulescu made, in April 1937, a resounding visit to Paris, the echoes of which in the French press are appended by the King to his diary, as an obvious sign that the problem still interested him, but also irritated him, at the same time. "The French government - we can read in the account of the well-known journalist Pertinax - was obliged to act and, above all, to inform itself, using Mr. Titulescu as a source, who knows, like no one else, the internal problems of Romania. This was received with unusual pomp for former ministers. The dinners, the breakfasts, the reception by the President of the Republic, all of these made it clear that Titulescu's arrival in Paris is much more important than the simple visit of a former Minister of Foreign Affairs from a friendly country. Indeed, Titulescu's actions demonstrated, right from the start, that he is willing to give his visit the real political significance of strict topicality.

As if he had not irritated Carol II enough with his diplomatic actions, Titulescu will meet, on May 29, 1937, in Talloires, a small town near the French-Swiss border, with Maxim Litvinov, the commissioner for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., with which he addressed the perspectives of Romanian-Soviet relations, general political developments in Central and Eastern Europe, collective security and the future of the League of Nations.

On this occasion, Litvinov frankly confessed to Titulescu the true Soviet intentions regarding Bessarabia: "For several days, Mr. Victor Antonescu asks me for a de jure recognition of Bessarabia. Or, to ask the U.S.S.R. de jure recognition means on the part of Romania to recognize that it does not possess Bessarabia by virtue of the previous documents you signed (...) Romania, I repeat - you say the opposite in vain - has changed its foreign policy. I want the potential that Bessarabia represents to become Russian, not German. That's why I want to inform you that we will try to retake Bessarabia by all the legal and military means that will be possible for us"¹⁵.

On February 5, 1940, a year before passing into eternity, the former Senior of Foreign Affairs sent a long letter to King Carol II, in which he

¹⁵ George G. Potra, *Convorbirile Nicolae Titulescu-Maksim Maksimovici Litvinov de la Talloires. 28 mai 1937 (The Talks Between Nicolae Titulescu and Maksim Maksimovici Litvinov from Talloires. May 28, 1937)*, în *lucrarea George G. Potra, Titulescu. Neuitarea geniului. Culegere de studii, articole, conferințe (Nicolae Titulescu. The Oblivion of Genius. Collection of studies, articles, conferences)*, vol. I, p. 316., Part II, pp. 899-901, 907-914.

expressed the bitterness caused by his removal from the public life of Romania: "I will not hide that the way I had to leave the Ministry of Foreign Affairs depressed me deeply at first. Not the fact of no longer being a minister, but the way I was fired after 20 years of service to my country, for which I have, along with the thanks of the heads of state I have had the honor to serve, the certificates of all the presidents of the Council with whom I exercised power. What is worse—here is a thing I never wanted to say, but which I am forced to do—is that I felt that the feelings of some members of my family—I told some—had changed from the moment I became a simple private individual and was subjected to ostracism from the Romanian authorities abroad. I have always had the absolute certainty that Your Majesty has nothing to do with the way I have been treated. But the high officials of the state thought they were doing the right thing by doing so. Thus, then, during these last three years, I was never the former minister, I was not even a simple private, I was only the man without a future, towards whom regret was expressed that he had been followed in the past. And, nevertheless, the present and the future of many young Romanians is not due to the kindness of Your Majesty, who was kind enough to give his high approval for their appointment, proposed by me, in important positions?".

Aware of the future importance of Romania's relations with the Soviet Union, Nicolae Titulescu sent him, as a patriotic gesture, on March 9, 1940, an extensive Report on Romanian-Soviet relations, a document in which he will explain his actions and meetings after his dismissal from the position of head of externals. He lived only one year. Upon his death, Carol II recorded, in his Journal, on March 18: This morning, the newspapers announce the death of Titulescu. He has also gone, thus ended a long and glorious period of our international politics. An undeniably smart man, a great talent, but too out of the way besides egocentric, an actor and seeing things more through the legal prism of a lawyer and sometimes too little realistic. These notes could be understood, even interpreted as a tribute that the monarch finally pays to a great servant of Romanian interests across the country's borders.

In one voice, Romanian historiography believes that after returning to the country from the self-exile to which he had personally condemned himself, the monarch made the *divide et impera* principle a way of action and life in his relations with the Romanian political forces. He was no longer a balancing factor between the political parties, such as Carol I and

Ferdinand the Unifier. The first attempt, made in June 1930, was to attract Dinu Brătianu and Gheorghe Tătărescu to his side, from the Liberal Party. Then, from among the People's Party, led by Marshal Averescu, Octavian Goga's group broke away. The most difficult was his relationship with the National Peasant Party, personally with Iuliu Maniu, who ab initio spoke against the restoration. And in this political formation, the monarch made a breach by attracting, in 1935, the older leader Vaida-Voevod and then Armand Călinescu, constituting the "centrist" wing of the PNȚ. Initially, the far right Legionary Movement enjoyed political, moral and material support from the king, so that later it came out from under the tutelage of the throne, appreciating that "occult forces darken the royal crown". In order to feel totally "unchained" she removed from the throne not only Queen Maria, but also her brother, Prince Nicholas, on April 9, 1937.

For the annihilation of Maniu, in 1935 the king launched the idea of forming the Mihalache Government, with Vaida-Voevod at the Interior, and appointed Gabriel Marinescu from the chamber. Faithful to the PNT doctrine, Ion Mihalache did not accept the king's proposal. Then the mandate was entrusted to the servile Gheorghe Tătărescu, with the mission of organizing the elections of December 1937. As no party obtained in that election more than 40% of the total votes to constitute a parliamentary majority / PNL (National Liberal Party) - 35.9% , PNȚ (National Peasants Party) - 20.4% and the "All for the Country" Party of the Legionnaires 15.5%. This - gave the monarch a free hand to appoint to the government the political formation most faithful to his personal interests. This is how Octavian Goga, the president of the National Christian Party, an old and determined opponent of Maniu, came to the head of the government in 1938 / in the elections they had won only 9.15% of the votes/. He manages, at the same time, to make another breach in the PNȚ by attracting the "centrists", appointing Armand Călinescu to the position of Minister of the Interior. Deeply outraged by the manner in which Carol II proceeded, who did not consult him, at least formally, in relation to solving the political crisis, he declared that the Goga government had become "a real challenge to the nation". From 1938, the Iron Guard will attack the democratic regime from all sides, arguing for the reorientation of the country's foreign policy towards the Berlin-Rome Axis. Octavian Goga negotiated a secret agreement with Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. In this context, on February 18, 1938, Carol dismissed Goga from the presidency of the Council of Ministers and established a government headed by patriarch Miron Cristea. He

suspended the 1923 Constitution, drafting a new fundamental law that was promulgated on February 27, 1938, the monarchy ensuring a dominant position in the country's political system, establishing the Crown Council as an advisory body with members appointed by the king, and on On December 16, the National Renaissance Front was established, "the only political organization in the state", transformed on June 22, 1940 into the Party of the Nation - "Unique and Totalitarian Party".



King Carol II