

HOW MINORITIES LIVE

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

M. GÉZA SZÜLLŐ ON SITUATION OF HUNGARIANS IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

At a meeting of the Budget Committee in the Prague Parliament on November 11th, M. Géza Szüllő, President of the United Hungarian Party's Club, made a striking speech in which, amongst other things, he said:

"It is no use insisting abroad that in this Republic the minorities enjoy the fullest minority rights and that their rights here are wider than in any other country. In full consciousness of my responsibility, I declare, here and now, that this is not the case. It is true that of late the Government has begun to rouse itself and is seeking by double-dealing to come to terms both with the Germans and with the Hungarians. We who were subjects of a thousand-years-old imperium know how to distinguish between rights and alms. We refuse to accept alms and secret support, and insist on the Hungarians living here being given their full rights. The Minister of Foreign Affairs should be aware and take cognizance of the fact that both the Hungarians and the Germans are dissatisfied. The reason of our dissatisfaction is that the Government would like to prevent the cultural progress of the Hungarians exceeding the intellectual level of the peasant. We have scarcely any grammar-schools and no universities. In the sphere of economy all our institutions, all our banks and savings-banks have been absorbed. In that of politics, we are being subjected to a ruthless process of assimilation..."

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs is an historian and must know that *historia est magistra vitae*. The case of Austria might be a lesson to us, for the spirit of our present Government is nothing but a perpetuation of the policy followed by pre-war Austria."

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HUNGARIAN VICE-BURGOMASTER OF KASSA SENTENCED UNDER DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC ACT TO ONE MONTH'S IMPRISONMENT

Kassa is the second largest town of Slovakia. At a meeting of its town council held on February 27th last at which the question whether the contract for the erection of an elementary school should be given to a Czech architect named Brepta or not, M. Ladislav Tost, the Hungarian Vice-Burgomaster of the town, voted against the motion with the words „No, No, Never!“. For this he was sentenced to a week's imprisonment and a fine of 2000 crowns. He appealed, and the Provincial Office remitted the sentence of imprisonment, but ordered the fine to be paid. Parallel with these proceedings separate criminal proceedings were instituted against M. Tost under the Defence of the Republic Act. At his trial, which was held in Kassa before the District Court on November 2nd, the accused declared that what he had said was „No, no, never to Brepta!“ and that what he meant by it was that Brepta could not possibly get the contract, seeing that the town had had a lot of trouble with him already. Although M. Maxon, the Burgomaster appointed

by the Government, as witness stated that M. Tost did not want to agitate against the State, and although his statement was supported by another witness, M. Herha, who said that M. Tost had used the expression in a joking manner, the Court sentenced this prominent member of the Hungarian minority to a month's imprisonment.

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HOW HUNGARIANS SUFFER FOR LACK OF HUNGARIAN SCHOOLS

The Hungarian school in the district of Körösmező, which had existed for 170 years, was confiscated after the change of rule, and a Ruthenian elementary school opened in the building. For nine years the Hungarian school had no premises. Then teaching in Hungarian began again. But the Treasury of the State Forests, under whose patronage the school stood, and which therefore was legally bound to support it, refused, giving various excuses, to pay the teacher. On 26th November 1934 the Provincial Office in Ungvár closed the school, declaring that it had no teacher whose qualifications complied with the requirements of the law. The parish vestry appealed against this decision to the Supreme Court of Administration under the Act of 1926 which says that persons with a matriculation certificate are qualified to teach in elementary schools. The teacher at Körösmező possessed this certificate and had several years' experience as a teacher, so that there was no reason to close the school. That act left 77 Hungarian children without schooling. To crown all, the School Inspector's Office in Rahó made the District Office fine parents whose children did not attend school. Thirty-five heads of families had to pay altogether 333 Czech crowns and to sit in jail for 319 days. The rest, in order to escape being sentenced, sent their children to Ruthenian and Czech schools. The Hungarian children who attend those schools must learn even their Bible lessons in Ruthenian or Czech, which is particularly hard on them.

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THREE YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR A SLOVAK REVISIONIST

The November 3rd issue of the "Lidové Noviny", a newspaper in close touch with the Hradžín, reports that the District Court in Pozsony (Bratislava) has sentenced Francis Uherik, an inhabitant of Magasfalu, to three years' imprisonment. He was charged with having been in correspondence with the Slovak exiles in Vienna and with Louis Koren, the founder of the American Slovak Revision League. The accused was also charged with propagating the creation of a Slovak Revision League in Czecho-Slovakia and with circulating in Slovakia an anti-Czech periodical called "Slovenská Revizia".

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PAMPHLET CONCERNING PÖSTYÉN CONGRESS OF SLOVAK PEOPLE'S PARTY CONFISCATED

A pamphlet relating to the Seventh Congress of the Slovak People's Party held in Pöstyén, a detailed report of which appeared recently in this paper, was

on November 12th confiscated in the St. Andrew Printing Office by order of the Public Prosecutor of Pozsony (Bratislava).

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COMPARISON BETWEEN PRAGUE AND BUDAPEST

In an article in the "Prager Tageblatt" of 1st November we read that a non-political visit to Budapest would do much to open the eyes of the Prague traveller. On one of the busiest motor-bus lines (that from Vörösmarty-tér to Castle Hill in Buda) a little badge on the Hungarian conductor's breast says that he speaks German, Czech and Rumanian. According to the "Prager Tageblatt" this must not be regarded merely as a clever way of attracting tourists, but even if it were, "Prague might be ashamed of itself, for it is inconceivable that anyone there would ever parade his knowledge of German, far less that of Hungarian."

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NEW CZECH ATTACK ON POLISH MINORITY IN SILESIA

Reports from Warsaw (published in the Polish papers on October 1) describe how a Polish boy was shot by a Czech customs officer because he was caught bringing some meat with him from Polish territory home to Silesia. Seeing the meat was not enough to authorize him to use his rifle, the customs officer cycled to the nearest city where he bought ten pounds of meat which he put beside the dead body. Subsequently it turned out that he had been transferred from Ruthenia to Silesia for similar abuses.

We have no reason to doubt the trustworthiness of the Polish papers. This is merely one of the many examples to show how quick the Czech customs officers are in using their arms against the defenceless population on the borders, whenever these poor people are driven by their misery to buy cheap food in the border land of the neighbouring States. It also shows that the Czech authorities punish the customs officers for their illegal actions by transferring them from one minority district to another, encouraging them to continue their abuses at the expense of another minority.

In conclusion we would note that M. Leo Wolf, a Polish member of the Prague Parliament, has appealed to the Government against the atrocities of the Czech authorities committed against the Polish Party at the recent elections in Silesia.

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RUMANIA

A St. BARTHOLEMW'S NIGHT PROMISED TO THE HUNGARIANS

The November 12th issue of the "*Glas Romanesca*" of Székelyudvarhely has threatened the Hungarians of Transylvania with a "St. Bartholemew's night". The Presidential Council and Central Executive Board of the General Hungarian Party of Rumania on November 14th held a meeting at which the deep indignation caused by the atrocious threat, which was printed under the protection of the censor, was voiced. The meeting resolved to carry this unparalleled case of agitation before Parliament, — if necessary, before the

international tribunals. The Hungarian Party established the fact that although the inflammatory articles against the Hungarians appearing for years in the Rumanian press were flagrant examples of agitation against a nationality, not only were they passed by the censor, but the authorities even neglected to take criminal proceedings against their authors. The effect of these incendiary articles, published with impunity was to create an atmosphere of hostility which in many places made itself felt in an intolerable treatment of the Hungarians ("Keleti Ujság", November 16).

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HUNGARIAN AUTHOR BANISHED FROM RUMANIA AND ESCORTED OVER THE FRONTIER

Three years ago the foreign press also published reports on the case of the engineer Dr. Gustavus Kövér, vice-president of the County Bihar branch of the General Hungarian Party of Rumania, who was deprived overnight of his Rumanian citizenship. A similar event has taken place now in Nagyvárad, where a Hungarian author, Louis Papp, was served with a writ of expulsion and escorted over the frontier at a few hours' notice. Louis Papp settled in Nagyvárad in 1918 and soon made a name for himself with his writings, which foreign magazines gladly published. In 1926 he opted and became a Rumanian citizen. The reason why he has been banished is that he was president of the "Bihar Tourists' Club", a minority society against which the Rumanian newspapers trumped up charges of irredentism. The charges were not proved, but Louis Papp was ordered to leave the country at once. He was forced to go, leaving his family and his property behind him ("Keleti Ujság", Oct. 31).

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HUNGARIAN NEWSPAPERS CONFISCATED AND SUPPRESSED

The Prefect of the county of Háromszék has caused the "Székely Nép" of Sepsiszentgyörgy to be confiscated, because the editor refused to publish one of his speeches ("Keleti Ujság", October 26). The "Brassói Lapok", a daily appearing in Brassó, has been suppressed for an indefinite period by the Minister of the Interior. No reason was stated. Even the Rumanian press is up in arms against the new Press Bill. The minority press has even greater reason to dread it. A natural anxiety has been aroused, for instance, by the measure refusing to permit any but "Rumanians" editing political papers. The Minister of the Interior will be invested with the right of suppressing any newspaper financed, directly or indirectly, by other nationals and of instituting proceedings for placing the assets of the owners of such papers under control. This will prove a great stimulus to denunciations. Only Rumanians may sell newspapers. The Bill enumerates the organizations officially recognized as representing the journalists of Rumania, but omits to include in the list the "Organization of Racial Minority Journalists of Rumania", which since 1921 has the rights of a fictitious person. The Bill also invests the Chief Press Council, to be formed hereafter, with the right to demand a preliminary examination from prospective journalists. The question is: will not the minority journalists be placed in that category?

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FRESH ATTACKS ON HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE

Merchants and tradesmen must do their book-keeping in Rumanian. If they do it in another language they will have to pay a sur-tax. In terms of § 30 of the law promulgated on 1st April 1935, the Rumanian Minister of Finance has fixed the sur-tax at 12% of the ordinary taxes. *The Supreme Bank Council has ordered the banks not to use any but Rumanian place-names in their superscriptions* ("Siebenbürgisches Deutsches Tageblatt" Oct. 18). *The measures prohibiting the use of any language but Rumanian on the cinema screen have now come into force* ("Keleti Ujság" Oct. 31). In Marosvásárhely John Gálffy, a fifteen-years-old barber's apprentice, had his ears boxed 15 or 20 times by Vasile Macavei, headmaster of the apprentices' school, for asking the loan of a pencil from a friend in Hungarian ("Reggeli Ujság" Oct. 26). The schoolmaster of the State elementary school in Kéziszentkereszt knocks the children about if they venture to speak to each other in their Hungarian mother-tongue while at play during the intervals ("Magyar Ujság" Nov. 5). All this is diametrically opposed to the provision of § 3 of Article 8 of the Minority Treaties.

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PARENTS PUNISHED FOR ENTERING THEIR CHILDREN IN DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS

Twelve Hungarian miners have been transferred from Felsőbánya to Nagyág as a punishment for not entering their children in the State school but in the Hungarian denominational one ("Magyar Ujság", Oct. 18). *One after another the Hungarian Sections of the State elementary schools are being closed.* At the beginning of the present school-year the third and fourth classes of the Hungarian section of the elementary State schools at Ótorda and Újtorda were closed. The same thing has happened at Adámos ("Keleti Ujság", Oct. 28 and Nov. 2). In the village of Mezőkapus 41 Hungarian pupils have been forced to attend the Rumanian section, because the Hungarian section has been closed ("Ellenzék", Oct. 7). In Temesvár, after the Hungarian and German sections had been closed, 170 Hungarian children were transferred to the Rumanian section.

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MINORITY NUMERUS CLAUSUS IN RUMANIAN UNIVERSITIES

The result of the entrance examinations of the faculties of medicine and law in Kolozsvár University is that only 9 of the 125 applicants registered as first-year medical students and 16 of the 114 registered as law students are Hungarians ("Brassói Lapok", Oct. 30).

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ITEMS FROM COMPLAINT BOOK OF LUTHERAN CHURCH

Article 22 of the Rumanian Constitution provides that the State shall guarantee equal liberty to all the religious denominations. How this equality works

out in practice may be gathered from the "Siebenbürgisches Deutsches Tageblatt" of Oct. 24. (This newspaper is the daily organ of the Transylvanian Germans which has the widest circulation.) From it we learn that a Royal Decree, No. 1.550 of 1st July 1936, authorized the Ministry of Finance to take upon itself, up to the sum of 230.000.000 lei, *the losses sustained through conversion* by the religious and cultural organizations in Transylvania and the Banate. But seeing that the Ministry has only asked the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic denominations to state their claims for compensation, it is obvious that *only those two Churches are going to receive support.* The above-mentioned German daily protests indignantly against this outrage on the Lutheran Church, because "the Germans contribute at least as largely to State revenues as the rest of the population". The same paper on November 3rd stated that by order of the Prefect of the County the village authorities had begun to take an inventory of all the property of the Lutheran Church in Bessarabia (schools, teachers' houses, and other valuable real estate belonging to the Church) with a view to confiscating it. It is a question of over 150 schools and other buildings valued at about 150.000.000 lei. Herr Hans Otto Roth, German M. P., protested, first in a memorandum and then at the head of a delegation, against this high-handed behaviour and cited the bravery shown by the Germans of Bessarabia at the time of the Tatarbuniar Bolshevik attack.

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EMBEZZLING METROPOLITAN AND GANGSTER POLICE SUPERINTENDENT

Curie, the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Kiselev, embezzled — so say the Rumanian newspapers — about 12 million lei belonging to church funds. He was asked to resign, but refused. Thereupon M. Jambandi, Minister of Education, brought a charge of embezzlement against him, and his private property was attached ("Reggeli Ujság" Oct. 24). According to the "Deutsche Tageszeitung" of 4th November the police superintendent of Strehia and Turn and Severin was arrested on the charge of being the leader of a gang of thieves who have committed numerous burglaries and robberies.

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EDUCATIONAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN RUMANIA AND CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

The recently signed educational agreement requires each of these countries to permit the language of the other to be the medium of instruction in State elementary schools in places where there are at least 30 Rumanian or Czech or Slovak pupils respectively. In the October of the present year 10 Slovak schools were opened in the Counties of Bihar and Szilágy. The Hungarian minority in Rumania would be happy to see the Rumanian Government fulfilling its obligation, undertaken in the Constitution, to allow the Hungarian elementary schools of their own, for today, as things stand, the few Hungarian sections still in existence are being closed one after the other and, beginning with infant schools, Hungarian children are compelled to study in Rumanian in all the State schools. The "Kronstädter Zeitung" of October 28th (an

important daily of the Transylvanian Germans) states that the 90.000 Germans in Bukovina do not enjoy the right guaranteed by law of instruction in their own mother-tongue in the elementary schools.

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YUGOSLAVIA

YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT IS READY TO GRANT LEGITIMATE DEMANDS OF HUNGARIAN MINORITY

October 23 and 24 will be memorable dates for the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia. On those days the Prime Minister and three other members of the Cabinet gave, at last, an audience to the delegates of the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia. This is the first time since the proclamation of the Dictatorship nearly eight years ago (on 6th January 1929) and since the formation of the Stoyadinovitch Cabinet 16 months back that the real leaders of the Hungarian minority have had a chance of personally submitting the legitimate demands, major complaints, and burning wrongs of the Hungarians to the Premier and the Ministers concerned. That this is so, is sufficient to cast light upon the singularly difficult position in which the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia has been languishing for eight years. If Premier Stoyadinovitch is, at last, going to abandon the policy of treating the minorities as mercifully tolerated pariahs, this change of tactics must not be *ab ovo* disparaged, even if the Government's decision was influenced either entirely, or to a great extent, by political and party interests, in view of the parish elections to be held on December 6th in the Danube Banate, i. e. in the district where the bulk of the Hungarian and German minorities and a considerable proportion of the Rumanian settlers are domiciled. After all, it was also political points of view that induced the 11 delegates of the Hungarian minority to discard their enforced passivity of the past eight years and appear before M. Svetozar Stankovitch, Minister of Agriculture, who has been entrusted with the organisation of the Government Party in the Danube Banate, M. Stoshovitch, Minister of Public Education, M. Koroshetz, Minister of the Interior, and Premier Stoyadinovitch, and, in the name of the Hungarian minority, announce a willingness to lend their honest support to the Government's work, if the Government, in return, is ready to fulfil, to begin with, at least a few urgent demands of the Hungarians and redress certain of their most galling grievances. Amongst other things they asked the Government to open Class I of the so-called Hungarian section of the Belgrade State Teacher's Training College; appoint Hungarian teachers in places that have been vacant for years; re-open the Hungarian minority schools which for lack of teachers of Hungarian nationality, or teachers qualified to teach in Hungarian, have been closed; re-appoint in the so-called Hungarian departments of the elementary schools in the Voivodina, the teachers of Hungarian nationality who on pretext of their having to learn the language of the State have been transferred to other Banates; carry out fully the provisions of § 45 of the Elementary Education Act relating to the minority departments of education; cancel wholly the system still in force of name analysis; and give the People's Circle of Szabadka (Subotica) and the Hungarian Cultural Society of Beckserek (Petrovgrad) permission to operate again.

A glance over the grievances enumerated above will show that all the demands made merely urge a realization of the most elementary minority rights as guaranteed in the Minority Treaties, the Yugoslav Constitution and the Elementary Education Act of 1929; and the memorandum, running to several pages, on the political and financial grievances of the Hungarians which was submitted to the Premier, was probably of the same character. It was officially reported that the Ministers listened to the wishes of the Hungarians with "benevolent understanding" and promised to grant their requests. Premier Stoyadinovitch even announced that "so far as the minority question is concerned the Government wishes to enforce in full the principles of democracy. We therefore disapprove of endeavours to make Slavs of the Hungarians. The Government will fulfil those desires of the Hungarian minority which are found to be justified, and do so of its own just judgment and not because M. Darányi, Premier of Hungary, has promised to protect the Hungarian minorities in the Succession States".

The reference to the Hungarian Prime Minister's speech in Parliament on October 21st, suggesting that "*qui s'excuse, s'accuse*", was *malapropos*, for M. Darányi, speaking in general of the policy of oppression and repression of the Hungarian minorities pursued by the Succession States from the outset, merely said that "the Hungarian Government will never cease to do all in its power, through the League and with all the legitimate means at its disposal, to effect an amelioration of the lot of the Hungarian minorities". And the Hungarian Government is strictly within its rights in doing so, if only on the strength of Article 11 of the Covenant. In fact, it is not a question of right, but of duty. And when the semi-official "*Vreme*" (October 23) argues that, not only no other Government, but not even the League of Nations has the right to interfere with the manner the Succession States treat their minorities, it must be pointed out that this is a regrettable lapse, an open denial of the obligations undertaken in §§ 2—9 of the Treaty of St. Germain — well-nigh to flouting repudiation of the whole institution of minority protection.

The only practical result so far of the negotiations between the leaders of the Hungarian minority, on the one hand, and Premier Stoyadinovitch and the three Ministers, on the other, is that the new rules of the Cultural Society of Beckserek — dissolved without any legal grounds, after 60 years of splendid work, in April, 1934 — which had been submitted for approval no fewer than three times, have been approved and permission to begin work granted (No. 1749 ex 1936). It would seem, however, as if the Government's liberality had stopped short after the first step. It should be known that one of the new rules restricts the scope of activity of the Society to the town of Beckserek (Petrovgrad). This means that the Cultural Society, which formerly was the central cultural organization of the Hungarians in Yugoslavia, may not form branches in any other town or village. Thus the Hungarian minority has been denied the right to form a central organization, after the pattern of the "Swäbisch-Deutsches Kulturbund" permitted to the German minority, the vocation of which would be to unite and direct all the Hungarian cultural societies in the country.

One result of the Hungarian minority delegates' Belgrade negotiations is that, for the time being at least, the authorities have begun to allow amateur performances arranged by Hungarian cultural societies to be held in Zombor (Sombor), Nagybeckserek (Petrovgrad) and Szabadka (Subotica), where for three years no Hungarian concerts or amateur theatricals were permitted.

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HUNGARIAN COMPLAINTS JUSTIFIED BY SERB UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

Mention has repeatedly been made in the columns of this paper of the grievance consisting in the fact that Hungarian students are being debarred from entering the civil service and that scarcely any Hungarian public and civil servants are to be found now in Yugoslavia. This state of affairs was condemned as wrong by Dr. Laza Kostitch, a Serb university professor, at the General Meeting of the Town Council of Szabadka (Subotica) held on November 9th. In order to redress, to a certain extent at least, this grievance, Dr. Kostitch urged that in future when vacancies occurred a proportional number of properly qualified Hungarians should be appointed by the town.

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MASTERPIECE OF KODÁLY'S BANNED

In the well-nigh purely Hungarian borough of Temerin, a place with 8000 inhabitants, Hungarian amateurs were making preparations to give a performance of the world-famed Hungarian composer, M. Zoltán Kodály's "John Hány". The authorities, however, refused permission. This was announced in the Hungarian newspapers, but in view of the rigorosity of the censorship, the usual cliché that the company was obliged to waive its intention to give a performance of Kodály's masterpiece "for reasons over which the company had no control" was the formula used to convey the information.

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P O L I T I C A L E C O N O M Y

THE LITTLE ENTENTE IN PRACTICE

On October 17th the "Die Wirtschaft", an economic periodical published in Prague, wrote as follows:

"Beautiful speeches were made some time ago in Bucharest regarding the wonderful improvement achieved within the limits of the Economic Little Entente. It was also rumoured not long ago that the Presidents of the Rumanian and Yugoslav National Banks would visit Prague to hold a "friendly discussion". This conference, however, never came off, in consequence of the intervening devaluation of the Czechoslovak currency.

If, however, we wish to see the actual economic relations between the States of the Little Entente, we need only bear in mind the attitude of the Yugoslav National Bank which, without any legal justification, is not inclined to recognize the clearing payments for the delivery of Yugoslav goods, effected as far back as September. The same is the attitude of the Yugoslav National Bank towards Yugoslav importers: it allows them to pay only half of the import value on the old basis of exchange, while the other half must be paid on the new basis; thus the importers are, without any legal justification, condemned to lose a considerable part of their profits in consequence of the devaluation of the Czech crown.

The Yugoslav National Bank did not send any preliminary notification to this effect to the Czechoslovak National Bank; its attitude was only seen from the information of Czechoslovak exporters and from the fact that the liquidation of accounts between the Yugoslav National Bank and the Bank of Bohemia, — which is entrusted with the clearing transactions —, was suddenly stopped. The Czechoslovak National Bank has, therefore, delegated Dr. Sourek, its representative just returned from Greece, to Belgrade to ask further information respecting this utterly unjustifiable course of action."

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

CZECHO-SLOVAK FINANCES

In the middle of October the Czechoslovak Government presented the 1937 Estimates to Parliament. For four years the revenue has been calculated at a maximum, the Budget having in consequence shown an excess of revenue of 1.5 million Czech crowns.

There is nothing, new about the Czechoslovak Government submitting, well-balanced estimates on paper. This time Dr. Kaufuss, the Czech Minister of Finance, bases his optimism on the devaluation of the Czech crown, effected in October. It was with this optimistic view that he recommended the acceptance of his Estimates and of the Finance Bill.

This optimism, however, is by no means shared by M. Remes, the rapporteur on the Budget; no member of the Opposition could criticize the Government more severely for its system of introducing absolutely imaginary sources of income (State revenue), the uncertainty of which must be quite clear to Government, too. With regard to the expenditure of the State, on the other hand, the Government omits to mention those millions which are spent, directly or indirectly, on armaments and war material. This may be clearly seen from the fact that the liabilities of the State rose by 5850 millions in one single year (1926), as the Minister of Finance himself stated in his Budget speech. Next year the 1937 part of the State Defence Loan (400 millions), which was issued recently, will also appear under the head of State debts.

Two points of the Estimates deserve particularly severe criticism: in the first place, the Estimates include only a comparatively small part of the amount appropriated for the purposes of National Defence; in the second place, the Estimates presuppose a remarkable prosperity in economic life in the near future, and the figures are calculated on that assumption. The taxes in the Estimates of the last three years have been calculated as follows:

1937,	1936,	1935,
6,660.653	6,307.890	5,455.160

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This shows a rise of 1200 millions within three years.