

POLITICAL MOSAIC

CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF UPPER HUNGARY

The entire Hungarian nation, but especially the people of the areas restored to Hungary in the autumn of 1938 by the Vienna Award, celebrated this historical event with great rejoicings. That event is regarded by the whole Hungarian people as a turning-point in their history, as the first harbinger of a new era. It was the first success achieved by the policy of peaceful revision, which must lead to the triumph of the truth proclaimed by Hungary, viz. that the Kingdom of St. Stephen is one organic whole indis severably knit together by the historical rights of a thousand years, by imperative geo-political postulates and by the will, the common interests and sentiments, of the peoples who for ten centuries have lived together on its soil.

The first anniversary was celebrated with scenes of wild enthusiasm by the people of the restored territories, who gave free rein to their joy at having been able to return, after two decades of separation, to the land from which the peace edict of Trianon had never been able to divorce them in spirit. Of the many rejoicings special mention must be made of the celebrations held at the following places: *Drégelypalánk*, where a new bridge over the Ipoly was opened, *Ogyalla*, where a war memorial grove was planted to commemorate the date of the restoration, *Zsiliz*, where November 8 was set apart as a perpetual day of remembrance, *Munkács*, called by M. Andrew Jaross, Minister, "the town of Magyar historical consciousness," *Komárom*, *Kassa*, *Rozsnyó*, *Udvard*, *Rimaszombat*, *Léva*, *Érsekujvár*, *Nagysurány* and *Ungvár*. In the last-mentioned town, where the celebrations were held on 10th November, M. Jaross made a speech in the course of which he said:

"Ungvár has always been and always will be a Magyar town. But it must be added that this town has also another mission, *for in it there are important cultural institutions of vigorous growth belonging to our brethren, the Ruthenian people. This town must be able to remain Magyar and at the same time take the Ruthenians to its bosom, and be ready to make sacrifices for them. It must unite all the people living in it, so as to be able to perform this double task.* Our nation has had to face severe trials in the course of its history, but we have

always been able to preserve our forces from one century to the next, and if one generation was compelled to lay down the standard, the next was always ready to raise it again and carry it to victory. This was true after *Mohi*, *Mohács*, the *Plain of Majtény* and *Világos*, and it is also true of the post-Trianon generation. At Trianon the nation had to stand again before the judgement-seat of history. The question was: *would it be capable of regeneration, of producing new vital forces?* And the nation did succeed in rising again from its tomb. Hungary has shown the world that the Magyars and their State have a mission in Europe. Our self-reliance has been restored, and now the vigour of the enlarged country, its moral authority and military strength, give us increased confidence in our ability to cope with the work before us. *Hungary's historical mission in the Danube Valley is to preserve the balance of power. We must convince the world that Hungary as an independent State is necessary, not only to our own interests, but also to the peace of every nation living in this region. We come prepared to tackle all the problems of the Ruthenian people in a spirit of brotherly love,* — continued M. Jaross, — “and when we approach them in this spirit we do so with the primary intention of supplying the Ruthenians with the means of subsistence. Besides this, it is the Hungarian Government's task to see that they enjoy the opportunities of political, cultural and economic progress that every people is entitled to demand. *At the same time, however, we expect the Ruthenians to join us in declaring that a strong Hungary, a strong Hungarian nation, is the only absolute safeguard of their interests as well as of ours.*”

COUNT CSAKY'S REPLY TO RUMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENTS

In his exposé delivered before the Rumanian Foreign Affairs Committee on 29th November M. *Gafencu*, *Minister of Foreign Affairs*, speaking of the relations between *Rumania* and *Hungary*, said amongst other things that the treaty of Trianon was not a terrible injustice, and that it could never be altered. On that same day *Count Stephen Csáky*, *Hungarian Foreign Minister*, made the following statement to a correspondent of the *Hungarian Telegraph Bureau*: —

“The Rumanian Foreign Minister, M. *Gafencu*, is said to have made a statement before the Rumanian Foreign Committee to the effect that the Treaty of Trianon was not a terrible injustice, and that whatever the new natural order of things might be, that Treaty could never be altered. Of all the States, whether belligerents or neutrals, who are not taking part in the present war, Rumania alone clings to this stubborn point of view. *I consider that I am doing my duty and serving the cause*

of peace, not only of the peace of Hungary, but also of that of Central Europe, when I raise my voice in warning and earnestly protest against the effort being made by Rumania to revive the spirit of the Paris Peace Treaties.

"It is my conviction that when the question of the Trianon Treaty comes to be laid before an impartial international tribunal, no matter when or where, it will be condemned — as it has been condemned recently — as unjust and urgently in need of revision so far as Rumania too is concerned. In an era when the failure of the Paris Peace Treaties is recognized, Rumania cannot be allowed to be the only State to profit by them, for this would not ensure tranquillity and peaceful development in the Basin of the Carpathians. The *Rumanian Foreign Minister* will surely know why not."

THE MINORITIES AND THE NEW RUMANIAN ADVOCATES BILL

An Edict promulgated lately has dissolved the General Law Association and the committees of the various Chambers of Advocates, and provides that until a new Act makes provision for a reorganization of those bodies, interim committees shall attend to their affairs. At a meeting convened for 4th November of the committee of 30 appointed to draft the new Bill, M. Iamandi, — who was Minister of Justice in the Argetoianu Cabinet, — first stated the reasons that had induced the Government to dissolve the committees of the General Law Association and the Chambers of Advocates and to appoint interim ones to carry on their work. He then outlined the aims of the new Advocates Bill. Speaking of the fundamental principles underlying the new Bill, M. Iamandi in the first place laid stress on the point that, *far from having any intention of abandoning the wish to ensure the priority of the Rumanian national elements, he thought that now was the time to attain that object by way of a law drafted in the spirit of the new Constitution.* When formulating and applying this principle, however, *the situation of the fairly large number of minority citizens in the country would have to be taken into consideration.* While ensuring priority to the Rumanian national elements, — said M. Iamandi, — a system would have to be devised that would be in keeping with their position in the State and their loyalty towards it. In connection with the Rumanianizing of the Chambers of Advocates, M. Iamandi expressed the opinion that *it would be the best plan to do so by legal methods,* since a flouting of the laws of the land made people lose their respect for them. He also said that the Government wished to respect vested rights and would re-examine the cases of lawyers hitherto excluded from the Chambers.

The standpoint of the minorities was stated by Dr. Hans Otto Roth, speaking on behalf of the German lawyers, and by Dr. Elemér Gyárfás, representing the Magyars. Both speakers laid emphasis on the point that *the new Advocates Bill ought to make it certain that lawful methods and stability prevailed in the practice of the legal profession. As regarded the priority of the national elements, that was, and would be, assured in any case — he said — by the mere fact that the Rumanians were in the majority. The solution of the problem, therefore, lay in an adequate guarantee that the minorities would be allowed to assert themselves in due proportion to their numerical strength.*

No impartial criticism of the proposed new law is possible before the text thereof is made public, or rather until we see how it is carried out. We have a vivid recollection of the principle of "*numerus valachicus*" (i. e. "*numerus nullus*") applied not long ago to lawyers in Rumania, the aim of which was to exclude minority solicitors from the Chambers of Advocates. A meeting held in Bucharest on 7th February passed a resolution in terms of which „in the service of the national idea only the rights of *Rumanians are recognized.*" This in effect meant that citizens of non-Rumanian extraction were to have no rights at all. The atmosphere prevailing in the Chambers of Advocates in 1937 was so prejudiced and anti-minority that the then Chairman of the Law Association, M. Micescu Istrate, called the minority solicitors "lice" and urged the need of disinfecting the premises. And at a congress of the Association held in Bucharest on 9th May of the same year, the minority lawyers were arbitrarily prevented from making their appearance and a resolution was carried by which the lawyers of the minorities in Rumania were declared to be second-rate citizens. It was also decided to exclude all but citizens of Rumanian ethnic origin from the Chambers of Advocates, and, in order to ensure the purely Rumanian composition of the latter, to revise the lists of members and strike out the names of all who did not fulfil the prescribed requirements.

There was no justification for the exclusion of the minorities from the Chambers of Advocates, particularly since the proportion of minority lawyers is considerably lower than the minorities would be entitled to according to their numbers. Here we would merely point out that in Transylvania the Magyars represent 24.4% of the entire population, but that in no Transylvanian county — not even in those inhabited almost exclusively by Széklers — does the proportion of minority solicitors rise above 20% of the total number of lawyers there. Of the 2646 lawyers in Transylvania only 542 (20%), are Magyars, whereas there ought to be at least 646 on a proportional basis. To be just, we must note that the minorities are reassuringly well represented on the new interim committees

managing the affairs of the Chambers of Advocates; in point of fact they are no longer debarred from leading positions on those committees. Whether the new, more "national" Tatarescu Government is going to bring the well-known ultra-chauvinist principles, involving the extermination of the minorities, that characterized his former régime, to bear on the aims of the new Advocates Act, is a question that only time can answer.

HUNGARIAN PARTY LEADER'S CRITICISM OF PREMIER TUKA'S PROGRAMME

On 22nd November M. Béla Tuka, Slovak Premier, made his début in the Pozsony Parliament. He outlined his programme of work and in his exposé touched on all the major questions of Slovakia's domestic and foreign policy. Amongst other things he stated that one of the most important factors ensuring a successful solution of Slovakia's problems was internal order; he was sorry, however, to say that he noticed various hostile tendencies that were keeping the Slovak nation in a state of unrest and tension. Premier *Tuka* then spoke of the minorities and said: —

"Although our country is a national State, our political administration proposes to show the greatest measure of understanding towards the minorities. We cannot, however, allow anyone to regard the equitable treatment meted out to the nationalities as a sign of indecision on the part of the Government... We shall naturally adhere most strictly to the Constitution and give every nationality no more than the rights accorded to our Slovak brethren living in the country to which the nationality in question belongs and in which they are living as a minority."

In the debate following Premier Tuka's exposé one of the speakers was Count John Esterházy, Chairman of the Hungarian Party of Slovakia. In his speech he referred to the Premier's announcement that the laws framed in Slovakia were free of all dogmatic abstractions. This would mean that practice would give meaning to the written paragraphs. From this angle Count Esterházy went on to criticize the position of the Magyars in Slovakia. He enumerated a long list of the difficulties and obstacles with which they had to contend and stressed the importance of civil rights and liberties. If Slovaks and Germans were equally free to meet and hold assemblies, why was this forbidden the Magyars? *The Magyar societies and organizations were struggling with difficulties.* The Sz. M. K. E. (Central Association of Magyars in Slovakia) had not been allowed to continue its activities since April, and the statutes of the Boy Scouts' Association and the Children's Welfare League had not been approved yet, despite the fact that all these three organiza-

tions were non-political associations. *Count Esterházy* next enumerated several concrete cases in which the personal liberty of Magyars had been restricted. Freedom of speech today — he said — was a source of more trouble than good. The Magyars had also many grievances in the field of education. *Count Esterházy* then proceeded to submit a number of Magyar demands and complained of the economic injustices suffered by the Magyars. The Premier's speech had contained a detailed summary of the economic contacts that had existed for twenty years between Slovakia and the Czech Protectorate, but not a word had been said of those that for a thousand years had linked that country to Hungary. In conclusion *Count Esterházy* spoke of Pozsony, its special role and position, and deplored the lack of the equality guaranteed by the *Vienna Award*. The activities of the Government Commissioner had not proved a success.

OFFICIAL SLOVAKIA OPPOSES RESUSCITATION OF CZECHO-SLOVAK STATE

The new Slovak Premier, Professor *Béla Tuka*, described his programme of work before the Slovak Parliament on 22nd November. Amongst other things, he defined his attitude towards the question of the resuscitation of Czecho-Slovakia. Premier *Tuka* rejected the idea entertained by the Western Powers of reconstructing the old Czecho-Slovak Republic. "It is" — said Professor *Tuka* — "inconsistent on the part of the Western Powers on the one hand to make it one of their war aims to recreate Czecho-Slovakia, and on the other, to de facto recognize the independence of Slovakia..." "The Slovak nation has definitely settled accounts with Czecho-Slovakia; we shall never agree to its being reconstructed, for that would mean the end of Slovak liberty..." "Not until the resistance of the whole Slovak nation is broken will Slovakia cease to be an independent State."

The semi-official organ of the Slovak Government, the "*Slovak*", writing about this question in its issue of 25th November says: "The leading politicians, generals and experts of former Czecho-Slovakia have gathered in *Paris*... We have no objection to these state-builders making provision for the future of the Czechs. That is a matter which concerns the Czech nation only. But we cannot understand how they find courage to decide the fate of the Slovak nation whose existence for twenty years they refused to acknowledge and whose name they still refuse to accept. For twenty years the fiction of a "Czecho-Slovak nation" broke the spirit of the Slovaks, sent their best men to prison, deprived the Slovak people of their means of subsistence, and of their daily bread, and drove our brethren

into exile in the U. S. A. and the *Argentine*. And now this humiliating conception raises its head again, thanks to the fanatics of the old Czecho-Slovak régime... Viest has declared that the Czecho-Slovak State exists. The advocates of this dead idea are not ashamed to stand up and tell the world an untruth. They refuse to recognize the *Slovak* nation and the *Slovak* State; so now we ask them what right they have to speak on behalf of that nation and State... The *Slovak* nation has had ample opportunities to learn what the lovingkindness of Beneš and his friends means. For every *Slovak* the past twenty years are a dark chapter in the history of the *Slovak* nation. *Beneš* and Co. have neither a natural nor a moral right to speak on behalf of the *Slovak* people... Nobody — not even the poorest *Slovak* in the humblest dwelling — can be persuaded to believe that those gentlemen who ran away to foreign countries would ever bring happiness to his humble home or money to fill his empty purse, while the better-off *Slovaks* and the intelligentsia would not demean themselves to shake hands with certain individuals. Should any attempt be made to deprive the *Slovaks* of their independence, the whole *Slovak* nation would resist... Those who regard us as their prey, who wish to make mock of our people, who fain would grow rich at our expense and steal our means of existence, who are trying to spread the theory of a *Czecho-Slovak* nation, will not be allowed to set foot again on *Slovak* soil... *Hitherto* *Beneš* has been able to mislead French circles in *Paris*, because the *Slovaks* could not make their voices heard. But now the *Slovak* people have given their answer. It is for *Beneš* and his followers to decide whether they are going to take cognizance of the protest voiced by the *Slovaks* of *America*, or whether they intend to continue their futile efforts to reconstruct a *Czecho-Slovakia* embracing *Slovakia*, i. e. former north-west *Hungary*, and the areas inhabited by *Magyars* restored to *Hungary* by the *Vienna* Award.

CROATIAN COMPLAINTS AGAINST YUGOSLAV LAND REFORM

Of late the *Croatian* newspapers have been devoting much space to the question of internal colonization in the *Banate* of *Croatia*. Thus, for instance, the "*Hrvatska Straža*", a daily paper, points out in a lengthy article that enormous estates have been taken from the *Roman Catholic* Church and that these excellent lands have been given to *Pravoslav* (i. e. *Serb*) people, while the *Roman Catholics* of the districts in question, who were without any land at all, have been compelled to emigrate to *America*. They were not even allowed to show themselves to

the colonists of non-Croatian origin who had been settled on those lands, for if by chance they ventured in their neighbourhood, the new occupants attacked them with guns and axes. Many a Croatian peasant paid with his life for daring to go near them. The newspaper urges that the proper authorities should devise some feasible method of transferring these non-Croatian political propagandists from the purely Croatian areas and of settling Croatian "landless" people in their stead. The „Obzor" of 3rd October contained a long article dealing with the same subject in which it was pointed out that 90% of the colonists settled in Croatia were not Croats. The article demanded a fair solution of the problem that would provide the poor peasantry of Croatia with land.

The "Hrvatski Narod", a weekly edited by the eminent Croatian author, *Dr. Milan Budak*, published on 29th September an article on the Land Reform, which was carried out without any consideration for Croatian interests. In this article we find the following passage: "Dr. Chubrilovitch, Minister of Agriculture, has stated that in the near future 27.000 cadastral yokes will be distributed among the *Dobrovoljaci* (war volunteers). The land in question is the so-called "*Meadow of Pancsova*", where over 2000 families from the Banates of Vrbas, Drina, Zeta, Morava and Croatia are to be settled It is a well known fact that the Radical Governments gave many people land in the "Prečanski" areas (the territory wrested from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy) in order to win and keep these people as their adherents . . .

"Here it should be mentioned that almost all the land distributed in the so-called "Prečanski" areas was given to war volunteers, since not one square inch of soil was to be found in Serbia for this purpose. Land was also given to others who were not war volunteers, to all sorts of settlers, who, purely to serve political interests, were scattered over the whole area of Croatia by the successive Governments. No consideration whatever was paid to the fact that there were many poor families among the Croats who ought to have been provided with land. No account was taken of the Croats of Lika, Zagorac, Dalmatia and Hercegovina. The Radical Ministers, as well as the Ministers of the Dictatorship, were concerned only with the Pravoslav populations, whose survival in the Croatian areas, on Croatian soil, they wished to ensure at all costs . . . It happened, and still happens, that the war volunteers ruined the soil allotted to them because they did not know how it should be tilled . . . In his speeches M. Chubrilovitch, Minister of Agriculture, has

often laid emphasis on social justice and justice in general; it would therefore not be a bad thing were he to make a closer examination of the question of the land allotted to the war volunteers and other settlers. We believe he would find much that ought to be repaired, for Croatia was never a colony of any kind, not even a colony for war volunteers."

UNIVERSITY ELECTIONS AT ZAGREB

The Students' Union elections held by the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of *Zagreb* on November 12th, resulted in the victory of the extreme nationalist party (108 votes), which is dissatisfied with the recent Serbo-Croat agreement; M. Maček's party secured 82, the Specialists and Communists 55 votes. The Students' Union of the Faculty of Law shows similar results; Nationalists 217, Maček party 172.

OSZK
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