

# HOW MINORITIES LIVE

## CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

### THE IMPORT OF HUNGARIAN BOOKS AND PAPERS FORBIDDEN EVEN AS TRAVEL READING

According to an edict issued by the Provincial Chief of Slovakia in the *Krajinsky Vestnik*, under no 407, on December 20th nothing that has been printed or multiplied (mymotyped) in any other way in Hungary may be introduced into Slovakia and Ruthenia before it was officially examined by the authorities. This examination may be undertaken exclusively by the Prefect of the Police in Pozsony (Bratislava). Consignments which contain such printed matters may only be introduced through the frontier stations of Ligetfalu (Petržalka) and Párkány (Párkán). It is not allowed to introduce or transport, or sell even one number of any those periodical publications (i. e. almost all newspapers) which have not been hitherto exempted from the general prohibition of transport and colportage, until the Government has authorized the Ministry of Interior to exempt, exceptionally and in a few actual cases, certain political writings (in printing) from this prohibition. If a passenger entering the Czechoslovak Republic is found at the customs examination to possess any such printed matter, it must be taken away from him and handed to the competent district or Police magistrate. This edict contains severe restrictions of the previous edict issued on May 24th, under no. 1—5000, in so far as passengers are now forbidden to bring in Hungarian books or papers even for themselves.

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### PERSECUTION OF HUNGARIAN POLITICIANS

M. József Szent-Iványi, Hungarian member of the Czechoslovak Parliament, was sentenced to three months "imprisonment under the State Defence Act at the District Court of Rimaszombat, for article written by him in the Budapest daily paper "Magyarság" under the title "From the Prague Workshop". A few days later he was sentenced to another two weeks' imprisonment by the same Court for certain statements contained in a speech which he had given three years ago at the general meeting of the Hungarian National Party at Rimaszombat, describing the political situation in general. The Christmas number of the "Komáromi Lapok" has been confiscated on account of the excerpts published from the speeches given in Zsolna by Count János Eszterházy and Andor Jaross, members of the Czech Parliament and leaders of the United Hungarian Party.

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### THE UNLAWFUL DISMISSAL OF THE HUNGARIAN ATTORNEY IN KASSA

Owing to the fact that he did not hang out the Czechoslovak national flag over his house on October 28-th, Mr. István Rédeky the city Attorney of Kassa

(Kosice) has been dismissed from the service of the town from July 1st, although the law No. 269/1936, which provides for the hanging out of the flag national holidays, had not come into force until November 14-th, 1936.

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### THERE'S MONEY FOR SCHOOLS FOR THE 33.000 CZECHS IN RUTHENIA, BUT NONE FOR THE 109.000 HUNGARIANS THERE

The committee of the Hungarian grammar-school at Ungvár (Uzhorod) struggles every year a new for a restoration of the Hungarian grammar-school in the capital of Ruthenia which was closed years ago by order of the Ministry of Education in Prague. This year the committee sent two applications to the Government and got two different replies. One of them curtly stated that there was no money to re-open the Hungarian grammar-school, the other said that the Government had prepared plans for a Czech grammar-school in Ungvár. The plans have been sent to the town with instructions that the building of the school was to be begun in the spring of next year. The new grammar-school is to be a magnificent building. The cost of erecting it will it is expected, greatly exceed the 7 million Czech crowns estimated and, may indeed be more than 10 million. Here let it be said that according to the Czech census of 1930 the Czechs and Slovaks in Ruthenia aggregate 33.961, while the Hungarians number 109.472. Meanwhile the pupils of the Hungarian parallel department of the Ruthenian board-school in Ungvár have lost their premises, for the school board has announced that it cannot give them an adequate number of class-rooms. At present they are having their lessons in the class-rooms of the municipal school for industrial apprentices. The class-rooms in the State board-school are all occupied by the Ruthenian board-school pupils.

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### ANOTHER CZECH PROVINCIAL CHIEF APPOINTED IN RUTHENIA

The retirement of M. Anton Roszypál, Provincial Chief of Ruthenia, was announced on the 1-st of January; since 1923 he was the supreme authority of this province whose autonomy existed only on paper. In contradiction to Art. 12 of the Treaty of St. Germain, which declares the right of the original inhabitants of that province to elect their own Provincial Chief, the Czech Government has again appointed a Czech to this high office, in the person of M. Meznik. M. Endre Bródy, the Parliamentary leader of the Ruthenian Autonomist Party, challenged the retiring Provincial Chief in an open letter to produce the accounts concerning the Charity Fund (respecting about 10 million Crowns), management of which had been entrusted to him. In his letter M. Bródy makes reference of the fact that the Czech Government parties had received several subsidies from this fund.

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## "BUDAPEST STILL EXERCISES A GREATER ATTRACTION ON RUTHENIA THAN PRAGUE"

The Czech National Socialist organ, the "A-Zet" says that Budapest, which is nearer to Ruthenia than Prague, exercises a greater attraction even yet on that province than does the Czech capital. The Ruthenians have often complained that not one yard of new railway has been built since the change of state. No new railway stations have been built either, though they are urgently needed in Ungvár (Užhorod), the capital of the province, and Királyháza (Královo). This statement by an extreme nationalist Czech newspaper is a clear proof that it is absurd to place Ruthenia under the rule of far-off Prague.

## HLINKA INTENDS TO CARRY THE TUKA AFFAIR BEFORE PRESIDENT BENES

It is the ninth year that Vojtech Tuka, former professor of International Law at the Pozsony (Bratislava) University, vicepresident of the Slovak Catholic Party and member of the Czecho-Slovakian Party, sits in prison. Under the Defence of the Republic Act he was sentenced by the Czecho-Slovakian courts of justice to fifteen years imprisonment, and three years ago his petition for pardon, in which he asserted his innocence and refuted every point of the charge against him, was ruthlessly rejected by the State. Although the League of Human Rights and similar organizations are always loud in their protests when even the most insignificant of left-wing politicians is arrested, the press continues to maintain a deep silence about Tuka.

In the report published in the "Slovák" by its editor-in-chief, M. Sidor, Slovak People's Party M. P., of his visit to M. Tuka in the prison at Pankráz, we read that this scholar and politician, who in convict garb is working on a book on legal philosophy, is threatened with slowly but surely approaching blindness. Now that M. Sidor has made M. Hlinka acquainted with the facts he gathered during his visit to the prison, M. Hlinka declares that he will take the first opportunity of again laying the matter before President Beneš.

## STARTLING DATA CONCERNING DESTITUTION OF SUDETA GERMANS

The following passages are from a recently published book entitled "200.000 Sudetendeutsche zu viel" (200.000 Sudeta Germans too many) by the eminent German publicist, Kurt Vorbach. Herr Vorbach's data are absolutely reliable and present a startling picture of the havoc wrought by Czech rule in the Sudeta German districts, the wealthiest part of pre-War Austria.

"Today the once flourishing industrial district has become the grave of industry. The factories, crumbling to ruins, are at a standstill; the wind whistles through the empty workshops; the machines are rusty. A hundred thousand unemployed, starving and ill, gaze at the closed gates without any hope that they will open."

"In 1918 the Czechs launched an attack with the

weapons of political power against every phase of existence of the Sudeta Germans. The old war-like spirit of Hussite vandalism awoke anew. German schools were closed; German workmen and officials were driven out of the civil service; the use of the German language was restricted; German railways were expropriated; and German forests and ploughed lands were conveyed to Czech settlers or to the State. The vitals of every racial group are its economic life, and the Czechs set themselves ruthlessly to the task of weakening and destroying economic prosperity among the Sudeta Germans."

"The (Czech) frontier problem" — writes the "Obrana Narodna", a Czech magazine — "is how to regain possession for our own (Czech) people of one-third of the country. The solution of the frontier problem lies in colonizing that one-third with our own people, in pushing out the present lingual border to the limits of the political frontier, and in creating an absolutely strong, invincible and reliable frontier zone by erecting a bastion composed of our own race and blood."

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"Unemployment has never spread to the same extent in any of the Czech districts as in the German frontier areas; destitution and want have never taken the same form in any Czech place as they have in the German frontier zone, where cats and dogs are being killed for food and the bark and roots of trees cooked to appease hunger."

This difference between the two peoples of the same State, between rulers and ruled, is not to be accounted for by the differences evident in the branches of occupation pursued by the two races, nor can it be satisfactorily explained by the changes in State and economic policy that took place in 1918, or dismissed simply as the result of "miscalculation" on the part of the leaders of German industry. It is the visible and undeniable expression of the State's will to destroy.

"200.000 unemployed will never return to the places of work they were forced to abandon." This statement was made calmly and dispassionately in 1934 by the Prague Administration. And those 200.000 will be Sudeta Germans! We cannot disregard this terrible statement. For the lot of the 200.000, with all the terrible accompaniments of starvation, want, misery, disease and despair, will not be their alone: it will also be the lot of the three and a half million Sudeta Germans who form a living barrier along the 1550 kilometres of frontier towards Germany against the coveted expansion of an imperialistic folk.

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## HUNGARY

### OPENING OF AN AGRICULTURAL COURSE IN GERMAN IN SOPRON

In pursuance of the Hungarian Government's minority policy, mention of which was made in our last issue, an agricultural course in German was opened for 60 students on the initiation of the Ministry of Agriculture in the Sopron "Széchenyi" real gymnasium on 27th December. Hitherto 50 farmers of German nationality have registered. The director is to be M. Otto Karsay, Agricultural Superintendent. The course was opened by Dr. Sopronyi-Thurner, Mayor of Sopron, with a speech in German. This measure of the Hungarian Government was received with general satisfaction by the Germans in Hungary.

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## RUMANIA

### GRIEVANCES OF HUNGARIANS IN TRANSYLVANIA BEFORE RUMANIAN PARLIAMENT

Addressing a meeting at Nagyvárad, on November 12th, M. Dinu Bratianu, leader of the Government Party (National Liberals) declared that the minorities of Rumania were in a much better situation than the minorities in Hungary. In face of such statements it is good to hear the opinion of the minorities themselves, for, after all, they are most competent to judge of the degree of their "happiness and satisfaction".

Speaking in the debate on address in reply to the King's speech, Dr. Willer, a Hungarian member of the Rumanian Parliament, gave the following summary of the grievances of the Hungarian minority, in an intensely hostile atmosphere created by Signor Mussolini's recent speech at Milan:

The very existence of the Hungarian minority is being threatened from all sides, and there are no signs whatever to encourage our hope of a better future. Our Government officials were simply thrown out of their posts, although, (according to a statement made by the Prime Minister before the deputation of our Party and repeated by the Minister of Finacial Affairs before the whole Parliament) it is quite natural that those who have been dismissed as a result of the *language tests* should at least receive a pension.

Practically not a Hungarian has been appointed in the place of the many thousands who have been dismissed. But this is not all; in addition to being excluded from the public offices, our brethren are being turned out of the offices of industrial and commercial undertakings. In the debate on the National Employment Bill we were told that the term "Rumanian" refers to nationality only, and that it includes the minority citizens too; nevertheless, acting under official pressure, the private companies are obliged to dismiss minority employees, and they are not allowed to take any new minority applicants to fill the vacancies.

We have had no opportunity to converse with M. Alexander Vaida concerning the exact meaning of his "numerus Valachicus". But if this means a treatment according to the percentage of the population, we declare that we ourselves would not think of asking for more. The fact is, however, that the present system of government shows a marked tendency towards a "numerus nullus". We, on the other hand, ask you in despair: do you really think it is possible to exclude a national minority from all the professions of intellectual and economic life and subject it to an infinitely low grade, exposing it to poverty and misery? do you not think that, for the benefit of a general good feeling and satisfaction, it would be more advisable to create a truly "liberal" atmosphere among the minorities, in the literal sense of the word?

The complete lack of Government subsidy, and the anomalies — or rather injustices — arising in the question of ecclesiastic benefices, tell most heavily on the intellectual class, and they discourage our youth from taking up a profession which is most suited for training the people to a virtuous life and to the fear of God, and which is — therefore — of primary importance for the welfare of the country.

We have proved to the authorities concerned that, for instance, the stipend of the Bishop of the Unitarian Church is lower than those of a janitor in Parliament.

But even more pressing than the anxiety for the present generation is the dreadful uncertainty as to what will happen to our children's. The Hungarian teaching in our elementary schools being is faced with almost insurmountable difficulties, which are becoming more and more numerous as time goes on. The Elementary Education Act of 1924 (§. 7) provides for minority school children an elementary education in their own mother tongue. But if we look at the statistical records concerning the schooling of our children and the Hungarian sections of the Government Elementary Schools, they present a very sad picture indeed. *In 1930 the records published by the Ministry of Education referred to 427 purely Hungarian schools and Government Schools with Hungarian sections. In the school year 1934—35 there were only 112 Hungarian schools or State schools with Hungarian sections actually working. The present situation is even more disheartening. In the 112 Hungarian schools and State schools with Hungarian sections there were only 11,484 Hungarian children being educated in their own mother tongue. Excluding the pupils of confessional schools, 175,000 Hungarian school children are not being educated in their own mother tongue.*

Furthermore, we do not receive any grants from the 14% communal revenue, although the Act of 1930 and the Order in Council of 1933 provide for the proportionate distribution of this revenue for the subsidizing of the confessional schools, too. Most of our school buildings are clean and spacious, and it hurts us immensely to see that the authorities close our schools one after the other "for hygienic reasons", simply in order to confiscate our school buildings subsequently for the purposes of State schools.

We have repeatedly pointed out that the ever increasing misery and the lamentable situation of the minority population, especially that of the Hungarian minority, is largely due to the unbridled agitation of the press against us which has been going on for many years now and against which — we regret to admit — we are absolutely defenceless. Being fully conscious of the responsibility laid upon our shoulders, and seeing the detrimental effects of this campaign, we have often asked those eminent representatives of the Rumanian Press who seemed to have a more sympathetic understanding for us, to consider what an insufferable atmosphere is being created by this hostility, which is allowed to break out with renewed strength day after day. Country teachers, minor officials, gendarmes, and other such simple people, are not able to form their own opinion of their reading; they simply take for granted whatever they read, they accept the accusations of the press against us, and every one of them who lives in a district inhabited by a minority population considers himself a champion of his race; the public administration, too, is active always and everywhere, especially by way of illegal "temporary committees" (in city administration); it prohibits or cancels cultural and religious meetings, and it even prevents the work of harmless choral societies; the public, in the heat of excitement, is becoming more and more intolerant towards us: the "bravest" have gone so far as to demolish our statues and monuments, not sparing even the statues of churches. The gendarme, whose invaluable service for the maintenance of public order and peace we would

gladly support, has become an absolute potentate, being an authority on every subject without sufficient knowledge or training; he meddles with everything and knows no limits to the employment of his well-known "disciplinary methods".

Government, instead of offering us its protection, falls victim to the general feeling of prejudice and treats us with undeserved mistrust. This attitude of mistrust, which is mainly due to the insufficient knowledge of actual conditions, was strikingly manifested by the prohibition of the general meeting of the Hungarian Party this year. The Honourable Minister of the Interior seems to be unaware of the fact that the meetings of the Hungarian Party have always been distinguished by absolute order and discipline, that no irresponsible speeches or remarks have ever been made there, and that the Party has never yet been accused of such an offence. The Honourable Minister of the Interior seems to be better acquainted with conditions — say — in Madagascar than with the conditions of the Hungarian minority; otherwise he might have known that to permit the general meeting would not have involved any menace to public order, while the prohibition of this meeting, at the same time when the other parties were allowed to call huge multitudes of their followers to the Capital and other large cities to take part in demonstrative processions, has provoked feelings of indignation and a consciousness of inequality in the souls of our Hungarian brethren!

Similar inequality may be experienced in the work of the *censors*. All our newspaper articles are mercilessly mutilated and the writings of our best authors are distorted with the most embarrassing ignorance, while — at the same time — those papers which write against us in a tone of implacable hatred are allowed to publish their venomous writings with impunity, and with the consent of the censors. We are collecting these writings full of astounding accusations and calumnious indictments from all parts of the country; to these we are not allowed to reply, nor do we feel any desire to do so.

After this Dr. Willer read an extract from a leader published in a Rumanian paper entitled "Glasul Romanesc in regiunea secuizata" (November 12th): "If Signor Mussolini wishes to deliver the Hungarians from the Rumanian yoke, we gladly offer him a helping hand: we shall arrange a modern "St. Bartholomew's Eve", after which the Italians may come and pick up the corpses of Hungarians lying on the soil of Transylvania. Our Hungarians will thus be freed from the Rumanian yoke, and we shall get rid of a pressing problem which gives us too much trouble."

Here we have, on the one hand — continued Dr. Willer — the suppression of our eminent daily papers and harmless weeklies, and on the other hand the toleration of deadly threats like the one about St. Bartholomew's Eve which I have just read to you. How can you expect, Gentlemen, that our hearts should be filled with happiness and satisfaction at the sight of such glaring injustice and inequality?

In conclusion Dr. Willer expressed a hope that the proposal submitted by the Hungarian Party two years ago would receive a more favourable reception now, and that the authorities concerned would be more willing to consider the possibility — as had been proposed — of solving the minority problem by lifting it out of the complexity of party problems and rivalry to be discussed by a special committee consisting of delegates from all parties in Parliament.

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## M. VAIDA-VOIVOD PROVES THAT MINORITY COMPLAINTS ARE JUSTIFIED

In his New Year's speech in the "Frontul Romanesc" M. Alexander Vaida-Voivod, who has several times been Rumanian Premier, urged a solution of the minority question and denounced the practice of Rumanianizing minority place-names. "What is the sense of this ridiculous measures — said M. Vaida-Voivod amongst other things — which orders a minority newspapers like the "Kronstädter Zeitung" to change its name to "Brasover Zeitung?" ("Keleti Ujság", January 3). But previously, when M. Vaida-Voivod was Prime Minister, it could not be said that the position of the minorities was a bed of roses, nor are certain principles which he stresses today (a *numerus clausus* for the minorities in commerce and industry) hopeful signs that a new Vaida-Voivod Government would prove friendly towards the minorities.

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## THE CITIZENSHIP OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE TERRITORIES ATTACHED TO RUMANIA TO BE REVISED

The Minister of the Interior has issued a decree ordering a re-examination of the citizenship of all subjects who under the law passed in 1924 were registered as Rumanian citizens. By 1st March the Prefects of the counties must submit the list of names to be struck off the roll. This decree was received with consternation and anxiety by the entire minority population of Transylvania, but especially by the Hungarian; a revision of the roll of citizen's will, as is foreseen, result in numerous Hungarians being deprived of their citizenship. The law passed in 1924, which was drafted without any consideration for the relevant provisions of the Peace Treaties, has already led to thousands of Hungarians being omitted from, or struck off the roll of Rumanian citizens. Here let it be said that M. Seicaru, M. P. and editor of the "Curentul" has drafted a separate motion suggesting that when the lists are being revised, it should be made obligatory to report any suspicious cases. This would open the gates to a flood of denunciations, persecution, and blackmail. This motion of Seicura's indicates what the real object of the decree is, and how extremely anti-minority is its tendency ("Curentul", December 18, and "Keleti Ujság", December 19).

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## MINORITY INDIVIDUALS SHOULD NOT BE PUBLIC SERVANTS, STATE PHYSICIANS, TRADESMEN OR TOBACCONISTS

In his speech at the unveiling of Lucaciu's statue, the Szatmár secretary of the Anti-revision League urged the pressing need for the Rumanization of commerce and industry. In his opinion no minority public servants should be tolerated within 50 kilometres of the frontier and tobacconist's licences there should be taken away from their present owners and given to Rumanian war cripples and war widows ("Keleti

Ujság", December 19). The Christian Alliance of Rumanian Nowns raised objections to minority physicians receiving appointments in State and public hospitals ("Aradi Közlöny", December 23).

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### THE HEADMASTERS OF STATE SCHOOLS MUST BE TRUE-BORN RUMANIANS

The Minister of Education has ordered that all minority headmasters of State elementary schools within the so-called culture zone must be replaced immediately by true-born Rumanians ("Banater Deutsche Zeitung", December 19).

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### WAITERS NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK ANYTHING BUT RUMANIAN

In Temesvár all the inn-keepers were summoned by the police and enjoined to see that no language but Rumanian was spoken by the waiters in their restaurants ("Déli Hirlap", December 19).

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### LANGUAGE TEST ABUSES

By order of the Prefect every civil servant of minority extraction in the purely Hungarian county of Csik must undergo a language test ("Székely Közélet", December 20). Of the 27 minority employees of the Municipal Electrical Works in Kolozsvár 13 were made to fail at the language tests ("Uj Kelet", December 13). M. Anghelescu, Minister of Education, has ordained that all the minority teachers in every private Academy of Music must pass the language examination ("Viitorul", December 19).

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### PERSECUTION OF ROMAN CATHOLIC MONKS

The Minister of the Interior has divested the Premonstratensian Order in Nagyvárad of its rights as a fictitious person, although both the Concordate and the Rumanian law dealing with the subject guarantee the rights of a fictitious person to all orders of monks in Rumania ("Keleti Ujság", January 1). The Rev. Gerhard Pongrácz, a priest belonging to the Order of Minorities in Arad, was sentenced in the Arad Courts of Justice in the April of 1936 to three months' jail and a fine of 10,000 lei on the charge of agitation against the State, because of his funeral speech at the burial of the conductor of the Roman Catholic Choir. In pronouncing sentence the judge said that the one sentence alone that "Hungarian words and Hungarian songs will never die upon our lips" was agitation ("Keleti Ujság", December 22).

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### THE HUNGARIANS OF CSIK AND HÁROMSZÉK MAY NOT APPEAR IN THE STREETS AFTER 7 p. m.

The Prefect of the purely Hungarian counties of Csik and Háromszék issued an order to the village authorities and the gendarmes *not to permit anyone to walk about the streets after 7 p. m.* Anyone found doing so without an acceptable reason is to be prosecuted. ("Keleti Ujság", December 16 and "Székely Közélet", December 20.)

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### YUGOSLAVIA

#### LEHÁR'S FILM BANNED IN THE VOIVODINA

The Budapest "Hunnia" studio received an order from a Swiss company for a film production of one of the great Hungarian composers Francis Lehár's musical comedies. This film under the title of "The Lark" was recently awarded a gold medal in Milan. In the course of its European tour it arrived in Belgrade and for three weeks delighted all cinema-goers. After Belgrade the cinemas in the Voivodina wanted to secure it for their audiences, but M. Korošec, Minister of the Interior refused, despite the intervention of the Swiss Legation, the necessary licence, with the peculiar explanation that a film about a Hungarian theme "might offend the sensibilities of the Serbs in the Voivodina" (sic!). This decision of the Yugoslavian Minister of the Interior and the poor excuse for it have given rise to natural indignation not only among the Hungarians of Yugoslavia, but also in Budapest, where in the interests of cultural co-operation the first Yugoslavian literary evening, a report of which will be found on another page, was held but recently.

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#### ROMAN CATHOLICS OF ZOMBOR DEMAND RESTORATION OF CONVENT AND ORPHANAGE

A delegation of 40 members of the Roman Catholic parish in Zombor appeared before the Serb mayor of the town on 14th December and asked him to use his influence with the authorities concerned to obtain the restoration to the Roman Catholic parish of the buildings of the Notre Dame convent and the Haynald orphanage founded by the Archbishop of Kalocsa. Immediately after the change of imperium the Serbs took possession of these buildings, and, without paying any compensation or rent, turned one of them into a home for students of the Serb women teachers' training college and used the other for other Serb educational purposes. In spite of all petition and demands on the part of the Roman Catholic Church they have not yet been restored to their original purpose and to their rightful owner, the Roman Catholic parish of Zombor ("Reggeli Ujság", November 16).

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