# Dying on the beach and other stupid moves you can make before the elections

The political scene is on fire in Romania. The tense but stable political environment created by the People’s Party pragmatic alliance of conservatives, regionalists, and the National Liberals has been demonstrated itself much flimsier than previously though (or maybe just fundamentally incompatible). Glued together by the popularity, charisma, and gravitas of Alexandru Averescu, famous war hero and semi-covert director of anti-socialist gangs, the alliance exploded recently as Averescu was unable to contain the rabid antisemitism his copartisans directed at their National Liberals “allies”.

The big controversy was sparked by the publication of a racist and antisemitic cartoon published in a conservative rag, slandering PNL leader Ion Brătianu as a friend of Jews and “foreign enemies” (a common label used to attack him for his role in enshrining minority rights in the Constitution of 1923). While this would otherwise pass under the radar as an underhanded jab made in poor taste, it soon blew out of proportion when it was revealed (or possible leaked) that the commissioner of that cartoon was a close friend of General Averescu and Deputy for the People’s Party.

The broader media was quick to attack the PP and Deputies and Senators of PNL demanded inquiries in Parliament over this gross offense. On the other hand, the conservative core of the People’s Party jumped to the defence of their man, with the more radical members threatening violence on “traitors and Jew lovers”. The loudest voices came from the National-Christian Defence Leage, a fascist party founded by Alexandru Cuza and ally of convenience of the PP against Bolshevik agitators at the beginning of the decade.

For his part, General Averescu remained long quiet on the matter, eventually coming out in defence of his “misguided friend”. This proved to be the straw that droplet that overfilled the cup, as his refusal to condemn the doubling down of his copartisans was picked up by the King. Ferdinand I, usually quiet on matters of parliamentary politics, spoke to the press that the recent controversy surrounding the People’s Party “reveals the lack of faith [they] have on the Constitution of 1923 and the rights it bestows upon [the King’s] subjects”. He would also completely shatter Averescu’s nation-wide respect by saying he “expected more from [his] generals”.

With the coalition dead on the water and PP at the head of public ire, this leaves the PNL in a weak position against the National Peasant’s Party, the PNȚ, who had been strategically quiet during the whole affair. Likewise silent, the Transylvanian minority parties realized they stood to gain more by joining forces instead of stealing votes from each other in their overlapping electoral regions. The newly formed German-Hungarian Bloc is thus expected to win several dozen seats in the less Romanian areas of the region.