

## ASPECTS REGARDING ROMANIA'S FOREIGN AND MILITARY POLICY DURING THE PERIOD 1941–1943

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Abstract: This material captures the politico-military relations between Romania and Italy during the period 1941–1943, a brief presentation of the Romanian diplomacy at that time.

Pendulating between the hypothesis of creating a barrier against Russian Slavism through a union with Italy and the fall of the fascist dictatorship, the Romanian-Italian relations bore the stamp of those troubled times, when mutual distrust and pursuit of one's own interests were obvious.

With immeasurable losses, Romania, allied with Germany until 23 August 1944, continued the total war, this time against the former ally – Germany.

**Keywords:** world war, diplomacy, diplomatic representation, fascism, dictatorship.

The Great Conflagration of 1939–1945 determined internal evolutions and foreign policy actions for Romania. The problem of Romanian oil, the collapse of Greater Romania and, later, the evolution of the war amplified and radicalized public protests, especially against territorial concessions<sup>1</sup>.

The dictatorial regime of that period, in Romania, was characterized by the concentration in the hands of the head of state of the entire leadership of the country, with very high responsibilities in the legislative, executive and diplomatic fields. The head of state and the President of the Council of Ministers, who later became Marshal of Romania, was the sole legislator of the state and also dealt with the enforcement of the laws; he was the head of the government and of the administrative apparatus, he decided on the directions of state policy, the ministers working under his direct guidance. The general kept the monarchical institution under control, as he had full powers and was not accountable to any forum<sup>2</sup>.

In 1922–1943, there was a large movement in Italy to militarize society and turn it into a fascist one. Mussolini's fascist state was intended to be a corporate

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<sup>1</sup> For more details, see Ioan Scurtu, Gheorghe Buzatu, *Istoria românilor în secolul XX (1918–1948)*, Bucharest, Paideea Publishing, 1999, pp. 365–401.

<sup>2</sup> For more details, see Cezar Avram, Roxana Radu, *Regimuri politice comparate. Fascism, nazism, stalinism*, Craiova, Aius Publishing, 2008, pp. 126–128.

state in which the class struggle was replaced by talks between the employer and the employees, the freedom of trade unions was suppressed and the strike banned. Mussolini's imperial ambitions led to an alliance with Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany and later led to the entry into World War II. Italy's foreign policy was subordinated to Mussolini's ambitions. He was amazed by the force of Germany and adopted, after 1937, the Nazi model, emphasizing the process of fascistizing spirits and culture<sup>3</sup>.

Both during and after neutrality, Romania pursued an active policy, initiating actions in order to maintain the territorial statu-quo, and then actions to liberate Bukovina and Bessarabia, lands that had been occupied by the USSR. Antonescu, the head of state and "administrator of the German power", wanting to defend Romanian interests, considering that he could not count on Berlin, started from the first year of Romania's entry into the war, to test the reactions of Rome. The opportunity was given by the dispute with Hungary regarding the brutal treatment applied to the Romanian population in the territory lost by the Vienna Award of 1940. The reciprocal transfer of populations between Budapest and Bucharest failed, the Romanian government, through Antonescu's voice, heard on the occasion of his visit to Rome, called for the sending of some Italian-German "joint commissions" to verify violations of the Vienna agreements concluded in order to protect ethnic minorities in the two countries<sup>4</sup>. Between 13 and 18 October 1940, the former foreign minister, M. Manoilescu, on a mission in Rome, tried to find out the intentions of the Italian government, also trying to prepare the visit of the Romanian head of state. He met Ciano, the Italian foreign minister, and the Romanian politician proposed the establishment of a "permanent control commission" in each territorial department in which representatives of ethnic minorities were to be present. Ciano, cautious, replied that he would take a decision after the conclusion of the investigations initiated by the Italian-German commission on the "alleged" violations of the rights of minorities. Manoilescu, in his report, expressed the opinion that Ciano's "promise" had referred to the future territorial conquests in the territories of Yugoslavia and the USSR. The Italian Minister was also skeptical about the proposal put forward by Manoilescu in respect of the possibility of a regime of complete autonomy for the Romanians who became Hungarian citizens<sup>5</sup>.

On 15 October 1940, at a meeting with Marshal Badoglio, Manoilescu obtained a vague promise of support for the full autonomy of that part of Transylvania ceded to the Hungarians. A series of personalities met in the exploratory journey of the diplomat M. Manoilescu were impressed, but without definite commitments to the news regarding the Hungarian excesses on the Romanian population in Transylvania. The diplomat Rocco, Pavolini, the minister of popular culture and

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 106–110.

<sup>4</sup> Caroli Giuliano, *I rapporti italo-romeni nel 1940: la visita di Antonescu o Roma*, in "Revista di studi politici internazionali", XLV, 1978, 3, p. 374.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 375.

propaganda, as well as Ricci, the minister of corporation, were reluctant to commit to supporting the observance of the Vienna<sup>6</sup> agreements on the observance of the rights of Romanian ethnics in the territory annexed by Hungary. The Romanian diplomat tried to obtain more substantial assurances at his meeting with Mussolini, on 18 October, to whom he explained the absurdity of the provisions of the Vienna Award and the real situation of the Romanians. He managed to obtain Mussolini's approval on sending experts to Romania and expanding the Italian-German joint commission by co-opting a Romanian and a Hungarian delegate. He also obtained Mussolini's promise to act for the return of the Romanian intellectuals expelled from Northern Transylvania by the Hungarian authority in Budapest, as well as the promise to support the appointment of permanent commissioners in each district with ethnic minorities<sup>7</sup>.

Manoilescu's mission proved to be a semi-failure because the details of the Romanian-Hungarian relations were not clarified. The mood that prevailed among the Romanian leaders in the autumn of 1940 determined Antonescu to choose first the visit to Rome and then to Berlin. Rome had been the first to send the invitation to Antonescu. At the same time, in Italy, due to a strong Hungarian propaganda and the cordial relations between Ciano and the Hungarian aristocracy, a diplomatic intervention was needed at the level of the head of state. Antonescu hoped to give Romania a better image abroad. To this end, the exchange of diplomatic personnel in the Berlin, Rome and Vatican Legations was considered to be a firmer and more determined attitude of Bucharest.

The conversations with the ministers of Germany and Italy, as well as the documentary materials on Italian-Romanian political, economic and cultural relations prepared the action plan. Prince Sturza, on the eve of Ion Antonescu's departure for Rome, drew up a precise plan in order to obtain from the Axis Powers the establishment of a stable control commission in each territorial department in the region ceded by the Ribentrop-Molotov Pact. Sturza provided for the Romanians expelled by the Hungarians who had to "return to their homes" the adoption of the regime of national autonomy proposed by Manoilescu in Rome. On the Italian side, there was a resistance to the wishes of the Romanians, considering that they intended to obtain the annulment of the Vienna decisions. Ghigi, Italy's minister in Bucharest, who would accompany Ion Antonescu to Rome, tried to persuade the marshal not to bring to Mussolini's attention the issue of the remedies and of "the injustices arising from arbitration" so as not to create difficulties with the German ally.

The conversations between Mussolini, Antonescu, Ciano and Sturza in November 1940 reveal the interest of both states in Transylvania. At the end of 1940, the objectives of the Romanian state were for the Romanian minority, which

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 376.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 377.

had become the most numerous ethnic component of Hungary, to obtain a status similar to what Berlin had provided for the German minority. The powers of the Axis in Antonescu's plans had to agree, not only "to satisfy the prestige reasons of an allied nation, but also to meet its political interest"<sup>8</sup>.

Italy was reserved about the marshal's wishes, refusing to submit in the first phase the Report of the Italian-German Commission of Investigation of the ceded territories. Ciano, the Italian foreign minister, had warned Count Roggeri to do whatever was possible to mitigate "the expressive terms of the Report of the Investigation Commission concerning the Hungarian Theses"<sup>9</sup>. As for the discussions on the Romanian-Soviet relations, there was a greater interest of the Italian side. The Slavic problem and that of the communist anarchy had become priority interests in the reorganization of the New Europe, projected in Berlin and Rome. The penetration of the Red Army, reaching as far as Galați, threatened the fortified region of the Delta, disturbing even Bulgaria. The Russian claims to establish a condominium on the Maritime Danube, for the navigation of military ships on the lower reaches of the river, displeased Antonescu. The marshal, a General Staff military man, realized that in the event of a conflict, the evacuation of the whole Moldova was necessary. Antonescu's support also included the oil situation because the distances of 100 km from the Russian border and 60 km from the new border with Hungary allowed the Soviet armies, in case of a war, to occupy the oil area. Although Mussolini accepted the expansionist nature of the Kremlin, he did not agree to substantially change the relations with Moscow.

Antonescu, in the relations with Italy and Germany, advocated the rights of the Romanians living in the Balkan Peninsula. The issue of the Romanians in Macedonia was of particular interest to Bucharest. The Romanian government wanted to obtain a special regime of autonomy that would allow "freedom of cultural, economic and spiritual development". In his relations with Italy, Antonescu also appealed to common Latinity, which made Mussolini malleable. He even proposed the arrival of a Romanian cultural personality in Rome to see the achievements of the Italian fascist regime in the legislative, administrative, corporate field, etc. Professor Onicescu, a member of the Romanian delegation, wrote in a note sent to Bucharest that Pavolini, the Minister of Popular Culture and Italian Propaganda, had been won over by the idea of setting up the "Italian-Romanian Friendship Association", which would include Professor Bertoni, a well-known researcher of Romanian history and culture<sup>10</sup>. Mussolini and Antonescu also examined other problems concerning economic issues as well as Romania's military efficiency in the event of its entry into the war. Vatican diplomacy also played an important part in the Romanian-Italian relations. The Holy See, well informed about the political situation in Europe, showed interest in the Romanian

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 381.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 392–395.

issues. On 16 November 1940, Antonescu was received in audience by Pope Pius XII. On this occasion, Antonescu was assured of the Vatican's intention to improve the conditions of the Romanians in the ceded territories. The Vatican's interests were also motivated by the possible damage that the Catholics would have suffered if Transylvania had remained the centre of tensions and conflicts. Marquis Pacelli repeatedly hinted that a greater freedom granted to the Catholic religion in Romania would have resulted in an effective Vatican effort in favour of the Romanian government as far as Transylvania was concerned<sup>11</sup>.

In the spring of 1941, the Romanian government discussed both with Vishinsky, through Gafencu, trying to obtain a more benevolent attitude of Moscow, and with Germany, through the Romanian minister in Berlin, Raoul Bossy<sup>12</sup>.

The year 1941 symbolized a new page in the history of the second great world conflagration. The entry of the USA and the USSR into the camp of the states fighting against the Axis, with their immense material and human potential, determined the entry of hostilities "into their world phase"<sup>13</sup>. The period of Romania's neutrality (6 September 1939 – 28 May 1940), rich in mutually conditioned internal and external events, was followed by Romania's need to fight with the Axis against the Great Allies, despite its traditional diplomacy and the feelings of the majority of the Romanian people<sup>14</sup>.

Between 1941 and 1943, the relations between Romania and Italy did not reach the magnitude expected by the politicians in Bucharest, especially by General Ion Antonescu and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mihai Antonescu. Romania joined Germany against the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, in order to liberate the territories lost in the summer of 1940. Mihai Antonescu, after accusing Rome of pursuing a duplicitous policy, tried with the new Italian minister in Bucharest, Renato Bova Scoppa, to create a new framework for bilateral relations. Renato Bova Scoppa arrived in Bucharest on 1 July 1941 and presented his credentials on 5 July 1941<sup>15</sup>.

As for Italy, it entered World War II completely unprepared, Mussolini himself being aware of Italy's lack of military training, but convinced that the war would end quickly and that England would have the fate of France. His concern was to sit at the table of peace negotiations on the part of the victors, which did not happen<sup>16</sup>. Mussolini's attitude was pro-German, although he had no "sympathy"

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 400.

<sup>12</sup> For more see *Istoria românilor, vol. IX. România în anii 1940–1947*, Bucharest, Encyclopedic Publishing, 2008, pp. 208–214; Florin Constantiniu, Ilie Schipor, *Trecerea Nistrului, 1941. O decizie controversată*, Bucharest, 1995, pp. 106–108.

<sup>13</sup> Apud J. B. Duroselle, *Histoire diplomatique de 1919 à nos jours*, Vth ed., Paris, Dalloz, 1971, pp. 294–295.

<sup>14</sup> For more see Gh. Buzatu, *România și războiul mondial din 1939–1945*, Iași, Centrul de Istorie și Civilizație Europeană, 1995, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> V. Fl. Dobrinescu, I. Pătroiu, Gh. Nicolescu, *Relații politico-diplomatice și militare româno-italiene (1914–1947)*, Craiova, Intact Publishing, 1999, p. 313.

<sup>16</sup> Giuliano Proccaci, *Istoria italienilor*, Bucharest, Politic Publishing, 1975, p. 474.

for the fuhrer. Mussolini believed that Italy should wage a war parallel to that waged by Germany, by its own forces and objectives. The failures on the Western Alpine front and the semi-failures in East Africa demonstrated the lack of military training of the Italians<sup>17</sup>.

The occupation of Romania by the Germans in October 1940 displeased Mussolini and caused him to begin his aggression against Greece, an aggression that ended in a resounding defeat<sup>18</sup>. On 11 November 1940, the British aircraft caused heavy losses to the Italian fleet anchored within the port of Taranto<sup>19</sup>. At the same time, the Italian failure in Ethiopia reduced Mussolini's enthusiasm.

In 1941 a new phase of the war began, placing Italy in a position of political and military subordination to Germany. The victorious intervention of the Germans in Greece and Yugoslavia put an end to the old Italian aspirations for hegemony in the Balkans. The sending of a German expeditionary force to Libya and the victorious offensive to Sollum meant a recognition of Italy's subordination to Germany. The last act of enslavement to Germany was the sending of an Italian expeditionary force to the USSR.

Shortly after his arrival in Bucharest, Renato Bova Scoppa met Mihai Antonescu, at which point the Italian minister acknowledged that Italy must have a new position vis-à-vis Romania, justifying that Italy did not perform the Vienna arbitration alone. The Italian diplomat informed Mihai Antonescu that, with the mandate from Galeazzo, Ciano would have a new orientation which would reveal Italy's interest in Romania<sup>20</sup>.

On the day of Romania's entry into the war against the Soviet Union, on 22 June 1941, Renato Bova Scoppa met Mihai Antonescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, discussing the arrival of the Italian troops in Romania and the reorganization of the Italian-Romanian Society in Bucharest, considering that only a diplomatic action program would promote relations between the two countries<sup>21</sup>. On 1 August 1941, Renato Bova Scoppa announced the head of diplomacy in Bucharest, Mihai Antonescu, that the Duke had received the memorandum sent by General Ion Antonescu, the main point being that Romania did not give up Transylvania. At the same time, Scoppa stated that the Duke was thinking of a Latin solidarity in the Balkans and that the Hungarian policy towards Romania was a challenge. On 1 September 1941, Mihai Antonescu addressed the head of the Romanian Legation in Rome, Vasile Grigorcea, emphasizing that everything had remained at a declarative level and recommending a more insistent diplomatic activity<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> For more see Jaques de Lauay, *Mari decizii ale celui de-al doilea război mondial*, vol. II, Bucharest, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing, 1988, p. 96.

<sup>18</sup> The Italian mountain infantry perished by the thousands due to the resistance of the Greek soldiers and the cold in the mountains.

<sup>19</sup> V. Fl. Dobrinescu, I. Pătroi, Gh. Nicolescu, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 315.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 316.

<sup>22</sup> *I documenti diplomatici italiani*, Nano serie: 1939–1943, vol. VII (24 aprile – 11 dicembre 1941), doc 610, p. 621.

With the departure of Renato Bova Scoppa to Rome, Mihai Antonescu sent through him, to Ciano, a diplomatic note entitled “Memorandum on the treatment applied by Hungary to the Romanian population in the territories ceded by the Vienna arbitration” which highlighted the atrocities of the Hungarians in Northwestern Romania<sup>23</sup>. This memorandum stated that 1,400,000 Romanians could not live in the conditions existing in the Hungarian regions, that the new border established in Vienna put a dagger in the very heart of the Romanian land, that no Romanian government could ever accept as final the current Transylvanian border for historical, political, economic, demographic reasons and for reasons of honour<sup>24</sup>. The memorandum also stressed Romania's importance in Balkan politics and the fact that Rome showed “no warm sign of friendship”.

Following the telegrams between the Italian Foreign Minister and the Minister in Bucharest, Renato Bova Scoppa, (from 7 November 1941 and 8 November 1941), Ciano thanked Mihai Antonescu for the invitation of the Romanian Government, subject to specification of the date by the Italian side, appreciating the support for the moral and material reconstruction under the guidance of Marshal Antonescu<sup>25</sup>. In the second telegram, Renato Bova Scoppa informed Ciano that Ion Antonescu had been notified of his visit<sup>26</sup>. Regarding the Russian issue, Mihai Antonescu asked Vasile Grigorcea to find out the Italian point of view on it, emphasizing that the Romanian people should not become a Balkan people. Mihai Antonescu insisted on the Slavic problem that he linked to Italian interests in the Balkans and the need for Romanian-Italian cooperation. The same issues were addressed by Mihai Antonescu at the meeting with the Italian chargé d'affaires Formentini.

At the meetings on 13 and 25 September 1941, Renato Bova Scoppa stressed the need for economic relations, which were difficult, and mentioned the importance of supporting the Italian Expeditionary Force, troops on their way to Russia<sup>27</sup>. Also in September 1941, Mihai Antonescu reproached the Consultation for its pro-Hungarian policy and the fact that the relations with Romania were not deepened, not even in Balkan politics. The Romanian diplomat, Mihai Antonescu, considered that Transylvania must be entirely ruled by Romanians and attacked the Hungarian policy.

Renato Bova Scoppa announced Mihai Antonescu, on 8 October 1941, about the future visit to Bucharest of Minister Riccardi, this being considered an opportunity to improve the relations between Italy and Romania, especially in the economic and financial field<sup>28</sup>. The restoration of the northwestern border would be done, in Mihai Antonescu's opinion, with or without the support of the Axis

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 723, p. 749.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 726, p. 750.

<sup>26</sup> V. Fl. Dobrinescu, I. Pătroiu, Gh. Nicolescu, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 318.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 319.

countries. Mihai Antonescu decided to set up a peace office for the defence of the Romanian territorial rights. On 27 October 1941, the Italian diplomat, Bova Scoppa, returned to Rome and informed M. Antonescu that the Italian Foreign Minister, G. Ciano, wanted a three-way discussion (Marshal Ion Antonescu, Mihai Antonescu and himself), but without approaching economic issues<sup>29</sup>. On 29 October and 1 November 1941, Minister Riccardi and Renato Bova Scoppa had meetings where the two considered “the Romanian-Hungarian border established by the Vienna arbitration a mistake and a strategic threat”<sup>30</sup>. However, articles appeared in the Italian press showing sympathy for Hungary. The economic-financial relations and military cooperation were much better than the political-diplomatic relations.

Until the engagement of the two states in the war, one should note the proposal made by Mihai Antonescu, in May 1941, to the Italian chargé d'affaires, Formentini, with regard to the opening of a Romanian corridor through the Timok Valley to the great border of Greater Albania so as to establish a new Latin barrier. On this, Formentini wrote to Ciano, on 13 June 1941, about the historical necessity of creating by any means a union with Italy in order to establish a barrier against the Slavism represented by Russia<sup>31</sup>.

In another telegram, addressed by Formentini to Ciano, it was stressed that Antonescu was for the Axis and that this policy of intimate collaboration with Italy had to be carried out, because Hungary represented the interests of Moscow. Hungary was not considered a safe country to rely on<sup>32</sup>.

Another telegram sent from Bucharest, on 12 December 1941, by Renato Bova Scoppa, to the Italian Foreign Minister, contained the communications of Marshal Antonescu to the Duke. Thus, it was stated that the Marshal would do all he could to contribute to the common victory. By the end of the month, he hoped to send 30,000 tons of oil to the Italian fleet. At the same time, Germany could build a warehouse in Romania of 50 thousand tons of coal, sending, on average, 3-4 trains of this fuel per day and 60 thousand tons of fuel oil per month. The sacrifices that Romania made were also taken into account<sup>33</sup>.

Another telegram sent by the Minister in Bucharest, Bova Scoppa, to Minister Ciano, from Bucharest (15 January 1942) reproduced the words of Mihai Antonescu, who expressed the opinion that his efforts had been in vain, because Italy did not want to consider Romania an essential element in tomorrow's politics. The head of the Romanian state wanted to be clearly shown the position of Italy. At the same time, he blamed Count Ciano for his visit to Budapest<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 320.

<sup>30</sup> *I documenti diplomatici italiani*, Nano serie: 1939-1943, vol. VII (24 aprile – 11 dicembre 1941), doc. 254, p. 246.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 255, p. 247.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. VIII (12 dicembre 1941 – 20 luglio 1942), doc. 4, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 156, p. 149.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 166, p. 169.



The telegram sent by Ciano from Budapest to the Italian diplomat in Bucharest, Bova Scoppa (17 January 1942) showed that he had informed the Romanian side of the purpose of this visit to Hungary. The relations of cordiality and friendship that Italy had always had with Hungary as well as the non-existence of any argument regarding the Romanian-Hungarian relations could not deteriorate the relations with Romania<sup>35</sup>.

On 28 February 1942, the Italian Foreign Minister informed Bova Scoppa, by a telegram sent from Rome, of his visit to Bucharest on 5 April<sup>36</sup>. On 28 August 1942, Ciano was assured by the President of the Council of Ministers, Ion Antonescu, that there would be no obstacle in the export of crude oil to Italy, ie the export of 5 thousand tons of crude oil was allowed for August, of which 3,500 tons were shipped out<sup>37</sup>.

On 2 September 1942, Bova Scoppa informed Ciano that Mihai Antonescu, speaking of the military situation, had informed him that Ion Antonescu was “tortured” by the fact that the Russians had shown very good combativeness. The unassailable offensive activity in the north was the symptom that devastated the leader's soul towards a certain preoccupation. Antonescu, however, assured him that he had faith that they would win<sup>38</sup>.

In another telegram, dated 18 November 1942, sent from Bucharest, Renato Bova Scoppa informed Ciano that Mihai Antonescu considered the current war not only a military fact, as there was a sensitive political front in Europe, but also an economic front. If in the military field the situation was characterized by an inevitable alternation of victories, politically there was a need for initiatives. The Romanian minister considered the alliance a fidelity and not a slavery, wondering “whether we want to continue like this and for how long”<sup>39</sup>.

On 25 November 1942, Mihai Antonescu, summarizing the situation on the front, pointed out the reason for the withdrawal of the Romanian divisions, although General Gheorghe had managed to defeat the Soviet columns three times. Antonescu, due to the losses, demanded an increase of the materials necessary for the Romanian army to urgently replace the destroyed ones<sup>40</sup>.

On 9 December 1942, Scoppa informed Ciano that the Chief of the General Staff, Șteflea, had presented the situation, specifying that the state of the front in the sector occupied by the German and Romanian troops was still confusing because the Russians continued to attack by force, endangering our strategic positions. It was mentioned that in one day, the Italians lost 80,000 people<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 321, p. 355.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. IX (21 luglio 1942 – 6 febbraio 1943), doc. 81, p. 94.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 100, p. 109.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 320, p. 318.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 345, p. 341.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, doc. 386, p. 383.

<sup>41</sup> D. F. Fleming, *Storia della guerra fredda 1917–1960*, Rizzoli Editore, p. 179.

The government of Marshal Badoglio, after the fall of Mussolini on 25 June 1943, tried to save the monarchy and take Italy out of the war. They managed to obtain an armistice with the Allies on 3 September 1943. The Germans released Mussolini and occupied much of Italy. In the years of the second great world conflagration, diplomacy had both failures and some successes, playing an important part in the moments of confrontation, but also of affirmation of the nations. According to the statements of the diplomat Nicolae Titulescu, “when the voice of the diplomats is no longer heard, the voice of the cannons comes into action” and “when diplomacy returns to its function, the armed confrontation ceases”<sup>42</sup>.

Romania’s international status between 1941 and 1944 was that of a satellite state within the Axis. Numerous and eloquent documents highlight the deterioration of Romania’s international status immediately after 23 August 1944.

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<sup>42</sup> Apud Dumitru Mazilu, *Diplomație europeană*, Bucharest, Lumina Lex Publishing, 2008, p. 6.