

Petroleum and the World War of 1939-1945

(II)

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B. Germany's temporary triumph

Under General Ion Antonescu's regime, Marshal beginning with August 1941,¹ the government formed first in collaboration with the Iron Guard (September 1940 – January 1941), and then the preponderantly military one ensured the sui generis integration of Romania in the system of the states of the Axis Berlin-Rome-Tokyo.² For almost four years, until August 23, 1944, Romania maintained its statute of satellite, not occupied country³ of the Powers of the Fascist Axis, next to which it participated to the hostilities in 1914-1944, for the liberation of Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina, the Herța Region, and the cyots in the area of the Danube Mouths and, equally, for the destruction of the Communist danger.⁴ On the Eastern Front, Romania's war, which broke out simultaneously with that of Germany and its allies on June 22, 1941, was fought in parallel,⁵ the hostilities being initially engaged against the U.S.S.R., and then the state of belligerence extended to the rest of the United Nations, first of all to Great Britain (1941)⁶ and the United States (1942).

In the context of Romania's integration in the system of the Axis, the arrival of the German military mission – also followed, in order to appease the susceptibility of “duke” B. Mussolini,⁷ by an Italian aviation group⁸ – had a special significance. Requested as early as July 2, 1940 by King Carol II from Wilhelm Fabricius,⁹ General Ion Antonescu, newly installed as head of the government, resumed the solicitation, insisting in the same sense, on September 7, 1940, during a meeting with the German air military attaché in Bucharest,

Colonel A. Gerstenberg.¹⁰ Also, on September 13, 1940, receiving the Ministers of Germany and Italy in Bucharest, Wilhelm Fabricius¹¹ and, respectively, O. Ghigi, Ion Antonescu requested the assistance of Romania's “guarantors” in defending the petroliferous area from the danger of “possible [enemy/British] air attacks.”¹² Consequently,¹³ on September 15-17, 1940, General Kurt von Tippelskirch, the future famous military historian of the world war of 1939-1940, arrived in Bucharest, where he was received by Antonescu himself.¹⁴ It was agreed that the main stationing area for the mission would be the petroliferous one, more precisely within the perimeter Bucharest – Ploiești – Buzău – Brașov.¹⁵ Later, as a result of the discussions held in Bucharest, von Tippelskirch wrote a report,¹⁶ on the basis of which, on September 19, 1940, Berlin decided to send a military mission to Romania. The next day, General W. Keitel, the head of the *O.K.W.*, signed the directive that specified the assignments of the German Military Mission.¹⁷ It is interesting that, among the “real assignments” of the Mission of the land forces, which were not supposed to be divulged neither to Bucharest nor to its own troops, the main ones were “the defending of the petroliferous region from the attack of a third power, as well as from destruction,” and then the instruction of the Romanian army or the preparation of the mobilization of the German and Romanian forces in case of a war “imposed” by the U.S.S.R.¹⁸ For the German Air Mission, the role of the *Luftwaffe* was also specified, which was “first of all to protect the Romanian oil fields.”¹⁹ On September 30,

1940, Berlin informed Bucharest that it had accepted to send the Mission and, at the beginning of October 1940, the Reich informed Rome²⁰ and Moscow.²¹ Finally, on October 7, the Ministry of Propaganda in Bucharest broadcast the communiqué that announced the arrival of the Mission, which sent its first detachment on October 12, on the same day when Berlin announced this fact officially.²² At the same time, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers announced – through communiqué no. 125 – that the first echelon of the Mission had arrived that day in Bucharest;²³ it was pointed out that, while the Mission was crossing Transylvania, “the population enthusiastically welcomed the glorious representatives of the German army.”²⁴ On October 14, 1940, at the Military Circle in Bucharest, Ion Antonescu was present and made a speech at the banquet held in honor of the German Military Mission.²⁵ The head of the Land Military Mission was General Erik Hansen, and of the Air Mission – General Wilhelm Speidel. After the war, in 1953 or in 1956, answering some questionnaires of the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, Hermann Neubacher and the Reserve General Erik Hansen specified that the essential purpose of their missions in Romania was oil related.²⁶

Even before the departure of the Mission,²⁷ the political-diplomatic and military circles and the press in Great Britain and the United States considered that the fact was equal with the occupation of Romania by the forces of the Third Reich. Thus, for instance, on October 4, 1940, the newspaper *The Christian Science Monitor* considered that Romania had already been placed under the direct control of the Nazis.²⁸ The North-American press was intensely preoccupied with the “entrance” of the German troops in Romania. It was mentioned that in Vienna Germany had committed to guarantee Romania’s frontiers, and the action proper aimed directly at defending the petroliferous regions which represented a great interest for the Third Reich.²⁹ The prestigious daily paper *The New York Times*, after having informed its readers on September 18, 1940 about Ion

Antonescu’s request for a German military mission, at the beginning of October, 1940 gave priority to news about the arrival of the troops and some experts.³⁰ *The Washington Post* from October 8, 1940 did not limit everything to the Romanian petroleum purposes, but discovered in the plans of the Reich intentions that were “yet unclear”, arguing: “... If Romania needs protection, it is not against Great Britain, but rather against Russia and maybe Romania’s occupation (sic!) had the purpose of intimidating Moscow. Therefore, the important question is what will Russia do. If it accepts the newly created situation, it means that it consents to the establishing on its Balkan flank of a force that might constitute in the future a real danger for its security. A consequence of the latest German move in the south-east could be – the newspaper predicted – the acceleration of the friendship between Russia and England.”³¹ The famous newspaper *The New York Times* from October 15, 1940 predicted, moreover, the engaging of Romania in Germany’s orbit for the future German-Russian war, in which Antonescu had been reserved an “important role”.³² The events that took place in Romania in September-October 1940 were carefully followed in London.³³ It was considered, for the moment, that it was difficult to predict “Romania’s future”,³⁴ one certainty being the support given by Hitler to Antonescu, out of the Reich’s interest to maintain peace in the south-east to thus ensure its petroleum and raw materials.³⁵ Later it was considered that Antonescu’s alliance with Germany and Italy had been necessary as a guarantee that the ambitions of the U.S.S.R. in South-Eastern Europe would be stopped.³⁶ General Antonescu admitted the economic cooperation with the Third Reich, and the spectrum of the German occupation had become unavoidable;³⁷ according to some information, the German military penetration had already “begun”, and the petroliferous areas could not be avoided.³⁸ The leader of the National Peasant Party, Iuliu Maniu, addressing the leader of the Romanian state personally, pointed out that the “instructors” within the German Military Mission were

announcing the occupation of the country,³⁹ and on May 20, 1941, C.I.C. Brătianu, the head of the National Liberal Party, in a message to Ion Antonescu, simply said: "we are under German occupation."⁴⁰ Numerous historians would later consider that the arrival of the German Military Mission coincided with the beginning of Romania's occupation by the Third Reich.⁴¹ Other studies gave nuances to the issue of Romania's statute in the years of World War II, showing that there was no question of an occupation, but of the installation of German domination in Romania, its placing among Berlin's satellite states, a regime that remained in force until August 23, 1944, which was something completely different.⁴² Anyway, at that time, in September-October 1940, the receiving of the German Military Mission in Bucharest complicated Romania's relations with the Western Powers,⁴³ especially with Great Britain.⁴⁴ Both the British government,⁴⁵ as well as the American one⁴⁶ declared that they did not recognize the validity of the Vienna Dictate in the issue of Transylvania. On November 20, 1940, R.A. Butler, Undersecretary of State of the Foreign Office, declared in the House of Commons that the British government no longer viewed the Romanian government "as having full control of its own country or of its foreign policy."⁴⁷ Having in view the evolution of the Romanian-German relations, during the same time the British government gave permission to Sir Reginald Hoare, the British Minister in Bucharest, to work, at his discretion, on breaking the relations with Romania.⁴⁸ On the other hand, Washington decided to block the Romanian goods in the U.S.A.⁴⁹ At the same time, signals were being registered from Ankara about the position of Turkey, which considered that Romania had "totally" lost its independence.⁵⁰ Prior to the suspension of the official relations between Bucharest and London (February 1941 and December 1941)⁵¹ and Washington (December 1941 and June 1942),⁵² a *National Romanian Committee* was constituted in Great Britain on November 29, 1940, led by the Romanian Minister in London, V.V. Tilea,⁵³ who, precipitated,

hurried to communicate the press the news about the resignation in block of all the people in his Legation, as a sign of protest against the "political assassination" practiced in Bucharest.⁵⁴ In the meantime, Romania had announced its firm orientation towards the fascist Axis, established on November 23, 1940 through the signing of the protocol of adhering to the Tripartite Pact.⁵⁵ General Ion Antonescu, for instance, declared for the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* from September 25, 1940: "I will go with the Axis, because our political and economic interests coincide, because for our security there is no possibility to separate ourselves from Italy and Germany and because Romania does not fall into the Anglo-French economic sphere."⁵⁶ The government of the U.S.S.R., considering the excellent relations with Germany at that time, initially had no objections towards the arrival of the German Military Mission.⁵⁷ But Joachim von Ribbentrop sent the German Embassy a special telegram about informing his Soviet counterpart V.M. Molotov about sending the Mission to Romania. We extract the following passage from the telegram: only at the request of the Romanian government and "considering our interest in maintaining the peace and order in the Balkans and to protect our interests regarding petroleum and cereals against any attempt of trouble from England, we declared ourselves willing to answer the Romanian invitation. As the Soviet Union is aware, we have a vital interest towards these territories (author's bold), which we could not leave to be put in peril by the British [...] Considering our friendly relations, we wanted to communicate this to the Soviet government..."⁵⁸ V.M. Molotov, was, indeed, officially contacted by W. von Tappelskirch, the counselor of the German Embassy in Moscow.⁵⁹ It is well known in what manner, in November 1940, Adolph Hitler "explained" to V.M. Molotov, who was in Berlin, the interest of Germany and Italy regarding Romanian petroleum.⁶⁰ In a telegram from October 10, 1940, Joachim von Ribbentrop had written that it had been "the great interest of Germany and Italy" to send the Mission in Romania in order to ensure the

undisturbed oil production and to prevent the sabotage attempts from England.⁶¹ Also, Karl Ritter, the Ambassador at the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, transmitted by telephone on October 10, 1940 to Minister W. Fabricius instructions regarding the final form of the communiqué about sending the Military Mission to Romania; also, measures needed to be taken at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bucharest for the instruction in a certain sense of the Romanian representations abroad: "most importantly, the action needs to acquire a new anti-British note and in no case an anti-Russian one."⁶² On the same day, a directive signed by Hitler⁶³ established the purposes, functioning and organization of the German Military Mission in Romania.⁶⁴ On October 22, 1940, a *protocol* was signed, which established the statute of the German troops in Romania.⁶⁵ Mention should be made that, in November 1940, with the occasion of his first visit to Berlin, General Antonescu met with Field Marshal Wilhelm Heitel, the head of the *O.K.W.*, both of them agreeing that, besides the forces of the Mission, the Reich should also send to Romania an armored division.⁶⁶

Both before and especially after the outbreak of the War in the East, the Romanian and German authorities gave a maximum of attention to fortifying the oil, within which Ploiești had become a veritable *nervum rerum*.⁶⁷ A fundamental German document like *The Journal of the High Command of the Wehrmacht* (*Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht*), published after the war by a group of historians,⁶⁸ offers the most conclusive data about the strategic importance of petroleum in the military actions of the Third Reich in the years 1940-1945.⁶⁹ It is understandable why Hitler made special preparations, as early as the winter of 194-1941, for the fortification of the areas in Romania considered neuralgic: Ploiești, the perimeter Constanța-the Cernavodă Bridge and the port of Giurgiu.⁷⁰ In 1941 and 1942, during the frequent meetings of the German and Romanian leaders, the petroleum question was never neglected. In this period, after having entered the planetary war, the United States gradually assumed the role not only of political

and military leader, but also of coordinator and executor of the ample operations against the *Axis* in the world, with the exception of the Soviet-German front.⁷¹ Consequently, Romania was engaged with land forces far inside the U.S.S.R, and at home it had to withstand in 1942-1944 the assaults of the Allied aviation (especially the American one). Received by Adolph Hitler and Joachim von Ribbentrop in September 1942, at Jitomir and Vinnița, Mihai Antonescu, the Romanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, found the right opportunity to point out the "contribution" of his country to the cause of the Axis, from a military, political-diplomatic, and economic point of view. As the meeting took place in the period of the notorious successes of the German forces, the visitor did not hesitate to present to the Führer a book with a flattering dedication: "The man on whom depends the honor of a century, the peace of Europe and the justice of my Country."⁷² At the same time, Mihai Antonescu did not conceal from his German counterpart that, at the Bend of the Don and in the region of Stalingrad, the winter combat disposition of the Romanian troops was "one of the most dangerous."⁷³ Regarding the contribution to the common cause, the Romanian diplomat considered relevant the deliveries of liquid fuel. Compared to the armament promised by Germany to Romania, "I pointed out, he dictated, having returned to Bucharest, that [...] we delivered petroleum in extremely large quantities (author's bold) exceeding 6 700 000 tons for the Axis and [of these] 5 500 000 tons for Germany..."⁷⁴ On September 23, 1942, in Vinnița, being received by Adolph Hitler, Mihai Antonescu insisted on the "most dangerous" situation in which the Romanian troops in the Stalingrad region were. He received from the Führer numerous assurances and promises, including that – probably the only one carried out – "he will send fighter planes for our defense and will establish a network from the Bulgarian Black Sea coast to our coast and [for the defense of the region] of Ploiești with this purpose."⁷⁵ After the America air attack from June 12, 1942 against Ploiești and Constanța, which was rather a warning,⁷⁶ the Romanian and German military

authorities⁷⁷ strengthened the defense of the Ploiești-Valea Prahovei area.⁷⁸ According to the available data, in the years 1943-1944 the Brigade 5 of the Romanian Army (regiments 7 and 9) and Division 5 of the German Army (regiments 180 and 202) which totaled 82 batteries, including 14 projecting batteries and 15 Würzburg stations for tracking enemy aircraft, plus air squadrons, hydrogen filled war balloons, "Nebeltopf" fog generators, and an ambush and alarm Service.⁷⁹ General Kuderna, commander of Division 5, coordinated all the troops in the area; in fact, the great "Protector" was General Alfred Gesternberg,⁸⁰ the Air Military Attaché in Bucharest, who, under the circumstances of the collapse of Antonescu's regime on August 23, 1944, assumed the command of the German forces found in Romania at the time.⁸¹ A few days after the famous Allied air raid of August 1, 1943 against Ploiești, the Nazi semi-official organ *Völkischer Beobachter*, pointing out that Romanian petroleum represented "a raw material of military importance", gave assurances that Romania would defend "by

every means" this "great resource", in cooperation with its "German comrades."⁸² Ploiești became this way a central point of the so-called Adolph Hitler's fortress of Europe, the best defended, but also the most targeted by the enemy (the forces of the United Nations)⁸³ and, consequently, the most vulnerable. The British Premier Winston Churchill himself considered that, within Europe's Fortress (Festung Europa), the "tap root of the German power"⁸⁴ was in the Ploiești petroliferous area.⁸⁵ We extract the following lines about the Ploiești fortress from an already familiar work: "Hitler endowed it with a powerful anti-aircraft defense: 40 buried batteries, each of them provided with six 88 cannon, plus lighter batteries, hundreds of machine guns, 'Messerschmidt' 109 squadron patrols, totaling 52 airplanes, and on the neighboring airdromes, another 60 fighter planes. THE ENTIRE ENSEMBLE FORMED 'FESTUNG PLOIEȘTI', 'THE PETROLEUM FORTRESS' - THE GREATEST CONCENTRATION OF FIRE IN THE ENTIRE EUROPE!" (Horia Brestoiu's bold).⁸⁶

C. Petroleum and politics in time of war

The evolution of the hostilities from the stage of European to planetary conflict, in 1941, determined the re-sizing of the coordinates of the general petroleum question. A rich literature published in the period pointed out the situation that had supervened. L. Mrazec, member of the Romanian Academy, was one most authorized voices in this issue. He pronounced himself numerous times. Thus, prefacing a specialized work, L. Mrazec opined: "None of the natural energy generators caused such a live interest from an economic and political point of view as petroleum;"⁸⁷ difficult and ruthless battles" were being fought for petroleum - he observed - in those days of the year 1940.⁸⁸ Publishing in the same year a paper work written at the beginning of the previous war from 1914-1918, L. Mrazec pointed out that he had taken in consideration the circumstances of the war in process.⁸⁹ Also,

for Ioan Basgan, the author of the work prefaced by L. Mrazec, petroleum had imposed itself as "a wonderful means to dominate space and conquer nature."⁹⁰ In 1942, we find the same specialist as a speaker of the petroleum law from July 1942, on which occasion he insisted on the protection of the national and smaller capital. He came to an agreement with Ion Antonescu that the interests in matters of oil needed to be kept in view, but, at the same time, he had to consider the Marshal's insistences for the increase of the liquid fuel production. In this context, the Marshal had declared firmly: "... I have the duty to correct a situation without compromising victory."⁹¹ The role of raw materials, primarily of petroleum, in the war appeared to the specialists as being self evident. Ștefan Chicoș wrote that, without liquid fuel, "a modern war, with aviation,

tanks, and other motorized vehicles would be literally impossible (author's bold).⁹²

An accepted and recommended principle was that of the necessity of the state's intervention in promoting a firm policy of energy.⁹³ The same issues regarding the role of the state and of the national and foreign capital or of the legislation in the matter came to the attention of the well known professor Gh.N. Leon, the author of 'an impressive volume of studies.⁹⁴ At the same time, in the semi-official collection *La Roumanie et la Guerre*, Gh.N. Leon published a special study on the nationalization of economic life.⁹⁵ Resuming a contribution from 1932, Leon considered the national capital to be "the one that comes into being within the territorial limits of the state and that works for capitalizing the national labor and resources," as opposed from the international capital which, "regardless of the country where in came into being, is considered without a country, because it always goes where it is best remunerated, even if in the foreign country it works against the general interests of the country it came from."⁹⁶ It is not difficult to assume that the author, involved in the elaboration of the 1937 mining law, insisted on a national petroleum policy.⁹⁷ During the war years, when Romania's policy was oriented towards the Axis, Leon recommended the application of a radical economic policy.⁹⁸ We notice that only the economic aspect of the issue was raised for discussion, the author declaring himself for a complete Romanianization of the national economy (capital, personnel, etc.), an area in which he considered that important results had been obtained in the period between 1940-1941, as for instance the creation on May 3, 1941 of a *National Center of Romanianization*.⁹⁹ Mention should be made that, in the same year, Mihail Manoilescu also dealt with the aspects of the technique of Romanianization, in his famous synthesis, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești* (The Role and the Destiny of Romanian Bourgeoisie).¹⁰⁰ The great economist and professor considered that Romanianization was no longer done with money (capital), but

with people,¹⁰¹ and, as far as putting it into practice, he excluded the empirical methods, insisting on legal and general methods of expropriation of the Jewish industrial and commercial properties.¹⁰² As we have seen, Mihail Manoilescu was not the only one who dealt with the question mentioned above, which received a lot of attention in that period.¹⁰³ Categorically, we do not believe, as it has been recently claimed,¹⁰⁴ that Mihail Manoilescu's attitude relative to the Romanianization of economy in 1942 can be compared to Hitler's plan regarding the "final solution" of the Jewish issue or, more recently, with the horrible crimes committed in Bosnia or Rwanda (!?).¹⁰⁵

In an epoch dominated by -isms, all of them involved in a planetary and total war (fascism, communism, capitalism), it was natural - we believe - for national and nationalistic tendencies to manifest themselves, some of them formulated to the extreme. One of the authors explained "the dangers presented by the foreign capital and the interference of other countries in the internal and external policy of our country."¹⁰⁶ But the author proved himself to be too deeply anchored in the issues of his time: he rejected unconditionally the collaboration of the Anglo-French-American capital, but accepted the cooperation of the German capital, which, supposedly, was done under "different circumstances" (?).¹⁰⁷ Around the same time, the question of the Romanianization of the economy as well as its concrete results and the anticipated prospects were also investigated, from a historical or contemporary point of view.¹⁰⁸ Constant Georgescu explained that the doctrine of economic nationalism began from the premise that "each nation constitutes an autonomous economic entity, in other words that each nation forms an independent economic organism, with specific interests."¹⁰⁹ Economic nationalism implied the state's intervention, the goal being the ensuring of the domination of the natives in the economy.¹¹⁰ Distinguishing several stages in the affirmation of economic nationalism in Romania,¹¹¹ Constant Georgescu discovered that the last one was that of the culminating

realizations, with results "de jure and de facto."¹¹² Fully confident in Marshal Antonescu, the author did not have any doubts regarding the success: "the Romanians can aspire to the complete control of the economic life in Romania."¹¹³ Economic nationalism found a competent interpreter in Ion Veverca,¹¹⁴ who wrote: "Today, beyond all the doctrinarian formulations, economic nationalism has become the fruit of history. The circumstances of the economic and political development of the country, as well as the tendencies of evolution of modern economy with the dissolving of the world economy and the autarchic battle impose it in the economic policy in its integral form: *no longer being able to remain only a school of ideas, it became a national imperative* (Veverca's italics)."¹¹⁵ More moderate and diverse, and closer to reality, Mihail Manoilescu discovered that the bourgeoisie's nationalism had been at that moment exceeded by the totalitarian one,¹¹⁶ situation in which the bourgeoisie¹¹⁷ was no longer a purpose and nationalism was no longer a means but, vice versa, nationalism had become "the supreme purpose, and the bourgeoisie one of the means through which the former achieves its ideals (author's bold)."¹¹⁸

While the world war was in full progress, the specialists tackled the issue of raw materials and sources of energy – among which petroleum was of utmost importance¹¹⁹ – in the context of the events.¹²⁰ Their importance for that stage of civilization was indisputable.¹²¹ Referring directly to the contemporary facts and processes, the authors under discussion were of the opinion that raw materials were not only important sources of richness, but, "through their unequal distribution on the surface of the earth, they are also the main

cause of wars (author's bold)."¹²² Therefore, the justification of the war of the fascist Axis against the United Nations was not strange.¹²³ Axente Sever Banciu argued his demonstrations with this declaration of Mussolini from 1940 about the real causes of the war: "it is the battle of the poor nations, but rich in manpower, against the exploiters who savagely hold the monopoly over all the resources and over all the gold of the earth (author's bold)."¹²⁴ On a different occasion, Banciu observed that the war was fought "for ruling the world,"¹²⁵ all the great powers (Great Britain, the United States, Germany, Italy, Japan, the U.S.S.R., France, China)¹²⁶ being involved, since they all had "expansionist interests, either from a political or from an economic or doctrinarian point of view and, therefore, are imperialistic."¹²⁷ It is known that the famous historian Gh.I. Brătianu was preoccupied with the petroleum question. Black gold and its derivatives conferred the specialized Romanian industry a truly international importance, whence the inclusion of the liquid fuel among the cursed resources.¹²⁸ The aspects of the petroleum question were not neglected, naturally, by the collaborators of the solid *Enciclopedia României* (The Encyclopedia of Romania) (Carol II edition).¹²⁹ During the same years, *Cursul de economie politică* (The Course of Political Economy) by Virgil Madgearu was published.¹³⁰ An important place was reserved for the translation of best-sellers.¹³¹

The debates on the theme of the liquid fuel policy of the Romanian state under the circumstances of the general and total war had to find their expression in the legislation of the period, especially in the petroleum law of July 17, 1942.

D. The Petroleum Law of July 1942

In the previous chapter we presented the advantages and disadvantages of the 1937 mining law. We know that the approaching, the outbreak, and the extension of the conflagration of 1939-1945 precipitated the discussions for the modification of the

respective law, having in view the elaboration of a new text that would place especially the oil resources in a situation as close as possible to the role occupied in the modern war.¹³² In September 1939, that is when, after Hitler's attack against Poland, the state of war was

established between Great Britain and France on the one hand, and Germany on the other hand, in Bucharest there began the discussions for the revision of the 1937 mining law.¹³³ The war, aggravating the problems, rushed the works of the committee that was already working within the Ministry of National Economy, whose head was engineer I. Bujoiu, on a draft of the mining law, in consultation with the "Association of the Oil Industrialists in Romania".¹³⁴ The committee within the Ministry of National Economy worked intensely in 1939-1940,¹³⁵ as well as after the regime changes from September 1940 and January 1941.¹³⁶ During this period, as we have previously shown, the law from March 24, 1937 suffered formal or content modifications, of certain articles (2, 7, 11, 21, 38, 45, 60, 67, 69, 71, 76, 106, 113, 118, 136, 139, 145-147, 151, 153, 158, 171-173, 175, 181, 184-185, 187, 190, 196, 200, 206-207, 230, 243, 260, 301, and 308).¹³⁷ Other modifications were brought later on (article

144, etc.).¹³⁸ New proposals and solutions were put forward regarding the mining regime and the capitalization of the petroliferous subsoil of the Romanian state.¹³⁹ In full war, on July 10, 1941, David Preda, General Secretary of the Ministry of National Economy, meeting with the representatives of the main oil companies affiliated to the "Association of the Petroleum Industrialists in Romania," shared with them the "topical" desiderata in the field:

- the increase of the production in the exploitation fields;
- the preparation of a new regime of petroleum.¹⁴⁰

These objectives preoccupied the members of the committee that functioned, as usual, within the Ministry of National Economy in 1941-1942.¹⁴¹ The decision factors were seriously alarmed by the fact that, according to statistics, the oil production after 1939 had proven unsatisfactory in relation to Romania's war needs:

1939.....	6 240 000 tons
1940.....	5 810 000 tons
1941.....	5 495 000 tons
1942.....	5 648 140 tons ¹⁴²

On the other hand, with different occasions, the political and military leaders of the Third Reich and their representatives in Bucharest (Minister Manfred von Killinger, Hermann Neubacher, Carl Clodius, etc.) intervened systematically for the adoption of certain firm measures which, determining the increase of the oil production, ensured increased deliveries of oil products to the Nazi Reich.¹⁴³ It was the case, which we shall bring up again, of Reichsmarshal Hermann Göring, who, receiving Mihai Antonescu, the Romanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Vice-President of Marshal Antonescu's cabinet, on November 26, 1941 in Berlin, asked him, "for the common interest of the continuation of the war [in the East], to increase the production of Romanian petroleum to the highest level possible, through all the conceivable means."¹⁴⁴ Acting

according to a disposition from the highest Berlin circles, Minister Carl Clodius, assistant director of the Department of Political Economy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the Nazi Reich, a personage we will meet again often in the following pages, wrote to Mihai Antonescu on January 17, 1942. The subject was a routine one at the time: the satisfaction of Germany's ever increasing demands for oil products. And, finally, Clodius insisted that the Romanian high official ask the government: "To make certain that the new mining law, whose coming into effect, in the German opinion, is an essential condition for the increase of the production of Romanian petroleum, is published as soon as possible this time."¹⁴⁵

However, the preparations for the elaboration and promulgation of the new law,

which was going to be exclusively a petroleum law, were prolonged until the summer of 1942.¹⁴⁶ According to Aurică Simion, "Antonescu gave indications to his subordinates to prepare a new *Law of petroleum*, whose provisions should reduce the sphere of action of the foreign monopolies and favor, in turn, the expansion of the Romanian capital in the oil industry."¹⁴⁷ The British historian Maurice Pearton is of the opinion that the petroleum law and the exposition of reasons, elaborated by Ion. C. Marinescu, the Minister of National Economy, had a nationalist character, strange compared to the previous regulations in the field made in Romania.¹⁴⁸ The petroleum law was promulgated through decree law no. 2 017, published in *Monitorul Oficial* no. 164 from July 17, 1942.¹⁴⁹

The petroleum law¹⁵⁰ – as we have seen¹⁵¹ – indisputably favored the companies with Romanian capital (article 96 – the granting of the right of exploitation on the exploitable mining properties). Under title XI (various dispositions), chapter IV was entitled as follows: *Encouraging the companies with Romanian capital* (article 269). We quote paragraph I from the following article: "*In order to stimulate the participation of the Romanian capital to the oil exploitations and to encourage the grouping of the existing companies with Romanian capital, the State grants the existing companies or those that might be founded, which will have a minimum capital of 400 000 000 in nominal shares, owned in a proportion of 75% by Romanian natives – natural persons or joint-stock companies, having 75% stock or social shares*

held by Romanian natives, natural persons – and whose president, board of directors, executive committee, and censor committee will be composed of Romanian natives, in the same proportion," a series of advantages (the reduction of taxes, the reduction of the dues to the state, the exemption from stamp duty on the dividend, tax exemption up to 500 000 000 *lei*, credits in cash, exemptions from the 0.5% tax on the new shares).¹⁵² We return to Aurică Simion, who considered that, although such provisions of the petroleum law from July 17, 1942 "hindered the penetration of the German capital in the Romanian economy"; they could not, however, completely stop their expansion.¹⁵³ Some companies (*Creditul Minier, Petrolul Românesc*, etc.) obtained advantages under the regime of the law, but the assertion that, under the same circumstances, the German monopolies would have succeeded "in controlling rigorously the Romanian oil industry" is unfounded.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, Maurice Pearton was preoccupied with the "rivalry" that opposed the German manifestations from the authority of the Romanian state during the war years.¹⁵⁵ With regard to the 1942 law, the German officials were dissatisfied rather with the technical possibilities offered than with the discriminating provisions for the foreign capital; Germany's actions aimed essentially at possibilities to increase the oil production by any means.¹⁵⁶ In fact, Romania's evolution in the world war marked the determining condition for which the results of the petroleum law from July 17, 1942 were in general fruitless.

During the war years, the oil production of Romania registered the following figures:

Years	Source ¹⁵⁷	Source ¹⁵⁸
1939	-	6 240 000 tons
1940	5 810 000 tons	5 815 000 tons
1941	5 453 179 tons	5 577 000 tons
1942	5 665 367 tons	5 665 000 tons
1943	5 273 432 tons	5 330 000 tons
1944	3 525 000 tons	3 525 000 tons
1945	4 640 000 tons ¹⁵⁹	4 640 000 tons

As we can see, the differences are insignificant. For the same period, the relation between the internal and external consumption evolved as follows (in thousand tons):¹⁶⁰

Years	Total	Internal consumption	Export	Export % of the total
1939	5 965	1 785	4 178	70.0
1940	5 356	1 862	3 495	65.2
1941	5 946	1 811	4 135	69.5
1942	5 492	2 097	3 395	61.8
1943	5 184	2 007	3 177	61.3
1944	3 227	1 108	2 119	65.7
1945	4 616	1 444	3 172	68.7

During the war years as well, the large oil company had a major contribution in the production of crude oil:¹⁶¹

Company	% in 1942	% in 1943
Astra Română	30.93	31.69
Concordia	11.66	12.32
Romanian-American	10.89	10.48
Steaua Română	10.24	10.14
Unirea	9.27	9.32
Colombia	7.63	7.84
Creditul Minier	4.73	5.01
Prahova	4.32	4.16
IRDP	2.13	2.42

The most interesting figures are, undoubtedly, those regarding the deliveries of Romanian oil products to Germany in the war years (in tons):

Years	Germany ¹⁶²	Germany and the German army on the fronts ¹⁶³	Protectorate ¹⁶⁴
1939	1 258 000	1 272 000	284 000
1940	1 196 000	1 177 000	127 800
1941	2 314 000	2 963 000	210 700
1942	1 497 000	2 192 000	110 400
1943	1 214 000	2 496 000	66 700
1944	591 000	1 043 000	35 900 ¹⁶⁵

For historians, an interesting study is that per years and per months (1935-1944) of Romania's oil deliveries to Germany, situation for which we refer the reader to the solid

monograph of Andreas Hillgruber regarding the Romanian-German relations between 1938 and 1944.¹⁶⁶

E. The petroleum question in the evolution of the Romanian-German relations

Just as the military, territorial, political and diplomatic aspects or those regarding the caducity of the Vienna arbitrage, the

financial-economic issues were constantly on the agenda of the Romanian-German relations between 1940 and 1944, especially

since Germany was at all times greatly interested in the Romanian cereals and petroleum, which were absolutely necessary for the continuation of the war effort. It is not an exaggeration to assess that, beginning with September 1940 until August 23 1944, the issue of Romanian petroleum was on the agenda of the relations between Bucharest and Berlin, affecting them. Moreover, we can state without out reticence that, in the period we are referring to, the Romanian-German relations, the contacts at the level of Hitler and Antonescu were marked – as was the world war in general – by the odor of petroleum.¹⁶⁷

First we shall mention that, as soon as he took over the leadership of the Romanian state, on September 6, 1940, General Ion Antonescu considered it necessary, on that "historical day", to address a message to Adolph Hitler, transmitting him the Romanian nation's "declaration of faith" in the Führer and in the German people, as well as its trust in the "security of the present and the hope of the future."¹⁶⁸ In the following weeks, through intense political-diplomatic contacts,¹⁶⁹ preparations were made for Antonescu's visit to Berlin and Romania's adhering to the Tripartite Pact. Before the meeting Antonescu and Hitler on November 22, 1940, which preceded the next day's official adhering of Romania to the camp of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis, the leader of the Romanian state had a long conversation with Joachim von Ribbentrop, the leader of the Nazi diplomacy.¹⁷⁰ Before the departure for Berlin, Antonescu and the Legionary Minister for Foreign Affairs M. Sturdza were received by Mussolini and Ciano in Rome.¹⁷¹ The General had found a first occasion to condemn the Vienna dictate, right before those who had imposed it. Von Ribbentrop, naturally, found out about it from Count Ciano, "with surprise and regret", as he personally declared to the General.¹⁷² This was the reason for which, before taking Antonescu to see Hitler, he considered it necessary to explain him the conditions in which Germany and Italy had imposed the "Vienna verdict."¹⁷³ The German diplomat could only justify what had happened, specifying even that "a great favor"

... had been done to Romania.¹⁷⁴ The context had been prepared to emphasize the roles of the Reich's interventions in the conflict that had opposed Hungary to Romania in August 1940; admitting without reticence that for Berlin it had been essential to prevent a conflict in the Balkans, in which the U.S.S.R. would have prepared to intervene. And the war had to be avoided for a very good reason, about which Hungary had been warned categorically, namely: "because of the threat [in case of war] oil fields in Romania."¹⁷⁵ Ion Antonescu recognized the importance of the political, military, and economic issues that existed between Bucharest and Berlin,¹⁷⁶ but he specified that he was not dealing with them as a politician or a diplomat, but as a soldier.¹⁷⁷ On the same day, also as a soldier, the Romanian General discussed with Hitler.¹⁷⁸ The latter believed in a "close cooperation" between Germany and Romania,¹⁷⁹ and his guest insisted, soliciting political and economic assistance.¹⁸⁰ At that stage of the discussions, Antonescu declared that he was willing, by adhering to the Tripartite Pact, "to fight, weapon in hand, together with the Powers of the Axis for the victory of civilization."¹⁸¹ Towards the end of the discussion, the Führer returned to the economic issues, declaring that Germany was "very much interested in the Balkans", where it did not want only to export its merchandise, but also to become "a great buyer", namely – raw materials.¹⁸² That was also the reason for which he did not want the extension of the hostilities in the south-east of the continent.¹⁸³ Hitler proposed long-term commercial treaties (10-20 years) with Romania, and as part of them the Reich would take over the surplus of Romanian products (among them first of all, of course, the oil products), at fixed prices established for several years.¹⁸⁴ As we can see, Hitler reiterated the spirit of bilateral treaties and conventions that had taken place between Bucharest and Berlin in those last years, but, at the same time, relying on the "affinity" between the two regimes,¹⁸⁵ he traced the limits of the outline of the future agreements, in essence of the economic agreement of December 4, 1940.¹⁸⁶ In relation to the

availability towards dialog manifested by Antonescu, Hitler admitted that "the Vienna verdict" of August 30, 1940 had not represented "an ideal solution".¹⁸⁷ The issues of the Romanian-German economic collaboration were discussed thoroughly, on November 23, 1940, in a new conversation with Joachim von Ribbentrop,¹⁸⁸ assisted by the Ambassador with economic tasks Carl Clodius. No less interesting was the meeting with the Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel.¹⁸⁹ Before leaving Berlin, on November 23, 1940, Antonescu was again received by Hitler. The General synthesized the results of his official discussions with the Reich, including the economic and financial agreement.¹⁹⁰ It was a new opportunity for the General to assure the Führer that Romania was ready "to fight for its rights"; and the host guaranteed that the Reich "will support, in all respects, its ally, both politically as well as economically."¹⁹¹ Upon his return to Bucharest, Antonescu made a declaration to the press at the train station, on November 25, 1940: "When I left, I assured you that I would return with the trust of the German people. I can assure you today that I am returning with the trust of the Führer and the German people. Romania will go towards victory. Romania will have its rights. Long live Romania!"¹⁹² Also, Antonescu presented in the meeting of the cabinet from November 26, 1940 the results of the negotiations in Berlin.¹⁹³ The internal evolutions predominated at that government meeting, but, with reference to the success registered in Berlin, the Premier specified the advantages obtained from an economic stand point: the establishing of a ten year collaboration plan, for which the negotiations, with the participation of Clodius, had already begun at Predeal and Bucharest; the obtaining of credits for the development of agriculture, the railway system, the irrigation system, and the food industry; at Hitler personal insistence, the reduction of the interest on credits from 6% to 3.5%.¹⁹⁴ The German historian Andreas Hillgruber investigated the recording of the top-level German-Romanian conversations from November 1940 and noted that Ion Antonescu made a very good

impression on Adolph Hitler.¹⁹⁵ Gheroghe Barbul, who accompanied the General, recorded the declaration that Hitler made at the end of the negotiations: "In the future, my external policy regarding Romania or its interests will be based on the close friendship through which I wish to connect myself to you [...] I count on you, you count on me."¹⁹⁶ Another important witness to the conversations from November 1940 was Mihail Sturdza, the Minister for Foreign Affairs.¹⁹⁷ Despite the fact that, warned in time by Ribbentrop, the General kept the attention of the Führer for two hours with a severe attack against the Vienna dictate, it was mentioned that he obtained a certain decree of recognition from Hitler.¹⁹⁸ But, encouraged by his initial success, Antonescu always resumed the issue in his meetings with Hitler. "... Antonescu – writes Hillgruber – never gave up the idea of a revision of the Vienna Arbitrage... (Hillgruber's italics)."¹⁹⁹ However, as far as the economic issues, noticed the same author, "Antonescu, as a soldier, was very insecure and suspicious. Only in matters of oil, which he judged from a military stand point and not from an economic stand point, was he more open. His dispositions, however, were only partially respected by his subordinates. Usually he was very careful and tried to stop any German interference."²⁰⁰

Andreas Hillgruber and Aurică Simion studied the contents and the significance of the Romanian-German economic agreement signed on December 4, 1940 in Berlin by C. Greceanu, the Minister of Romania in Germany, and V. Dimitriuc, Under-Secretary of State of the Ministry of National Economy for petroleum questions, on the one hand, and Carl Clodius, on the other hand.²⁰¹ The document, consisting of eight points, named *protocol*, established for ten years the framework of the economic cooperation between Berlin and Bucharest, regulating the receiving of credits from Germany and the quantum of the interest, and – separately, per articles – it set the conditions for each area (agriculture and forestry, industry, communication lines and means of

transportation, the banking and credit system, commercial relations, etc.). One of the most important articles (#7) established fixed prices for the products delivered by Romania (first of all, cereals and petroleum) and, moreover, assured Berlin that the Romanian market would constitute a "positive outlet" for Germany during the war.²⁰² The agreement was signed at a moment when the German offensive for the strengthening of its positions in Romania had already begun – concomitantly in metallurgy, shipyards, commercial companies (*Malaxa, Reșița, Metrom, Cugir, Șantierele Navale Galați, Astra, Hunedoara, Agromex, Dunarex*, etc.)²⁰³ – in the oil industry or marked a signal that encouraged the respective action.²⁰⁴ Berlin was concerned, first of all, with the acquisition, partially or integrally, of the shares of the companies belonging to the citizens/firms in the occupied states (Czechoslovakia, Holland, Belgium, France),²⁰⁵ among which were *Petrol Block* (which also had interests in *IRDP*), *Concordia*, *Colombia*,²⁰⁶ *Astra Română*,²⁰⁷ *Foraky*, *Steaua Română*, *Explora*, etc.²⁰⁸ The only company that made an exception to a certain extent was the *Romanian-American*; in 1940-1941, it was under the "protection" of a special commissary of the Minister of National Economy, and beginning with October 1941 the German

tutelage was consolidated,²⁰⁹ as, at a superior level, an agreement had been realized between *Standard Oil Co.* and *I. G. Farbenindustrie* to mutually watch over the protection of their interests in the two belligerent camps.²¹⁰ After the economic agreement from December 1940, the German offensive in the petroleum industry intensified, especially through the creation, on March 27, 1941, of the transnational company *Kontinentale Öl A.G.*²¹¹ Germany's efforts, recorded in numerous other specialized works,²¹² are considered to have been crowned by the agreement between *Kontinentale Öl A.G.* and *Astra Română* from May 1941, which, in Andreas Hillgruber's opinion, "sealed the penetration of the German capital in the Romanian oil industry, where it gained an important position, if not even a dominant one (author's italics)."²¹³ There is no need to specify that, during the war years in the East (1914-1944), things did not stagnate, the situation of the German companies and interests in the oil industry were constantly being consolidated,²¹⁴ as was the German control.²¹⁵

Without being able to delimit exactly the nature of the capital invested in the oil industry in the war period, we shall appeal to the data communicated in 1945 by *Monitorul Petrolului Român* for the respective year.²¹⁶

Origin of the capital	Total (million lei)
Romanian	3 840.9
American	1 728.0
Belgian	480.7
British	3 161.7
Swiss	170.1
French	1 495.9
Italian	533.5
Dutch	228.9
U.S.S.R.	1 759.9
Other capital	647.0
TOTAL	14 046.5

As we can see, the Romanian and the British capital had the supremacy, being succeeded by the soviet capital, namely by the one that, through the decree law published in *Monitorul Oficial* on July 19, 1945, was taken from the German origin and transferred to the

U.S.S.R.²¹⁷ This way, indirectly, we are able to establish the percentage of the German capital, certainly considering not only those transferred to the Soviet occupier of Romania, but also the proportions that in 1940-1944 were held in the British-Dutch, French or Belgian spheres.

General Ion Antonescu returned to Germany, to Obersalzberg, on January 14, 1941, for decisive negotiations with Hitler and von Ribbentrop with a view to and on the eve of the confrontation with the Legionaries on January 21-23, 1941.²¹⁸ We benefit from two minutes of their meeting: one of Hitler's translator, Paul Otto Schmidt,²¹⁹ and the other one of the collaborators of the Romanian premier.²²⁰ Only the German version offers details about the fact the Antonescu referred to the danger of British attacks on the Romanian petroliferous regions and the crude oil reserves stored in the port of Constanța.²²¹ The Romanian guest pointed out in the context that his country was had the power to use "all the means it possesses" in order to contribute in the future to the victory of the Powers of the Axis.²²² The meeting had a major role in convincing Hitler to support Antonescu in the looming conflict with the Legionaries.²²³ Antonescu consolidated the position he gained. Having arrived to Bucharest, he sent the Führer a memorandum that synthesized the issues debated on January 14, 1940 and which, moreover, constituted a plan for the future.²²⁴ Romania's key-position in the German combat disposition in the south-east of the continent and its affiliation to the camp of the Axis were indisputable and unconditional. "Romania represents today for Germany - we read in the memorandum - a strategic center and a base for the political supremacy over Eastern and South-Eastern Europe [...] If necessary, Romania is ready to take military actions on the side of Germany [...] In case Russia attacks, Romania wishes to participate to the military operation with all its forces."²²⁵ Romania's eventual preparations involved several areas of activity: the military, the economic, the diplomatic, and the political areas.²²⁶ The chapter of the memorandum relative to the economic area could not have ignored the petroleum question: "As a country with industrial potential, Romania's economy is supplementary to Germany's economy; thus, the German industry has the possibility to easily establish the center for the industrial production and the selling of the products in the entire area. Being in the possession of the

nearest oil resources and forming a strategic center among the Mediterranean, the Balkans, the Straits, and Russia, in the future Romania will continue to have the same importance as today regarding the security of Germany in the sector of Eastern Europe (author's bold)."²²⁷

In the first part of the year 1941, in the context of Germany's preparations for the operation "Barbarossa" against the U.S.S.R. of June 22, the petroleum question was the most often attacked issue as part of the contacts between Berlin and Bucharest: on February 6, 1941, with the occasion of the meeting between the new German Minister to Romania, Manfred von Killinger, with the head of the Second Office of the General Staff of the Romanian Army;²²⁸ on June 11, 1941,²²⁹ at the meeting of General Ion Antonescu with the military and diplomatic leaders of the Reich, headed by Hitler in Munich;²³⁰ the memorandum presented to the Führer in Munich and dated June 11, 1941,²³¹ containing assurances regarding the consolidation of German-Romanian industrial collaboration, framework in which Romania could become "a supply center for the entire European region", with its raw materials and cheap labor.²³² Also, during the preparation of the military operation in the East, on May 23, 1941, Hitler's Headquarters designated General Ritter von Schobert as supreme commander of the German armed forces in Romania and established his attributions, including the subordination of the German Military Mission of Erik Hansen, whose main role was to "secure the petroliferous region."²³³ In March 1941, Antonescu was received by Hermann Göring,²³⁴ at the "Belvedere" Palace in Vienna.²³⁵ At the Reichsmarshal's request, the discussions were concentrated only on the petroleum issue: the supply of the Reich and the Wehrmacht, Germany's resources (the only ones: Romania and Russia),²³⁶ the place and role of Romania in the supply of the Reich for the moment and in the future, the increase of the oil production and the discovery of new reserves,²³⁷ the possibility of enemy air raids (British and Soviet!) against the Ploiești petroliferous region.²³⁸

Only a few days before the anti-Soviet aggression, Adolph Hitler, according to those convened in Munich, addressed Ion Antonescu in order to inform him of "the final decision" taken with respect to the moment of the attack. It was June 18, 1941²³⁹ and the Führer signed one of the most eloquent documents in the war period, in which he recognized the essential role of the Romanian petroleum in the leading and development of the hostilities. From the point of view of the O.K.W., the German forces in Romania (the 11th Army and the Land, Navy, and Air Mission) together with the Romanian Armies (2nd and 3rd) formed the group of the Allied forces, under the general command of Ion Antonescu, and for that the Führer established the initial mission in the war, which consisted in:

"1. Defending the Romanian territory against the invasion of the Russian forces.

Along this line, special attention should be given to the defense against the air raids, against the actions of the paratroopers, and the sabotage actions in the petroliferous area, **VITAL FOR THE COMMON LEADING OF THE WAR**, against the port of Constanța and against the bridge across the Danube."²⁴⁰

The intention was to create some bridge heads east of the Prut and, then, to begin to offensive. Under such circumstances, the mission of the Romanian air military forces was multiple, but first of all there was "the question of ensuring the security of Romania **AND ESPECIALLY OF THE PETROLIFEROUS REGION**" (author's bold).²⁴¹

The evolution of the military, political-diplomatic, and financial-economic events and processes until August 23, 1944, when Romania deserted from the fascist *Axis*, integrally confirmed the opinion included in Hitler's message from June 18, 1941.²⁴² **THE QUESTION OF ROMANIAN PETROLEUM WAS AND REMAINED VITAL FOR THE NAZI REICH ENGAGED IN A GENERAL AND TOTAL WAR.**

During the campaign in the East, the petroleum question – as we have already mentioned – was constantly on the agenda of the Romanian-German relations.²⁴³ On July

27, 1941, after the liberation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, Hitler asked Antonescu to cooperate at a military level with the German troops, across the Dniester and in the area of the Bug. The war would decide "the fate of Europe for centuries."²⁴⁴ Ion Antonescu, convinced that he was serving "not only the Romanian nation and the Romanian populations across the Dniester, but also the commandment of civilization and the need to consciously fight for the building of Europe's new fate", decided immediately to assure the Führer, through the letter from July 31, 1941, that he would continue the fight "till the end" next to the Nazi Reich.²⁴⁵

Under the new circumstances, Berlin and Bucharest²⁴⁶ reached important agreements.²⁴⁷ It is not by accident that all the known Romanian documents register the fact that all the bilateral agreements were advantageous for Germany.²⁴⁸ The Romanian officials, most often Mihai Antonescu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs after June 29, 1941, negotiated intensely with Berlin's delegates, in the petroleum questions especially with Manfred von Killinger, Hermann Neubacher, Carl Clodius, General Georg Thomas from the O.K.W., and others.²⁴⁹ What did the Reich's delegates ask for? It is not difficult to imagine: first of all for PETROLEUM! On November 10, 1941, for example, von Killinger, speaking in the name of Field Marshal W. Keitel, asked that Romania respect the economic agreements and, this way, "make the sacrifices of a close collaborator of Germany", these pretensions determining the reply of the leader of Romanian diplomacy, namely that Marshal Antonescu had engaged in war, but he intended "to defend the rights of Romania as well."²⁵⁰ Around the same time, on November 19, 1941, von Killinger, organizing a press conference at the Legation with German journalists, did not conceal the fact that: "We need many things, especially petroleum."²⁵¹ At the end of November 1941, Mihai Antonescu, in order to sign Romania's adhering to the Anti-Comintern Pact,²⁵² traveled to Berlin, where he was received separately by Hermann Göring,²⁵³ Joachim von Ribbentrop,²⁵⁴ Adolph Hitler,²⁵⁵ and

Joseph Goebbels.²⁵⁶ The reader suspects, of course, that the terms that some of the most used terms in the meetings were: Führer, Marshal, war, sacrifices, economic agreements, and, among them – petroleum. Mihai Antonescu, for instance, told the Minister for the Reich Propaganda: “I assume that I am not telling you anything new [...] when I insist especially on our contribution in petroleum, cereals, and cattle, since the beginning of the war, in September 1939, until today...”²⁵⁷ To Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Romanian diplomat imputed the solution of the 1940 Vienna dictate, when Germany intervened in order to reserve for itself the Romanian oil and to protect its strategic position;²⁵⁸ however, the war, the expenses of the German Military Mission in Romania, and, especially, the inequity of the commercial exchanges with the Reich had caused a serious economic and financial situation, the country being threatened with inflation and disorder; the only solution was for the Reich to immediately deliver gold and foreign currency for the Romanian imports.²⁵⁹ Mihai Antonescu’s commentaries succeeded von Ribbentrop’s statements, who appreciated Romania’s military contribution to the anti-Soviet war, but then asked Bucharest to supply Germany with “petroleum, black oil, and cereals, in order [for the Reich] to be able to continue the war.”²⁶⁰ As for Adolph Hitler, appreciating the fanatical leader that was Marshal Antonescu,²⁶¹ pointed out that, on the Eastern Front, “the Romanian people made sacrifices not only of an economic nature, but blood sacrifices as well (author’s bold).”²⁶² That was also the reason for which the Führer agreed that Romania, in the East, should receive “limitless rights and powers; take as much as you want”²⁶³ – he urged. It is known, however, that Bucharest was not going to accept such a thing.²⁶⁴ There is no doubt however that Mihai Antonescu proved as eloquent as possible in front of Hermann Göring, whom he told about the sacrifices of the Romanian army and about the rich supplies with oil;²⁶⁵ the continuation of the exports required gold and foreign currency for financing; the reserves were threatened with

exhaustion, and, in case of victory, Mihai Antonescu risked to observe that Germany would reserve for Romania advantageous conditions in the petroliferous regions in... Russia.²⁶⁶ The Reichsmarshal did not refrain from making promises (gold, foreign currency, oil pipe lines, etc.), being loquacious even in the question of north-western Transylvania occupied by Horthy: “Have faith and patience.”²⁶⁷ But, certainly, Hermann Göring pleaded the best in the petroleum question. From the beginning, the Reichsmarshal observed – as we deduce from the German minute of the meeting – that the issue had gained “an unexpected importance”.²⁶⁸ Noting, with good reason, that Hitler’s Germany and Antonescu’s Romania “can together win or lose the war,” the Reichsmarshal declared ruthlessly: “Immediately after the blood of its soldiers, the most important contribution that Romania can bring to the common cause is therefore PETROLEUM.”²⁶⁹

Thus, Hitler, as well as Ribbentrop and Göring²⁷⁰ insisted on the exceptional importance of the Romanian resources and deliveries of oil for the continuation of Germany’s war efforts. They were joined by Field Marshal Keitel, who addressed Bucharest many times with requests for petroleum,²⁷¹ as for instance on October 29, 1942,²⁷² when he personally telegraphed Marshal Antonescu in these grave and pressing terms: “In the name of the Führer, I appeal to Your Excellency and solicit Your personal intervention for the extreme acceleration of the deliveries of black oil, necessary for fighting the war in the Mediterranean, to the Italian naval forces. The situation in Africa is extremely precarious due to the lack of supplies. [...] With comradely respect, I remain devotedly Yours.”²⁷³ At a different level, Manfred von Killinger, the German Minister in Bucharest, was no more reticent; on the contrary. In his note regarding his conversation with the Nazi diplomat from January 23, 1942, Mihai Antonescu recorded: “[Manfred von Killinger] came to intervene for the increasing of the petroleum and black oil quantities at export [to Germany]. He

showed me that our export has been very weak lately."²⁷⁴ On January 5, 1942, von Killinger and Neubacher had informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin about the

situation of the Romanian exports of oil products for the month of December 1941. Of a total of 287 196 tons, the destinations of the exports were established as follows:

142 297 tons.....	The Reich 29
524 tons.....	The Wehrmacht
15 171 tons.....	The Protectorate of Czechia and Moravia
4 951 tons.....	Slovakia
14 219 tons.....	Switzerland (through Germany)
206 162 tons.....	total for Germany
70 098 tons.....	Italy
7 119 tons.....	Bulgaria
2 417 tons.....	Greece
1 400 tons.....	Serbia ²⁷⁵

Manfred von Killinger and Hermann Neubacher often discussed with Marshal Antonescu the file of the German-Romanian economic exchanges, the first place being occupied, at the beginning of 1942, by the petroleum question.²⁷⁶ In August 1943, Joachim von Ribbentrop sent several telegrams to Berlin to Hermann Neubacher, asking him to personally discuss with Marshal Antonescu the issues of increasing the oil deliveries at export, the reconstruction of the refineries in the Ploiești area after the Allied bombings, etc., considering the "decisive" importance of liquid fuel for fighting the war.²⁷⁷

A new message, probably the most significant one in the entire history of the war, came from Berlin to Bucharest on December 29, 1941: the Führer informed Marshal Antonescu about the level of leadership of the land forces after the first failures in Russia, inviting him to participate with new units to the offensive in the East, planned for the spring of 1942.²⁸⁰ In the final part of the Führer's letter there was a paragraph that, possibly, explained the reason for the sending of the document:

"Finally, I ask You one more time, Marshal, to do everything possible to place at the disposal of our common war THE THING WITH WHICH ROMANIA CAN CONTRIBUTE THE MOST: PETROLEUM AND GASOLINE."²⁸¹

Bucharest often received messages from the Romanian negotiators in Berlin, who had become exasperated with the amplitude of the German pretensions and the brutality of the pressures exerted. Thus, on January 14, 1942, through the Romanian Legation in Berlin, N. Rămeriță communicated from the capital of the Reich that the economic and financial discussions (including in the question of petroleum) had been "drastic", so that "we could consider ourselves close to the point of interrupting the negotiations at this time."²⁷⁸ In the development of the ever more advanced military operations on the territory of the U.S.S.R., in the last months of the year 1941 Hitler communicated to Antonescu that their reason consisted, among others, also in the liquidation of the Soviet air bases that could threaten the Ploiești petroliferous area.²⁷⁹

From the reply from January 5, 1942 we can only conclude that Marshal Antonescu was pleased with the Führer's intention and reaffirmed, once again, his decision to fight in the German camp for the destruction of the "communist Slavism."²⁸² Answering directly to the Führer's solicitations, the Marshal stimulated the export of 33 380 tons of gasoline and oil derivatives besides the engagements, dictating similar measures regarding cereals. A concrete engagement was timely: "The greatest effort will be made for the future, reducing the consumption [of oil products] and replacing it with coals."²⁸³

The engagements made by the Marshal most often represented the façade of the

profound financial-economic and commercial contradictions that undermined the Romanian-German "collaboration". That was why interventions on both parts were necessary, and the differences that would occur were settled in the sessions of the Government Committees. On January 17, 1942, the eleventh session of the Government Committees led to the signing of a protocol that settled the differences between Berlin and Bucharest resulted from the methods of payment for the deliveries of war materials.²⁸⁴ From the studies performed in Bucharest it results that, after the closing of the protocol as well, Romania's clearing account in Berlin reached the sum of 600 million marks, of which the Romanian state was able to capitalize a maximum of 200 million marks.²⁸⁵

On February 11, 1942, Marshal Antonescu went to Adolph Hitler's Headquarters in Rastenburg – Eastern Prussia (*Wolfsschanze – The Wolve's Lair*), where he had two meetings totaling four hours with the Führer.²⁸⁶ It was an opportunity for the examination of the military and political-diplomatic events at an international scale, a context in which Antonescu asserted firmly: "We will not accept [as] final the Vienna arbitrage."²⁸⁷ Both the German and the Romanian minutes attest to the fact that, although the military-strategic aspects predominated, the economic issues were not neglected. It is easy to imagine that the delivery of Romanian oil products to the countries of the Axis were on first place: 3.9 million tons of a production of 5.3 million tons.²⁸⁸ On February 12, 1942, Antonescu met separately with Joachim von Ribbentrop, the center of the discussion being the petroleum question.²⁸⁹ The memorandum²⁹⁰ presented by Ion Antonescu to A. Hitler, dated February 11, 1942,²⁹¹ was of great importance. As it was to be expected, the Marshal renewed his assurances regarding Romania's adhesion to Germany's future cause, which should not lead to the neglecting of the previous contributions, which the signatory of the document categorized in 11 areas (military-strategic, financial and alimentary sacrifices, the preparation and sending of forces to the front, the beginning of the anti-Soviet

aggression, etc.²⁹² Especially points *g-h-i-j* of the memorandum presented the situation of the war expenses and the deliveries of Romanian merchandise to Germany in the previous period:

"G. [Romania] made financial sacrifices of 200 billion *lei* for the preparation and support of this war;

H. It placed 2 672 000 tons of petroleum at Germany's disposal, giving it the last reserves of its aviation's gasoline and imposing the most drastic privations to its population.

The production stretched to the exhaustion of the reserves and the Romanian black oil had a decisive role in supporting the war and the action in the Mediterranean;

I. It gave 88.6% of its entire foreign trade to Germany, thus reaching a true export monopoly in Germany's favor;

J. It gave cereals, animals, and export contingents that represent 31.6 billion *lei*."²⁹³

1942 was the year of the great summer offensive of the German and Allied troops (Romanian, Hungarian, etc.) in the south-east of the U.S.S.R., in the directions of Stalingrad and the Caucasus.²⁹⁴ The preparation of the offensive launched on June 28, 1942 (operation Blau-Braunschweig),²⁹⁵ involved a series of actions concertized at military and political-diplomatic levels in Bucharest.²⁹⁶ Naturally, the economic sector was not neglected, as it was an area in which the concern for the ensuring of the oil resources necessary for the war predominated.²⁹⁷ Under those circumstances, Hitler, Keitel and von Ribbentrop intervened. Answering a letter dated May 6, 1942 from Hermann Göring, Ion Antonescu gave new assurances that Romania would export "without any circumspection" the oil products in the direction of the Reich, and that would be done by sacrificing the internal consumption.²⁹⁸ The Marshal was pleased that Herman Göring appreciated Romania's war efforts in flattering terms, which, in compensation, wrung the assurances of the Leader of the Romanian State in the sense that "we shall continue with increased efforts until total victory is obtained."²⁹⁹ In September 1942, at the height of the offensive

of the troops of the Axis towards Stalingrad or in North Africa, Marshal Antonescu assured Field Marshal W. Keitel regarding the efforts made to ensure the oil products necessary to Germany and Italy, where Romania had delivered over 6.4 million tons in the years 194-1942.³⁰⁰ The acceptance of certain German conditions and the assurances given did not manage, however, as far as Marshal Ion Antonescu was concerned, to hide the strong Romanian-German conflicts of interests, first of all at an economic level. Addressing C.I.C. Brătianu, the leader of the National Liberal Party, on October 29, 1942, the Marshal observed: "You accuse me of starving the country and depriving it of fuel while I give Germany cereals and black oil in exchange for armament, although you know very well that I cannot give anything else and I cannot bring the armament in any other way."³⁰¹

The failure of proportions of the Axis's forces at Stalingrad and in the Caucasus in the winter of 1942-1943, resulted in the catastrophe of the Romanian 3rd and 4th Armies,³⁰² caused serious political-diplomatic and military tensions between Bucharest and Berlin.³⁰³ Marshal Antonescu personally addressed Adolph Hitler,³⁰⁴ as well as Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, the commander of the armies of the Axis west of Stalingrad (the Group of the "B" Armies).³⁰⁵

A new round of Antonescu-Hitler negotiations took place also at Wolfsschanze on January 10-12, 1943, under the pressure of the military events on the Eastern Front and after the temporary escape of Horia Sima from the concentration camp at Berkenbruck.³⁰⁶ Despite all this, the economic and financial aspects were not ignored. The Marshal was accompanied by Mihai Antonescu and Generals Gh. Dobre and Ilie Șteflea, the Minister of National Economy and, respectively, the Romanian Chief of Staff. Mihai Antonescu, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, informed his cabinet colleagues about the visit to the German Headquarters on January 10-12, 1943.³⁰⁷ On the basis of the Romanian-German credit conventions of

January 17 and August 17, 1942, Mihai Antonescu obtained, after negotiations with Carl Clodius and Joachim von Ribbentrop, the signing of a new payment protocol.³⁰⁸ The advantages obtained by the Romanian side were explainable on the basis of the previous deliveries of oil products, which Germany had not managed to "cover" with armament deliveries in equal quantities and at an equal value. The unbalance that occurred, Mihai Antonescu specified in the Government meeting, threatened a serious inflation, which could determine the collapse of the economic system of Romania, which was not the intention nor in the interest of the Third Reich.³⁰⁹ We must mention here that the Romanian-German economic and financial negotiations were held on the basis of a memorandum dated January 9, 1942, addressed by Ion Antonescu to Adolph Hitler, but drawn up by Mihai Antonescu and presented also by him to Joachim von Ribbentrop and Carl Clodius.³¹⁰ The document, as it results from the preamble, was intended to treat all the issues, present and future, regarding the common war against Bolshevism.³¹¹ It mentioned that, fighting the war alongside Germany, Romania freed "the lands occupied unjustly through Soviet aggression,"³¹² a remarkable fact, obtained however through the "exhaustion" of its military capacity.³¹³ Germany's support of Romania became very important and Bucharest was trying to avoid the situation of "humiliation upon peace and in the future reorganization of the continent."³¹⁴ The Marshal, however, had complete trust in the Führer's "honest word" and, in that spirit, the second compartment of the memorandum³¹⁵ insisted on the Romanian sacrifices in the world conflict: losses of men, armament, the respecting of the economic agreements with Germany, presenting in this sense in detail the alarming role and the conditions of the Romanian oil industry.³¹⁶ During the good-bye visit paid by Ion Antonescu and his collaborators to Adolph Hitler, the Führer, after having studied the memorandum,³¹⁷ eulogized the German-Romanian collaboration, including the economic part; it

was – Mihai Antonescu stated at the cabinet meeting – at the time when Romania's economic effort was talked about at such a level, "accompanying the recognition with the gratitude."³¹⁸

The historian Aurică Simion commented the results convened at Wolfsschanze in January 1943 as follows: "Despite the agreements signed and the engagements mutually assumed, the disagreements between the Romanian and the German governments continued to be strongly manifest in the next period, because each interpreted and intended to apply the agreements in their own way. After the signing of the Protocol of January 11, 1943, deliberations took place in Berlin between the German and the Romanian experts for the establishing of the necessary measures in a first stage, with a view to obtaining the 4 million tons of oil solicited by the government of the Reich. As it results from a letter addressed to the Reichsmarshal Hermann Göring by one of the German negotiators, in these meetings it became clear that 'the Romanian government only reluctantly begins taking measures to fulfill the promises made to the Führer by Antonescu'..."³¹⁹

The continuation of the general hostilities and the ever greater difficulties of the Axis determined Berlin to constantly make representations to Bucharest, insisting that Romania should intensify its efforts at all levels, including economically (in the area of petroleum, which interests us here). A few examples should be given. On March 30, 1943, Mihai Antonescu received the famous "ambassador of petroleum" Hermann Neubacher at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, accompanied by several German councillors. The Germans had come, Antonescu related in the note of the conversation, to ask again for money for the Land and Air Missions in Romania, but especially "to formulate new requests for petroleum, asking that we should give them from the oil reserves of the aviation and the army."³²⁰ We reproduce the answer of the Romanian official: "I told Minister Neubacher that this becomes impossible, especially under

the threat of the bombing of the refineries, which would completely paralyze our oil production and, with it, not only the activity of the companies tied to liquid fuel, but also our national defense."³²¹

The next Hitler-Antonescu round of negotiations from April 12-13, 1943 took place at the moment when, after the failures of proportions of the Axis at Stalingrad and the Caucasus, Romania intensified its secret measures for the possible abandonment of the German camp.³²² Mihai Antonescu became involved, and Berlin obtained positive proof in this sense.³²³ Thus, when Marshal Antonescu and his suite arrived at the Klessheim Castle (Salzburg), they found Hitler extremely furious. Gh. Barbul remembers: "... We found Hitler raging. He was shouting that he was betrayed. The Marshal could see with his own eyes what one of Hitler's temper tantrums was like."³²⁴ As a result, the discussions gravitated around the "case" of Mihai Antonescu,³²⁵ the Marshal taking the latter's side.³²⁶ It was not in vain because, in consequence, Mihai Antonescu was going to be kept by the Marshal in the structure of his government.³²⁷ As for the petroleum question, it was not ignored with the occasion of the Klessheim round either. On the contrary, it was debated with priority, on April 13, 1943, during the Antonescu-von Ribbentrop meeting.³²⁸

In the following period, the petroleum question was often a topical issue in the evolution of the relations between Berlin and Bucharest. First of all, Marshal Antonescu addressed Hitler repeatedly.³²⁹

Previous to the new Romanian-German economic and financial protocol from July 17, 1943,³³⁰ ample negotiations took place in Berlin,³³¹ and Carl Clodius returned to Bucharest. On July 15, 1943, he was received by Mihai Antonescu and the Romanian competent Ministers.³³² They discussed the payments of the deliveries made to Germany (half for the orders of war material) effected through the credit conventions from January 27 and August 17, 1942 after the signing of the protocol from January 11, 1943,³³³ and Clodius inquired

about the defense of Romanian petroleum – “a national issue.”³³⁴ Mihai Antonescu did not spare his guest: “You cannot compare Germany’s efforts with those of Romania. The oil companies export almost the entirety of the export (sic!) to Germany’s profit; we have established exceptional prices to give you petroleum, we are exhausting our oil resources for the war and you are saying the Romania is not making enough efforts and is not giving enough for the war. Have other countries done anything similar, Mr. Clodius? What number did the oil export reach [during the war years]? *Minister Engineer Stavri Chiholu*: 10 million tons. *Professor Mihai Antonescu, vice-president of the Council of Ministers*: We have given these tons for the war. Do they not exist?...³³⁵ As the head of Romanian Diplomacy, Mihai Antonescu – in a strictly-confidential document from July 30, 1943 – sent the Romanian Minister in Berlin, General Ion Gheorghe, ample considerations of the recently closed negotiations with Clodius;³³⁶ he explained that, as opposed to the “honest contribution” of Marshal Antonescu, the German delegates, headed by Clodius, behaved inadequately.³³⁷ “Germany – Mihai Antonescu was convinced – often makes the mistake of mistaking the loyalty of honorable people with reservation or hostility and taking hypocrisy and simulated devotion for an act on which they can count;” Romania “had given” to the war over 11 million tons of petroleum, especially its territory, and had sent its forces “to the accursed land of Russia alongside the German troops”; and that was why the reaction and behavior of the German delegates offended him.³³⁸ Mihai Antonescu met Carl Clodius again on October 21, 1943,³³⁹ maintaining the same tone towards his guest, to whom he declared that Romania would help Germany with exports of petroleum and cereals, but was asking that, for that, Berlin should punish Romania by throwing it in the arms of inflation.³⁴⁰ An undated document from the time attests that, between 1939 and 1942, the Romanian oil exports were destined to Germany in a proportion of 75%, at prices that registered minimum fluctuations (27-45%), in relation to

those of the main raw materials (platinum, zinc, etc.) imported from Germany (85-193%).³⁴¹

In 1943-1944, the economic aspects (and, in the context, if not primarily, the petroleum question) persisted on the agenda of each of the last Hitler-Antonescu meetings.³⁴² In this interlude,³⁴³ on December 15, 1943, a message was sent by Adolph Hitler to Ion Antonescu, which clearly reminds of Gerooges Clemanceau’s famous cablegram from December 15, 1917 to the president of the United States regarding the absolute necessity for liquid fuel in the war, as well as for the blood of the soldiers,³⁴⁴ namely:

“... MARSHAL, BECAUSE THE WAR IN THE EAST IS VERY HARSH AND VERY DIFFICULT, LET US RECOGNIZE WHAT AWAITS ALL OF US IF WE DO NOT WIN THIS FIGHT. THAT IS WHY IT MUST BE WON! BUT THAT IS POSSIBLE ONLY IF WE RENOUNCE ANY POINT OF VIEW THAT DIVERTS OUR ATTENTION AND DEDICATE OURSELVES TO ONE SINGLE IDEA: WHAT CAN STRENGTHEN OUR FORCE AND WHAT CAN BE OF HELP TO OUR SOLDIERS? *EACH TON OF OIL THAT WILL BE SAVED IN ROMANIA WILL REPRESENT A SUPPORT FOR THE WAR FOUGHT BY GERMANY. THEREFORE FOR OUR COMMON FUTURE. BECAUSE IT DOES NOT GO TO GERMANY TO BE WASTED THERE, BUT PUTS OUR TANK DIVISIONS IN MOTION, OUR FORTIFYING SERVICES, THUS USING THE BATTLE FRONT* (author’s italic and bold).”³⁴⁵

Any commentary is, obviously, unnecessary!

Until the last moment of Romania’s defection from the camp of the Axis, the economic agreements with Germany and their application were under the attention of the leaders in Bucharest.³⁴⁶

We shall mention, however, that in the interrogation given in Moscow to Marshal Ion Antonescu by the representatives of the NKVD in April 4, 1946, he declared among other things that:³⁴⁷ “In the period of Germany’s and Romania’s war against the Soviet Union, the

oil extracted by Romania was transported mainly to Germany and partially to Italy, Turkey, and Bulgaria. In total, 4 400 000 tons of petroleum were extracted annually in Romania in this period, of which 3 000 000 tons were sent to Germany. The entire oil industry of Romania was in the hands of the British, American, Dutch, Belgian, and French companies. This way, it was the British and the American oil-producers that were ensuring Germany's petroleum." And in continuation: "The deliveries of Romanian oil to Germany were done in conformity with the economic convention signed before I came to power. In November 1940, at my first meeting with Hitler, a new economic convention was concluded between us, according to which the Germans delivered to Romania 'Messerschmidt-109' airplanes, tanks, tractors, anti-aircraft and anti-tank artillery, machine guns and other weapons, receiving from Romania – petroleum, gasoline, and bread. Besides that, in the spring of 1941, at the meeting in Vienna with Goering I convened with him verbally that Romania should try to increase the oil deliveries and in exchange it would receive petroleum equipment from the Germans. This convention had a general character and later it was developed and concretized through negotiations..."³⁴⁸

After the fall of Antonescu's regime,³⁴⁹ during and after the "trial" of the cabinet of Marshal Antonescu from May 1946, the opinion was accredited that all the 1940-1944 governments had no other role than the enslaving of Romania to the Nazi Reich, under all aspects (ideological, political-diplomatic, economic, military, etc.). Such a reality, contradicted by the specialized studies,³⁵⁰ was however amply expounded in the Bill of Indictment presented in the opening of the sessions of the "People's Court" in Bucharest on May 6, 1946, several compartments being significantly entitled: "the treason" and "disaster" of the country, the "plunder" policy promoted exclusively to the advantage of Hitler's Germany, etc.³⁵¹ The document included such considerations: "... Hitler needed maintenance for his troops,

destined to attack the Balkans and then the Soviet Union, and Antonescu's servants gave it to him in abundance; he needed the Romanian oil (author's italics) and had it until the exhaustion of our resources of wealth;³⁵² he wanted our cereals and had them until the starvation of the population; he wanted the slave work of the Romanian hands; he wanted complete control of the Romanian industry and commerce; he wanted control over the entire economic sector, and all these were placed at his disposal by the Antonescu government."³⁵³ Also, Alexandru Voitinovici, the head judge of the "People's Court", questioned Ion Antonescu: "With regard to the economic servitude, after the arrival of the Germans [in Romania, October 1940], what was your role in this economic servitude?..."³⁵⁴ The answer of the main accused, very short, was as precise as possible: "The economic servitude was done by my predecessors and I found a given situation. And this situation we tried to meliorate."³⁵⁵ Marshal Antonescu repeated in *The Last Word*: "... I did not premeditate and plan the receiving of the German fifth column on the territory of the country [...] With regard to the servitude of the country's wealth, I am being unjustly accused of this. Had you allowed me, I would have shown you the economic laws, I would have shown you what good coverage the currency had [...] I saved the foreign capital, the telephones and the matches. I did not have laws of vassalage towards Germany, but of equality..."³⁵⁶ However, at the end, the sentencing of Antonescu's ministers and, especially, Antonescu's sending before the firing squad were done on the basis of their pleading guilty of the "country's disaster", of "crimes against humanity", and of "war crimes".³⁵⁷ In the special case of Ion Antonescu, it was recorded that – at military and political-economic levels – he enslaved "unscrupulously and ruthlessly the country and its wealth to Hitler and his clique. Thus, immediately after coming to power, Ion Antonescu and his ministers did nothing else but work for the interests and purposes of Hitler's Germany."³⁵⁸ The studies of historians, and we are referring to those

who had the possibility to study integrally the files of the "trial of the great national treason", proved the groundlessness of such accusations.³⁵⁹ In fact, during the "trial", the accused themselves claimed the inconsistency of the accusations,³⁶⁰ and, in 1948, Mircea Vulcãnescu, in *The Last Word* pronounced before the Court of Appeal in Bucharest, demonstrated systematically the absurdity of the theories about the "plundering" of the country for the profit of the Hitlerites between 1940 and 1944 or about its political and economic "subjugation" to the Reich. He dedicated a separate chapter to the economic and financial agreements and protocols from March 23, 1939, December 4, 1940, January 1942, January 1943, and February 1944.³⁶¹ According to Mircea Vulcãnescu, the agreements and protocols signed with Berlin's delegates were realized on the basis of the principles imposed and consistently followed by Marshal Antonescu, namely:³⁶²

"1. Nothing will be exported to Germany before having reserved the necessary quantities for the internal consumption and before having reserved the export quantities necessary to cover the imports necessary for the country, which it cannot procure from Germany;

2. The exchanges will be done in a balanced manner, at fixed prices; each price increase from one side must be compensated by a corresponding increase on the other side. A momentary exceeding in one sense or the other is admitted, but it must be compensated in the course of the contractual year;

3. For covering the exports, we shall receive merchandise necessary to the market and the investments of the state; agricultural tools, machines, parts, but also rents, movables and redemption of external debts;

4. Petroleum, the material necessary for the war, will be exported in exchange for armament;

5. The net financing effort, made to cover these exchanges, will be covered with gold and free foreign bills."

Relative to the "exhaustion" of Romanian economy by Germany (cereals, petroleum, etc.),³⁶³ Mircea Vulcãnescu revealed

completely different realities that those circulated by the Communist authorities in Bucharest:

"... Romania managed to redeem foreign debts and to obtain at the same time from abroad gold and free foreign currency convertible into approximately 11 carloads of gold (of which 8 and a half from Germany), doubling this way the stock of the National Romanian Bank from 13 to 24 and a half carloads of gold. It is a unique situation, never before met in a country, even victorious, as was the case of England, which was not even able to cover its needs except by ceding the gold and the foreign portfolios, which it possessed in other countries, remaining in debt. Thus, not only that Romania was not impoverished [by Germany], but it was able to constitute, through the reserves accumulated on its territory, an important base for the supply of the Allies in the war fought in the West, after August 23, 1944."³⁶⁴

The exactness of the situation presented by Mircea Vulcãnescu was discussed again in the recently published materials, with the occasion of the debates around the issue of the Nazi gold. Based on sources from the National Bank of Romania and of some unpublished documents,³⁶⁵ it was reconfirmed that, according to the Romanian-German economic and commercial agreements from 1940-1944, besides the military technology received in exchange (mainly) for the exports of cereals and petroleum, Bucharest conditioned and obtained from Berlin the payment in gold of the executed deliveries. Consequently, during the war years, Germany delivered to Romania: 3.4 tons of gold in 1940; 14.3 tons of gold in 1942; 29.9 tons of gold in 1943, and 10.3 tons of gold in 1944; in total, therefore, 58.1 tons of fine gold (in the form of ingots or coins). Therefore, at the moment when Ion Antonescu's regime was overthrown, Romania possessed the greatest reserve of gold in its history: 244.9 tons.³⁶⁶ At the "trial", in *The Last Word*, Antonescu mentioned that, August 23, 1944, he left in the safes of the National Bank of Romania 49 carloads of gold gathered in time of war, in comparison with

the previous peace time, credited only with 16 carloads of gold.³⁶⁷

Numerous Romanian and foreign historians have insisted on the difficulties suffered by the economic relations during the war years.³⁶⁸ On the other hand however, the

conditions are no longer valid for taking literally the official and semi-official propagandistic materials elaborated and published after August 23, 1944 relative to the subjugation of the Romanian economy by the Third Reich under Antonescu's regime.³⁶⁹

NOTES:

¹ A. Hitler was reassured by the fact that I. Antonescu had accepted to receive a German military mission, whose main purpose was to defend the Ploiești petroliferous area

² *Ibidem*, p. 19.

³ Willingly or not, this confusion still persists: Romania did not fall in the category of the states occupied by any of the powers of the Axis, concretely by Germany (cf. Gh. Buzatu, *Din istoria secretă a celui de-al doilea război mondial*, I, p. 328 and the following; chapter 15 – "Statutul internațional al României între 1939 și 1940). Mention should be made here, in connection with the subject in discussion, Joachim von Ribbentrop's letter addressed on July 20, 1944 to Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, the commander of the W.: "To treat Romania as an occupied territory, as various German fora occasionally tend to do, is, naturally, not possible (author's bold)" (*ibidem*, p. 332).

⁴ See Marshal Ion Antonescu, *Un ABC al anticomunismului românesc*, I, edition of Gh. Buzatu, Iași, Editura Moldova, 1992, *passim*; Ioan Scurtu, C. Hlihor, *Complot împotriva României, 1939-1947*, București, Editura Academiei de Înalte Studii Militare, 1994, p. 32 and the following; Alexandru Dutu, Mihai Retegan, eds., *Armata Română în al doilea război mondial*, I, *Eliberarea Basarabiei și a părții de nord a Bucovinei (22 iunie-26 iulie 1941)*, București, Editura Militară, 1996, p. 138 and the following.

⁵ Cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 275.

⁶ Recording that on December 7, 1941, at twelve o'clock, the state of war "between small Romania and the immense power" occurred, the Marshal wrote: "Great Britain has not known the tragedy and humiliations of foreign occupation for centuries. We have gone for two thousand years, not only in the course of time, but also during the same century, from battle to battle, from occupation to occupation, from tragedy to tragedy. Great Britain has been fighting for centuries for new conquests, we are fighting to defend ourselves" (apud Ion Țuța, *România la cumpăna istoriei. August '44*, București, Editura Științifică, 1991, p. 394).

⁷ Despite all the supposition that Berlin did not notify Rome regarding the preparation for sending a military mission in Romania, we specify that, during his meeting with Mussolini and Ciano on September 19, 1940 in the Italian capital, Joachim von Ribbentrop mentioned that, at Bucharest's request, Berlin intended to send a few units; he also referred clearly to a common Italian-German action of supporting Romania, having in view the Russian danger and the "protection" of the petroliferous area (*ADAP 1918-1945*, Series D, Band XI/1, p. 97 and the following, doc. no. 73)). It seems that Ciano "forgot" to keep Mussolini up to date. Anyway, on October 8, 1940, when it had become known that a German military mission "I placed in the Romanian petroliferous regions", the same Ciano wrote in his *Journal* that Mussolini had told him that he was "very discontented" (cf. *The Ciano Diaries*, p. 299). Two days later, the Duke declared himself even "indignant at the occupation of Romania by the Germans", threatening to proceed identically: namely that Hitler would find out "from the newspapers" that Italy would occupy Greece (*ibidem*, p. 300). Which happened on October 28, 1940!

⁸ Cf. Edwin Packer, "Fiasco italien en Grèce ou les déboires d'un dictateur", in *Historia-Magazine*, Paris, no. 13/1968, p. 341.

⁹ See Margot Hegemann, "Einige Dokumente zur <<Deutschen Heeresmission in Rumänien>> (1940-1941)", in *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Osteuropas*, vol. 5, Berlin, 1961, p. 315.

¹⁰ Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 133-134.

¹¹ As early as September 2, 1940, he transmitted to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he would act in Bucharest so that the government would "renew its wish for the sending of a military mission" (apud Ion Ardeleanu, Vasile Arimia, Mircea Mușat, eds., *23 august 1944. Documente*, I, 1939-1940, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984, p. 130, note 1).

¹² See I.E. Levit, *Uceastăie fașistskoi Rumîniî v agresii protiv SSSR, I, 1939-1942*, Chișinău, Știința, 1981, p. 109. The Anglo-Romanian relations deteriorated immediately after the modification of the course of Romania's foreign policy towards Germany. Attention was given to numerous issues regarding petroleum (sabotages in the Ploiești area, navigation on the Danube, the arresting of and instituting legal proceedings against some British citizens in September 1940, etc.) (see Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu, Lenuța Nicolescu, Gh. Nicolescu, *Relații militare româno-engleze. 1918-1947*, Pitești, Editura Cultura, 1998, pp. 62-69).

¹⁵ In the meantime, on September 10, 1940, Hitler received General Sztojaj, the Hungarian Minister in Berlin, with whom he shared the reasons for which he had intervened so that "what had been left of the Romanian state should not collapse;" he explained that Germany was fighting for victory, because, in case of failure, all the territorial revisions would become null; this purpose required the security of economy, and, in that context, there acted "two factors of vital interest for Germany...: the Swedish iron and the Romanian oil" (see Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Les entretiens secrets de Hitler*, pp. 207-208; *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series D 1937-1945, Band XI/1, *Die Kriegsjahre*, VII, 1, *September 1940 bis 13. November 1940*, Bonn, 1964, p. 44 (doc. no. 41).

¹⁶ Cf. Margot Hegemann, *Einige Dokumente...*, pp. 322-325, doc. no. 9 (the note of the meeting).

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 324.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 326 (doc. no. 11, from September 18, 1940); *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series D, Band XI/1, pp. 108-110 (doc. no. 75).

¹⁹ Margot Hegemann, *Einige Dokumente...*, pp. 328-329 (doc. no. 13); Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 134-135.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, Margot Hegemann, *Einige Dokumente...*, pp. 328-329 (doc. no. 13); Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 134-135.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 124.

²² Receiving Count Ciano in Obersalzberg on August 28, 1940, Hitler told him that a material element of "primary importance for leading the war" was the supply of Germany and Italy with petroleum; the Reich could dispense with the Romanian oil but, however, losing it would entail "an aggravation of the leading of the war and a great restriction of the normal consumption of the economy" (cf. Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Les entretiens secrets de Hitler*, p. 201).

²³ Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 135-136.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ A.N.R., the Presidency of the Council of Ministers fund, file 456/1940, f. 25.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ Idem, file 325/1940, ff. 138-140.

²⁸ See Dan-Radu Vladim ed., *Evenimentele din ianuarie 1941 în arhivele germane și române*, București, Editura Majadahonda, 1998, p. 158 and the following (doc. no. 39-40). Already on October 1, 1940, the Ministry of Air and Navy informed General Ion Antonescu through note 3464 about the adequate measures for the ensuring of the transportation of the raw materials – a "serious problem" for the Axis – from Romania and Russia to Germany and Italy. For the transport of the oil products they recommended the Danube line, although the British had already taken extreme "violent and illicit" countermeasures (document presented by Colonel Ioan Damaschi at the international conference organized by *Revista de Istorie Militară*, Mangalia, September 14-15, 1998).

²⁹ Numerous documents, published and unpublished, regarding the internal and international context in which the Mission arrived in Romania, in Ion Ardeleanu and collaborators, eds., *23 August 1944...*, I, pp. 129-138.

³⁰ Cf. A.N.R., the Presidency of the Council of Ministers fund, file 523/1940, f. 7.

³¹ *Ibidem*, f. 6.

³² See *The New York Times* from October 2, 1940; idem, October 7, 1940, October 8, 1940; idem, October 9, 1940; idem, October 12, 1940; idem, October 13, 1940.

³³ A.N.R., The Presidency of the Council of Ministers fund, file 523/1940, f. 7.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, ff. 13-14.

³⁵ Cf. Great Britain, Public Record Office, London-Kew, *Weekly Political Intelligence Summary*, no. 49/September 11, 1940, pp. 10-12; idem, no. 50/September 18, 1940, pp. 11-12; idem, no. 51/September 25, 1940, pp. 13-14; idem, no. 52/October 2, 1940, pp. 11-12; idem, no. 53/October 9, 1940, p. 12.

³⁶ Idem, no. 49/1940, p. 11.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ Idem, no. 51/1940, p. 13.

³⁹ Idem, no. 53/October 9, 1940, p. 12.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, See also PRO, War Office 201/1625 (The chronology of the events in Romania, 1940, 9 pages).

⁴¹ See Marshal Ion Antonescu, *Epistolarul Infermului*, edition of Mihai Pelin, Bucharest, Editura Viitorul Românesc, 1993, p. 40 (Letter from December 4, 1940).

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 135.

⁴³ See Ilie Ceaușescu and collaborators, *România în anii celui de-al doilea război mondial*, I, București, Editura Militară, 1989, pp. 319-322. In the dummy of the academic treatise *Istoria României*, vol. VI (București, Editura Academiei, 1968) it was asserted: "<<The Military Mission>> behaved like a true occupation army in a defeated country (p. 645).

⁴⁴ Cf. Gh. Buzatu, *Din istoria secretă a războiului mondial*, I, p. 328 and the following (see above, in the note); Ion Șuța, *România la cumpăna istoriei...*, p. 99 and the following. The well known American historian Keith Hitchins also wrote: "To save appearances, they (the forces of the Mission – Gh. B.) were destined to participate in the instruction and reorganization of the Romanian army. The German officials expected them, however, to fulfill their 'real' missions, namely to protect the Romanian oil fields against the attack of a third power and to prepare both the German forces, as well as the Romanian ones for the war with the Soviet Union, were it to occur..." (*România. 1866-1947*,

București, Editura Humanitas, 1996, p. 488). Mihail Sturdza, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Legionary-Antonescu government in 1940, was in the best position to specify the international statute of Romania during the world war: "There was never an occupation of Romania" (cf. *The Suicide of Europe*, p. 173). Another contemporary, General Platon Chirnoagă, wrote after the war in his position of a historian: "They (the units of the Mission – Gh. B.) were not occupation troops, but were on Romania's territory with the same title and mission that the American troops have been for so many years in Europe and in other parts of the world; safety from Russia (Chirnoagă's italics)" (*Istoria politică și militară a războiului României contra Rusiei sovietice. 22 iunie 1941-23 august 1941*, third edition, Iași, 1997, p. 66).

⁴³ Cf. Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania. British and American Policies towards Romania: 1938-1947*, Los Angeles, A.R.A., 1977, pp. 66-67.

⁴⁴ See Great Britain, PRO, FO – 371/24 996, *passim*.

⁴⁵ Paul D. Quinlan, *Clash over Romania...*, p. 65.

⁴⁶ Cf. Stephen Fishcer-Galati and collaborators, eds., *Romania between East and West. Historical Essays in Memory of Constantin C. Giurescu*, Boulder/New York, 1982, pp. 372-373.

⁴⁷ Apus Elisabeth Barker, *British Policy in South-East Europe in the Second World War*, London, Macmillan, 1976, p. 76; V.F. Dobrinescu, Ion Pătroi, *Anglia și România între anii 1939-1947*, București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1992, p. 101. The British historian Maurice Pearton concluded however that, after the arrival of the German troops, "Romania remained a sovereign state (author's italics)" (*Oil and the Romanian State*, quoted edition, p. 226).

⁴⁸ Idem, FO – 371/24 993 (October 8, 1940); David Britton Funderburk, *Politica Marii Britanii față de România. 1938-1940*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983, pp. 162-163. The recommendation of the Foreign Office succeeded the arrest of and the instituting of legal proceedings against certain British citizens who worked in the oil industry, on September 25, 1940, an issue that affected the diplomatic relations between Bucharest and London. Lord Halifax, the head of the Foreign Office, threatened then with the "breaking of the diplomatic relations" (cf. V.F. Dobrinescu, Ion Pătroi, *Anglia și România...*, pp. 95-96).

⁴⁹ Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, pp. 225-226.

⁵⁰ Cf. Eliza Campus, *Din politica externă a României. 1913-1947*, București, Editura Politică, 1980, p. 558.

⁵¹ Ion Ardeleanu and collaborators, eds., *23 august 1944...*, I, p. 336 (doc. no. 249).

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 337 (doc. no. 251).

⁵³ Cf. V.F. Dobrinescu, *Emigrația română din lumea anglo-saxonă*, Iași, Institutul European, 1993, p. 95. The Committee was followed by two other formations with pretensions of "cabinet in exile". *Romanian Democratic Committee and Free Romanian Movement (ibidem)*, pp. 98-99).

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 93-94.

⁵⁵ Cf. Ion Țuța, *România la cumpăna istoriei*, pp. 393-394.

⁵⁶ A.N.R., the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, file 325/1940, f. 149.

⁵⁷ Cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 136.

⁵⁸ Ion Ardeleanu and collaborators, eds., *23 august 1944...*, I, pp. 129-130 (doc. no. 98). At the same time, von Ribbentrop contacted the Soviet Ambassador in Berlin (*ibidem*). The next day, the German Minister for Foreign Affairs sent a memorandum to the diplomatic representations of the Reich abroad (except for Moscow) regarding to the "official interpretation" of the sending of troops to Romania (*ibidem*, pp. 135-137, doc. no. 102): at the request of the I. Antonescu government and for "the reorganization of the Romanian army on the basis of the German war experience." For the information of the diplomats, the memorandum pointed out that "determining" (sic!) were "the great German-Italian interest in and undisturbed Romanian oil production and the danger of British sabotage attempts" (*ibidem*).

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 137-138 (doc. no. 103).

⁶⁰ ADAP 1918-1945, Series D, Band XI/1, p. 470 (doc. no. 328).

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 237-238 (doc. no. 169). Mention should be made that, having under their attention the prospect of breaking the diplomatic relations with Romania, the British Legation in Bucharest established "measures for the preparation of the sabotages and of the political resistance" (V.F. Dobrinescu, *Emigrația română...*, p. 84). About the British sabotage network in Romania in 1939-1940: George Beza, *Misiune de război. Al II-lea război mondial*, București, Editura Niculescu, 1994, pp. 30-33.

⁶² Ion Ardeleanu and collaborators, eds., *23 august 1944...*, I, pp. 134-135 (doc. no. 101).

⁶³ ADAP 1918-1945, Series D, Band XI/1, pp. 239-240 (doc. no. 171).

⁶⁴ About the German Military Mission in Romania: D. Șandru, I. Saizu, "Unele aspecte privind consecințele economice ale prezenței trupelor germane în România (1940-1944)", in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie "A.D. Xenopol"*, Iași, t. IV/1967, p. 117 and the following.

⁶⁵ Ion Țuța, *România la cumpăna istoriei*, pp. 100-101. About the arrival and the purpose of the German Military Mission, details in Platon Chirnoagă, *Istoria politică și militară a războiului României...*, p. 65 and the following; A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România în perioada septembrie 1940-ianuarie 1941*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1976, p. 121 and the following; Horia Brestoiu, *Impact la paralela 45°. Incursiune în culisele bătăliei pentru petrolul românesc*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 1986, p. 283 and the following; James Dugan, Carroll Stewart, *Ploiesti. The great*

- Ground-Air Battle of 1 August 1943*, New York, Random House, 1962, p. 24 and the following; John Sweetman, *Ploiesti Oil Strike*, New York, Ballantine Books Inc., 1974, p. 33 and the following.
- ⁶⁶ A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România în perioada septembrie 1940-ianuarie 1941*, pp. 128-129.
- ⁶⁷ See James Dugan, Carrol Stewart, *Ploiesti...*, *passim*; Raymond Cartier, *La Seconde Guerre mondiale*, II, Paris, Paris-Match, 1966, p. 100.
- ⁶⁸ Percy Ernst Schramm, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Andreas Hillgruber, Walter Hubatsch, and Donald S. Detwiler.
- ⁶⁹ See *Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht (Wehrmachtsführungsstab)*, vol. I-IV, Frankfurt am Main, Gracfe Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1961-1965, *passim*; republished in eight volumes, München, 1982 (in the Collection of the Library "Dr. Faust Brădescu" of the Center for European History and Civilization of the Iasi Branch of the Romanian Academy).
- ⁷⁰ Cf. Constantin Chiper, "Orașul Ploiești – obiectivul strategic al coalițiilor beligerante în cel de-al doilea război mondial", in Ilie Manole, ed., *Societate și Armată în Europa secolului XX*, București, 1995, p. 137.
- ⁷¹ Eddy Bauer, ed., *The History of World War II*, Leicester, Galley Press, 1984, *passim*.
- ⁷² See the minute dictated by Mihaï Antonescu regarding the meetings at Vinița, in Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents Concerning the Fate of Romanian Jewry during the Holocaust*, IX, New York, 1986, p. 458 (doc. no. 176).
- ⁷³ *Ibidem*, p. 447.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 457. See also the German minute of the meeting, in Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, quoted edition, p. 129 (doc. no. 13).
- ⁷⁶ See below operation "Halpro".
- ⁷⁷ Constantin Chiper, *Orașul Ploiești – obiectivul strategic...*, p. 317.
- ⁷⁸ Vasile Berheciui, "Sistemul de apărare antiaeriană din zona strategică Valea Prahovei în anii 1943-1944", in Ilie Manole, ed., *Societate și Armată...*, p. 133 and the following.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 133-134.
- ⁸⁰ Cf. James Dugan, Carrol Stewart, *Ploiesti...*, p. 25.
- ⁸¹ See Gh. Buzatu and collaborators, *Din istoria unei zile*, Iași, 1979, p. 105 and the following.
- ⁸² A.N.R., the Presidency of the Council of Ministers fund, file 2106/1944, f. 58 ("V.B." from August 5, 1943).
- ⁸³ According to Leon Wolff, Ploiești represented for the Allies "the No. 1 priority objective in the entire Europe of the Axis" (cf. *Low Level Mission*, Ploiești New York, Arno Press, 1972, p. 190). See also Constantin Chiper, "Orașul Ploiești – obiectivul strategic...", in Ilie Manole, ed., *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 136-140; Vasile Berheciui, "Sistemul de apărare antiaeriană din zona strategică Valea Prahovei în anii 1943-1944", in *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 133-136; Ilija Rotaru, "Bombardamentul de la 1 august 1943: victorie sau înfrângere?", in *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 140-143; Gheroghe Boblea, "Acțiunile trupelor de jandarmi pentru salvarea avutului cetățenilor și stingerea incendiilor produse de bombardamentele americane (1943-1944)", in *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 144-145; Aurel David, Șerban Pavelescu, "Organizarea apărării antiaeriene în zona petroliferă Valea Prahovei în perioada 1942-1944", in *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 146-148; Ion Arnată, "Impactul psihologic al bombardamentelor americane din 1943-1944 asupra autorităților și opiniei publice din România", in *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 149-150; Aurel Pentelescu, "Colonelul american Crowne în România: Apărarea a.a. – 'Rezultate cu totul excepționale'" in *Societate și Armată...*, pp. 150-153.
- ⁸⁴ Apud James Dugan, Carrol Stewart, *Ploiesti...*, p. 3; Alesandru Dușu, Florin Constantin, "Raidul american asupra Ploieștiului din 1 august 1943. Mărturie inedită", in *Revista Istorică*, no. 7-8/1991, p. 412.
- ⁸⁵ James Dugan, Carrol Stewart, *Ploiesti...*, p. 33.
- ⁸⁶ Horia Brestoiu, *Impact la paralela 45*, p. 292.
- ⁸⁷ Cf. Ioan Basgan, *Petrolul și gazele naturale în România*, p. 3.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibidem*.
- ⁸⁹ Cf. L. Mrazec, *Problema petrolului în România față de problema mondială din 1915*, București, 1940, pp. 10-11.
- ⁹⁰ Ioan Basgan, *Petrolul și gazele naturale în România*, p. 100.
- ⁹¹ Idem, *Principiile politicii economice în legislația petroliferă din România*, (I). *Problema apei în Dobrogea* (II), București, Imprimeria C.F.R., f.a. [probably 1944], p. 6.
- ⁹² Ștefan Chicoș, *Economia națională în serviciul războiului*, București, 1943, 116 p.
- ⁹³ Cf. Ion G. Răincescu, *Priviri retrospective în politica energiei*, București, 1943, p. 166.
- ⁹⁴ Cf. Gh. N. Leon, *Economie politică economică*, București, p. 1943.
- ⁹⁵ See *La Nationalisation de la vie économique*, București, Tip. "Dacia Traiană", 1942. A scientific study dedicated to the issue is owed, among others, to a famous professor from the University Institute of Superior International Studies in Geneva – Michael A. Heilperin, *Le Nationalisme Économique*, Paris, Payot, 1963. According to the author, economic nationalism represents "an ensemble of national policies that regulate the relations between a country and the rest of the world. The policies to which this term applies are very old, the term itself being of recent origin." (p. 16). The author studied economic nationalism throughout the centuries (p. 47 and the following), specifying that it intensified after 1918, in all the states, primarily in the "young" ones towards the interests of Great Britain, the United States, etc. (p. 66). The possibility of the triumph of economic nationalism would constitute an "error" (p. 11).
- ⁹⁶ Gh.N. Leon, *Economie politică*
- ⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 259 and the following.

⁹⁸ Idem, *La Nationalism...*, p. 14.

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 16-23.

¹⁰⁰ First edition – București, Editura Cugetarea – George Delafraș, 1942; second edition, București, Editura Athena, 1997 (Edition – Leonard Oprea; introductory critical study – Dan Pavel).

¹⁰¹ Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*, second edition, p. 337.

¹⁰² *Ibidem*, p. 333.

¹⁰³ See Anastase N. Hâciu, *Evreii în Țările Românești*, Editura Cartea Românească, 1943, pp. 321-519 (with references to the period 1918-1940, but with conclusions updated for the respective period, pp. 626-631).

¹⁰⁴ See Dan Pavel's considerations in the quoted introductory study (apud Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*, pp. 47-49). In the above mentioned academic treatise of *Romanian History*, VI, the author insisted on the "class essence" of the so-called Romanianization, which coincided with the infeudation of Romania to the Nazi Reich, accompanied, from the "military-fascist dictatorship" of Ion Antonescu, by the "intensification of the terror in the interior and the unleashing of a powerful wave of chauvinism that also spread in the economic area" (p. 655).

¹⁰⁵ Apud Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁶ Dr. I. Cengher, *Problema capitalului străin în România legionară*, București, Tiparul Românesc, 1941, p. 4.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁸ See Constant Georgescu, *Românizarea economiei naționale*, București, Tip. "Dacia Traiană" (excerpt from *Buletinul Academiei de Științe Morale și Politice*, 1941-1942); Iosif Maior, *Problema românizării economiei naționale*, București, Editura Lumina Românească [1940].

¹⁰⁹ Constant Georgescu, *Românizarea...*, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 4-5.

¹¹¹ These were: I – 1800-1829; II – 1829-1859; III – 1859-1887; IV – 1887-1914; V – 1914-1927; VI – 1927-1938; VII – 1938-1942.

¹¹² Constant Georgescu, *Românizarea...*, p. 34.

¹¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 286.

¹¹⁴ See *Enciclopedia României*, III, București, 1939, pp. 275-286 (with the bibliography of the issue).

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 286.

¹¹⁶ See Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*, p. 331.

¹¹⁷ The author observed the failure of the Romanianization of the economy by the Romanian bourgeoisie, the result being mediocre.

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*. In the annex of his work, M. Manoilescu examined the technique of the Romanianization of the economy (*ibidem*, pp. 333-335). In the first years after the world war of 1939-1945, the issue of the Romanian and the foreign capital was studied, out of scientific or propagandistic reasons (cf. Lucian Griogrovici, *Considerațiuni asupra capitalismului românesc*, București, Tip "Presa" D. Andreescu, 1946; T. Savin, *Capitalul străin în România*, București, Editura Eminescu, 1947; Aurel Vijoli, *Cercetări asupra capitalului financiar în țara noastră*, București, 1949; Ion Totu, *Viniță Brătianu*, București, Editura Clujana, 1946; idem, *Iuliu Maniu*, București, Editura Clujana, 1946; Petre Ghiță, *Ionel Brătianu*, București, Editura Clujana, 1946).

¹¹⁹ See E. Severin, *Jevoare actuale de energie*, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1943, p. 15 and the following; Mihail N. Constantinescu, *Producerea și folosirea energiei în România. Dezvoltarea lor rațională*, București, 1942, pp. 12-13; idem, *Importanța europeană a petrolului românesc*, București, Imprimeria C.F.R. – Filaret, 1943, *passim*.

¹²⁰ Cf. Axente Sever Banciu, *Importanța mondială a materiilor prime*, București, Editura Universul, 1942, pp. 51-75. The author mentioned that, in the last decades, petroleum "revolutioned the entire industry and economy of the world and contributed to the profound change of the war tactic" (*ibidem*, p. 51). After the world conflict, Axente Sever Banciu published "Materiile prime în ultimul război", in *Almanahul economic 1947*, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1947, pp. 237-242.

¹²¹ Axente Sever Banciu, *Importanța mondială a materiilor prime*, p. 7 and the following.

¹²² *Ibidem*, p. 17.

¹²³ Ioan A. Roceric (*Lupta pentru înlocuirea materiilor prime coloniale cu surrogate și materii sintetice*, București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1940) considered raw materials to be "the oxigen of the economic and political life of the states, and if in normal times their absence is felt only in a painful way, it can become a catastrophe in case of war, for the state that is placed under the impossibility to obtain supplies or to replace the raw materials that it needs with similar ones" (p. 3). The unequal distribution of raw materials represented the "main cause" of the imperialist tendencies that caused the armed conflicts" (*ibidem*). About the role of petroleum in this context (pp. 26-28), and about the war in progress (March 1940): "... It is only the result of the nations that are rising and wish to assert themselves on their own. They rise against the nations with a dominant economic situation" (p.33).

¹²⁴ Axente Sever Banciu, *Importanța mondială a materiilor prime*, p. 18.

¹²⁵ Idem, *Războiul imperialismelor*, București, Editura Universul, 1943, p. 8.

¹²⁶ Investigated in this order (*ibidem*, pp. 17-120). See, also, P. Dedulescu, *Factorul economic cu determinant al războiului și al păcii*, f. 1, 1925; A. Soreanu, C.J. Ciorogaru, *Civilizație și potențial de război*, București, Imprimeria

Națională, 1935; Captain Constantin V. Marcu, *Apărarea națională din punct de vedere economico-financiar*, București, 1938.

¹²⁷ Axente Sever Banciu, *Războiul imperialismelor*, p. 8. Cf. also Idem, *Aspectul economic al războiului actual*, București, Editura Universul, *passim*.

¹²⁸ Cf. G.I Brătianu, *Roumanie et Hongrie*, pp. 10-11.

¹²⁹ See I.G. Rarinceanu, "Politică petrolului", in *Enciclopedia României*, III, pp. 204-210; Theodor Ficșinescu, Tudor Dobrescu, "Petrolul", in idem, III, pp. 617-650; Paul Gr.I. Dragomir, "Economia energetică", in idem, III, pp. 591-617.

¹³⁰ București, Institutul de Cercetări Economice, 1944.

¹³¹ See Anton Zischka, *Războiul petrolului*; idem, *Știința distruge monopolurile*, Henry Peyret, *Lupta pentru alimentele vitale*, București, Editura Contemporană, 1943 (later, the same author published *La bataille des trusts*, Paris, P.U.F., 1954, with rich references to the international history of petroleum).

¹³² Cf. Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, p. 238.

¹³³ See "Punctul de vedere unitar al industriei petroliere în proiectul noii legiferări miniere", in *M.P.R.*, no. 8/1939, pp. 481-482; *ibidem*, p. 517; idem, no. 15/1939, p. 1033.

¹³⁴ Idem, no. 18/1939, p. 1219; idem, no. 217/1939, p. 1391. *AIPR* had already put forward its own draft (cf. V. Patriciu, "Ideile conducătoare și inovațiile cuprinse în anteproiectul de lege a minelor întocmit de 'Asociația Industriașilor de Petrol din România'", in idem, no. 14/1939, pp. 924-935).

¹³⁵ Idem, no. 2/1940, p. 97; idem, no. 5/1940, p. 271; idem, no. 6/1940, p. 355; idem, no. 9/1940, p. 531.

¹³⁶ Idem, no. 11/1940, p. 639; idem, no. 7/1941, p. 329; idem, no. 8/1941, p. 369.

¹³⁷ See Nic.E. Ionescu, "Modificări aduse până în prezent legii minelor din 24 martie 1937", in *M.P.R.*, no. 5/1941, pp. 213-217; "Modificări...", II, in idem, no. 6/1941, pp. 255-259. Cf. also C. Hamangiu, *Codul general al României. Legi uzuale*, vol. XXX/III, 1942, București Editura Monitorul Oficial [1942], p. 2487, note 1 (modifications brought to the mining law from March 24, 1937).

¹³⁸ *M.P.R.*, no. 1/1941, pp. 29-30; idem, no. 14/1941, pp. 623-625; idem, nos. 16-17/1941, pp. 749-752.

¹³⁹ Cf. *M.P.R.*, no. 1/1941, pp. 29-30; idem, no. 14/1941, pp. 623-625; idem, nos. 16-17/1941, pp. 749-752.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. "Expunerea domnului secretar general Preda...", in *M.P.R.*, no. 15/1941, pp. 663-664.

¹⁴¹ A.N.R., the Ministry of the Oil Industry fund, file 1/1942, *passim*.

¹⁴² Idem, file 9/1943, ff. 9-10. As far as the attitude of the *decision factors* in Bucharest regarding the economic issues, we should mention first of all the opinions of Ion Antonescu expressed in the cabinet meetings, in the directives sent to his collaborators, as well as in the declarations and acknowledgements made in the preparatory stage of the "trial" from May 1946. We would like to point out that Antonescu specified that, during his detention at the Monastery of Bistrița (July-August 1940) or during his first contacts with the Nazi leaders in Berlin (November 1940), he formulated and explained his "governing plan" which, from an economic stand point, it had in view among others: "1. I will not alter the fund of the Romanian resources; 2. I will Romanianize the economic life of the Romanian state. Therefore, I will not alter the fund of the Romanian resources. This includes everything, coal, petroleum, methane gas. The second principle: I will Romanianize the economic life of the Romanian state. But, driving out the Jewish and the foreign capital, we are not able to fully occupy [their places], because we do not have the necessary capital and technicians... This void... [...] I hold at the disposal of Germany, with the condition that it respects the principle according to which I have the possibility to be the leader of any economic action. I dictate in the economic life of the Romanian state, therefore in each compartment, as well as the ensemble of some production compartments; I must have fifty plus one percent, in order to have the leadership..." (apud Marian Ștefan, in *Magazin Istoric*, no. 9/1988, pp. 14-15). Confronting these directives with the realities of the 1940-1944 regime, we notice that the Marshal proved consistent with his formulations put forward at the beginning of his rule.

¹⁴³ Cf. A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice ale revoluției române din august 1944*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1979, pp. 156-158; D. Șandru, I. Saizu, "Cu privire la acapararea petrolului românesc de către Germania hitleristă (1940-1944)", in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie "A.D. Xenopol"*, Iași

¹⁴⁴ *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, series D, XIII, *The War Years. June 23, 1941 - December 11, 1941*, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964, p. 844 (doc. no. 505, shorthand record Paul Otto Schmidt of the conversation from November 26, 1941).

¹⁴⁵ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents Concerning the Fate of Romanian Jewry during the Holocaust*, IX, New York, The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1986, p. 333 (doc. no. 120).

¹⁴⁶ Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, pp. 238-239.

¹⁴⁷ A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 158.

¹⁴⁸ Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State...*, p. 139.

¹⁴⁹ See the integral text studied by us, in C. Hamangiu, *Codul general al României. Legi uzuale*, vol. XXX/III, 1942, București, Editura Monitorul Oficial [1942], pp. 2486-2553.

¹⁵⁰ The text contained 293 articles, disposed in several compartments (titles): general dispositions (I, articles 1-5), prospecting (II, 6-11), explorations (III, 12-60), mining regions (IV, 61-90), exploitations (V, 01-119), the exploitation of the oil fields (VI, 120-165), gas fields (VII, 166-178), amalgamations (VIII, 179-191), transportation, processing and marketing of the gasses, the crude oil and its derivatives (IX, 192-214), the National Institute of Petroleum (X, 215-231), various dispositions (XI, 232-293).

- ¹⁵¹ A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 159.
- ¹⁵² C. Hamangiu, *Codul general al României...*, XXX/III, 1942, p. 2547. Commentaries on these provisions, in Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, pp. 241-242.
- ¹⁵³ A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 159.
- ¹⁵⁴ D. Șandru, I. Saizu, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- ¹⁵⁵ Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, pp. 237-238.
- ¹⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 243.
- ¹⁵⁷ *M.P.R.*, nos. IX-X/1945m, p. 297.
- ¹⁵⁸ Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 289 (annex II, table 3).
- ¹⁵⁹ Cf. Victor Axenciuc, *Evoluția economică a României. Cercetări statistico-istorice 1859-2947*, I, *Industria*, p. 291 (table 273).
- ¹⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 275 (table 250).
- ¹⁶¹ Cf. D. Șandru, I. Saizu, *op. cit.*, p. 17 (table).
- ¹⁶² Cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler. Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 290 (table no. 4).
- ¹⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 291 (table no. 6).
- ¹⁶⁴ *Ibidem* (table no. 5).
- ¹⁶⁵ For all contingencies, the figures were confronted with those communicated in the German edition (cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, König Carol und Marschall Antonescu. Die deutsch-rumanischen Beziehungen, 1938-1944*, second edition, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1965, pp. 249-250).
- ¹⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 250-251 (table no. 7). See also the Romanian edition: idem, *Hitler. Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 291-292 (table no. 7).
- ¹⁶⁷ See Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler. Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu, passim*; Vasile Arimia and collaborators, eds., *Antonescu-Hitler*, I-II, *passim*. According to the Romanian historian Viorel Roman, Romanian petroleum played "a central role" in the East-European plans of A. Hitler (cf. *România în Spanningfeld der Grossmächte*, II, 1878-1944, Offenbach, Dr. Dieter Falk Verlag, 1989, p. 154).
- ¹⁶⁸ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 23.
- ¹⁶⁹ Cf. A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România în perioada septembrie 1940-ianuarie 1941*, p. 121 and the following.
- ¹⁷⁰ See *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series D, Band XI/2, *Die Kriegsjahre*, IV/2, 13. November 1940 bis 31. Januar 1941, Bonn, 1964, pp. 548-554 (doc. no. 380); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 24-33 (doc. no. 3).
- ¹⁷¹ Prince Michael Sturdza, *The Suicide of Europe. The Memoirs of...*, pp. 175-182 (see also the Romanian edition: *România și sfârșitul Europei. Amintiri din țara pierdută*, Alba Iulia – Paris, Editura Fronde, 1994); Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler. Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 150.
- ¹⁷² *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 24.
- ¹⁷³ *Ibidem*, pp. 24-26.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 25.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Ibidem*; *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series D, Band XI/2, p. 549.
- ¹⁷⁶ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 31.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Ibidem*.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 36 (doc. no. 4, the German synthesis of the Hitler-Antonescu conversation). The same document, in the original, in *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Band XI/2, p. 554 and the following (doc. no. 381); Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Les entretiens secrets de Hitler*, p. 354 and the following (doc. no. 48).
- ¹⁷⁹ Cf. *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 35.
- ¹⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 38-39.
- ¹⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 39.
- ¹⁸² *Ibidem*, p. 41.
- ¹⁸³ *Ibidem*.
- ¹⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 42.
- ¹⁸⁵ *Ibidem*.
- ¹⁸⁶ Cf. A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România în perioada septembrie 1940-ianuarie 1941*, p. 156 and the following.
- ¹⁸⁷ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 44.
- ¹⁸⁸ See *ADAP 1918-1945*, Band XI/2, p. 569-572 (doc. no. 387).
- ¹⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 572-576 (doc. no. 388); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 45-51 (doc. no. 5).
- ¹⁹⁰ *ADAP 1918-1945*, Band XI/2, p. 576-577 (doc. no. 389); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 52-53 (doc. no. 6).
- ¹⁹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 53.
- ¹⁹² A.N.R., the Presidency of the Council of Ministers fund, file 325/1940, f. 123.
- ¹⁹³ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 53-62 (doc. no. 7); Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă and collaborators, eds., *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului de Miniștri. Guvernarea Ion Antonescu*, I, septembrie-decembrie 1940, București, 1997, pp. 493-523 (doc. no. 25).
- ¹⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 495.
- ¹⁹⁵ Cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler. Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 151.

- ¹⁹⁶ Gheorghe Barbul, *Memorial Antonescu. Al treilea om al Axei*, the edition of V.F. Florin Dobrinescu, Iași, Institutul European, 1992, p. 26.
- ¹⁹⁷ Mihail Sturdza, *România și sfârșitul Europei*, p. 195 and the following. Reference to the discussions at the chancellery of the Reich regarding the oil fields (*ibidem*, p. 196).
- ¹⁹⁸ Gh. Barbul claims that Hitler declared: "No frontier of the continent is final [...] Even the borders of the Reich are only provisional..." (Gh. Barbul, *op. cit.*, p. 24).
- ¹⁹⁹ *Ibidem*.
- ²⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 193.
- ²⁰¹ A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România...*, pp. 156-165; Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 197-198. The issues were studied thoroughly by I. Chiper in his paper presented at the international symposium organized by *Revista de Istorie Militară* in Mangalia, September 14-15, 1998 (cf. *Problema petrolului în cadrul raporturilor germano-române. 1940-1944*). The author of the paper placed at our disposal certain documents discovered in the funds of the Federal Archives in Germany (Bundesarchiv Koblenz, Rumänien 2/14157) regarding the integration of Romania in the "great economic space" of the Nazi Reich in the period October 1940-December 1942, the ten-year plan of economic collaboration from December 4, 1940 (*ibidem*, ff. 63-64), the German-Romanian agreement from October 1, 1940 relative to the exchange and the payment of oil products, the evolution of the prices between 1940 and 1942, the bilateral credit agreement from December 4, 1940.
- ²⁰² A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România...*, pp. 159-160.
- ²⁰³ *Ibidem*, pp. 163-164.
- ²⁰⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 161-163; D. Șandru, I. Saizu, *Cu privire la acapararea petrolului românesc...*, p. 10 and the following; Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, quoted edition, p. 227 and the following. According to the British historian, the agreement of December 4, 1940 was equal with a plan "for the reorganization of the entire economy of Romania under German auspices" (*ibidem*, p. 228).
- ²⁰⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 229.
- ²⁰⁶ About these companies, see *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Series E: 1941-1945, Band II, 1. März bis 15. Juni 1942, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1972, pp. 467-468, doc. no. 273.
- ²⁰⁷ Branch of *ataafsche Petroleum Matschappij* (Shell), where a Dutch was placed in charged, who was however devoted to the Reich – Rost van Tonningen (A. Simion, *Regimul politic din România...*, p. 162; Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, p. 230).
- ²⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 229-230.
- ²⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 236.
- ²¹⁰ D. Șandru, I. Saizu, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.
- ²¹¹ The company, founded on the basis of the instructions of Hermann Göring from November 1940, had the role of taking over the companies belonging to the enemy or neutral countries occupied by the Third Reich. It had a capital of 80 000 000 DM, guaranteed by the German state, by the large banks, and by various German oil companies (Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, p. 231). In Romania, the interests of the company were going to be directed, beginning with August 1941, by *Kontinentale Öl G.m.b.H.* from Berlin (*ibidem*, p. 232). According to an understanding from March 1941, *Kontinentale Öl A.G.* received 50% of the shares in *Astra Română* (cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, pp. 194-195).
- ²¹² See James Dugan, Carroll Stewart, *Ploesti...*, p. 25; D. Șandru, I. Saizu, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-12 (with interesting details based on unpublished documents from the Romanian archives).
- ²¹³ Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 195.
- ²¹⁴ Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, p. 232 and the following; D. Șandru, I. Saizu, *op. cit.*, *passim*; A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, pp. 148-150.
- ²¹⁵ Maurice Pearton, *Oil and the Romanian State*, pp. 232-237. Which, as the British historian remarked, did not exclude the German-Romanian rivalry in the field (*ibidem*, pp. 237-238).
- ²¹⁶ Cf. *M.P.R.*, nos. XI-XII/1945; Victor Axenciuc, *Evoluția economică a României...*, I, p. 286 (table no. 265).
- ²¹⁷ This capital constituted the first contribution of the U.S.S.R. to the establishing of the company "Sovrom-petrol" of 1945-1954.
- ²¹⁸ Cf. Radu-Dan Vlad, ed., *Evenimentele din ianuarie 1941...*, *passim*.
- ²¹⁹ See *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series D: 1937-1945, Band XI/2, pp. 905/911 (doc. no. 652); Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Les entretiens secrets de Hitler*, pp. 432-441 (doc. no. 59); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 65-74 (doc. no. 9).
- ²²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 79-82 (doc. no. 11).
- ²²¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 71-72.
- ²²² *Ibidem*, p. 72.
- ²²³ In fact, at the end – according to the German minute – the Führer declared himself "convinced that Antonescu was the only capable man to guide Romania's destinies" (*ibidem*, p. 74).
- ²²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 75-79 (doc. no. 10).
- ²²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 75.
- ²²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 76.
- ²²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 77.

²²⁸ The Nazi diplomat, friend of Adolph Hitler, pointed out at the time what were the German-Romanian "vital common interests": "The mutual exchange of products: Germany, Romania's petroleum and cereals; and Romania, Germany's machines and equipments; the common work against Bolshevism, the common enemy of both countries" (Radu-Dan Vlad, *Evenimentele din ianuarie 1941...*, pp. 132-133, doc. no. 28).

²²⁹ On the same day, Antonescu met separately with Joachim von Ribbentrop, but the minute of the meeting was not printed.

²³⁰ See *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D 1937-1945, XII, *The War Years. February 1-June 22, 1941*, London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1962, pp. 996-1006 (doc. no. 614); Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Les entretiens secrets de Hitler*, pp. 590-603 (doc. no. 81, Schmidt's minute); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 93-105 (doc. no. 15). In the face of the war prepared against the U.S.S.R., the Romanian leader declared that the Romanian people tied its fate to that of the Reich, because Romania and Germany had to face "a common danger", and the two nations "complement each other economically and politically" (*ibidem*, p. 93). Antonescu added that, from an economic stand point, he had done "everything possible" to facilitate the fighting of the war for the Reich, a fact illustrated by the agreement from December 4, 1940 (*ibidem*, pp. 94-95). Later, General Antonescu expressed – through Mihai Antonescu – his dissatisfaction with the discussions with Joachim von Ribbentrop (*Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, XII, p. 1025, doc. no. 626).

²³¹ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 89-92 (doc. no. 14).

²³² *Ibidem*, p. 92.

²³³ *Ibidem*, p. 87 (doc. no. 13); *DGFP 1918-1945*, Series D, XII, p. 864 (doc. no. 544, W. Keitel's directive 44780/41).

²³⁴ Prior to the meeting scheduled with Ion Antonescu, Hermann Göring had declared, in February 1941, that he had designed a "continental company" for the protection of Germany's oil interests (the future *Kontinentale Öl A.G.*) and, also, that he would discuss the aspects of the petroleum question with the Romanian Premier, for which reason he expressed his wish that his guest come accompanied by specialists in the field (A.N.R., the collection *Microfilme S.U.A.*, roll 8, frames 89446-89452).

²³⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 221-227 (doc. no. 126, Schmidt's minute on the meeting from March 5, 1941).

²³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 221.

²³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 222.

²³⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 226-227.

²³⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 1047-1049 (doc. no. 644).

²⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 1048; *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 108 (doc. no. 16).

²⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 109.

²⁴² Unpublished information regarding the preoccupations of the High Command of the Wehrmacht for the ensuring and the transportation of Romanian petroleum to Germany with a view to the war with the U.S.S.R., in A.N.R., roll 500, *passim*.

²⁴³ See especially Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler. Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 193 and the following (Chapter "Relațiile economice Germano-Române, în special livrările de petrol").

²⁴⁴ *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D 1937-1945, XIII, *The War Years. June 23, 1941 – December 11, 1941*, London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1964, pp. 225-227 (doc. no. 159); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 115-117 (doc. no. 21).

²⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 117-119 (doc. no. 22); *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, XIII, pp. 266-267 (doc. no. 167).

²⁴⁶ In the capital of Romania, the situation of the oil industry was examined and presented in detail in the so-called "Internal Bulletins" (with limited circulation) published by the "Association of the Oil Industrialists in Romania", years I-II/1941-1942 (A.N.R., the fund of the Ministry of the Oil Industry, file 14/1942, the bulletins 1-8/January-November 1942).

²⁴⁷ Numerous documents that attest to this reality are published (integrally or fragmentarily) in the Annexes of the present volume.

²⁴⁸ See Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 197-213 (doc. no. 85 from September 17, 1941 – Raport asupra avantajilor acordate Germaniei prin Acordurile comerciale și de plăți de la începutul războiului, septembrie 1939 și până astăzi). Oibly from the export of oil products, because of the difference in prices, Romania registered in two years losses in a value of 90 million marks/5.4 billion lei at the day's exchange rate (*ibidem*, pp. 198-199).

²⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 216 and the following (the note of the M. Antonescu-H. Neubacher conversation, September 22, 1941); *ibidem*, p. 238 and the following (the note of the M. Antonescu-Carl Clodius conversation, October 17, 1941); *ibidem*, p. 249 and the following (the note of the M. Antonescu-Manfred von Killinger conversation, in the presence of councillor Steltzer, November 10, 1941); *ibidem*, p. 251 (the note of the M. Antonescu-H. Neubacher conversation, November 15, 1941).

²⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 249.

²⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 253.

²⁵² Cf. A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 154 and the following.

²⁵³ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 257-266 (doc. no. 101, note dictated by Mihai Antonescu about the reception at the Reich's Reichsmarshal); *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, XIII, p. 844 and the

- following (doc. no. 505, German minute of the Mihai Antonescu-Hermann Göring meeting); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 132-140 (doc. no. 30, Mihai Antonescu's minute).
- ²²⁴ *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, XIII, pp. 870-876 (doc. no. 513, the German minute of the meeting); Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, pp. 269-276 (doc. no. 104, note dictated by Mihai Antonescu); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 140-147 (doc. no. 31, Mihai Antonescu's minute).
- ²²⁵ *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, XIII, pp. 891-894 (doc. no. 519, the German minute of the meeting); Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Les entretiens secrets de Hitler*, p. 676 and the following (doc. no. 94, the German minute); Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 277-285 (doc. no. 105, the note dictated by Mihai Antonescu regarding his conversation with the Führer Adolph Hitler); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 147-153 (doc. no. 32, Mihai Antonescu's minute).
- ²²⁶ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 286-300 (doc. no. 106, the note dictated by Mihai Antonescu).
- ²²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 293.
- ²²⁸ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, p. 272.
- ²²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 270; *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 142.
- ²³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 141.
- ²³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 152.
- ²³² *Ibidem*.
- ²³³ *Ibidem*.
- ²³⁴ Cf. Reichhard Rurup, ed., *Voïna Ghermanii protiv Svetskogo Soiuza 1941-1945*, Berlin, Argon, 1992, pp. 77-78 (Hitler presents to Göring the limit of Antonescu's pretentions in the East).
- ²³⁵ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 257-258; *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 133-134.
- ²³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 134.
- ²³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 139.
- ²³⁸ *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945*, Series D, XIII, p. 844.
- ²³⁹ *Ibidem*.
- ²⁴⁰ On May 6, 1942, the Reichsmarshal addressed Ion Antonescu personally with requests regarding fuels (Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, p. 398).
- ²⁴¹ Cf. Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu. Mareşalul României şi războaiele de reîntregire*, III, Cannaregio/Veneția, Nagard, 1989, pp. 259-262 (message from May 2, 1942, doc. no. 81). Compare with the message from June 28, 1944 (A.N.R., the fund of the Ministry of the Oil Industry, file 1/1942, f. 26). Addressing the Romanian leader, Keitel most often consulted with von Ribbentrop, whom he informed in October 1942 about "the great importance of the deliveries of Romanian oil for the fighting of the war" (idem, the collection *Microfilme S.U.A.*, roll 607, frames 1796472-1796473).
- ²⁴² See Annexes, doc. no. 47.
- ²⁴³ A.N.R., the collection *Microfilme S.U.A.*, roll 39, frame 1 796 405.
- ²⁴⁴ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, p. 337 (doc. no. 123). Similar measures, in Berlin or in Bucharest, were taken by: Clodius on January 17 or May 5, 1942 (*ibidem*, pp. 333, 394-395; *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Series E: 1941-1945, Band I, 12. Dezember 1941 bis 28. Februar 1942, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1969, pp. 258-260, doc. no. 144, report no. 144 from January 18, 1942 for Ribbentrop; *ibidem*, pp. 392-393, doc. no. 217, secret report signed by Wiehl from February 9, 1942); Neubacher on March 10 and April 15, 1942 (*ibidem*, pp. 389, 390-391); Neumann on May 15, 1942 (*ibidem*, pp. 396-397); General Reinecke (Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 253-255), but especially the same Manfred von Killinger (*ibidem, passim; ADAP 1918-1945*, Series E, Band I, pp. 7-10, doc. no. 7, telegram no. 4 202 from December 13, 1941 regarding the discussions with Mihai Antonescu relative to the economic issues; *ibidem*, pp. 142-144, doc. no. 79, report from January 1, 1942). Von Killinger, in his actions, was most often instructed by Joachim von Ribbentrop (cf. *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Series E, Band I, pp. 127-128, doc. no. 68, telegram no. 1 338 from December 30, 1941; *ibidem*, pp. 480-482, doc. no. 255, February 18, 1942).
- ²⁴⁵ *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series E, Band I, pp. 171-172 (doc. no. 93, telegram no. 41).
- ²⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 182-184 (doc. no. 98, telegram no. 63 from January 6, 1942).
- ²⁴⁷ A.N.R., the collection *Microfilme S.U.A.*, roll 9, frames 182486-182488, 182497-182498.
- ²⁴⁸ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, p. 332.
- ²⁴⁹ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 119-120, (doc. no. 23, the letter from August 14, 1941); *ibidem*, pp. 130-131 (doc. no. 28, the letter from October 5, 1941). See also the answers of Marshal Antonescu (*ibidem*, pp. 121-122, 122-124, 131-132).
- ²⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 154-158 (doc. no. 33); *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Series E, Band I, pp. 113-116 (doc. no. 63).
- ²⁵¹ In German: "Endlich bitte ich Sie noejmals, Marschall Antonescu, alles zu tun, um unserer gemeinsamen Kriegführung das zur Verfügung zu stellen, was Rumänien am meisten beisteuern kann: Öl und Benzin" (*ibidem*, p. 116); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 154-158 (doc. no. 33).
- ²⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 163 (doc. no. 37).
- ²⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 162.
- ²⁵⁴ See Andrea Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol şi Mareşalul Antonescu*, p. 199.

- ²⁸⁵ See Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 342-344 (doc. no. 127, *Observațiuni asupra acordurilor economice încheiate cu Germania la 17 ianuarie 1942*, București, February 4, 1942).
- ²⁸⁶ See Schmidt's minutes, in Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, Frankfurt am Main, Bernard und Graefe Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1970, pp. 44-57 (doc. no. 2); *ibidem*, pp. 57-61 (doc. no. 3); *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series E, Band I, pp. 443-456 (doc. nos. 244-245); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 185-188 (doc. no. 41, excerpts from the minute of the second conversation); *ibidem*, pp. 179-184 (doc. no. 40, the summary of the conversations dictated by Ion Antonescu to Colonel Radu Davidescu, the head of the Military Cabinet); Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 249-252 (doc. no. 75, Davidescu's minute).
- ²⁸⁷ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 184.
- ²⁸⁸ *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series E, Band I, p. 452 (Schmidt's minute).
- ²⁸⁹ Cf. A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, pp. 174-177.
- ²⁹⁰ The document was drawn up by Mihai Antonescu (*Antonescu-Hitler*, II, p. 21).
- ²⁹¹ *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 166-177 (doc. no. 39).
- ²⁹² *Ibidem*, pp. 167-168.
- ²⁹³ *Ibidem*, p. 167; Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, p. 345 and the following.
- ²⁹⁴ Cf. Adolph Hitler, *Directives de guerre*, the edition of Walther Hubatsch and H.R. Trevor-Roper, Paris, Arthaud, 1965, p. 143 and the following (doc. no. 41, War directive no. 41 of A. Hitler, April 5, 1942).
- ²⁹⁵ Cf. Gh. Buzatu, *Din istoria secret*
- ²⁹⁶ See *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945*, Series E: 1941-1945, Band II, doc. nos. 39, 91, 95, 97; *ADAP 1918-1945*, Series E: 1941-1945, Band III, 16. Juni bis 30. September 1942, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1974, doc. nos. 18, 19, 36, 47, 85.
- ²⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, II, doc. nos., 110, 192, 495.
- ²⁹⁸ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 398-399 (doc. no. 148).
- ²⁹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 398. Which did not stop the Marshal, however, from also presenting to Göring unacceptable situations: the restriction to the limit of the internal consumption of oil products, the extreme directing of the exports towards Germany and Italy (237 000 tons of crude oil of 264 900 tons per/month), prices under the international level (between October 1, 1940 and May 1, 1942, Romania exported to Germany 3 965 550 tons of oil products, losing in consequence 15 billion lei), the stabilization of the prices for the exported oil products, in comparison to the increase up to 218% of the prices of the armament delivered to Romania, etc. (*ibidem*, pp. 399-400).
- ³⁰⁰ Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 267-268. On October 29, 1942, Keitel addressed Ion Antonescu again, insisting on the acceleration of the black oil deliveries (A.N.R., the collection *Microfilme S.U.A.*, roll 39, frame 1 796 405).
- ³⁰¹ Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, II, Cannaregio/Veneția, Nagard, 1988, pp. 231-281 (doc. no. 23).
- ³⁰² Cf. Cornel I. Scafeș and collaborators, *Armata Română 1918-1945*, București, Editura R.A.I., 1996, p. 49 and the following.
- ³⁰³ Cf. Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, Regele Carol și Mareșalul Antonescu*, p. 188.
- ³⁰⁴ See Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 293-294 (doc. no. 113, the telegram of Ion Antonescu to Colonel Ion Gheorghe, the Romanian Military Attaché in Berlin, November 22, 1942, 23:20 hours); *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, p. 193 (doc. no. 45, the telegram from November 23, 1942, as answer to the one from the day before, pp. 190-191, doc. no. 43).
- ³⁰⁵ Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 317-324; *Antonescu-Hitler*, I, pp. 199-210 (doc. no. 49, letterl from December 9, 1942); *ibidem*, pp. 211-214 (doc. no. 50, von Manstein's answer, December 15, 1942).
- ³⁰⁶ See Schmidt's minutes regarding the Hitler-Antonescu meetings from January 10, 1943 (Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, pp. 197-203 (doc. no. 26); *ibidem*, pp. 202-208 (doc. no. 27). Other information, in A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, pp. 237-252.
- ³⁰⁷ See Mihai Antonescu's Declaration at the government meeting of January 18, 1943 (*Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 20-57, doc., no. 53).
- ³⁰⁸ The document was signed by Mihai Antonescu and Joachim von Ribbentrop (see the Protocol signed on January 11, 1943, in the Annexes of this volume – doc. no. 49, apud Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 363-364, doc. no. 153).
- ³⁰⁹ *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, p. 30.
- ³¹⁰ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 27-28.
- ³¹¹ Two versions are known: *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 9-20 (doc. no. 52); Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, pp. 340-347 (doc. no. 1400. See also another memorandum, also dated January 9, 1943 (apud Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, pp. 531-538, doc. no. 195).
- ³¹² *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, p. 29.
- ³¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 10.
- ³¹⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ³¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 11-13.
- ³¹⁶ *Ibidem*. See the text in the Annexes of this volume (doc. 48).
- ³¹⁷ *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, p. 29.

³¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

³¹⁹ A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 253.

³²⁰ Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, p. 557 (doc. no. 205).

³²¹ *Ibidem*.

³²² Cf. Gh. Barbul, *Memorial Antonescu*, pp. 97-98; A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 271 and the following; Gh. Buzatu, A. Simion, "Preliminarii diplomatice ale actului de la 23 august 1944", in *Actul de la 23 august 1944 în context internațional. Studii și documente*, coordinator Gh. Buzatu, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1984, pp. 220-221.

³²³ Cf. General Ion Gheorghe, *Un dictator nefericit: Mareșalul Antonescu (Calea României spre statul satelit)*, edition of Stela Neagoe, București, Editura Machiaveli, 1996, pp. 267-268.

³²⁴ Gh. Barbul, *Memorial Antonescu*, p. 98.

³²⁵ They also discussed "Juliu Maniu's file", rejected by Marshal Antonescu for the well founded reason that he did not want to turn him into a "martyr" by arresting him (A. Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, p. 284).

³²⁶ See Schmidt's minutes of the meetings from April 12, 1943 (Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, pp. 214-227, doc. no. 29; *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 63-75, doc. no. 59) and April 13, 1943 (Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, pp. 228-233, doc. no. 30; *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 78-83, doc. no. 60).

³²⁷ Gh. Buzatu, A. Simion, *Preliminarii diplomatice...*, p. 223.

³²⁸ *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 84-91 (doc. no. 61). See, in Annexes, doc. no. 50.

³²⁹ See *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 106-119 (doc. no. 63, September 1943 – memorandum sent by Ion Antonescu to the Führer, with references to the Romanian oil deliveries to the Reich after 1940 and the role of the Ploiești area in the imposing of the Vienna dictate by Hitler, pp. 107-108); *ibidem*, pp. 122-128 (doc. no. 66, November 15, 1943 – the letter addressed by the Marshal to Hitler, with reference to the fact that Romania had exported to Germany "immense quantities of oil, which threatened not only the production, but also the Romanian reserves", p. 124) and Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 625-629 (doc. no. 227); Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 373-381 (doc. no. 163-164, original and variant). See also Hitler's answer from December 15, 1943 to Antonescu's letter from the previous month (apud *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, 129-134, doc. no. 67).

³³⁰ Apud Iosif Constantin Drăgan, ed., *Antonescu...*, III, pp. 363-364 (doc. no. 153); Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 594-595 (doc. no. 218).

³³¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 576-579 (doc. no. 215, the confidential report from July 8 of Minister Ion Gheorghe to Mihai Antonescu).

³³² The stenogram of the meeting, in Jean Ancel, ed., *Documents...*, IX, pp. 580-588 (doc. no. 216).

³³³ *Ibidem*, p. 582.

³³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 584.

³³⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 596-601 (doc. no. 219).

³³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 597.

³³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 598.

³³⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 615-616 (doc. no. 223, note of the meeting dictated by Mihai Antonescu).

³⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 616.

³⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 620-621 (doc. no. 225 – Note on the evolution of the import and export prices in the Romanian-German economic relations).

³⁴² We are referring to the meetings from September 2 and 3, 1943 (apud Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, pp. 301-311, 311-314, doc. no. 38-39); February 26 and 27, 1944 (*ibidem*, pp. 348-354, 355-359, 360-363, doc. nos. 44-46); March 23 and 24, 1944 (*ibidem*, pp. 389-397, 398-406, doc. nos. 50-51, Schmidt's minutes; see also the notes dictated by the Marshal to Colonel Radu Davidescu – *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 143-149, doc. no. 71) and August 5, 1944 (apud Andreas Hillgruber, Hrsgb., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler*, II, pp. 481-484, 484-501, doc. nos. 63-64; *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 176-194, doc. no. 84 – Schmidt's minutes; *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, pp. 166-176, doc. no. 83 – note dictated by Ion Antonescu; *ibidem*, pp. 195-204, the account of General Titus Gârbea).

³⁴³ Various information of the greatest interest for these years, in A.N.R., the collection *Microfilme S.U.A.*, rolls 33, 607, 611, *passim*. A Berlin report from July 5, 1944 analyzed the situation of the oil industry in the entire south-east of Europe, and regarding Romania it registered in an alarmed tone the decrease of the exports from 269 200 tons (March 1944) to 92 000 (June 1944) (idem, roll 607, frames 1792745-1792746).

³⁴⁴ See Gh. Buzatu, *România și trusturile internaționale de petrol până la 1929*, p. 13.

³⁴⁵ *Antonescu-Hitler*, II, p. 135.

³⁴⁶ See, for example, the data examined in the government's meeting from June 16, 1944, under the presidency of Mihai Antonescu (A.N.R., the fund of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, file 79/1944, ff. 1-28). Earlier, in the cabinet meeting from May 15, 1944, Mihai Antonescu, commenting the financial disaster predicted by Gheron Netta, the Minister for Finance, specified in his turn that, if the existing situation lasts for six more months, "we will tumble,

overturning the whole village and the entire wealth of the people" (apud V. Liveanu and collaborators, *Din cronica unor zile istorice*, București, Editura Academiei, 1971, p. 26).

³⁴⁷ Apud Alina Tudor, Șerban Pavelescu, "Mareșalul Antonescu: Alte interogatorii", in *Magazin Istoric*, no. 10/1997, pp. 29-30; Teodor Mavrodin, *Mareșalul Antonescu întemnițat la Moscova*, Pitești, Editura Carminis, 1998, pp. 180-182.

³⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁴⁹ Ion Șuța, *România la cumpăna istoriei*, p. 175 and the following.

³⁵⁰ Cf. A. Șimion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice...*, *passim*.

³⁵¹ See Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă, ed., *Procesul Mareșalului Antonescu. Documente*, I, București, Editura Saeculum I. O./Editura Europa Nova, 1995, p. 63 and the following (Bill of Indictment no. 1 from April 29, 1946, read in the public session of the "People's Court" on May 6, 1946).

³⁵² We point out that, exactly at the same time, the government in Bucharest and the organizers of the "trial of the great national treason" witnessed the real exhaustion of the country by the occupant power – the U.S.S.R.!

³⁵³ *Procesul Mareșalului Antonescu. Documente*, I, p. 90.

³⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 201.

³⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁵⁶ Apud Gh. Buzatu, *România cu și fără Antonescu*, Iași, Editura Moldova, 1991, p. 335.

³⁵⁷ See *Procesul Mareșalului antonescu. Documente*, I, p. 188 and the following.

³⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 115.

³⁵⁹ See especially Ioan Dan, "Procesul" *Mareșalului Ion Antonescu*, București, Editura Tempus, 1993, pp. 171-183.

³⁶⁰ *Procesul Mareșalului Antonescu. Documente*, I, p. 188 and the following.

³⁶¹ Cf. Mircea Vulcănescu, *Ultimul cuvânt*, the edition of Marin Diaconu, București, Editura Humanitas, 1992, p. 63; idem, "Ultimul cuvânt", the edition of Virgil Ierunca, in *Ethos*, Paris, no. 4/1983, p. 20 and the following.

³⁶² *Ibidem*, p. 50; idem, *Ultimul cuvânt*, the edition of Marin Diaconu, pp. 67-68.

³⁶³ *Ibidem*, the Humanitas edition, pp. 69-71.

³⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 70-71.

³⁶⁵ Apud *Evenimentul zilei*, București, December 8, 1997, p. 3.

³⁶⁶ *Ibidem*; Daniel Pavel, "Banca Națională a României deține 60 tone de aur nazist", in *Național*, București, December 5, 1997, p. 3; *Adevărul*, București, December 3, 1997, p. 20. The subsequent evolution of the gold stock at the National Romanian Bank: 53.1 tons of gold in 1953; 111 tons of gold in 1969; 64.6 tons of gold in 1972; 1118.7 tons of gold in 1983; 42.4 tons of gold in 1987 and, in 1997, 93.4 tons of gold.

³⁶⁷ Cf. Gh. Buzatu, *România cu și fără Antonescu*, p. 335.

³⁶⁸ See, in this sense, Costin C. Kirișescu, *Sistemul bănesc al leului și precursorii lui*, II, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1997, pp. 503-531; D. Șandru, A. Karetchi, I. Saizu, "Dificultăți în 'colaborarea' româno-germană (1940-1944)", in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie "A.D. Xenopol"*, Iași, vol. XXIII/1986; Gh. Buzatu, I. Saizu, "Apariția și dezvoltarea contradicțiilor dintre regimul antonescian și Germania hitleristă", in Gh. Buzatu and collaborators, eds., *România în istoria universală*, III/1, Iași, 1988; I. Saizu, "Ion Antonescu despre relațiile economice româno-germane (1940-1944)", in Mihai Timofteț, ed., *Concepte și metodologii în studiul relațiilor internaționale*, II, Iași, Antheros, 1998.

³⁶⁹ See *Rezultatele "colaborării" economice cu Germania și ale participării noastre la războiul hitlerist*, București, 1945 (special references to the industry of petroleum, pp. 9-11).