

THE “ECHO” OF THE GOVERNMENT POLICY ON EDUCATION IN THE WRITTEN PRESS OF THE GOVERNING PARTIES (1919-1929)

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Abstract. *The principles that stood at the base of the educational policy in Romania during the first interwar decade, discussed and analyzed by the politicians of that time, by the decision-makers, teachers, parents, specialists etc., occupied frequently the columns of the newspapers. Thus, this study tries to emphasize the “echo” of the government policy on education in the written press, and to show what media considered as being relevant in terms of education in the period of 1919-1929. The study reveals and confirms the opposition of political parties; it is noticeable that while liberals praised in the “media house” the steps, actions and projects proposed by liberal ministers, the members of the Peasants Party were criticizing those actions. Unfortunately, the controversial reactions do not occur and do not remain only in the “quadrant” of the press, but they sometimes put their mark on the educational process, which not infrequently had suffered. Overall, however, despite divergences and critical attitudes, an important place in the concerns of those who had the power to legislate was occupied by the desire to create an education adapted to the specific conditions of our country, an education that takes into account the circumstance in which the Romanian state develops and the needs that had to be met.*

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1. Introduction

The educational policy of the government undergone radical changes after the World War I, a period marked by the common opinion that education had to be reconsidered, mainly because the reform of education had to take into account the new administrative organization of the country. Starting from the way in which the education had been organized in Romania before the World War I and analyzing the press published in the first decade of the interwar period, this paper aims to make an analysis of how the government's proposals regarding education were reflected in the press. The study assumes that the press is the place of written confrontation between parties, so we focused our attention towards the comments published in the written press by those political parties that dominated the political scene of the first decade of wars, the National Liberal Party and the Peasant Party. The National Liberal Party was the one that declared in the *Manifesto of the National Liberal Party*, published at the end of 1918, the party's intention of decreasing the number of illiterates and increasing the number of schools and teachers¹, while the Peasant's Party was the one that, in its *Declaration of Principles*, advocated for the spreading of learning through the establishment of schools in every village, through courses for adults, and through the formation of a well-trained and well-paid teaching staff².

2. The government's policy

a. General principles of organizing the education

The educational policy of the government regarding the general principles of how the education should be organized in Romania after the war determined controversial reactions in the press. Some articles were expressing a feeling of disappointment regarding the actions taken by the Parliament in order to satisfy the cultural needs of the people, the message being that the government and the parliament are silent as to the means through which the educational goals should be accomplished. Other

¹ Sbârna, 2001, 54.

² *Ibidem*, 128.

articles stressed over the expensiveness of the books, the school fees, the inability of some parents to pay school expenses, and the lack of basic learning materials in schools.

„The whole cultural initiative of the government consisted in a proposal of law regarding the reconstruction of new buildings and the repairing of old schools, for which it was predicted a credit of 3 million, when in reality this great and urgent problem should need ... 300 million!”³

In 1921, *Viitorul*, the central press of the National Liberal Party, called attention over the education by publishing an article about the expensiveness of the school books and the lack of schools. Under the subheading entitled “Teaching children it has become a luxury”, the author debated over the excessive expensiveness of books, mentioning that their price increased by 30-50% over a year. A comparison of prices before and after the war showed that the prices of the school books increased 10 to 15 times, fact that inevitably led to the persistence of the illiteracy⁴, many families being unable to pay the books, the fees, and all the other expenses in order to keep the children in schools. If before the war the costs for a child that was in school were around 50 lei in the lower secondary school and 80 lei in the upper level of secondary school, in 1921 the tax reached 500 lei and, respectively, 1,000 lei. These taxes were far outweighed by the fees charged by the private schools, where they would double. *Viitorul* underlined in this way the well-known problem of those who could not afford to send their children to school because of their material situation, problem that interfered with the objective of the government, that of reducing illiteracy⁵.

This problem had been also debated in the press of the People’s Party, on September 1925, the newspaper *Îndreptarea* publishing an article that came up with the proposal that poor students should take an examination which, in case of good

³ *Țara Nouă*, II, no. 209, 2 December 1920.

⁴ The reports show that before the World War I, the illiteracy registered 43% in the Old Kingdom, 40% in Transilvania, 60% in Bukovina and 94% in Basarabia. See for details Angelescu, f.a., p. 7.

⁵ *Viitorul*, XIV, no. 4081, 21 October 1921.

results, would allow them to stay in school without paying taxes or to benefit from a scholarship.⁶

The situation was even worse in the countryside, the primary schools from rural areas being in an unpleasant situation; there was a shortage of 25,000 teachers and a severe need of buildings⁷. The proposed solution to form the teachers that were needed for and to specialize them (in order to increase the quality of the educational process) was to establish schools that would train those who want to embrace teaching as a career. The real problem was that the rural schools, in their majority, were missing teachers mainly because the teachers were leaving the system. Their poor financial situation and poor salaries determined the majority of them to find another job and other places where to work. The same situation was encountered in secondary education; there were many vacancies and numerous teaching positions filled by substitutes. At the university level, the problems consisted in the lack of learning materials in the laboratories, the books and courses had exorbitant prices, being available only for the students with a good financial situation, while the student houses were insufficient, and the life in those dormitories became unbearable, mainly because of the terrible food and their bad administration.

„... While millions upon millions are wasted to satisfy political partisans from all kinds of committees and missions, the government doesn't find money for the maintenance of student dormitories. Even the university professors endure the same privations as students, except those who, to save their unbearable financial situation, engage themselves in the service of the governing party, which gives them the possibility of doing jobs incompatible with intelligentsia, or in the service of capitalism, becoming totally dependent of that...”⁸

The reactions in the press were sometimes very controversial. While *Viitorul* exhibited empathy for the work of the liberal minister of education, Constantin Angelescu, the

⁶ See *Îndreptarea*, VII, no. 212, 22 September 1925.

⁷ See *Viitorul*, XIV, no. 4081, 21 October 1921.

⁸ *Patria*, VI, no. 36, 22 February 1924.

newspaper *Patria* (the central newspaper of the Romanian National Party) was publishing critical remarks regarding those actions. For instance, on February 1924, *Patria* published the article “The Crisis of Education”, article which stated that minister Angelescu is not ceasing to congratulate himself through the liberal press for his work, work that it is actually confined only to inspections and expensive banquets⁹. Indeed, the liberal press included a lot of articles which emphasized the work of Angelescu, offering statistics that showed how many new schools were built and how many old schools were reconstructed or repaired during the Angelescu’s mandate as a minister of education. *Patria*, on the other side, highlighted the problems faced by each stage of education and by education in general, which, in its opinion, was “threatened with a complete disruption”¹⁰.

In harmony with *Patria*, *Aurora* published in December 1924 an article that underlined the need for the culture of the masses and the need to eliminate illiteracy. Among other things, the minister of education was asked to take action on improving the material condition of the teachers and on improving the education in general. The main idea was that solving the problems that persisted in the Romanian society regarding the cultural stage of the people would be a solution for the social reform of the villages which included the extirpation of the disruptive influence of the alcohol over the people, the disruptive influence of the cities over the villages, and the replacement of the taverns with “reading houses” or libraries¹¹.

The controversial opinions on education continued to be expressed in the newspapers. Another issue of debate was the law on primary education; the press considered that in theory the law provided beautiful things and easy to apply if we would live in a country with a strong educational past, but in our country those principles will hardly find their fruitful achievement. This pessimism was fueled by the reality that in Romania were neither kindergartens (apart from some cities and some provinces with minority population), nor normal schools for teachers, which meant that we lacked the first level of the educational structure

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ *Aurora*, IV, no. 942, 25 December 1924.

and the staff that was needed for at that level. In addition, the teachers, “few, hungry, and demoralized”, barely coped with the level of primary education, not having enough power to cope with the complementary one. The suggestion was that the government should look at the social problem in all its extent, and endorse the most urgent means for straightening the terrible situation.¹²

Îndreptarea, the press of the People’s Party, praised the work of their own minister, P. P. Negulescu¹³, and criticized the efforts made by Angelescu, declaring that the work done by Negulescu during his term as a minister of public instruction under the People’s Party government “was objective and civilized” and the political considerations and political interests were expelled from where only the exclusive interest of the schools should dominate. The same newspaper accused minister Angelescu that, together with the general director of the primary and normal-primary education, overloaded the budget with unnecessary expenses and unnecessary jobs. It was stated that there were counties that had 10 or 20 “political parasites” placed in jobs only to compensate their electoral merits. Besides, Angelescu was accused by building schools without a methodical plan and by forcing people to pay contributions¹⁴. Moreover, the same newspaper sustained that the interest of Angelescu was only to increase the adherence of new members to the liberal club, regardless of the means employed¹⁵.

On the other hand, the liberal newspaper *Viitorul* praised the work of Angelescu publishing articles in which Angelescu was portrayed as being the man “who is interested with so much love by the fate of education at all levels and who is inspired by the best intentions in solving the problems of the Romanian school”¹⁶. Moreover, *Viitorul* published articles that were attacking the opposition proposals and comments, so that both, the project of P. P. Negulescu, submitted for public debate in his quality as minister of public instruction in 1921, and the project proposed by I. Petrovici, the minister of education in 1926-1927, encountered opposition in the liberal press. As an example, from

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ See Negulescu, 1927, II.

¹⁴ *Îndreptarea*, VI, no. 588, 9 December 1924.

¹⁵ *Îndreptarea*, VI, no. 581, 2 December 1924.

¹⁶ *Viitorul*, XIV, no. 4215, 1 April 1922.

the article “The reorganization of education” we can perceive the disapproval regarding those projects on the grounds that the draft organizational principles that regard education should be established in the limits and based on the Constitution, and not before the adoption of the fundamental law of a state.

„ [...] must not be forgotten that, before we have a Constitution, which establishes general directives, all these projects are simple patches of various shapes and colors, added to an old cloth, which tomorrow will be changed. ... The project proposed by Negulescu is of course frivolous, the law not embracing multiple issues related to the reorganization of the education but still adding one stone to the entire mosaic. Tomorrow, when the Constitution will determine the attitude of the State towards education and will give directives in a particular direction – all these disparate projects will be a serious obstacle to a normal development.”¹⁷

Criticism continued in the same terms in December 1921 under the heading “Last information”, which included an article entitled “The education reformer”, article that addressed multiple critical comments at the address of Negulescu¹⁸. Negulescu was mainly condemned because he considered himself as being the “reformer” of education, ignoring the work of his predecessors. The press considered this declaration as being a proof of disrespect and lack of intelligence by ignoring the work of his predecessors, mainly the work of Spiru Haret who contributed fundamentally to the strengthening of education in Romania before the war. The article “A reformer defends himself”, in the same manner, criticizes the work of Negulescu, mentioning that the law that Negulescu is assuming as being his work it was actually a plagiarism of Angelescu’s activity. It was also stated that Negulescu, “unable to conceive some reforms, as it was unable to take any positive and useful measures, did nothing else than copied the decrees laws of Angelescu in order to create a pedestal based on the work of others”¹⁹.

¹⁷ *Viitorul*, XIII, no. 3962, 2 June 1921.

¹⁸ *Viitorul*, XIV, no. 4126, 14 December 1921.

¹⁹ *Viitorul*, XIV, no. 4127, 15 December 1921.

The problems that the educational system was facing and the activity of the Ministry of Education were once more debated in *Patria*, the central newspaper of the Romanian National Party, in September 1924, under the title “The new school year”. The article brings into focus the issue of the reopening of schools’ gates, highlighting the flaws and the causes which, according to the Romanian National Party, form the basis of the failures and the shortcomings in education. The main reason of the poor functioning of the schools and of the whole educational system it was considered to be the hundreds and thousands of laws and decrees that had no coherence and no continuity, that embraced different mentalities of the governments that after 1920 manifested opposed opinions on how the unification of education should take place. The newspaper reiterates the idea that education was better left to the provinces and not centralized at the governmental level²⁰.

The ministers were criticized because “they didn’t research over the needs of the cities and regions, but they established the school that the vanity of the governmental political human being from that part of the country was asking for”²¹. The result was that there are a lot of schools purely intellectual, and only a few practical preparatory schools.

„Thus we found ourselves with little practical career preparatory schools, industry and commerce, and too many schools purely intellectual. In ten years we will have a considerable number of proletarian intellectuals, and the cities will still miss the craftsmen and the merchants.”²²

The article concluded that what was necessary to enterprise and what should be the main concern of the ministers of public instruction was to bring a better educational guidance in this field, a stability of the educational system and a stability of teachers.

²⁰ *Patria*, VI, no. 204, 25 September 1924.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*.

b. The issue of the professorship

The problem of the insufficient number of teachers appears briefly described in *Viitorul*, on April 1, 1922. The author of the article, Mihail Marinescu, tried to alert the public about the small number of teachers and the growing tendency of young people to embrace totally different careers than that of teaching. Obviously, the professorship involved, at least initially, a spirit of material sacrifice. To become a teacher the person had to go through a lot of tests and examinations, to leave his place of birth, and to spend a pretty long period of time until obtaining a stable and permanent job. So, the opportunity to get faster in other careers encouraged young people to decide for a military career (which asked only 6 or 7 years of school plus 2 years of preparation in the military school) or for various administrative jobs which were already available to them when they finished their baccalaureate exam, or, more profitable than those two, for the Commercial Academy or the Polytechnic school. Among other things, the article suggested that the high-school should be organized in that way to assure the preparation of teachers and to offer the students elements from all specialties and so for to prepare them for the career as a secondary teacher.²³

„It is said, and rightly, that we live in an epoch of acute materialism, that the necessities of life, the desire to win and therefore to have a wider life, more convenient, cannot be achieved otherwise than through the studies that the high-school has to offer, moreover through studying mathematics. It is also stated that our country has industrial trends and that will need many, many engineers and technical specialists. This statement it is justified till to a point. The intellectual road of mankind it is not a straight line but a winding one with heights and downs which represent periods of psychological uplifts and periods of material interests. We are in the era of descent which corresponds now to the study of sciences, producing wealth for the individual and the society. The sector of humanities disappeared for the moment, with the advent of cinema, aviation, and wireless telegraphy. [...]

²³ *Viitorul*, XIV, no. 4215, 1 April 1922.

The duty of those called to reform education is to not get out of their hands the brakes of classicism and to know how to lead a chariot – even using mathematical solutions – through the most dangerous places.”²⁴

In 1923, the problems faced by the teachers became more acute and visible. There were protests organized by teachers in different locations in the country, protests in which the teachers were threatening to resign if their demands regarding salaries would not find favorable settlement. At that time, at the head of the ministry of public instruction was the liberal Constantin Angelescu. Therefore, the pages of *Viitorul* (the liberal press), instead of offering details about the protests, were writing about the liberal minister’s activity regarding the numerous school buildings built through his initiative, naming Angelescu as “the second Haret of education”. In response, *Aurora* published on June 2, 1923 the article „The demagogy of C. Angelescu, the minister of schools”, making reference to the last visit of Angelescu in Brăila County, where the minister wanted to prove to the minister of finance that the schools were built only with the peoples’ money, not the state money. The newspaper revealed that in reality the majority of the schools that were visited those days were rebuilt, while the rest of them were only subject to slight reparations²⁵. Related to this issue, “The crisis of the Romanian culture”²⁶, manifested a critical attitude towards the miserable reality that surrounded the teachers, noting that the efforts for the consolidation and construction of schools buildings were overcome by the misery in which the teachers were living. On December 7, 1923, *Aurora* continues in the same manner, criticizing the activity of the minister of education, entitling the article “The minister of schools, but not the minister of teachers” and naming Angelescu as being “the minister of the walls”²⁷.

The newspaper *Dreptatea* used similar appellatives regarding the person of minister Angelescu, naming him as “the maniac of the vacuum contour” and describing his activity as a kind of “acrobatics”. The school is presented as being the place

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ *Aurora*, III, no. 480, 2 June 1923.

²⁶ *Aurora*, III, no. 539, 10 August 1923.

²⁷ *Aurora*, III, no. 639, 7 December 1923.

where the students are left in the care of disappointed teachers who are waiting for the time to elapse, with the hope that it will bring a better future situation²⁸.

c. School fees and other administrative matters

The media didn't omit to underline in its pages the actions taken by the ministry of public instruction regarding administrative matters. So it was the article "The exams at university" which stated that the introduction of exams in order to be declared admitted in a university represents a disguised «*numerus clausus*», an illegal and stupid measure taken by Angelescu. Moreover, *Aurora* criticized another newspaper, *Universul*, which was looking to find a justification for this measure, bringing the ridiculous argument that there were many fake diplomas and a lot of Romanian students enrolled at various universities from abroad without even knowing to write. *Aurora* was insisting on solving those cases of fake diplomas and certificates through the judicial way and not through this measure of introducing the exams, considered to be "the entering through the back door of an absurd measure and an absurd goal as that of «*numerus clausus*»"²⁹.

With respect to the fees established by the ministry and which had to be paid by students (for example at the Faculty of Law from Bucharest the fee for bachelor degree was 1,500 lei, and, respectively, 2,000 lei for the doctorate) the article "University fees. A scandal and a provocation" stated that the increase of taxes will prevent the poor young people to reach a bachelor degree. The newspaper *Aurora* addressed, in this way, a request towards the Minister regarding the revision of taxes and the adoption of such measures that would improve the living of the young university class.

„The poor student must wrestle with the owner who requires him 1,500 lei monthly for the most modest room; the shopkeeper who raises the prices of meals every day; the tailor, the bookseller, all these speculators who make impossible the life of a student. Well, now the student

²⁸ *Dreptatea*, II, no. 79, 20 January 1928.

²⁹ *Aurora*, III, no. 590, 10 October 1923.

wakes up with another opponent, who speculates him, the state.”³⁰

The discussion about the shortcomings in schools, the expensiveness of the books and the sums that had to be paid as school fees came back into the attention of the press at the beginning of the 1925-1926 school year, when, unlike the liberal press who had only words of appreciation for the work of Angelescu, the press of the Peasant Party published articles that emphasized the fact that education became a luxury, a thing that only rich people could afford.

„Come in the courtyard of a high-school, or a commercial school, or a vocational school. You will find out how expensive are school books; how high are school taxes; how increased are the prices for the uniforms required by the regulations; and what fantastic prices ask the hosts for the maintenance of a scholar whose parents live in the province or in the countryside ... And after this short and easy investigation you will conclude rightly that education has become a luxury – the preserve of the rich people. The civil servant, the soldier, the peasant, the priest, and the rural teacher cannot cover the expenses required in order to send their child to a secondary school.”³¹

In the period of 1926-1927, I. Petrovici (member of the People’s Party) was at the head of the ministry of public instruction. During this time, both, the liberal and the peasant newspapers were criticizing the activity of Petrovici, declaring that “these months of his activity were sufficient to rank him as being not only the most neutral Minister of Instruction but also the one who in a short period of time disorganized the school and discouraged the teachers”³². *Viitorul* claimed that Petrovici decided to close eight regular schools, of which two have hardly been reopened, that he tried to engage the ministry in doubtful affairs and took some actions that were in opposition to the

³⁰ *Aurora*, III, no. 606, 28 October 1923.

³¹ *Aurora*, V, no. 1179, 11 October 1925.

³² *Viitorul*, XIX, no. 5622, 23 November 1926.

provisions of the law by granting privileges to minorities in the detriment of the Romanian people, or by approving new examinations to students who fell the exams, with the recommendation that the exams to not be done too seriously etc. One month later, the same newspaper published facts that were describing some of the above actions, making public the cases of two primary schools, one of which had been closed and the other reduced to 2-3 rooms, so being unable to offer education to more than 100-120 students, instead of 300-400, the typical number for a primary school. As a result, Romanian population had to enroll their children in schools belonging to minorities, because the Romanian schools had not enough capacity³³. The discussion on this issue was reopened one month later, in December 1926, when *Viitorul* published the letter received from the principal of the school in question, which complained that the normal school had been evacuated from the building and moved in train wagons, the vocational school was thrown in the street and another primary school was closed³⁴. It is interesting to see that the liberal newspaper *Viitorul* brought this problem into the public attention only in 1926, after Angelescu's mandate as a minister, while *Patria*, the newspaper of the Romanian National Party, published articles that concerned this issue since August 1925. Therefore, in the article "The scandal from at the normal school in Satu-Mare", *Patria* emphasized that the school in question was almost closed, so the students were forced to go to schools in neighborhood cities (Sighet and Oradea-Mare)³⁵. There were also given some other examples of schools from Transylvania which encountered the same difficulties, the main cause being the lack of resources, the lack of government funds and State aid, the schools being financially supported neither by the State nor by the civil society³⁶.

In 1927, *Viitorul* is the one that continued to criticize the activity of Petrovici, accusing him of creating a philosophy chair for him at the University of Bucharest, and a chair for his son at the Law Faculty in Iași³⁷. In a subsequent issue, published on

³³ *Viitorul*, XIX, no. 5625, 26 November 1926.

³⁴ *Viitorul*, XIX, no. 5654, 31 December 1926.

³⁵ *Patria*, VII, no. 182, 23 August 1925.

³⁶ See *Patria*, VII, no. 229, 22 October 1925.

³⁷ *Viitorul*, XX, no. 5664, 14 January 1927.

February 4, 1927, two articles have been printed in which the name of Petrovici was involved; in one of them Petrovici was accused that he approved a state fund of 60 million lei for Hungarian schools, while unfinished Romanian schools were deteriorating. *Viitorul* considered that “this amount of money represented one of the conditions which were at the basis of Averescano-Hungarian electoral pact”. The second article referred to the conflict between I. Petrovici and P. P. Negulescu (the predecessor of Petrovici at the ministry of public instruction), accusing Petrovici by ignoring the studies realized by his predecessors regarding the needs of the Romanian educational system and drawing up a bill of secondary education which had opposing trends to those considered as necessary in order to reform the secondary education. Negulescu, former minister of public instruction during the first Averescu’s governance, considered the project proposed by Petrovici as a project that ignored the whole concept of the People’s Party regarding education, project that could have adverse effects on the overall image of the People’s Party, especially that there were signs of violent attacks against this project during parliamentary sessions³⁸.

The administrative issues were often the subject of the debate inside the columns of the newspapers, the press including statements that accused the ministers by controlling the body of the Ministry, and by controlling the way in which the inspectors were recruited and appointed in administrative jobs. *Viitorul* brought to the public attention some famous cases of inspectors which lacked the necessary studies or exams but were in positions of inspectors or revisers, or were still in jobs despite the fact that were defendants in criminal proceedings for fraud or forgery convictions. The liberal newspaper declared, in this context, that “the anarchy spread out: no one knows exactly how many people are hired at the ministry of instruction as the control body of the ministry; for a department or a chair there are 5-7 appointments,

³⁸ *Viitorul*, XX, no. 5681, 4 February 1927; Nicolae Iorga is the one who wrote about the educational reform projects of Negulescu and Petrovici, stating that both projects included also original ideas, mentioning, through others, the development of personal aptitudes which are very important for the development of a human being... See Iorga, 1928, 342-343.

from inspectors to the minister, each one of them trying to impose their protégés...”³⁹.

At the end of Petrovici’s mandate as a minister, *Aurora* published the article “A fall and a parable” which detailed the activity and the governing concept in the mind of Averescu, the Peasant’s Party press summarizing the views of Averescu’s ruling in a simple formula: “I am the government”, which in the thought of general Averescu became “I am the state”⁴⁰.

In June 1927, the portfolio of the ministry of public instruction was retaken by Angelescu, the Peasant’s Party press starting a new campaign in the name of the Romanian education, with a different attitude towards Angelescu’s work. Without criticizing the school construction campaign done by Angelescu, *Aurora* actually published an interview of him, under the title “The Romanian peasant the builder of the schools”⁴¹, interview which underlined the efforts made by the Romanian peasantry in creating the places of culture in our country. The article mentioned that the problem of the Romanian schools still exists, but the ministry of education imposed it as a task of it.

„The placement of the students will be solved, undoubtedly, according to the new necessities of our country, giving special attention to the technical education – so as to arrive at a decongestion of the secondary high-school level. Guidance towards agricultural and vocational schools, etc., should be effective and should offer the possibilities of doing so. It is a known fact that good craftsmen, those who have responsibilities and occupy the first places among the workers in an enterprise, are foreigners... Instead, we produce graduates with baccalaureate and diplomas – those who are aspiring to positions of clerks. In addition, in the Ministry of Education’s view, there is a decentralization of education, which would be a new impetus and a reduction of expenses. Not only in municipalities, but also in other

³⁹ *Viitorul*, XX, no. 5763, 14 May 1927.

⁴⁰ *Aurora*, VII, no. 1675, 8 June 1927.

⁴¹ *Aurora*, VII, no. 1769, 24 September 1927.

small cities, it is necessary to build new schools. The benefits are incalculable.”⁴²

On the other hand, Angelescu was criticized in the pages of *Țărănismul*, the article “Students on the roads...” published in September 1928 bringing accusations against Angelescu’s policy; the paper entitled Angelescu as being “the petroleum man of fallen walls”, while the reform that he proposed for the secondary school was described as being bad envisaged and not applicable to our schools and our children⁴³. The gaps in educational system and the lack of material resources were also emphasized in the article, being reiterated the idea that the liberal policy was designed to shut down the schools for children of rural areas, discouraging the children of the lower and working classes to enter into schools and to follow education, giving a chance to education only to sons of noblemen which had the necessary resources to pay high fees, to enroll into high-schools or into private schools⁴⁴.

3. Conclusions

The written press of the governing political parties of the first interwar decade includes in its pages political, social, cultural articles, which deal with general or specific issues. Noteworthy is the trend of the liberal press, the newspaper *Viitorul*, to insert therein, not infrequently, enthusiastic articles which praised the work of liberal ministers while they were at the head of a ministry, while the projects proposed by the ministers coming from the opposition (from the Peasant’s Party or the People’s Party) were attacked violently and devalued publicly.

The analysis of the written articles published in the newspaper during 1920s leads us to the conclusion that while the liberal press (*Viitorul*) published articles criticizing members of other political parties, *Patria*, *Îndreptarea*, *Țărănismul*, and *Aurora* were criticizing the actions taken by the liberals, namely the activity of Constantin Angelescu, minister of public instruction during 1918-1919, 1922-1926, and 1927-1928.

⁴² *Aurora*, VII, no. 1771, 26 September 1927.

⁴³ *Țărănismul*, IV, no. 22-23, 30 September 1928.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

The overall image of the Romanian school and education in the first decade of the interwar period, the crisis of the Romanian culture, the governmental politics, and the problems faced by the educational system appeared frequently reflected in the columns of the newspapers. The educational system, as a whole, was described as being characterized by general instability, by anomalies and disorientation, fueled by general instability and lack of design manifested at the governmental level, attested by a lot of ministerial orders, given without any logic and any order⁴⁵.

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⁴⁵ See *Patria*, VII, no. 166, 2 August 1925.