

Personalities of the Romanian Interwar Diplomacy: Nicolae Titulescu

Anișoara Popa¹

Abstract: This paper investigates the activity of one of the most representative personality of the Romanian Interwar Diplomacy, Nicolae Titulescu. We will point out the value of his vision on the role that the Society of Nations had in preserving the peace and rebuilding the international system and we conclude on the novelties of his intuitions.

Keywords: Interwar period; Romanian diplomacy; Nicolae Titulescu; peace; cooperation

1. Introduction

Nicolae Titulescu's diplomatic activity promoted him as a notable figure of the Romanian and international inter-war diplomacy whose complex sides are extensively reflected in the rich Romanian and foreign both contemporary and posthumous historiography (Agrigoroaiei, 1982, pp. 19-53; Dobrinescu, 1982, pp. 349-362; Titulescu politico-diplomatic work: Correspondence / volume cared by George G. Potra, 2004; Potra (Ed), 2007).

"A strong personality who used to enchant and amaze", stated the historian Ioan Ciupercă, starting from the numerous records about "the strong impression left on his contemporaries from inside and outside the country "and from" the perpetuity of his thoughts and actions" (Ciupercă, 1982, p. 133).

1.1. Objective and Hypotheses

The value and the importance of his presence during 20 years in the Romanian political life, at the external political leadership of the state and in the big forum of the United Nations were the object of numerous analysis.

¹ Professor, PhD, Danubius University of Galati, Faculty of Communication and International Relations, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd, Galati, Romania, Tel.: +40372 361 102, Fax: +40372 361 290, Corresponding author: apopa@univ-danubius.ro.

Titulescu's removing on August 29th, 1936, from the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania and the concerted action of the Romanian authorities of discriminating him and of stopping his every subsequent political movement, of diminishing his influence and his possibilities of actions confused the external political circles of the former allies, thus creating unease concerning the future orientation of Romania and abridging the Geneva forum of one of its most influential voices.

Echoes of the reactions concerning this "ignoble" act was immediately heard by the Romanian political class, by his former external collaborators, by the internal and international public opinion and they were subsequently formulated as well, after the declaration of the war and its end, against which Titulescu had fought with all his energy.

The publicist N.N. Petrașcu, insisting during a conference held in 1937 under the auspices of the International Studies Association, "Louis Barthou", on the national value that Titulescu represents and which the country needed, also mentioned the message sent by the French minister Georges Mandel, who was "Clemenceau's right-hand man", to the Romanian diplomat. He was writing to Titulescu no more no less, than "Your absence from Geneva is a danger for the peace" (Potra (Ed.) Ist part, 2007, p. 191).

The paper of the Belgian Jacques de Launay, *Titulescu et l' Europe*, published in 1976, took an account of documents - and not just a few of them - which attested how much Titulescu's withdrawal from the Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Romania was regretted in 1936. It is summarized here, in words that mean so much, the opinion formulated by Maxim Litvinov, immediately after the Second World War: "Had Titulescu stayed in his seat, nothing of what happened would not have taken place, the way we lived and suffered". (de Launay, 1976 apud Agrigoroiei, 1982, p. 52).

Antoine F. Frangulis (1888-1975), delegate of Greece at the Society of Nations, general secretary of the International Social Diplomatic Academy affirmed as well: "... [Titulescu] was a great jurist and had the vision of the future, just like Taleyrand. Had Europe taken into account the policy he was foreseeing, of course that its faith would have been a different one. He was perhaps, the greatest diplomat of this time." (Buzatu, 1982, p. 86).

We are trying to outline, starting from these affirmations, hues and new meanings of Titulescu's removing from the Romanian external political leadership that can contribute to sketching the importance of this Romanian diplomat's figure.

1.2. Context

The end of the World War I, by obtaining the surrender of Germany and its allies, was opening a new difficult era, filled with efforts and confrontations, transferred from the battle field in the international political area, having as aim the obtaining of peace. The treaty system from Versailles has as a target the obtaining of a just peace, based on the nationalities' principle and along with the Pact of the Society of Nations, will be at the base of the restructuring the international system of the times.

Mechanisms that could avoid the starting on a new conflagration, similar to the ones that had just horrified the contemporaries, were thought and promoted by the political and cultural elites that embraced the idea that, basically, war is inappropriate with civilization and human nature.

To struggle against it where it firstly appears, in the mind of humans, becomes the aim of the "education for peace" (Pita González, 2014), part of the cultural dimension of the activity promoted the Society of the Nations which wanted, foremost, a society of spirits. In that matter, Albert Einstein considered Society of Nations, the most important issue in the civilizations' succession and Eduard Barnes, "the expression of the democratization of Europe and the world." (Iacobescu, 1982, p. 159).

The cultural dimension was doubling the most important nucleus of Society of Nations, the political one, that will create, based on the Pact, a complex system based on new principles of international right that will serve the proclaimed ideal.

We insisted in one recent article on the paradigm of the inter-war idealism, outlining, on the same idea as Daniel Laqua, that it kept the liberal understanding of the previous century but from an international point of view, trying to overcome the specific anarchy of the international space by judicial regulations of the freedom of states' actions (Laqua, 2011, pp. 246-247; Popa, 2014, pp. 137, 144).

The contribution of the Romanian diplomat Nicolae Titulescu, who called himself one of the "accomplishing idealists/idealiști făptuitori" to the international law debates, collective security conferences and disarmament conferences would bring him international recognition proved with his election of 1926 as the vice-president

of the Diplomatic Academy of Paris, established at Gh. Marinescu's proposal, but also as a permanent delegate of Romania and president of League of Nations' Assembly, with two successive mandates, in 1930 and 1931 (Titulescu, *Discursuri/Discourses*, 1967, p. 319).

It was outlined that after Tsarist Russia had left the Entente, the idea of democracies fighting against empires and subsequently the idea of democracies that were going to lead to democratizing international relations, the League of Nations was the expression of universalizing the parliamentary regime and apparently of the ultimate triumph of the right against force, of installing a judicial order to replace the violent solutions.

Nicolae Titulescu's activity involved this exact matter, democratizing international relations, and, accordingly to Rene Cassin, he wanted, just like Herriot, Aristide Briand or Louis Bathou, to incorporate nations in a system of safeness to keep them at shelter from the danger of the war. (Ciuperca, 1982, pp. 134-135).

2. Analysis and Results

2.1. Positions and Diplomatic Representation

Born in March 16th, 1882, with a PhD degree in Law obtained in Paris, with brilliant results, a Civil Law professor at the University of Iasi and after that, at the University of Bucharest, N. Titulescu was beginning his diplomatic activity as a member of the National Assembly for the unity of Romanians founded in 1918, in Paris, and recognized by France in October 12, 1918.

Managed by Take Ionescu V. Lucaci, O. Goga, C. Angelescu, Dr. I. Catacuzino, C. Diamandy, I. Ursu, Traian Vuia etc, this assembly in immigration was assuming to represent Romania in front of the Entente under the delicate circumstances in which Romania, left alone on the eastern field, following the Russian failure in October 1917, after a heroic defense, was getting a great part of its territory under the enemy's occupation, as a consequence of the Buftea-Bucharest peace.

The first delegate of Romania at the Peace Conference in Paris, N. Titulescu signs, alongside with Dr. I. Cantacuzino, on behalf of the Romanian government, first the pact of The League of Nations that will be included in all the peace treaties from the Versailles System and that will come into force in January 10, 1920. In June 4, 1920 he also signed the Trianon Treaty, which internationally recognized the union

of Transilvania, Banat, Crisana and Maramures with the former Romanian Kingdom.

Issues related to war reparations and the Austro-Hungarian heritage of Romania as a successor state will remain under his attention in the following years, as a delegate and Finance minister of the country in 1920-1921.

His contribution as a minister in the improvement of the Romanian economy after the war and in solving the agrarian and financial problem will prepare him for a brilliant pleading of the Romanian cause in circumstances such as the process of the Hungarian optants or in different international conferences.

His unique diplomatic qualities bring him as a reward the nomination at the end of 1921 as a plenipotentiary minister and extraordinary envoy to London, position of a strategic importance, starting from the role that England will play alongside France in organizing the peace. Titulescu will illustrate it from December 1921 to June 1927 and from August 1928 to October 1932.

His one and a half decay activity as a delegate of Romanian at the League of Nations, starting with the inaugural session from November 1920, has a great success exactly thanks to his loyalty to the ideal of maintaining the peace, helped by the principles of the pact, the good collaboration within the Romanian delegation, the mutual informing, the interest showed in an excellent representation of Romanian at Geneva, the extension of the contact with the delegates interested in maintaining of peace and of status quo, an exact informing of the public opinion. Mihai Iacobescu underlined that he, directly or indirectly, helped the Romanian state grow and improve its representational system to Geneva, from a simple and humble secretariat founded alongside the Romanian Legation in Berna, to its enlargement and transfer to Geneva in 1925, up to the absolute premiere, the creation, in 1927, on his initiative, of an diplomatic office with the status of Legation” (Iacobescu, 1982, p. 161).

As a minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania between 1927-1928 and 1932-1936, he will work for the knowledge and support of the public opinion in the matter of the Society of Nations activity and the growth of its role, its democratization. The invested energy will give him the right to subsequently affirm: “I think I can speak of the League of Nations as of a part of my life” (Titulescu, 1967, p. 342).

2.2. Moment, Significance and Consequences of Removal

On August 29th, 1936 Gheorghe Tătărescu sent Titulescu a telegram informing him of his demission and the government's reshuffle, for reasons of „homogeneity”, by replacing him in foreign affairs with the old liberal Victor Antonescu. The discourteous manner of his removal affected his health so profoundly that he was close to passing away. The removal of N. Titulescu was the result of internal intrigues and extreme external pressure, with visible echoes and consequences on the country's status and the efficiency and authority of the League of Nations.

George Potra insists on the fact that over time Titulescu understood that “the King Carol II was the brain, while the Prime Minister Tătărescu just the hand of the political assassination committed on August 29th, 1936” (Potra, 2007, p. 78). It was confusing that the removal occurred after the king had refused to accept his resignation on July 11th, 1936, and after receiving full powers to negotiate the text of the mutual assistance pact with USSR. Thus he had managed to negotiate and obtain the signature of the foreign affairs commissary of the USSR on the project of the mutual assistance treaty between Romania and USSR, which essentially sanctioned the acknowledgement of the Nistru border and was to be officially signed in early September (Ciupercă, 1982, p. 155; Buzatu, 1982, p. 75; Potra, 2007, p. 25 etc.). Also, Potra insisted in 1982 on the triggering elements of the crisis resulting in this removal. He concluded that the trigger may have been the Titulescu's file put together by the German secret services, brought by Octavian Goga to the king, but mostly the imminence of signing the Romanian-Soviet mutual assistance treaty, when foreign pressure tended to pull the country onto another political direction the king considered more appropriate (Potra 1982, pp. 277-293). The latter will soon impose his personal dictatorship.

The British diplomat Anthony Eden highlighted in his telegram sent to the Foreign Affairs Ministry regarding his first meeting with Victor Antonescu that the justifications given to the Western allies for the “reasons for Titulescu's removal, despite his multilateral personality”, were connected to the “tense relations between Mr. Titulescu and the Prime Minister (Gh. Tatarascu), due to the latter's opinion that the government was not strong enough to deal with the anti-Semitic demonstrations, Mr. Titulescu's prolonged absences from Romania, leading to losing touch with the public opinion here; his relations with Russia which, even if Mr Antonescu did not tell me, I believe that the Romanian government considered

too cordial; his disputes with the other politicians, like Mr Beck and Mr Stojadinović, who, in Romania's opinion, made foreign policy difficult" (Potra, 2015).

A. Eden opined that "Mr Titulescu was, above all, a brilliant member of the Parliament of Geneva", and wanted to evince that "when Germany was still unarmed and a relatively humble member of the League of Nations, and before Japan and then Italy could decide that force was the most convincing argument, Romania had much to gain, its Foreign Minister being a brilliant lawyer and orator in Geneva like Mr Titulescu was, and his explosive temper did not run any risks; but the times have changed and I think that now it is true, as Mr Antonescu said, during the meeting he granted me on September 3rd (my report no. 270) that Mr. Titulescu "pushed Romania into a position on the international field that he was no longer capable of maintaining" (Potra, 2015) Gradually, as it was noted, "the reasons of domestic policy are more and more at a loss as singular explanation, then also as principal explanation" and external factors are increasingly present in the explanations of the Romanian officials in the meetings with the foreign politicians, diplomats and journalists".

Eden's opinion reflected, besides mentioning Titulescu's name, a judgement of the new international context and at the same time the option to reposition Great Britain founded on a new type of political reasoning, ignoring the principles of the Pact of the Society of Nations. It was seen and clearly stated by the American ambassador in London, Breckrindge Long, who informed, as early as April 1935 the State Department that the lack of an "actual opposition" to Germany would encourage it to prepare and implement "its expansionist program", "legally", and "in a time of peace". But the governments of Europe were not willing to use force to stop it and anyway this alternative "would open the door to the extension of bolshevism [...] As a last resort (Long said), the issue is to assess if it is not preferable to have German control over Central and South-Eastern Europe, rather than let communism infiltrate all over Europe" (N.A.U.S.A., R.G. 59, Breckrindge Long to Secretary of State, April 1, 1935, nr. 1022, 862.20/876, cf. Ciupercă, 1982, p. 152). In London, an agreement with Germany seemed necessary, and it would not support the Oriental Pact initiated by France.

Titulescu's efforts, in agreement with the Romanian interests in maintaining the status quo-and in fighting against revisionism according to League of Nations' principles, for an indivisible peace grounded in collective security and regional

alliances of the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact, follow the Barthou line, of an Eastern Locarno. Concretized into two treaties, Franco-Soviet, and Franco-Czechoslovakian, and a project of the Romanian-Soviet mutual assistance pact, whose signing failed by the very removal of Titulescu, the Barthou line also failed, making it possible for Germany to expand its influence in Central and South-Eastern Europe. However, Hitler “monopolised anticommunism in his favour”, stating that “the only hope to save Germany and West-European civilization is to rearm Germany and prepare it in order to face the unavoidable Russian attack” (Ciupercă 1982, pp. 151, 153).

Removing Titulescu was the very act that led to the failure of the Barthou line.

The historian Ioan Ciupercă detailed the Memorandum of the Near East Division that, in response to the demand of the American State Secretary Cordell Hull (the future founder of UN) to send “a short comment on the reorganisation of the Tătărescu cabinet and the meaning of Titulescu’s removal”, also referred to the profile of the Romanian diplomat (Ciupercă, 1982, pp. 156-157). The characteristics that stood up were “passionate antirevisionist leader”, who said that “revision means war”, and to whom “article 19 in the Pact of the League of Nations does not exist”, “defender of small states”, diplomat for whom “the existence of the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact gives the member states the position of great power in European conferences”. Indeed, Titulescu had spoken of “a front of peace of 70 million people” at the ceremony when the Balkan Pact was signed, and had acted in favour of correlating the actions and interests of the two regional alliances, trying to create a unitary voice. The memorandum’s conclusion was that if Titulescu’s removal “means a step towards reorientation to Berlin, it also means a crucial moment in the post-war European situation. Romania’s reorientation in such a moment would mean the dissolution of the alliance between France and the Little Entente, and it would announce, perhaps, a constellation of Central Europe comprising Germany, Italy, the states of the Little Entente and Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria” (Ciupercă, 1982, pp. 156-157). The Romanian diplomat had fought to maintain the status quo, to organize peace on the basis of regional alliances and collective security, whose solidity was to be achieved by the closeness and agreements between France and England and USSR, before the latter turns to Germany, the leading power among the states promoting revisionism. He had considered that the Germany would turn towards USSR, but it should find us with an agreement already signed with the former, so that this reorganisation should not turn against us.

The new foreign affairs minister, the old liberal Victor Antonescu, was to take over a very elaborate diplomatic construct, whose elements had to be gradually adapted to the new line of foreign policy. However, the domestic opponents like Mihail Manoilescu blamed him for the lack of national character. The image is malicious: the new minister, running like a “foreman” to patch together “Mr Titulescu’s diplomatic edifice, that has all the qualities: it is built on the granite ground of the League of Nations and collective security: it is adorned with all the ornaments of talent and is lit from all sides by the most substantial publicity in all diplomatic history. Like art monuments, around which lights are on all night to evince all the beauty of their style, Mr Titulescu’s architectural work, rich in storeys of superposed pacts and pinnacles of paragraphs, lies under the blinding –and alas! expensive light of the lights of the international press!” (Manoilescu, 1937, February 25, in Potra, 2007, pp. 234-235). He insisted that “if it hadn’t been for the League of Nations, it would have had to be invented, so that to give Mr Titulescu a status and a country, like in his dreams”, “a place where he could speak publicly and profusely”, where to expose “his ego, this I for which there are not capitals enough [...] for the whole world to see in a lit window, in the middle of a big international bazaar”. This is how this opponent understood why the “catastrophe of the League of Nations is a personal disaster to Mr Titulescu”.

When talking about Titulescu’s contribution to promoting Romania’s foreign policy, Săvel Rădulescu, the closest collaborator of the great diplomat, considered that it may be assessed by the difference in status that our country had in 1918-1920, departing from “the country with limited interests in the Peace conference”, when Titulescu started to represent Romania, and reaching “state acknowledged as equal partner in all treaties or documents with all countries, big or small” when he was removed in 1936 (Rădulescu, 1969. p. 363).

Contemporaries like the French politician Edouard Herriot, referring to Titulescu’s contribution to promoting Romania’s international action between the two World Wars, noted that “this minister of a small country does great politics” (Tabouis, p. 154). The confirmation of the increased power potential given to Romania by the brilliant diplomatic activity promoted by Titulescu also stems, according to the researcher Gh. Buzatu, from the words spoken by the Foreign Office upon hearing of the Romanian minister’s demission in 1936 : “Here is how Romania goes back into its geographical dimension” ((Buzatu, 1982, p. 70).

2.3. Years of Exile – Cassandra’s Years...

Throughout the period after dismissal until the end of his life (1936-1941) the great diplomat carefully followed the international developments and Romania's actions, hoping for a return to power. From Switzerland he returned to the country in 1937, but the Iron Guard threats and hostility and the concerted action of his political opponents made him to retire to France.

During the meeting in Saint-Moritz on the 8th of January 1937, he was confessing to the Yugoslav leader Milan Stojadinović that in September 1936 he had been almost dead, he had felt lost and suffered as he could no longer fight for his country. He was preaching loyalty for The Little Entente and the system of collective security and was emphasizing with an amazing intuition of the developments that “Today I am afraid of war (...) The only issue I am interested in, the only one for which I would give my life, is that of maintaining our current borders” (Potra, 2007, p. 138).

Aware of his own value, he had stated in 1937, when he was in Bucharest, according to the reporter N. Carandino: “They are criminals. They do not realize it. You be the judge of that! Does the country have enough money to manufacture a new Titulescu? This is not an issue of personal value. I can admit that they have found another similar one, if not better. But to make him known, to advertise him in the press, to get him connected, to create him a pedestal, you need many years and many millions. But what do they know? They believe that Europe works like Bucharest” (Potra (Ed/), 2007, I, p. 79). On some other occasion he said that “the evil that these men are doing will not possibly be repaired even by me”!

In April 4th, 1937, Victor de Lacroix, the French Minister in Prague, was informing the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yvon Delbos, about the German-Czechoslovakian relations and the Little Entente state. He mentioned the bad impression made by Minister V. Antonescu through his “helpless pessimism”, “the passive of obstacles and exaggeration of dangers” and wished to add that “I dare hope that a man of Mr. Titulescu’s value and dynamism will immediately take in his hands the Romanian foreign policy” (Potra (Ed.), 2007, p. 248).

Moreover, in January 1937, in the context of some Anglo-French differences and complaints requiring a change to be “at least formal – at the level of the League of Nations’ leaders (Assembly and Council, Secretariat, commissions, etc.)”, the name of Nicolae Titulescu was mentioned in connection with replacing Joseph

Avenol as a general secretary of the League of Nations in order to “reactivate and return to the orientation and the major objective of maintaining peace” (Potra (Ed.), 2007, p. 9).

Titulescu continued to actively express himself, even if from the position of a former minister, about the international developments and to suggest solutions to the ones involved.

The difference in prominence between the new foreign affairs minister, V. Antonescu, and Titulescu was obvious.

The foreign policy line/ orientation promoted by the former minister is confirmed in the Parliament by his very successor, which was even more confusing to the members of parliament regarding the reasons leading to Titulescu’s removal.. The analysis of these parliamentary debates give a glimpse of the future foreign direction of Romania, that of “adapting” to the new developments and manifestations of conciliarism. Titulescu had assessed as early as July 4, 1924 that “the revenge war started [...] under the form of judicial duels in Geneva”, and on August 7, as a Romanian minister in London, he stated in a declaration to The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that “the Western powers give me the impression of sleepwalkers who are unconsciously setting fire to their own house” (Buzatu, 1982, p. 85). His anticipatory ability makes him foresee “peace organization” as the only reasonable solution, devoting all his efforts to organizing this “front”, in whose “trenches” he will be found together with brilliant minds devoted to the pacifist ideal promoted by the League of Nations. It was not a coincidence that Titulescu was on the list, after the 1933 assassination of I. G. Duca, together with Roland Koester, the German ambassador in Paris, five or six personalities, Louis Barthou, king Alexander of Yugoslavia, the Austrian chancellor Dollfus, king Albert of Belgium, who, if removed, “Germany would save itself a war, and then obtain whatever it wants from Europe!” (Tabouis, G., p. 156, apud Ciuperca, 1982, p. 149).

Indeed, despite assurances after Titulescu's dismissal, change of direction of the Romanian foreign policy becomes evident and it will be sanctioned by the allies.

Mihail S. Ostrovsky, the Soviet envoy in Bucharest reproached in March 1937, to the successor Titulescu, on developments in relations with Poland that “the concept of collective security passes to the concept of so-called neutrality” and even “anti-Soviet actions “.

The conclusion of the dialogue was that, in the absence of Titulescu, the attempt to strengthen the relations is made so that, without acquiring anything new, “Bucharest loses what it has”, that “Romania's borders are more vulnerable now than ever: those we ran after and for acquiring their friendship we removed Titulescu, respond us with kicks in the back (Italy), others are inclined to consider us a semicolony, in order to supply them with raw materials and where everything is allowed.” Filipescu accepted in front of Ostrovskzy that “the country would not have been in this situation if he (Titulescu) had still held the position. *Au moins, il aurait pu garder le prestige du pays et la dignité nationale*» (Potra, 2007, p. 229). Also Maxim Litvinov told Edmond Ciuntu, Romania's extraordinary delegate and minister plenipotentiary in Moscow, that “he sees Romania irremediably going down to the slope of fascism” (Potra, 2007, p. 225).

Critical conclusions were coming from the inside and, perhaps the most illustrative is the one made by N.N. Pătrascu during the conference from “Louis Barthou” Association of International Studies from February 11th, 1937: “We are now suspected by France, with relaxed connections in both bodies of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente, badly seen by Russia, with no real progress in Germany or Italy. We ruined what we had without adding anything in return. This is the alarming conclusion of the 6 missing months of Mr. Titulescu from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” (Potra, 2007, p. 193).

The circumstances of the removal created a situation in which the newly appointed minister could not benefit, at the beginning of his term, according to the habitual protocol, from his predecessor's support and information on the main ongoing issues and their stage, which would prove tremendously detrimental to Romania's interests. The efforts that Titulescu had made for so many years to obtain the acknowledgement by USSR of the common Nistru borders, which had prompted him to obtain Litvinov's signature on the paragraph containing this provision in the text of the bilateral agreement to be officially signed in early September 1936, would be annulled by the request from the new Romanian minister addressed to USSR to acknowledge de jure Bessarabia as part of Romania.

Titulescu was personally informed by Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet commissary in charge of the Foreign Affairs, at the meeting in May 1937, of this diplomatic blunder which rendered void the Non-aggression Convention signed in 1933, the project of the Romanian-Soviet mutual assistance pact signed by Litvinov on July 21, 1936 and ignored Ionel Bratianu's instructions of 1924 regarding Bessarabia.

The Russian diplomat mentioned that he had found out also about Victor Antonescu's statement in the Parliament according to which "we have no mutual assistance pact with Soviet Russia, nor do we have the intent to have such a pact". The meeting in Talloires seems to have been requested by the Russian diplomat "not to risk being disloyal" to the negotiations with Titulescu. Starting from the obvious fact that Romania had changed its foreign policy, Litvinov showed the need to stand up "against the documents that Titulescu made us sign", underlining that he wanted "the potential represented by Bessarabia to become Russian, not German", which was why he communicated that the USSR would try to take over Bessarabia "by any legal and military means possible" (Potra (Ed.), 2007, p. 25). Titulescu will later refer to this meeting and his efforts to convince Litvinov to abide by the documents he had signed, in his work *The Foreign Policy of Romania* (1937), and also in his *Memorandum-letter* to King Carol II, on March 9th, 1940, after the unsuccessful attempts to see the king in 1937 when he was in the country. In the Archives of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs there is also one of Titulescu's Memorandum addressed to King Carol II on Romania's position in international relations and at a future peace conference on September 11th, 1939, as well as a Memorandum of October 1940 (Dobrinescu & Buzatu, 1982, p. 350)

The isolation that Titulescu was thrown into made it possible for the new Foreign Affairs Minister to find out as late as April 21, 1937 about the text of Titulescu's telegram to Germany regarding the availability to sign mutual assistance pacts with both USSR and Germany. It has been sent by the Romanian ambassador in Berlin, Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen, and stated that "the guiding line of Romanian foreign policy [...] of equal friendship with all the Great Powers, from which we do not understand Germany to be excluded" (Potra (Ed), 2007, pp. 272-273; also p. 262).

The hostility of King Charles II, who had categorically refused to sign the decree of renewal of the mandate as a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in Hague which had expired in November 27th, 1936, would make room to a concerted action of isolation, by its denigrating in front of the international partners, the exclusion of collaborators and supporters etc. from the diplomatic corps. However, as it was highlighted by Adrian Năstase, he himself a former foreign minister of Romania and President of Titulescu European Foundation, "the variety, multiplicity and altitude of Nicolae Titulescu's contacts (..), hard to understand even for a minister in office, are more appreciated, at its best, for the one who was just a "former" minister, ultimately for an illustrious individual" (Năstase, *Foreword*, Potra (Ed), 2007, p. 3).

Editing *Romania's Foreign Policy* that was to come out in French, English and Romanian, his *Diary* and the many documents later purchased by Hoover Institution Archives, as well as the numerous conferences held at the invitation of various organizations and institutions, although they were not completed by the publication of his memoirs, more clearly outlines his vision about the international political life of the ways and means by which peace could be saved (Buzatu, 1982, p. 75)

Promoting the interests of the unitary Romanian state, maintaining the peace and status quo were the main objectives of N. Titulescu. His contemporaries remarked his ability to analyze international realities, and also to sense the direction of future developments, which helped him direct the foreign policy of Romania and serve the pacifist ideal of Society of Nations.

Starting from the situation as “a soldier in the trenches of peace”, concerned with outlining a strategy for peace, stating that peace is indivisible and showing that border controlling means war, he spoke of “spiritualization of borders”, helped at defining the aggressor and urged to “order in thinking” and action. Traditional alliances with France and England, integration of USSR in the SN system logic, supporting and strengthening the SN action, collective security through regional alliances of small and middle antirevisionist states, the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente, were connected to his strategy of rescuing peace, which he served in his diplomatic activity and the efforts after his dismissal.

In his own words, the tragic of his condition is assimilated to that of ancient Cassandra, a character whose role he said he was tired of playing, in the summer of 1939 when he authorized Charles Henry to communicate the French authorities to immediately sign the Franco-Soviet and British pact as the last chance of the European peace (Buzatu 1982, p. 86). The war breakout on September 1st, 1939 after signing the Ribbentrop - Molotov Pact and the Romanian territorial losses during the year 1940 that he witnessed were circumstances that deepened the suffering of the same role and brought his end in March 17th, 1941.

As stated by the researcher V. Sîrbu upon investigating the archives of the Nobel Institute “Although an entire mythology surrounds Titulescu and his alleged recommendations for the Nobel Peace Prize, he was in fact never nominated” (Sirbu, 2011, pp. 279-81). The address from February 7th, 1935 to the Rector of the Council of the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy in Iasi, contained the proposal of Titulescu’s nomination for the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1935 (Buzatu, 1982, p.

488). However, the official proposal was apparently not submitted to the deciding forums.

Titulescu himself recommended for the Nobel Prize, on January 28, 1935, the former Prime Minister of Brazil, Afrânio de Mello Franco.

His brilliance, devoted to peace, with a fabulous memory, a good knowledge of the principles of international law and an intuition of the evolution direction, a remarkable oratorical talent, Titulescu was one of the most brilliant diplomats of his time, whose removal accelerated the way towards war. George Anastasiu, the youngest Titulescu's close collaborator argued in the interview from 6th of July, 1981 to the "Radio Free Europe" even that this diplomate, kept as the Romanian foreign minister, could be able by his authority, by his prestige by his capacity to find solutions and original, prodigious formulas, "to change the course that the events were subsequently committed to" (Potra (Ed.), 2007, part III, p. 9).

3. Conclusions

Titulescu's dismissal was the act by which Barthou line failed and Society of Nations lost one of its most influential voices.

The principles and solutions promoted by him referring to the new type of sovereignty of states burdened by the obligation to observe the international law, the democratization of international relations, removing war outside the law, the collective security, the role of diplomacy in maintaining peace and the need for an active and efficient international forum to serve them, maintain their topicality.

Although the value of his action in the service of peace is obvious, he was not nominated for the Nobel Prize for Peace.

We agree with the historian Ioan Ciuperca that N. Titulescu may have understood SN weaknesses and that the greatness of his action resulted from assuming the mission of peace preserving under the given circumstances and with such imperfect means.

"Pilgrim" and "strategist of peace", opponent of revanchist circles, although he enjoyed international recognition in the context of lack of support from domestic policymakers and revanchist warlike circles progresses, he was able to play only "Cassandra's role".

4. References

- Agrigoroaiei, I., Buzatu, Gh. & Pavelescu I. (1982). Major directions in Nicolae Titulescu's diplomatic activity - from a historiographic point of view, in G. Buzatu, *Titulescu and the peace strategy* (pp. 19-55). Iasi: Junimea.
- Bacon, Walter-Meredith Jr. (1999). *Nicolae Titulescu*. Iasi: "European Institute" Publishing House.
- Iacobescu, Mihai (1988). *Romania and the Society of Nations 1919-1929*. Bucharest: Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania.
- Ciupercă, I. (1982). Nicolae Titulescu and the role the Small Powers play in contemporary international life. In G. Buzatu, *Titulescu and the peace strategy*. Iasi: Junimea.
- Dobrinescu, V. & Buzatu, Gh. (1982). *N. Titulescu and the Peace Strategy: A Bibliography*.
- *** (1982). *Titulescu and the Strategy of Peace*. Coordinator Gh. Buzatu. Iasi: Ed. Junimea.
- Fundația Europeană Titulescu (FET), (2004). *Titulescu, N. Opera politico-diplomatică: Corespondență/Titulescu, N. Political and Diplomatic Opera: Correspondence* Coordinator George G. Potra. Bucharest: FET.
- Oprea, Ion.M. (1966). *Nicolae Titulescu*. Bucharest: Ed. S.
- Pita González, Alexandra. (2014). *Educar para la paz. Mexico y la Cooperacion Intelectual Internacional, 1022-1948/Educate for peace. Mexico and the International Intellectual Cooperation, 1922-1948*. México: Secretary of Foreign Affairs, University of Colima Publishing House.
- Popa, Anișoara. (2014). Cultural Dimension of International Relations during Interwar Period: International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation and the scientific study of international relations. *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Relationes Internationales*, Vol. 7, No 2 (2014), <http://journals.univ-danubius.ro/index.php/internationalis/article/view/2688/2370>.
- Potra, G. *Studiu introductiv* la FET, (2007). N. *Titulescu, Opera politico-diplomatică (1 ianuarie–31 decembrie 1937)* (partea I / N. *Titulescu, Political-diplomatic Work (1 January-31 December 1937)* part I, II and III, Coordinator George G. Potra, Bucharest: FET.
- Potra, G. (2015). The Removal of Nicolae Titulescu seen by the Foreign Office (4). *Revista Art-emis Academy*, 4 January, 2015, [online at] <http://www.art-emis.ro/istorie/2665-demiterea-lui-nicolae-titulescu-vazuta-de-foreign-office-4.html>.
- Rădulescu, Săvel (1969). Nicolae Titulescu 1882-1941. *Diplomati ilustri/Illustrious diplomats*, vol. I, Bucharest: Ed. Politica.
- Sirbu, V. (2011). The Nobel Peace Prize from a Romanian perspective– The Interwar Period. *Romanian Review for Baltic and Nordic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 275-298.
- Tabouis, G (1958). *20 years of diplomatic tensions*. Paris.
- *** (1982). *Titulescu and the Strategy of Peace*. Coordinator Gh. Buzatu, Iași: Ed. Junimea.
- *** (1967). *Nicolae Titulescu Discursuri/Nicolae Titulescu Speeches*. Bucharest: Editura Științifică.