

# POLITICAL MOSAIC

## PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN HUNGARY: GREAT GOVERNMENT VICTORY

An added significance was given to the general elections held on 28th and 29th May by the fact that they were followed with keen interest by foreign countries. Furthermore this was the first time the new law was enforced which introduced voting by lists in a great part of the constituencies, and secret balloting in all.

The *Teleki* Government won an overwhelming victory at the elections, which were conducted with the greatest fairness, securing 70 per cent of the seats. Of the 260 members of the new Parliament 182 are Government Party. The largest Party of the Opposition (50 seats) consists of an alliance of 5 or 6 minor factions of the extreme Right, the National Socialists, who had only four seats in the former Parliament. Then follows the Independent Smallholders Party under the leadership of Dr. Tibor Eckhardt with 14 seats. This Party, which had 28 seats at the beginning of the last cycle and had shrunk to 22 members before the elections owing to the desertion of some, has now lost much ground. The rest of the Opposition Parties with their small number of seats scarcely count. The Liberals have five seats and the Social Democrats (the Party representing the industrial labouring class) have lost nine of their former seats, which leaves them only five.

The outstanding feature of the election results is that the majority of the new members of the Government Party itself (which owing to the defection of a considerable number of its adherents during the era of the Imrédy Government numbered only 118) are men of the Right Wing, and thus the whole Party is more pronouncedly of the extreme Right than it was. More than half of the Opposition belong to the extreme Right, so that the new Parliament as a whole has shifted considerably towards the Right.

Another characteristic is that the constitution of the Parliament is much more democratic, for the number of its members representing the minor branches of occupation has increased. This in itself and the programme speeches in particular show that the new Parliament will meet in a spirit of social reforms, the chief of which will be the Land Reform Bill.

The *Teleki* Government, whose Foreign Minister, Count Csáky, took an extremely active part in the election campaign,

owes perhaps the splendid manifestation of the confidence placed in it by the majority of the nation to four factors. The first of these is that in the weeks before the elections both the Premier and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in all their important speeches emphasized primarily their adherence to the Parliamentary system, their unswerving loyalty to the ancient Hungarian Constitution and their firm determination to defend the absolute independence and liberty of the country.

The second factor was that the Government itself promised to introduce major social reforms, amongst others the rational breaking up of the large landed estates in order to provide as many families as possible with land of their own.

The third was that the Government, strongly nationalist in its policy, had already passed laws and issued ordinances in keeping with the nationalist principles permeating the majority of the nation.

And, last but not least, the chief reason why the Teleky Government won such an overwhelming victory was that it was under this Government that Hungary within the past year regained possession of part of the territories wrested from it on the north with one million Magyars and Ruthenia with its mixed population of Magyars and Ruthenians. The Hungarian nation, which for twenty years has never ceased to demand the revision of the Trianon Treaty, hopes that, progressing along the same lines, the Teleki Government will achieve further results by peaceful methods.

## OPENING OF POLISH INSTITUTE IN BUDAPEST

On May 24th the Polish Institute was opened with impressive ceremony in Budapest, as a pendant to the Hungarian Institute opened in Warsaw on 4th November 1935. The object of these institutions is to promote the scientific study of the cultural life of both countries. Contacts between Poland and Hungary have always been lively, and with the establishment of these two institutes it will be possible to examine the historical background of these extremely friendly connections, and the two nations will have an opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of one another's history and art, of one another's culture.

The opening speech was delivered in Polish by Count Leo *Orlowski*, the Polish Minister in Budapest. Count *Orlowski* pointed out that the contacts between the two friendly nations must be based on realities, one factor of which will be the newly established Polish Institute. The Polish Ministry of Education was represented by M. Oscar Halecki, Professor of Warsaw University and a historian of note. In his speech he mentioned that cultural intercourse between the two countries had always

been lively, especially in the Middle Ages, when a large number of Hungarian youths attended the Polish universities. Two rulers of Poland of Hungarian extraction, *Queen Hedwig* and *Báthory*, had done much to further cultural development in Poland. *Hedwig*, daughter of *Louis the Great* of Hungary, founded the Cracow university and *Bathory* the university at Vilno, thus establishing an outpost of culture in the most eastern part of Europe.

*Valentine Hóman*, Hungarian Minister of Education, expressed his pleasure at having the honour to represent the Hungarian Government. His pleasure was all the greater in view of the fact that it had fallen to him, as Minister of Education, to open the Hungarian Institute in Warsaw. Nobody who had been to Poland could ever forget the impression made by the cultural institutions and works of art created by Poland's great men. He hoped that the Polish Institute would exercise a stimulating influence on Hungarian research work.

*Alexander Eckhardt*, Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the Budapest University of Sciences, briefly outlined the significance of the Institute to the world of science. Then *Zdzislaw Jachimek*, a professor of Cracow University, gave an address on the Polish musical genius, *Chopin*. He quoted evidence to prove that *Chopin* was a Pole, sketched his musical career and characterized his works. The assembly hall of the Budapest University was packed with a distinguished audience, who greeted the various speakers with loud applause.

## COUNT JOHN ESTERHAZY SPEAKS OF COMPLAINTS OF MAGYARS IN SLOVAKIA AND THEIR REDRESS

On 12th May, the Committee of the United Hungarian Party held a session. On this occasion Count John Esterházy submitted a lengthy report:

"Since our last meeting in January" — he said — "barely four months have elapsed, and in that short time the map of Europe has again undergone a change. The Danube Valley problems that affect us most closely begin to assume a new shape.

"In the month of March Hungary regained possession of Ruthenia, and an old wish, the establishment of a common Polish-Hungarian frontier, was fulfilled. From an economic point of view Ruthenia's restoration to Hungary is a great godsend, the fruits of which our brethren across the frontier are already beginning to enjoy.

"The groups of Powers in formation for a long time back are striving to knit their political and military ties closer than ever. It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the situation in

Europe today is dangerously like the state of affairs in the months immediately preceding the great war; on the other hand, it is reassuring to know that all those who, today, decide the fate of the nations think with horror of another world war, which would mean the destruction of our culture and civilization.

"On the surface, we Magyars of Slovakia are of little account in the great game being played by the European Powers, but the fact that our future is organically bound up with that of a Hungary grown greater in territory and importance, has not lessened our significance — though appearances sometimes seem to deny this; on the contrary our significance is steadily on the increase.

"Amidst revolutionary phenomena of an extremely lively nature Slovakia became an independent State. On behalf of the Magyar minority I immediately — frankly and sincerely — offered to join in the work of construction. Unfortunately, it would seem that certain factors misunderstood our good intentions, for otherwise I can find no explanation of the circumstance that our situation has grown considerably worse in every respect since the month of March. It is enough to point out that since Slovakia became independent our official organ, the "Uj Hírek", has been suppressed, the activity of the Hungarian Cultural Society has been stopped, and no meetings are permitted even yet. In addition to this, important memorandums dealing solely with social and cultural matters have not been answered, though submitted months ago. Recently the stoppage of their pensions was a great blow to thousands of Magyar families, whose sole means of support were the small sums thus received. Added to all this, there is the regrettable circumstance that the members of the Hlinka Guard, acting in very many cases entirely on their own initiative, and without any legal warrant, arrested our people and cast them into prison or maltreated them. The systematic persecution of the Hungarian minority culminated in the events that took place in Pozsony at the end of April.

"In his recent speech delivered in Nyitra Premier Tiso dealt with the situation of the nationalities. He said: "We Slovaks desire to live in peace and therefore will live in peace with our subjects of other nationalities, and will treat them with the greatest goodwill so long as they prove loyal to the Slovak State." The Magyars of Slovakia, one and all, have always been loyal to the Slovak State, and yet a deaf ear is turned to our complaints. During the revolutionary days in March the calm and peaceful attitude displayed by the Magyars witnessed to the fact that we were pleased to see Slovakia an independent State and that within its borders we hoped at last to be recognized as citizens with full rights, and not to be treated as we were during the Czech era.

"If here, in Slovakia, any ultra-chauvinist Slovak should think he was serving the interests of an independent Slovakia

best by tearing his Party badge off the coat of a Magyar of Nyitra, Pozsony, Eperjes or Besztercebánya, or by insulting his national feelings, that ultra-chauvinist Slovak is doing as great harm to his country as an ultra-chauvinist Magyar in Hungary who by word or deed tried to prevent or hinder the national development of the Slovaks in Hungary.

"Having had conversations with the most competent Government circles in Hungary, I can confidently assert that the Hungarian Government, for their part, are willing to do everything in their power to restore friendly relations between Slovakia and Hungary as soon as they see a similar willingness on the part of the Slovaks. Not only the Hungarian Government, but also Hungarian public opinion, is fully aware that the two countries should be able to live side by side in complete political and economic harmony and peace, and that this would prove of the greatest benefit to both countries. On Thursday I was approached by the most competent Slovak factors, who officially stated that what had happened should be regarded as past, that we should drop recriminations and turn our attention towards a fairer future, the foundations of which they, for their part, were ready to guarantee.

"Patience, confidence, discipline and incessant work! They are what in our present circumstances must be the substance of our life. But if we do not receive our rights within the shortest time, we shall fight for them in other ways until they are ours. We cannot allow anything to make us abandon our present attitude, which is based on Christian ideology and Christian charity. If we cannot obtain redress for any of our wrongs, we shall find ways and means of submitting our case to the international tribunals."

## HLINKA GUARD ATROCITIES

In previous issues of this paper mention has been made more than once of the Hlinka Guards. This formation was originally created at the time of the dissolution of the Czecho-Slovak Republic for the purpose of maintaining order. In a short time, however, the Hlinka Guards became terror troops. The central Government not being able to provide for them, they were compelled to supply their own needs. As we have already stated, they did so chiefly by blackmailing well-to-do minority citizens. They went so far in their campaign of blackmail and terror that in several places the population rose up against them. Finally the Slovak Government was forced to order them to hand in their weapons; but, especially in Eastern Slovakia, this order was not obeyed, and we continue to receive

reports of a number of brutal attacks and acts of terror. The following are a few examples. —

1. A report from *Érsekújvár* states that on 5th May Louis Kovács, a farmer with land on both sides of the frontier, crossed the Slovak frontier at Dunasápa to work on his farm on the Slovak side. He had a properly made out official permit to cross the frontier. Kovács went to the village of *Cseklész*, where his wife owns a house in which they had lived until the new frontier allotted the village to Slovakia. While he was in the house, the head of the Hlinka Guard appeared accompanied by two gendarmes and ordered him to go with them to the police station. There they first told him that his permit to cross the frontier was not in order, and then began to beat him. They dragged him down to the cellar and tortured him for a long time, cursing the Hungarians all the while. The Guard were assisted in this cruel work by six Slovak gendarmes. Finally Kovács was put over the frontier. He was so badly hurt that he fainted several times from pain and loss of blood while he was being examined by a doctor.

2. It is reported from *Kassa* that on 10th May three young men of *Mecenzét*, Michael *Gajdon*, John *Hofcsik* and Joseph *Tischler*, were arrested by Hlinka Guards and carried from the local gaol to the prison in *Illava*. The reason why they were taken to *Illava* was that they were not willing to declare that a man called *Kaspar* had been shot on Slovak territory by the Hungarian frontier guards. This John *Kaspar*, a member of a local formation co-operating with the Hlinka Guards, had been shot by Hungarian frontier guards on Hungarian territory when he refused to halt at their order. *Kaspar* died of his wounds. The Slovaks employed the most cruel methods of cross-examination to force a confession from the three young men, but nothing would induce them to alter the statements in which they said that John *Kaspar* had at the beginning of April announced his intention to cross the Hungarian frontier and bring Hungarian frontier guards back with him as prisoners.

3. Two *Mecenzét* women went to the gendarmes for permits to cross the frontier in order to visit their husbands on the other side. The two women were badly beaten by the Hlinka Guardists. ("*Felvidéki Magyar Hírlap*," May 11.).

4. Eperjes, May 9. On 8th May at *Szucsány*, County *Turóc*, Hlinka Guards assaulted the Lutheran clergyman and the village teacher, who were taking a walk, and threw them half-dead into a brook. When they regained consciousness the clergyman manag-

ed to creep home and is now lying at death's door. Rosenberg, a lawyer from Eperjes, who was arrested some time ago, was transferred to the prison in Illava on 9th May. The 70 leading Magyars of Eperjes who, as we stated in our last issue, were arrested by the Hlinka Guards, are languishing in Illava and nothing is being done about their case.

5. A report from *Kassa* dated 4th May states that on May 2nd a Hlinka Guard named Francis *Schwartz* was on a propaganda tour in *Alsómecenzéf*. He went to *Grundi Street*, called *Horthy Miklós Street* by the Magyars of the village, and knocking at every door promised 500 crowns to every Magyar who deserted the United Hungarian Party and joined the Hlinka Guard. The people of the village, however, soon drove Schwarz out of the place. Later on about 150 Germans with Hungarian sympathies met and marched through the village loudly demonstrating against the terror of the Hlinka Guards. When the propaganda chief, *M. Hrobok*, heard of this he called the members of the Hlinka Guard to arms. These Guards set upon the pro-Hungarian Germans with fixed bayonets, wounding several of them severely and beating them with the butt-ends of their rifles.

6. On 2nd May *Julia* and *Anna Pöhm* and *Ellen Gedeon*, who had been dismissed from their jobs at the municipal office because of their Hungarian sympathies, and a young university student named *Eugene Schmiedl*, met a band of Hlinka Guards who told them to go home at once. *Schmiedl* protested against this order, whereupon the Guards knocked him down, robbed him of his possessions and half-strangled him. This instance of robbery and assault awoke a storm of indignation in *Alsómecenzéf*. A crowd of about six hundred people gathered and demonstrated against the Slovak acts of violence. Shortly after 130 Hlinka Guards arrived in the village from the environs and attacked the crowd with the butts of their rifles and rubber truncheons. Two women and one child were severely hurt.

Armed Hlinka Guards marched through *Mecenzéf* with machine-guns, yelling and firing and driving the population, who are mostly German-speaking people, before them. When they were crossing the bridge at *Alsómecenzéf* they met an old woman of seventy. The Guards threw her into the stream, from whence she was later rescued with broken limbs by the people of the village.

7. A report from *Kassa* dated 16th May says that on the 15th the Slovak gendarmes arrested *Andrew Harcsanik*, an

employee of the Hungarian State Railways, who was at Nagyszalánc on a visit to his parents. He was in possession of a permit to cross the frontier. In spite of this he was beaten by the gendarmes and Hlinka Guards and carried off to *Eperjes*.

### THE DOBRUDJA MASSACRE

In terms of § 46 of the agreement concluded at the Berlin Congress in 1878, Northern Dobrudja was attached to Rumania as counter-value for Bessarabia, which was allotted to Russia. At the time the entire Rumanian Press and Parliament protested against the annexation by Rumania of that territory. On 25th June, 1878, the following resolution was passed by the Rumanian Parliament: "In view of the fact that it would not serve Rumania's interests to obtain possession of the territory south of the Danube and that the slightest international dispute would later undoubtedly lead to complications and trouble, Parliament cannot agree to the annexation of the Dobrudja by Rumania in any form or for any reason." (Basile Cogalniceanu: Dobrudja 1879—1909.)

In spite of this resolution Rumania occupied Northern Dobrudja after the proclamation of a Royal Manifesto at Braila on 14th November, 1878. At that time the Bulgarian population numbered 140.000 souls, and to dissipate the anxiety expressed by Parliament and in the Rumanian Press the Government settled 150.000 Rumanians in that area between 1878 and 1908. In 1913, after the Balkan War, Southern Dobrudja, with a Bulgarian population of 136.439 and only 6359 Rumanians, was wrested from Bulgaria by Rumania. In 1930 the total number of Bulgarians in the two Dobrudjas was 362.000. In order to paralyse the efforts of the Bulgarian population to join their old mother-country, the Rumanians were forced to maintain a rule of terror. The more self-reliant Bulgarian elements, about 40.000 souls, emigrated from the Dobrudja to Bulgaria. Persecution was not confined to economic and cultural matters, and even today the population lives in terror of the brutality of the gendarmes and of the administrative authorities.

In connection with the latest massacre the Bulgarian Telegraphic Bureau on 15th May issued the following report: "In the village of Belitza in Rumanian Dobrudja 22 Bulgarian



inhabitants have been slaughtered. Various press agencies in Bucharest are attempting to create the impression that the massacre was the work of Komitachis from Bulgaria. But the truth is as follows. At the time of the last Rumanian mobilization against Bulgaria about 60 Bulgarian men belonging to the village of Belitza in the Tutrakan district fled across the frontier to Bulgaria. Their womenfolk were dragged away by the gendarmes and badly maltreated at the police station. On 15th April, 100 soldiers from the Tutrakan garrison went to Belitza, where they abused their authority, robbing and plundering the population. On 7th May, a Bulgarian named Nicholas Cholakov was killed in the Indzsekőj forest by Rumanian gendarmes, who put nine bullets into him. On 9th May, at 3 p. m., 25 Bulgarian inhabitants of Belitza, a list of whose names had been prepared, were arrested and forced to sign a statement the text of which they were not permitted to read. They were then imprisoned in a cellar which had previously been filled with water knee deep. There they spent the night. At 3 o'clock in the morning they were fettered and driven in the direction of Silistra by a detachment of gendarmes armed with two light machine-guns. When they reached the Indzsekőj forest, about a mile from the village, one of the gendarmes left the others and disappeared into the wood. Shortly after a gunshot was heard. This was the prearranged signal for the massacre to begin. The machine-guns were set in action, and 12 of the 25 prisoners fell dead immediately. Those who were merely wounded were despatched by the gendarmes with their bayonets. Only three men managed to make their escape. They hid in the wood, and, sorely wounded though they were, succeeded in reaching Bulgarian territory."

When the news of this terrible massacre spread in Bulgaria the indignation of the population knew no bounds, and demonstrations took place everywhere in the country. The Serb "Politika" of 17th May contains the following report from its correspondent in Sofia: "The Bulgarian Government was powerless to prevent anti-Rumanian demonstrations in connection with the massacre of the Bulgarians. In Roustchouk a mourning committee was formed, which broke open the gates of the cathedral and tolled the bells, so that in a short time a crowd of many thousands gathered round the church. Black

flags were hoisted on the houses. Clashes occurred between the police and the citizens and several people suffered slight wounds. It was not till noon that order was restored. In Varna, too, there were violent anti-Rumanian demonstrations."

## TWO MEN PROMINENT IN RUMANIAN PUBLIC LIFE ARRAIGNED ON CRIMINAL CHARGES

*M. Xen*, *ex-Minister of Justice*, who was a member of several Cabinets, has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment by the court of first instance for gold-smuggling. A man, that is to say, who not long ago was head of the criminal jurisdiction and chief guardian of the law, has now been arraigned himself on a criminal charge. — On the charge of manslaughter criminal proceedings have been instituted against *M. Alexander Licu*, Chief President of the Bucharest Supreme Court. — These two cases throw a lamentably characteristic light on public life in Rumania.

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