

## PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN BIHOR COUNTY AND THEIR RESULTS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

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**Abstract:** Between the World Wars, Oradea was a cosmopolitan city. As we have seen, the Romanians were not the majority population. Those who dominated the city under demographic and economic aspect were the Hungarians and Jews. In political terms, since the early 20's, the most of the Romanians of Bihor County were subordinated to the most important party in Transylvania, the Romanian National Party, while the Hungarians adopted immediately after unification a political attitude circumscribed to passivity. After this period, the political life will greatly diversify in Transylvania together with the offensive of the parties in the Old Kingdom while the Hungarians will gradually accept to engage themselves in the political affairs of the city and country.

**Key words:** Bihor county, parliamentary elections, interwar period, politic parties

After unification, the political Bihor County life experienced substantial changes absolutely necessary to fit to the administrative structure of the Great Romania. In political terms, since the early 20's, the most of the Romanians of Bihor County were subordinated to the most important party in Transylvania, the Romanian National Party, while the Hungarians adopted immediately after unification a political attitude circumscribed to passivity. After this period, the political life will greatly diversify in Transylvania together with the offensive of the parties in the Old Kingdom while the Hungarians will gradually accept to engage themselves in the political affairs of the city and country.

During the interwar period, Oradea was a cosmopolitan city. As we have seen, the Romanians were not the majority population. Those who dominated the city under demographic and economic aspect were the Hungarians and Jews.

The parliamentary elections on November 2-8<sup>th</sup> in 1919 were the first in the history of Romania held under universal suffrage. The General Arthur Văitoianu's Government (September 27<sup>th</sup> - November 28<sup>th</sup> 1918) had as main mission the very organization of these elections. The ballot was also the first to which the Romanians took part from all the historical provinces united with Romania.

Văitoianu's Government was closely controlled by Ion I. C. Brătianu. That is why the government kept in its administrative functions mayors and prefects, so, just those who organized the election<sup>1</sup>. Under the conditions the whole

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<sup>1</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți 1916-1938*, Editura Silex, București, 1996, p. 32 (hereinafter Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*)

apparatus belonged to the National Liberal Party, three of the major parties of the Romanian political spectrum, the People's League, the Conservative Democrat Party and the Socialist Party refused to participate to elections believing that they could not take place properly<sup>2</sup>. As a Transylvanian and Bihor local specific we need to say that the Hungarians have adopted for these elections the political passivity. Despite of these predictions, the Liberals have not won the election. Important successes have been won by the political parties in the territories recently united with Romania: the Romanian National Party of Transylvania, Peasants' Party of Bessarabia, and the Unification's Democratic Party of Bukovina. These were the main beneficiary of the election. The elections on November 2-8<sup>th</sup> in 1919 also meant the beginning of the marginalization of the conservative parties in the context of introducing the universal suffrage.

Accordingly, in Bihor County, where the political parties in the Kingdom did not organize local political structures, the election favored the most powerful local political party in Romania, the Romanian National Party. Moreover, it was the only political party which was seriously electioneering in Oradea and Bihor County. However, not everywhere the political candidates have won. In total, the organization of Bihor County Romanian National Party sent in the Parliament of the Great Romania 23 representatives: 18 deputies and 5 senators<sup>3</sup>.

## Members:

Successful candidate	Constituency
Justin Ardelean	Oradea I - II
Dumitru Ionaș	
Constantin Pavel	Beiuș
Gheorghe Crișan	Vașcău
Aurel Pinția	Beliu
Gheorghe Miculaș	Criștior
Petru E. Papp	Răbăgani
Dumitru Lascu	Cefa
Teodor Popa	Tileagd
Lazăr Iacob	Aleșd
Sever Sălăjan	Sălard
Emeric Vaina	Barcăul Mare
Iuliu Chiș	Marghita
Gheorghe Moroianu	Borodul Mare
Ioan Iacob	Ceica
Victor Pop	Leta Mare
Aurel Lazăr	Tinca
Nicolae Roxin	Salonta

## Senators:

Successful candidate	Constituency
Coriolan Pop	Oradea
Partenie Cosma	Beiuș
Andrei Ille	Salonta
Gavril Cosma	Ceica
Roman Ciorogariu	Aleșd <sup>4</sup>

Although the Romanian National Party conducted a very active campaign, not all over the official candidates of this party had prevailed. In this way, people who were not official candidates of the party or independents managed to gain access to the Parliament. Thus, at Săcuieni, the Count Nesselrode Karoly had prevailed by Gheorghe Pop's withdrawal. Also, the winners of the districts Oradea II - Dumitru Ionaș, Cefa - Dumitru Lascu, Sălard - Sever Sălăjan were

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>3</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 210, November 8<sup>th</sup> 1919, p. 2

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*

not the official candidates of the party, although they were part of the Romanian National Party<sup>5</sup>. Interesting is that during the elections of 1919, few representatives of the Social Democratic Party also took part in several constituencies. We need to mention here Adrian Deseanu at Vașcău and Kóos Mozés at Salonta. Like the other Transylvanian parliamentarians, those of Bihor County arrived in Bucharest on November 18<sup>th</sup> 1919 being welcomed by Vasile Goldiș<sup>6</sup>.

It should be noted that to the elections of 1919 the Hungarians and Jews in Oradea and Bihor County, like those of the whole of Transylvania, adopted a passive policy attitude. It was their way of protesting against the territorial consequences of the World War I.

Before the elections at the beginning of June 1920, by the law decree of May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1920, all the electoral districts of Transylvania were reorganized. As a result the Bihor County had 10 constituencies for the Chamber of Deputies (Oradea, Beiuș, Beliu, Ceica, Aleșd, Salonta, Tinca, Sălard, Tileagd, Marghita) and five for Senate (Oradea, Beiuș, Tileagd, Marghita, Salonta).

This time, more political parties were engaged in the battle. Together with the Romanian National Party, in the heat of the electoral battle also was powerfully engaged the People's Party. It has created its subsidiary in Bihor County since the spring of 1920, mainly due to the insistence of Alexandru Averescu and Octavian Goga, who had been present in Bihor several times in the interval between the elections of 1919 and the beginning of June 1920<sup>7</sup>.

In Bihor County, the elections were held on June 3-4<sup>th</sup> 1920 for Chamber and, on June 6-7<sup>th</sup> 1920 for Senate. The Romanian National Party candidates were confronted with those of the People's Party in all the electoral districts. The People's Party was an ally of the Liberals who had not an established organization in Bihor County. From the Romanian National Party have candidate for the Chamber the following:

## Members:

Candidate	Constituency
Justin Ardelean	Oradea I - II
Dumitru Ionaș	
Gheorghe Crișan	Beiuș
Aurel Pinția	Beliu
Teodor Popa	Tileagd
Grigore Egri	Sălard
Iuliu Chiș	Marghita
Gheorghe Moroianu	Aleșd
Nicolae Zigre	Ceica
Aurel Lazăr	Tinca
Dumitru Lascu	Salonta

## Senators:

Candidate	Constituency
Demetriu Kiss	Oradea
Ioan Bușița	Beiuș
Mihai Pavel	Marghita
Vasile Teuca	Salonta <sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In Oradea II the official candidate was Gelu Egri, Salonta - the priest Petru Popa, Sălard - Dumitru Oros. These three have been left behind either because of withdrawal from the race - Gelu Egri, or because their counter candidates enjoyed the support of the inhabitants of those districts. The case of Dumitru Ionaș and Sever Sălăjan.

<sup>6</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 220, November 20<sup>th</sup> 1919, p. 2

<sup>7</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor (de la Marea Unire la Dictatul de la Viena)*, Editura Universității din Oradea, Oradea, 2007, p. 253 (hereinafter Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor.*)

<sup>8</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 210, November 8<sup>th</sup> 1919, p. 2

The People's Party had itself candidates in every constituency, evidence of a better organization of the local branch of this political party. The candidates for the Chamber were:

## Members:

Candidate	Constituency
Octavian Goga	Oradea
Alexandru Averescu	Beiuș
Cristian Musceleanu	
Iacob Lazăr	Aleșd
Nicolae Firu	Marghita
Constantin Banu	Ceica
Ioan Haidu	Tinca
Ioan Iacob	Tileagd
Petru Vuruclăș	Sălard
Nicolae Roxin	Salonta
Gheorghe Tulbure	Beliu

## Senators:

Candidate	Constituency
Iosif Diamandi	Oradea
Gavril Cosma	Beiuș
Andrei Horvath	Tileagd
Nicolae Bataria	Marghita
Ioan Pop	Salonta <sup>9</sup>

The elections in Bihor County were not held just in the best conditions. The abuses of the prefect George Bacaloglu, assisted by the general school inspector, George Tulbure, under the patronage of Alexandru Averescu's government, based since March 13<sup>th</sup> 1920<sup>10</sup>, left their mark on the electoral campaign and election results. The government wanted to take all the measurements to winning the elections in Bihor by requiring as prefect the Colonel Gheorghe Bacaloglu. The pressures have gone so far as in the districts of Beliu, Ceica, Marghita and Tileagd, the candidates of the Romanian National Party were unable to submit their application or were forced to withdraw them. The aim was to defeat by any means the representatives of the Romanian National Party. The irregularities under the patronage of the Averescu Government's Prefect of Bihor were so large and obvious that, in one of the first meetings of the Chamber, the People's Party president himself, Alexandru Averescu, acknowledged their existence<sup>11</sup>.

In this situation, the representatives of the Romanian National Party had prevailed only in two constituencies of 10. This is about Aurel Lazăr at Tinca and Dumitru Lascu at Salonta. The remaining 8 were in favor of the following representatives of the People's Party: Octavian Goga in Oradea, Cristian Musceleanu at Beiuș, Iacob Lazăr at Aleșd, Constantin Banu at Ceica, Gheorghe Tulbure at Beliu, Nicolae Firu at Marghita, Ioan Iacob at Tileagd and Petru Vuruclăș at Sălard<sup>12</sup>.

In the June 1920's elections have also candidate with real chances a number of independents who obtained a considerable number of votes. Thus, at Aleșd participated Ioan Câmpeanu and Petru Dejeu. Of the 2822 valid votes, the first obtained 255, and Petru Dejeu 831. In the constituency of Sălard also participated as an independent Nesselrode Sandor. Of the 2513 formulated

<sup>9</sup> *Nagyvarady Napló*, Oradea, no. 107, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1920, p. 2

<sup>10</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria României în anii 1918-1940. Evoluția regimului politic de la democrație la dictatură*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1996, p. 74 (hereinafter Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria României în anii 1918-1940...*)

<sup>11</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 137, June 27<sup>th</sup> 1920, p. 2

<sup>12</sup> *Nagyvarad*, Oradea, no. 60, June 5<sup>th</sup> 1920, p. 1-2

votes, Nesselrode Sandor received 640. In the constituency of Oradea, Ioan Pelle has candidate as an independent for the Chamber. He won only 16 of the 353 valid formulated votes<sup>13</sup>.

An interesting fact by the concerned person has happened in the constituency of Beiuș. There has also candidate the head of Alexandru Averescu's Government, from the People's Party. The result was catastrophic. He got only 7 votes. As a result, the validation of the elections in this was the settled down during the meeting in the Chamber of Deputies on July 15<sup>th</sup> 1920, just not to remember the extremely poor result obtained by the General Averescu. However, the elections from here have been won by the other representative of the Averescu's Government, Cristian Musculeanu<sup>14</sup>.

Like the elections in 1919 and those in 1920 the Hungarians of all county's constituencies did not participate to the elections. The extremely low turnout in Oradea, only 355 voters, shows the relative small share of the Romanian electorate of Oradea. However, the Hungarians and Jews, first of all their press, had a positive attitude to the representatives of the People's Party in the detriment of those of the Romanian National Party, their former "political enemies" on local level. It was considered, perhaps, that the representatives of this party will have more understanding for Hungarians and Jews, knowing the nationals' attitude until then.

In late 1921, the Alexandru Averescu's Government fell. Its place was taken surprisingly, on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1921 by a government led by Take Ionescu<sup>15</sup>. It did not last more than a month since follow-up of a vote of censure received from the Parliament on January 17<sup>th</sup> 1922 he was forced to resign. It was only a transitional government to a new Liberal government. As Nicolae Iorga also said, Take Ionescu "*felt behind him the glowing passion of ownership of Ion Brătianu*"<sup>16</sup> early on his investiture. Consequently, the government of Ion I. C. Brătianu was formed on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 1922. On January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1922 the Parliament was dissolved announcing the holding of elections<sup>17</sup>. This held the elections for the Constituent National Assembly in March 1922. Continuing already a tradition that has tended to institutionalize, the liberals closely controlled the electoral campaign and therefore the election results.

In Bihor County, the reality was as much as possible annoying for the opposition parties. The most widely used method of obstruction and removal of the opposition candidates, particularly those of the Romanian National Party, was the rejection of its candidates.

There were 10 constituencies for Chamber and 5 for Senate in Bihor. The National Party's candidates were rejected in 8 of the 10 constituencies, at Aleșd, Beiuș, Ceica, Tileagd, Sălard, Marghita, Beliu and Oradea. The crudest abuse took place in the constituency of Sălard, where the Liberal prefect Sever Andru candidate. There, the chairman of the election commission has invalidated all the others who wanted to submit their applications because they had not submitted their certificates of good character<sup>18</sup>. In this context, basically, in five

<sup>13</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 256

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>15</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 41

<sup>16</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *O viață de om. Așa cum a fost*, vol. III, București, 1934

<sup>17</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 44

<sup>18</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 257

districts have not held elections since the liberal candidates have stood the electoral test without facing the electorate in the absence of other candidates. Elections were actually held in only two constituencies at Tinca, where the favorite of the population, Aurel Lazăr, the representative of the Romanian National Party, had prevailed to the Liberal Ioan Câmpeanu and Pavel Toncescu and, at Salonta, where also won the representative of the Romanian National Party, Dumitru Lascu, a very known character in the area, in the detriment of the liberal representative, Iacob Niște. As a result of the electoral realities in Bihor County, the nationals have had prevailed only in a single Senatorial constituency, in Oradea, in the person of Demetriu Kiss<sup>19</sup>.

In Bihor, during the elections held on March 7-8<sup>th</sup> 1922, the Liberal candidates were confronted with the candidates of Averescu and the national ones. From the Romanian National Party the following candidate for Chamber and Senate:

## Members:

Candidate	Constituency
Sever Erdely	Oradea I – II
Ioan Sferlea	Aleșd
Petru Popovici	Beiuș
Aurel Pintia	Beliu
Victor Pop	Ceica
Sever Selegian	Marghita
Dumitru Lascu	Salonta
Aurel Lazăr	Tinca
Grigore Egri	Sălard
Iosif Tărău	Tileagd

## Senators:

Candidate	Constituency
Demetriu Kiss	Oradea
Iosif Maiorescu replaced with Aurel Lazăr	Beiuș
Iacob Radu	Marghita
Vasile Teuca	Salonta
Nicolae Poenaru	Tileagd <sup>20</sup>

The Liberal Party had to its turn candidates in each constituency. The candidates for Chamber and Senate were:

## Members:

Candidate	Constituency
Nicolae Zigre	Oradea
Ion I. C. Brătianu	Ceica
gen. Traian Moșoiu	Aleșd
Constantin Banu	Beiuș
col. Atanasie Negulescu	Beliu
Vasile Chirvai	Marghita
Sever Andru	Sălard
Iacob Niște	Salonta
Ion Câmpeanu	Tinca
Nicole Zigre	Tileagd

## Senators:

Candidate	Constituency
Gavril Cosma	Beiuș
gen. Dumitru Iliescu	Tileagd
Dumitru Marian	Marghita
Alexandru Munteanu	Salonta <sup>21</sup>

The People's Party did not submit decisive applications in all the constituencies. Thus, the Averescus have presented for elections with the following candidates for Chamber:

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>20</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 210, November 8<sup>th</sup> 1919, p. 2

<sup>21</sup> *Tribuna*, Oradea, no. 17, February 5<sup>th</sup> 1922, p. 3

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Gheorghe Tulbure	Beliu
Ioan Iacob	Ceica
Lazăr Iacob	Aleșd
Nicole Firu	Marghita
Romul Fersigan	Sălard
Iosif Iacob	Salonta
Pavel Toncescu	Tinca

For Senate the People's Party filed applications only in two constituencies, Oradea and Tileagd:

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Iosif Diamandi	Oradea
Andrei Horvath	Tileagd

The Hungarians, a demographic and social component extremely important to the Bihor County level, have applied candidatures only in some constituencies. They were still divided politically and with little chance of success. Thus, in Oradea, Ioan Kocsán has submitted his application, he subsequently withdrew and his place was taken by Iosif Willer, and at Sălard, Eugen Kötzo, at Marghita, Sudi Tibor and at Tileagd, Kóthelyi Zoltán<sup>22</sup>.

The abuses of the liberal authorities, which took place during the election campaign, have not remained without consequences. Preventing the application was the ultimate form of interference of the liberal power. In fact, this kind of pressure has been put in practice also in other counties in Transylvania. Of the 121 constituencies from here, in no fewer than 29, the candidates, others than those of the Liberal Party were unable to submit their application<sup>23</sup>. Bihor County was one of the leading in electoral abuses since of the 29 constituencies with problems in Transylvania, 8 were in Bihor County. All these, the opposition's protests in Parliament made that in three constituencies in Bihor, where elections were not actually held, Aleșd, Ceica and Tileagd, to run elections on May 28-29<sup>th</sup> 1922<sup>24</sup>.

After the general elections on March 7-8<sup>th</sup> 1922 and of the part ones on May 28-29<sup>th</sup> 1922, the Bihor County sent to the Romanian Parliament the following deputies and senators:

Deputies:

Nicolae Zigre	Oradea - National Liberal Party
gen. Traian Moșoiu	Aleșd - National Liberal Party
Constantin Banu	Beiuș - National Liberal Party
col. Atanasie Negulescu	Beliu - National Liberal Party
I.I.C. Brătianu	Ceica - National Liberal Party
Vasile Chirvai	Marghita - National Liberal Party
Dumitru Lascu	Salonta - Romanian National Party
Aurel Lazăr	Tinca - Romanian National Party
Sever Andru	Sălard - National Liberal Party
Iosif Tărău	Tileagd - Romanian National Party

<sup>22</sup> Idem, no. 29, February 17<sup>th</sup> 1922, p. 1

<sup>23</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 46, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1922, p. 2

<sup>24</sup> I. Zainea, *Aurel Lazăr (1872-1930) – viața și activitatea*, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 210

## Senators:

Demetriu Kiss	Oradea - Romanian National Party
Gavril Cosma	Beiuș - National Liberal Party
Dumitru Marian	Marghita - National Liberal Party
Alexandru Muntean	Salonta - National Liberal Party
gen. Dumitru Iliescu	Tileagd - National Liberal Party

As you can see, the Liberals have taken the most of the mandates of deputies and senators at the elections in March - May 1922. The abuses and the pressures of the local liberal authorities under the patronage of I. I. C. Brătianu's Liberal Government, have fully contributed to this situation. Almost the entire state apparatus was controlled by I. I. C. Brătianu's Government. To this was added that all the chairmen of the electoral constituencies were appointed by the same liberals<sup>25</sup>.

The year 1926 meant the end of the first mandate for four years of a government of the interwar Romania. On March 27<sup>th</sup> 1926 four years came true since the election of the Romanian Legislative Bodies. Under these conditions Ion I. C. Brătianu, the head of the government, has brought his mandate leaving open the way for new elections. On March 30<sup>th</sup> 1926 the General Alexandru Averescu was appointed to form a new government. The Government Averescu was the one which organized the new elections on May 25<sup>th</sup> 1926 for the Assembly of Deputies and, on May 28-31<sup>st</sup> 1926 for Senate<sup>26</sup>.

Before the parliamentary elections, in Bihor County were held the communal elections. For this election, in Bihor there were made up two groups: the United Opposition composed of the organizations of the National Party, the Peasant Party, the People's Party, the Workers' Block and the Zionist Organization, on one hand, and on the other hand, the electoral cartel formed by the Liberal Party and its allies, the Hungarian Party and the Social - Democrat Party. The communal elections resulted in the victory of the opposition. In Oradea, of the total of 9,235 formulated votes, the United Opposition received 4,560, and the list of the Liberal-Hungarian-Social-Democratic cartel 4,402,181 votes being rejected and, 91 canceled<sup>27</sup>.

In order to overthrow the Averescu's Government supported by liberals, for the parliamentary elections at the end of May 1926, the nationals and peasants concluded an electoral alliance that would bring all over the country common lists. Following further debate about the composition of the common lists, in Bihor the pact was not implemented. Therefore, the two political parties submitted separate lists. On the list submitted by the National Party there were to be found, for the Chamber of Deputies, the following: Aurel Lazăr, Iosif Maiorescu, Iosif Tărău, Grigore Gafencu, Vasile Bledea, Gheorghe Sofronie, Teodor Popa, Victor Cădere and Ulpiu Traian Gomboșiu and, for the Senate: Dumitru Lascu, Demetriu Kiss, Grigore Egri, Teodor Rocsin and Ioan Costa<sup>28</sup>. On the peasants' list were: Anastasius Mavrodin, Ioan Silaghi, Gheorghe Balc, Gheorghe Popescu-Ceica, Victor Felea, Vasile Stupariu, Mihai Balogh, Nicu Anghel and Iuliu Kurutz<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 209

<sup>26</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 58

<sup>27</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 257

<sup>28</sup> *Dreptatea*, Oradea, no. 22, May 20<sup>th</sup> 1926, p. 1

<sup>29</sup> *Tribuna*, Oradea, no. 20, May 16<sup>th</sup> 1926, p. 2

In addition to these two political parties, in Bihor County have also brought lists for the parliamentary elections the organizations of the People's Party, the Liberal Party, the Workers' Block and the anti-Semitic League. The Hungarian Party and the German Party brought candidates on the lists submitted by deputies and senators of the People's Party, under a pact concluded between these political parties at Ciucea.

Like the other electoral campaigns, this also was characterized by a series of violence even controlled by the Averescu's Government. It had been decreed the martial law and imposed the censorship. The aim was that the government lists have prevailed. All of them were taking place under the eyes of the prefect Iosif Iacob. The electoral meetings of the opposition have been banned and, some of the press bodies suspended. A number of candidates have been intimidated being also reported many attempts to influencing the outcome of voting by preventing a part of the electorate to carry up its voting papers, or even to vote<sup>30</sup>.

Although the elections were held by Averescu's Government, in Bihor County, the elections for Chamber were clearly won by the National Party. But, however, no representative of the National Party has entered the Chamber because of a "misunderstanding". It was argued that in Bihor, the nationals and the peasants had brought common list although at a national level this was happening everywhere. However, they had received the approval from the Central Election Commission to use the same parallel fence and, the votes on the two lists to be considered as votes obtained by the opposition. When distributing the votes, however, the Central Election Commission went into account of the National - Peasant opposition only the votes obtained by the peasant list, 257<sup>31</sup> and, those on the list of nationals, 31,451, were passed on the behalf of the Government lists. There were disputes, particularly of Iuliu Maniu, and, although the Central Election Commission has accepted it had been wrong, its representatives said they can not do anything because the list of the deputies of the People's Party in Bihor had already appeared in the Official Gazette<sup>32</sup>. As Octavian Goga had been elected deputy of Bihor, Cluj and Sibiu on the Government lists, and he chose to represent Sibiu, on September 6<sup>th</sup> 1926 in Bihor new elections were held. Mihail Sadoveanu came out on top, whose nomination was submitted by the Government, in the detriment of the national Dumitru Lascu. Neither this electoral campaign was a quiet one. There were many abuses reported by the local media<sup>33</sup>. The appeals made to that effect had no purpose.

In the Senate, the victory went to the People's Party organization, the beneficiary of a general competition in the entire state apparatus in the county, which received 19,438 votes, followed by the National Party organization with 14,537 votes, the anti-Semitic League with 1229 votes and the Liberal Party organization with 887 votes<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 258

<sup>31</sup> The peasant organization was a very poor one in Bihor during the respective period, reducing to a group of people around the organization's President, Anastasie Mavrodin.

<sup>32</sup> Ion Zainea, *Aurel Lazăr (1872-1930) - viața și activitatea*, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 210

<sup>33</sup> *Patria*, Oradea, no. 258, November 25<sup>th</sup> 1926, p. 1

<sup>34</sup> *Tribuna*, Oradea, no. 22, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1926, p. 3

At the request of King Ferdinand, on June 4<sup>th</sup> 1927, the General Alexandru Averescu had to bring the mandate to the government. Even the same day it was formed a government led by Barbu Știrbey, brother-in-law of Ion I. C. Brătianu and a close friend of Queen Mary<sup>35</sup>. The government was one of National Unity getting representatives of several parties: the National - Peasant Party, the National Liberal Party, the Peasant Party (Dr. Lupu), independent<sup>36</sup>. The Barbu Știrbey's Government has resisted only until June 20<sup>th</sup> 1927 when, at the suggestion of Ion I. C. Brătianu, the liberal ministers withdrew from the government which led the Prime Minister to bring the mandate to the Government. The maneuvers of the great Romanian politician Ion. I. C. Brătianu were resultful again, so on June 21<sup>st</sup> 1927 it was constituted a new government Ion I. C. Brătianu<sup>37</sup>. Immediately after the government had been installed, also the data of the parliamentary elections was established: July 7<sup>th</sup> 1927 for Chamber of Deputies and July 14<sup>th</sup> 1927 for Senate. Winning them was a key issue for the government. For this, they did not spare any effort.

These realities have been visible in Bihor County, too. As on other occasions, the local authorities have involved heavily in the favor of the government lists. The liberal prefect, Dezideriu Tempelean, has forbidden the national - peasants meetings in Oradea and county, they being seen as the main danger to the liberal organization. As this order was not complied, they proceeded to the arresting of some leaders of the National Peasant Party present at the electoral meetings. This fate was shared by: Victor Cădere arrested at a meeting at Marghita, and Aurel Lazăr<sup>38</sup>.

From the National Liberal Party, for Chamber, the following applied:

Gen. Traian Moșoiu	National Liberal Party
Iosif Tărău	National Liberal Party
Ion Fiñescu	National Liberal Party
Tiberiu Moșoiu	National Liberal Party
Ulpiu Traian Gomboșiu	National Liberal Party
Petru Fodor	National Liberal Party
Vasile Bledea	National Liberal Party
Ion Picu Băncilă	National Liberal Party
Mihai Turla	National Liberal Party <sup>39</sup>

For Senate the liberal list contained five names:

Demetriu Kiss	National Liberal Party
Dumitru Lascu	National Liberal Party
Iuliu Chiș	National Liberal Party
Mihai Poynar	National Liberal Party
Titu Trif <sup>40</sup>	National Liberal Party

Of the National Peasant Party, the following applied their candidature for Chamber:

<sup>35</sup> Mihail Manoilescu, *Memorii*, vol. I, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1992, p. 92

<sup>36</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 60

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 62

<sup>38</sup> Ion Zăinea, *Aurel Lazăr (1872-1930) – viața și activitatea*, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 238

<sup>39</sup> *Dreptatea poporului*, Oradea, no. 28, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1927, p. 1

<sup>40</sup> *Nagyvardi Napló*, Oradea, no. 141, June 26<sup>th</sup> 1927, p.1

Alexandru Vaida-Voievod	National Peasant Party
Aurel Lazăr	National Peasant Party
Iosif Maiorescu	National Peasant Party
Gheorghe Crișan	National Peasant Party
Teodor Rocsin	National Peasant Party
Victor Cădere	National Peasant Party
Petru popovici	National Peasant Party
Mihai Pop	National Peasant Party
Enea Popovici <sup>41</sup>	National Peasant Party

For Senate the national peasant list of Bihar contained five names:

Nicolae Zigre
Vasile Teuca
D. Hurmuzescu <sup>42</sup>

At a national level the parliamentary elections were won by the National Liberal Party which won 61.69 % of the total votes, while the National Peasant Party only 22.09 %<sup>43</sup>.

In Bihor County the elections in 1927 had similar results. Of the total of 66,465 formulated votes, the organization of the Liberal Party received 29,765, representing 45.6 %. The organization of the National Peasant Party positioned on the second place with 19,242 votes, representing 29.1 %. They followed, in order, the organization of the Hungarian Party, with 8,541 votes (12.1 %), the Workers' Block, with 5 203 votes (7.3 %) and the Social - Democrats with 2,214 votes (5.1 %) 27. Of nine mandates of deputies which had been distributed in Bihor County, eight were for the Liberal organization and only one returned to the National Peasant Party<sup>44</sup>. Of the National Peasant Party was elected Alexandru Vaida Voievod, but because he also won the elections in Cluj he resigned his mandate of Bihor in favor of Aurel Lazăr.

The representatives of Bihor in the Chamber of Deputies were:

Gen. Traian Moșoiu	National Liberal Party
Iosif Tărău	National Liberal Party
Ion Fiñescu	National Liberal Party
Tiberiu Moșoiu	National Liberal Party
Ulpiu Traian Gomboșiu	National Liberal Party
Petru Fodor	National Liberal Party
Vasile Bledea	National Liberal Party
Ion Picu Băncilă	National Liberal Party
Alexandru Vaida Voievod	National Peasant Party <sup>45</sup>

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1928, Vintilă Brătianu presented to the Regency the resignation of his cabinet. After the unsuccessful attempt to set up a national unity government chaired by Nicolae Titulescu, the Regency entrusted Iuliu

<sup>41</sup>*Ibidem*

<sup>42</sup>*Ibidem*

<sup>43</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 64

<sup>44</sup> Ion Zainea, *Aurel Lazăr (1872-1930) – viața și activitatea*, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 239

<sup>45</sup> *Nagyvaradi Napló*, Oradea, no. 158, July 17<sup>th</sup> 1927, p. 2

Maniu to constituting a new government<sup>46</sup>. The National Peasant Party came thus to the government. The government has set the parliamentary elections for December 1928. In preparation for elections, Iuliu Maniu's Government moved to replace the Liberal prefects with some National - Peasants.

In Bihor County was named as prefect Iosif Maiorescu. Also, both at the Prefecture and the Oradea City Hall, the old liberal interim committees were replaced by new ones formed by National - Peasants. The head of the committee of the Prefecture was Teodor Rocsin and, at Oradea City Hall, Aurel Lazăr<sup>47</sup>.

Most of the analysts believe that the December 1928 elections were the most democratic of all Romanian interwar period. This is also supported by the suspending of the censorship by the Council of Ministers on November 19<sup>th</sup> 1928, in all regions where it was active. An exception was a strip of 10-15 km from the border area. In case of the county capital cities that were inside this strip the censorship was also suspended. Oradea was in this situation.

To winning the election, the Bihor County organization of the National Peasant Party has concluded electoral agreements with the Social Democratic Party and the Zionist movement<sup>48</sup>. These parties received a place on the lists of deputies of the National-Peasant Party. It was the Social Democrat Iosif Jumanca and Tivadar Fischer of the Zionist movement<sup>49</sup>.

The complete list of the National Peasant Party for Chamber included the following candidates:

Aurel Lazăr	National Peasant Party
Gheorghe Crișan	National Peasant Party
Victor Cădere	National Peasant Party
Teodor Rocsin	National Peasant Party
Teodor Popa	National Peasant Party
Petru Popovici	National Peasant Party
Gh. Popescu Ceica	National Peasant Party
Enea Popovici	National Peasant Party
Nicolae Pop	National Peasant Party

The following candidates were for Senate:

Demetriu Kiss	National Peasant Party
Sever Erdely	National Peasant Party
Iuliu Chiș	National Peasant Party
Gelu Egry	National Peasant Party
Titu Trif <sup>50</sup>	National Peasant Party

In Bihor, the elections in December 1928 were won by the National Peasant Party organization. Of the 83,578 formulated votes, it has managed to collect 54,451, representing 62.2 %, followed by the Hungarian Party organization, with 16,155 votes (19.2 %) and the Workers' Block with 7,332 votes (8.7 %). The other political parties have obtained: the National Liberal

<sup>46</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria României în anii 1918-1940. Evoluția regimului politic de la democrație la dictatură*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1996, p. 105

<sup>47</sup> *Tribuna*, Oradea, no. 47, November 18<sup>th</sup> 1928, p. 5; no. 48, November 25<sup>th</sup> 1928, p.3

<sup>48</sup> Idem, no. 49, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1928, p. 2

<sup>49</sup> Idem, no. 51, December 16<sup>th</sup> 1928, p. 3

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*

Party (1,575), Lupu's Peasant Party (1,562) and the People's Party (1,397), a number of 1,120 votes being canceled and 630 rejected<sup>51</sup>.

Following these results, the National Peasant list sent in Chamber the following representatives:

Aurel Lazăr	National Peasant Party
Gheorghe Crișan	National Peasant Party
Victor Cădere	National Peasant Party
Teodor Rocsin	National Peasant Party
Teodor Popa	National Peasant Party
Gh. Popescu Ceica	National Peasant Party
Iosif Jumanca	Social Democrat Party
Tivadar Fischer	Zionist Movement

The Hungarian Party in its turn sent a representative in the person of Iosif Șandor<sup>52</sup>. On the occasion of the opening of the Parliament's works on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1928, Aurel Lazăr was elected Vice President of the Chamber of Deputies.

The period November 1928 - November 1933 was quite agitated in the Romanian political life. The impact of the economic crisis on the parliamentary activity was a significant one. In those four years, at the helm of the country were no less than nine successive governments and three parliamentary elections were held, although the length of a term was of four years. Neither in Bihor County things was better, the Bihor political life being full of events and seizures.

On April 4<sup>th</sup> 1931 Gh.Gh. Mironescu brought forward the government's resignation. After the longest government crisis in the interwar period his leading place at the Council of Ministers was taken by Nicolae Iorga, beginning with April 18<sup>th</sup> 1931. On April 30<sup>th</sup> Nicolae Iorga announced from the rostrum of the Chamber that new parliamentary elections had been fixed. These were going to be held on June 1<sup>st</sup> for Chamber and, on June 4-6<sup>th</sup> for Senate.

On the horizon of the parliamentary elections in the early June, the government signed an electoral cartel with I.G. Duca, the leader of the National Liberal Party. It was called the National Union. In fact, nationally, it won the elections obtaining 47.49 % of the votes, on the following place, the National Peasant Party with 14.99 %. The National Union sent 289 deputies in Chamber, and the Peasant Party 30 deputies. On the following places, far, have been placed the Liberal-National Party - Gh. Brătianu with 5.95 %, The People's Party with 4.92 %, the Hungarian Party with 4.75 %, of the National Christian Defense League with 3.89 %, the Peasant Party - Dr. Nicolae Lupu with 3.44 %, the Social Democratic Party with 3.25 %, the Democratic Peasant Party in cartel with the League against usury with 2.75 %, the Workers' Block with 2.52 %, the Jewish Party with 2.19 %<sup>53</sup>.

In Bihor County, 10 organizations have submitted lists, namely: the National Union, the National Peasant Party, the Hungarian Party, the Workers' Block, the Peasants Party - Dr. N. Lupu, the National Liberal Party - Gh. Brătianu, the Jewish Party, the People's Party, of the National Christian Defense League, and the Social Democrat Party. In Bihor, it was made a test, failed in

<sup>51</sup> *Monitorul Oficial*, Oradea, no. 2, of January 6<sup>th</sup> 1929, p. 16

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 65

<sup>53</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria Partidului Național Țărănesc*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1994, p. 167

fact, by the electoral cartel between the National Union and the Peasant Party group – Dr. N. Lupu, whose chairman in Bihor was Professor Anastasie Mavrodin.

In general, the parliamentary elections in June 1931 were conducted in an atmosphere quite tense<sup>54</sup>. Oradea's newspaper *Tribune* revealed this state of affairs. According to it "*The country was studded by police, arrests, beatings, seizure, stop citizens from voting and all what Mr. Argetoianu's evil mind could invent*"<sup>55</sup>. For the results to be those expected, in Bihor County's Prefecture head was sent from Bucharest the general inspector Nicolau. After the election process, his place was taken by Gheorghe Ghica.

In the entire Bihor County there were 75,542 voters actually voted. In the first place, with the most votes, 23,145, representing 30.5 %, the National Union stood. Runners were located, in order, the National Peasant Party with 15,402 votes (20.4 %), the Hungarian Party with 12,562 votes (16.5 %) the Workers' Block with 9,077 votes (12.7 %), the Peasants Party – Dr. Nicolae Lupu with 4,610 votes (6.17 %), the National Liberal Party – Gh. Brătianu with 3,417 votes (4.53 %), the Jewish Party 2,575 votes (3.47 %), the People's Party with 2,275 votes (3.0 %), the Social Democratic Party with 1618 votes (2.13 %) and the National Christian Defense League with 861 votes (1.3 %)<sup>56</sup>.

At the whole county level the ruling party won at Aleșd, Beius Cefa, Ceica, Marghita, Tinca, Tileagd and ranked the second place at Săcuieni, Vașcău and Ștei; the Hungarian Party won in Oradea, Biharea, Sălard and Săcuieni, topping is in second place at Salonta, Marghita and Tinca; the National Peasant Party had the best electoral at Beliu, Vașcău and Ștei, being the second at Cefa and Ceica and three at Tinca and Tileagd; the Workers' Block had a large electorate that was in the leadership at Salonta, the second place in Oradea, Aleșd, Beiuș, Biharea, Sălard and, the third place at Marghita; the Jewish Party received more votes in Oradea and Săcuieni, in both sites being situated on the third place.

The government Nicolae Iorga lasted a little longer than a year, between April 18<sup>th</sup> 1931 and May 31<sup>st</sup> 1932. The times were troubled, and the economic crisis on the work of this office aggravated seriously. On June 6<sup>th</sup> 1932 King Carol II appointed as Chairman of the Council of Ministers the National Peasant Alexandru Vaida Voevod. His mandate was well stated. In his investiture speech, Alexandru Vaida Voevod said that the main task of the cabinet was to hold free elections. The new elections were set for July 17<sup>th</sup> 1932 for Chamber, and July 20-26<sup>th</sup> for Senate<sup>57</sup>.

The election favored the National Peasant Party. It achieved 40.3 % of the votes, followed by the Liberals with 13.63 %. The National Peasants sent 274 deputies in Chamber, while the Liberals only 28<sup>58</sup>. The election campaign was conducted without major incidents. In the electoral battle has been engaged numerous political parties. Not more than 16 political parties disposed on 12 electoral lists obtained more than 2 % of the total votes. Following the National Peasant Party and the National Liberal were located in order the following formations: the National Liberal Party – Gheorghe Brătianu (6.53 %), the Peasant Party – Dr. Nicolae Lupu (5.72 %), the National Christian Defense League (5.32 %),

<sup>54</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 87

<sup>55</sup> *Tribuna*, Oradea, no. 22-23, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1931, p. 3

<sup>56</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 260; see also *Nagyvárad Napló*, 1931, no. 121, p. 1

<sup>57</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 91

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*

the Hungarian Party (4.75 %), the National Agrarian Party (3.64 %), the Social Democratic Party (3.38 %), the Grouping Corneliu Zelea Codreanu (2.37 %), the National Union (2.28 %), the Jewish Party (2.26 %) and the People's Party (2.16 %)⁵⁹.

Considering that his mission was fulfilled, Alexandru Vaida Voevod brought his mandate to the government on August 10<sup>th</sup> 1932<sup>60</sup>.

In Bihor County, things stayed the same. A large number of local organizations have submitted applications for the two Chambers of the Parliament. In all, no fewer than 12 county political organizations submitted their lists: the National Peasant Party, National Liberal Party – I.G. Duca, the National Liberal Party - Gh. Brătianu, the People's Party, the Peasants Party – Dr. Lupu, the National Christian Party – O. Goga, the National Union – N. Iorga, the Hungarian Party, the National Christian Defense League, the Social Democratic Party, the Jewish Party, the Agrarian League and the Conservative Party. There were a total turnout of 72,383 voters. The elections were won by the National Peasant Party, which received 32,214, that is 44.60 %. It was followed by the Hungarian Party with 10,983 votes (15.17 %), the National Liberal Party – Duca with 7,174 votes (9.9 %), the Peasant Party – Lupu with 5,764 votes (7.95 %), the National Christian Party – Goga with 2,327 votes (3.21 %), the National Union - Iorga with 3,744 votes (5.17 %), the Agrarian League with 2,260 votes (3.12 %), the Jewish Party with 2,083 votes (2.87 %), the National Liberal Party - Gh. Brătianu with 1,760 votes (2.43 %), the Social Democratic Party with 1,687 votes (2.33 %), the Conservative Party with 1,389 votes (3.12 %); the last places with an equal number of votes – 499 (0.68 %) – were located the People's Party and the National Christian Defense League<sup>61</sup>.

Interesting are the results of voting in Oradea. Here, from a total of 7,772 voters registered on the electoral lists have voted 7,167 (92.3 %). Winner was the Hungarian Party that has obtained 3,191. On the following places were situated the National Peasant Party (1,074 votes), the Jewish Party (972), the National Liberal Party – Duca (514) the Social Democratic Party (325), the Agrarian League (217), the People's Party (170), the Conservative Party (168), the National Liberal Party – Gh. Brătianu (149), the National Christian Party (143), the Peasant Party – Lupu (113), the National Christian Defense League (53) and the National Union – Iorga (50).

At the level of the whole county the Hungarian Party won, apart from Oradea, at Salonta, Sălard, Biharea and Săcuieni; the National Peasant Party won at Beiuș, Cefa, Tileagd, Marghita, Ștei and Vașcău while the Liberal Party – I. G. Duca was placed only the second at Cefa, the third place at Salonta, Beiuș and Săcuieni, and the fourth in Oradea<sup>62</sup>.

The series of the National Peasant cabinets in the interwar period ends in November 1933 with a new government Alexandru Vaida Voevod, activating between January 14<sup>th</sup> and November 9<sup>th</sup> 1933. From October 1<sup>st</sup> 1933, the Liberals led by I. G. Duca, launched a broad campaign to overthrow the government Vaida Voevod. On November 15<sup>th</sup> 1933 it was going to be held a great anti-government meeting in Bucharest. The government announced that it will not allow this. As a result of a meeting with Carol II, on November 9<sup>th</sup> 1933, Alexandru Vaida Voevod brought his mandate to the government. Under these circumstances Carol II

<sup>59</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria Partidului Național Țărănesc*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1994, p. 175

<sup>60</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 91

<sup>61</sup> *Nagyváradai Napló*, Oradea, no. 162, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1932, p. 1

<sup>62</sup> *Gazeta de Vest*, Oradea, no. 829, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1932, p. 1

appointed as Chairman of the Council of Ministers I. G. Duca. The legislative chambers were dissolved and the date of the new elections was announced: December 20<sup>th</sup> 1933 for Chamber, and December 28-29<sup>th</sup> 1933 for Senate<sup>63</sup>.

Organized by Liberals, the parliamentary elections ended in victory for the National Liberal Party. It achieved 50.99 % of the total votes translated into 300 deputies and 100 senators. The National Peasant Party won 13.92 % of the votes and 29 mandates of deputies, the National Peasant Party situated on the second place in the hierarchy of the political parties, that fact, placing it in the top of the opposition. The two parties were followed by the Peasant Party – Dr. N. Lupu with 11 mandates, the Liberal National Party – Gh. Brătianu with 6, the National Christian Defense League with 10, the National Agrarian Party with 9, the Hungarian Party with 9, the Radical Peasant Party with 8 and the Agrarian Union with 5 mandates<sup>64</sup>.

In Bihor County, the Liberals have taken precautionary measures to winning the elections. Thus, the National Peasant prefect Petru Popovici was replaced by the Liberal Ioan Picu Băncilă. Also, the head of the County Election Board was called Alexandru Atanasiu, one near to the liberals and the first President of the Bihor Court. Overall, in Bihor, have been received thirteen nomination lists headed by Tiberiu Moșoiu, the National Liberal Party (Duca), Gheorghe Crișan, the National Peasant Party, N. Zigre, the National Liberal Party (Gh. Brătianu), Ferdinand Hegedus, the Hungarian Party, Aurel Popa, the Agrarian Party, Alex. Mateescu, the Radical Peasant Party, Apostol Zamfir, the Peasant Party – Dr. N. Lupu, Dănilă Vereș, the Independent Peasant Party, Emil Böszörményi, the Social Democratic Party, Nicolae Constantinescu, the Iron Guard, Iosif Fischer, the Jewish Party, Ioan Pop, the People's Party and Emil Grigorescu, the Agrarian Union<sup>65</sup>.

The elections recorded a low turnout, the victory of the ruling party being expected. According to the statistics, 71,835 voters expressed their voting right. The best were placed the representatives of the National Liberal Party – I. G. Duca – 35,139, followed by the National Peasants – 12,745, the George's Liberals – 1,905, the Hungarians – 7,604, the National Agrarian Party – 2,754, the Radical Peasant Party – 1,461, the Peasant Party – Lupu – 5,389, the Social Democratic Party – 737, the Jews – 1,538, the Averescu's – 504, and the group Argetoianu – 716<sup>66</sup>.

For Senate, at the level of the whole Bihor County, only two political parties have submitted lists, the National Liberal Party (Duca) and the National Peasant Party. The Liberals had prevailed<sup>67</sup>.

The mandate for four years of Gheorghe Tătăreșcu's parliament and liberal government expired at the end of the year 1937. The Romanian political life had become quite complex. The most important parties: the National Liberal Party and the National Peasant Party were troubled by internal contradictions, and Carol II closely supervised the government that became one of the King's personal. On November 9<sup>th</sup> 1937, in the conditions the maturity of Tătăreșcu's government mandate was approaching, the king began consultations to form a new government. On November 14<sup>th</sup> 1937 Gheorghe Tătăreșcu resigned his government. After several consultations with the heads of the political parties, Carol II appointed at the head of a new government the same Gheorghe Tătăreșcu. On November 19<sup>th</sup> the

<sup>63</sup> Ion Mamina, Ioan Scurtu, *Guverne și guvernanți...*, p. 105

<sup>64</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria Partidului Național Țărănesc*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1994, p. 232

<sup>65</sup> *Gazeta de Vest*, Oradea, no. 1111, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 1933, p. 5; no. 1126, December 18<sup>th</sup> 1933, p. 7

<sup>66</sup> Idem, December 29<sup>th</sup> 1933, no. 1136, p. 1

<sup>67</sup> Idem, December 29<sup>th</sup> 1933, no. 1136, p. 1

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*

Parliament was dissolved and new elections were announced, on December 20<sup>th</sup> 1937 for Chamber and, on December 23-28<sup>th</sup> for Senate.

Given the political situation in the country, the electoral campaigning for the elections in December 1937 was conducted in an atmosphere quite confusing. They were the last elections held under a democratic spectrum in the interwar Romania. They concluded the most bizarre alliances, among them that concluded between the National Peasant Party and the Iron Guard, which was joined by Gh. Brătianu's liberal party. The National Peasant Party and the Iron Guard had not brought common lists of candidates<sup>68</sup>.

The electoral campaign has been entered by 13 main political parties and 53 secondary groups. The voting results were surprising. Although it had practically organized the elections, the National Liberal Party won only 35.9 % and most places in Chamber. But it did not obtain the 40 percent of votes necessary to gain the first and, together with it, the majority in Chamber. It was an unusual situation. For the first time in the interwar history of Romania, a government was losing the elections it had organized. On second place was the National Peasant Party, which won 20.4 %, followed by the party All for the Country with 15.38 %, the National Christian Party (9.15 %), the Hungarian Party (4.43 %), the National Party Liberal – Gh. Brătianu (3.89 %), the Radical Peasant Party (2.25 %). The last places were ranked by the Agrarian Party (1.70 %), the Jewish Party (1.49 %), the Social Democratic Party (0.94 %) and the People's Party (0.83 %). They did not manage to exceed the electoral threshold in order to have representatives in Parliament<sup>69</sup>.

In Bihor, immediately after determining the date of polling day, the lists of candidates both for the Chamber of Deputies and Senate have been submitted. The list of the National Liberal Party organization for the Chamber of Deputies included: Traian Moșoiu, Dr. Petru Popovici (Vaida's), N. Cosma, Dr. Peter Topa (Iorga's), Nae Popescu, A. Andru, Ion Mangra, Sofronie Sângeoreanu, Virgil Givulescu and A. Barna. The candidates for Senate were Ludovic Bica, Matei Vasiliu and Petrescu-Ercea. From the National Peasant organization for the Chamber of Deputies candidate: Dr. Teodor Roxin, Dr. Teodor Popa, Dr. Romulus Popa, Dr. Gheorghe Popescu-Ceica, Augustin Cosma, Dr. Cornel Vaida, C. Anastasiu, Dr. Petre Mărcuș and Dr. Virgil Vaida. On the list of senators were to be found: Dr. Augustine Ciavici, Iacob Niște, Dr. Alexander Reti and Traian Neagu<sup>70</sup>. In turn, the organization of the Radical - Peasant Party for the Chamber of Deputies was headed by lawyer Nicolae Holescu in Bucharest, the new Chairman of the organization of Bihor, that of the National Liberal Party - Gheorghe Brătianu, Nicolae Zigre, of the National Christian Party the Professor George Bota, and the Social Democratic Party, the lawyer Emil Bőszörményi<sup>71</sup>.

The Bihor electoral race has registered 11 political organizations. There were 85,340 voters for voting, but of the total votes 1,324 were canceled<sup>72</sup>. Of the remaining, the National Liberal Party won 33,858, the National Peasant Party 17,761, All for the Country 12,210, the Hungarian Party 8,160, the Jewish Party 2,894, the Radical Peasant Party 2,736, the Agrarian Party 1,932, the Liberal Party - Gh. Brătianu 1,609, the National Christian Party 1,490, the last places

<sup>68</sup> Keith Hitchins, *România 1866-1947*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1998, p. 413

<sup>69</sup> Ioan Scurtu, *Istoria Partidului Național Țărănesc*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, , 1994, p. 317

<sup>70</sup> *Noua Gazetă de Vest*, Oradea, no. 477, December 17<sup>th</sup> 1937, p. 3

<sup>71</sup> Idem, no. 482, December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1937, p. 1; Idem, no. 487, December 28<sup>th</sup> 1937, p. 4

<sup>72</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 264

being occupied by the People's Party (896 votes) and the Social Democratic Party (470 votes)<sup>73</sup>. In Oradea eight polling stations were established. The vote had 7,597 voters. The Hungarian Party emerged victorious with 2,261 votes, followed by the National Liberal Party with 1,366, the Jewish Party with 1,362, the National Peasant Party with 1,288, All for the Country with 537, the Social Democratic Party with 192, the National Christian Party with 90, the Radical Peasant Party with 83, the Agrarian Party with 70, the Liberal Party – Gh. Brătianu with 52 and the People's Party with 35 votes<sup>74</sup>.

During the election campaign all parties held an intense activity. The most active propaganda teams were the propaganda teams of the National Liberal Party which crossed the county up and down. They have held numerous popular meetings at Marghita, Borod, Tinca, Salonta, Cefa, Oșorhei, where they spoke to the voters Tiberiu Moșoiu and Petre Topa. The Hungarian Party organization held a large meeting in the hall of the Catholic circle in Oradea involving 400 voters. There have been delivered speeches by Markovits Mano, the chairman of the organization and Ștefan Soos, who underlined the historic importance that the elections on December 20<sup>th</sup> have had, and the need for the unity of the 180,000 Hungarians in the county in order to send at least three representatives in parliament and, such the Hungarians' interests not to have suffered<sup>75</sup>.

The election paved the way for the establishment of the authoritarian regime of Carol II. The policy pursued by him in the direction of the division of the parties showed their fruits on the occasion of these elections. Upon learning that the government did not win the elections, King Carol II started to change it before publication of the election results. On December 28<sup>th</sup> 1937, he accepted the resignation of Tătărescu's Government. Without proceed to the usual consultations with the heads of the political parties, the king appointed Octavian Goga, Chairman of the National Christian Party, to form a new government. Along with this government an important stage of Romania's history ended, one that was held under the auspices of a democratic political system.

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<sup>73</sup> *Nagyváradi Napló*, Oradea, December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1937, p. 9

<sup>74</sup> *Idem*, December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1937, p. 5

<sup>75</sup> Ion Zainea, *Economie și societate în Bihor...*, p. 263-264