

# HOW MINORITIES LIVE

## RUMANIA

### PERSECUTION OF MAGYAR CLERGYMEN: SEVERE SENTENCES

*The Rev. Louis Csongvay*, Unitarian clergyman of Nyaradszentlászló, was prosecuted on the charge of subversion for quoting the Bible. Two years ago he preached a funeral sermon at the grave of a Székler soldier who died in Bucharest in tragic circumstances, and quoted texts from the Bible to comfort his sorrowing parents. Because of certain of those texts the police accused M. Csongvay of subversive conduct. A year ago the court of law in Marosvásárhely sentenced him to 6 months' imprisonment and ordered him to pay a fine of 4000 lei and 2000 lei costs. The accused appealed and the case is now being tried by the court of the second instance. At the trial counsel for the prosecution admitted that he had not sufficient knowledge of Hungarian to give an exact rendering in Rumanian of the text of the sermon; he nevertheless sustained the charge. The court of appeal has postponed the trial until an exact translation has been made. ("Magyar Ujság", July 16.)

*The Rev. Andrew Vadon*, Reformed Church clergyman of Sarmaság, was arraigned before the military court in Kolozsvár charged with having had *the church steeple painted in the Hungarians colours* and also with having forbidden the schoolchildren to sing the Rumanian national anthem in church a year ago on a Rumanian national holiday (8th June). Although the accusation was not proved in the form submitted by the Public Prosecutor, the military court sentenced M. Vadon to pay a fine of 2500 lei. ("Keleti Ujság", July 14.)

*The Rev. Alexander Günczy*, Reformed Church Dean of Nagykároly, was charged before a military court with *not having put out the Rumanian flag on his deanery* on one of the Rumanian national holidays. He was fined 1000 lei. ("Keleti Ujság", July 14.)

*The Rev. John Nagy* Reformed Church pastor of Bede (County Maros-Torda) was fined 2500 lei for attempting to send a collection form to Hungary last autumn. He had given it to a lawyer from Budapest to make a collection for the parish church and school. The collection form was found in the lawyer's possession at the frontier. ("Magyar Lapok", August 4.)

*The Rev. Gabriel Deák*, Reformed Church clergyman of Szatmár, and *M. Alexander Szegedi*, a teacher of that town, and his wife, were charged by the gendarmes with having held a

*forbidden meeting*, because four people met at the parsonage to discuss some matters. They were acquitted of the charge by the military court.

*The Rev. Emil Orth, Reformed Church clergyman of Bihar-püski*, was reported by the village notary for having used expressions dangerous to the State in one of his sermons. On the evidence of witnesses he was acquitted by the military court. The accusation against *the Rev. Michael Mezey, Reformed Archdeacon of County Szilágy*, was that he had hidden Hungarian national relics in his loft, where the gendarmes found a tattered Hungarian flag and a few bundles of faded documents tied with string in the Hungarian colours. The Archdeacon was taken into custody by the gendarmes and kept in detention for a long time. At his trial it was proved that he had no knowledge of the existence in his loft of the so-called Hungarian national relics discovered there. He had not been up in the loft for decades. He was acquitted. ("Ellenzék", August 3.)

*Dr. Joseph Lőrincz, Roman Catholic parish priest of Ditró*, was innocently accused of having insulted the State religion and its local representative years ago. He was arraigned on the charge of incitement. At the trial before the military court his accusers contradicted one other so hopelessly that the charge had to be dismissed, and Dr. Lőrincz was at last relieved of the persecution to which he had been subjected for two whole years. ("Magyar Lapok", July 30.)

On the charge of incitement against the State the *Rev. Nicholas Fodor, Reformed Church clergyman of Bólkény*, and two other inhabitants of the place were arraigned before the military court. The accusation was that at a funeral two years ago there was a Hungarian ribbon on the flag of the local choir. The flag was confiscated, and when the pastor's house was searched, prohibited badges had been found. The accused were also said to have held meetings without a licence. When evidence was produced that there had been ribbons of all colours on the choir flag and that the meetings in question had been vestry meetings, the charge was dismissed. ("Ellenzék", August 3.)

### MILITARY COURTS PASS SEVERE SENTENCES ON MAGYARS

For listening to the Hungarian anthem, Stephen Kabos, a sapper in the Rumanian army, was found guilty of a want of respect for the Rumanian State and sentenced by a military court to six months' and one day's imprisonment. The extra day was evidently added to prevent the accused taking advantage of the amnesty granted to prisoners with less than a six months' sentence... George Gundl, an official of Nagybánya, was found guilty of *insulting the Rumanian nation* and was sentenced by a

military court to three months' and one day's imprisonment. Some time in the spring he had asked in Hungarian for a telephone connection and when the exchange operator protested and ordered him to speak Rumanian, he is said to have cheered Hungary and poured abuse on the Rumanian nation... A severe sentence was passed on Joseph Bobolyák, Blasius Anghi and three other inhabitants of Sárd, for *spreading false reports*. Joseph Bobolyák got 2 years' imprisonment, Blasius Anghi 7 months' gaol, Gabriel Anghi, Joseph Kukta and Andrew Varga received sentences of seven months, two months and one month respectively.

### MAGYAR JOURNALISTS IN TRANSYLVANIA BEFORE MILITARY COURTS.

Dr. Ladislas Sebestyén, editor-in-chief of the "Magyar Szó" of Marosvásárhely, last December published an item of news that had passed the censor stating that the magistrates of five Rumanian villages in Ruthenia had held a meeting at which it was resolved to appeal against the attachment of those villages to Rumania, and had sent this resolution to Budapest. Dr. Sebestyén was accused of acting against the interests of the State by spreading exaggerated reports. He was fined 3000 lei and 1000 lei costs by the military court. ("Keleti Ujság", July 27.)

### NAGYVARAD LADY ARRESTED BECAUSE OF A LETTER FROM HUNGARY

Miss Charlotte Gerencsér, an official of the Agrarian Bank in Nagyvárad, was arrested on a charge of subversive propaganda. After several weeks' detention she was released, but the proceedings against her have not been stopped, for it was proved that she had received an irredentist map in a letter from Hungary. ("Szabadság", August 10.)

### ANTI-MAGYAR COURSES FOR TEACHERS IN NAGYVARAD

The Rumanian Ministry of Education has arranged summer courses for Rumanian teachers in Nagyvárad. These courses have a definitely anti-Magyar tendency. At their opening ceremony the speakers, amongst others Nicholas Popovici, Bishop of the Greek Catholic Church, and the Minister of Education himself, delivered speeches that were expressly anti-Magyar in tone.

### RUMANIAN POST OFFICE IMPOSES FINE ON LETTERS ADDRESSED IN HUNGARIAN

Of late the Rumanian Post Office has begun to levy an extra charge on all letters, parcels, etc. on which the name of the sender or addressee is written in Hungarian. The explanation given is that Rumanian postmen are not obliged to know foreign languages.

An extra charge is also made on telegrams in Hungarian, as though that would help the clerks to learn foreign languages. This measure is a violation of the minority statutes passed on 1st August 1938, which expressly permit the free use of minority languages on sign-boards and in correspondence.

### LAND OWNED BY MAGYARS APPROPRIATED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES

In Lemhény and Bereck (County Háromszék) 144 hectares and 2406 square metres of land have been appropriated by the State. 19,240 square roods have also been appropriated in Tasnád (County Szilágy) and 8 yokes in Szilágycseh. All this land is required for military purposes. In almost every instance the owner was a Magyar. ("Magyar Ujság", July 31.)

### ASSOCIATION OF MAGYAR CHOIRS IN TRANSYLVANIA SUSPENDS ITS FUNCTIONS

The management of the Association of Magyar Choirs in Transylvania have decided not to arrange any competitions this year because of "insurmountable difficulties", and have suspended all activity until things take a turn for the better. ("Keleti Ujság", July 9.)

## SLOVAKIA

### ARRESTS IN ARANYOSMARÓT

A report from Pozsony dated July 27 states that on the night of 22nd July 35 *Magyars were arrested in Aranyosmarót* and conveyed to the gaol at Nyitra. Some of the arrested are women, and all are members of the Hungarian Party of Slovakia. The only reason for their arrest is that of late this Magyar organization has considerably increased in strength, a circumstance that certainly does not find favour in the eyes of Slovak official circles.

As was reported in our last issue, *the Slovak authorities paid a domiciliary visit to the central premises of the Hungarian Party*. Since then they have instituted proceedings against the leaders of the Party in Lőcse and Ótátrafüred. The houses of several Party leaders were searched, but without any result.

It was reported from Igló on 29th July that the local gendarmes had conducted a search in numerous houses and premises, amongst others in the „Kultur” printing-office, where they seized all the manuscripts. Others subjected to domiciliary visits were Dr. Joseph Marschalkó, Dr. Alexander Horka, Joseph Lángh, Elemér Hornicsek, Anthony Köri and the firm of Alexander Kleinberger & Sons. Joseph Lángh has been taken into custody by the gendarmes.

## POLITICAL PRISONERS AT ILLAVA

The Slovak Telegraph Bureau reported on July 29th that Propaganda Minister Alexander Mach had visited the Illava prison in the company of a group of German journalists. According to M. Mach, there are 77 political prisoners detained at present in Illava. Most of them are of Magyar nationality, who — to use the Minister's own words — were imprisoned "for spreading false reports." Mention was made of their arrest in our last issue. *Here we would add only that the Propaganda Minister's statement merely goes to prove that the minorities in Slovakia are being subjected to political persecution.* (For report see "Slovak", 1939, July 30.)

## 120 MAGYARS EXPELLED FROM SLOVAKIA

A report from Kassa states that *on 25th July 120 Magyars who had been expelled from Slovakia arrived in that town.* The expelled belong to various classes; among them there are tradesmen, officials, teachers, farmers, etc. Most of them have been expelled by the administrative authorities because they were born in the areas now restored to Hungary. *The order of expulsion took them completely by surprise.*

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF HUNGARIAN PARTY  
EXPELLED FROM SLOVAKIA

Pozsony, August 2. *Gustavus Derfínyák*, Secretary-General of the United Hungarian Party of Slovakia, was acquitted by the Slovak court of justice of the charge brought against him and released. *Immediately after his release, however, the Pozsony police again took him into custody.* He was not set free until he had signed a statement that he was leaving Slovakia "of his own free will". M. Derfínyák was given one week to leave the country.

GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER FOR MAGYAR CULTURAL  
SOCIETIES

A report from Pozsony dated 4th August states that *police headquarters in Pozsony have appointed a Government Commissioner to control the activity of the Magyar cultural societies.* This mistrustful and insulting measure instituted by Slovak official circles has given rise to great indignation among the Magyars, particularly as the latter have given numerous proofs of their loyal attitude towards the Slovak State.

## BAN ON MAGYAR PLACE-NAMES

Pozsony, August 2. The "Uj Világ", a Hungarian newspaper appearing in Eperjes, has been forbidden by the Slovak authorities to print the names of places and villages in Hungarian.

## YUGOSLAVIA

### INTERESTING NEWS ABOUT THE "MAGYAR" SECTION OF STATE GRAMMARSCHOOL IN ZENTA

In the column devoted to "Editorial information" in one of the newspapers appearing in *Zenta* we read that it will not handicap any pupil in his studies to attend the "Magyar" section, for that department differs from the Serb one only in that Hungarian is taught instead of French. So far as the rest of the subjects are concerned, with one or two exceptions, the official language of the State is the medium of instruction.

This information is in fact no news, and we mention it merely because in the Yugoslav official statistics the so-called "Magyar" section of the *Zenta State grammar-school* always figures as a "Magyar" institute.

### TWO KINDS OF TREATMENT

The Ministry of Education has allowed the German private teachers' training college in Ujverbász to enrol 25 male and 15 female pupils in the first class for the school-year 1939—1940. ("Deutsches Volksblatt", July 9) *On the other hand only 30 pupils of Magyar nationality may be admitted to the first class of the "Magyar" department of the State teachers' training college in Belgrade.*

### MAGYARS BADLY TREATED EVEN IN ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT

In the second week of July, the *Zenta* branch of the Government Party deprived M. Savo Vuyitch, member of the Skupshtina and former Mayor of the town, of his office as chairman and expelled him from the Party because he had joined the *Stoyadinovitch* Opposition movement. This affects the Magyars of *Zenta* more closely, because M. Vuyitch was one of the few Serb politicians who in certain questions at least did not refuse their support to the Magyars of the town, who form 87% of its population. M. Vuyitch's successor is *Dr. Alexander Dragin*, who was forced on the *Zenta* branch of the Party by the Banate organization *despite the fact that the Zenta branch is composed mainly of Magyars and Dr. Dragin cannot speak the Hungarian language at all.* ("Napló", July 11.).