

HOW MINORITIES LIVE

RUMANIA

THE RUMANIAN STATE TAKES POSSESSION OF THE ACADEMY OF LAW IN NAGYVARAD

Before the year 1919. i. e. before the beginning of the Rumanian régime — there was an *Academy of Law* in the city of *Nagyvárad*; the building has been the property of the *Roman Catholic Studies Fund* for 70 years. — The *Rumanian Minister of Education* applied to the County Court of *Nagyvárad*, asking for the allotment of this property to the Rumanian State as legal successor of the *Roman Catholic Studies Fund*. The allotment was made and executed without the previous information of the parties concerned. The decision made has now been confirmed by the *Court of Appeal*, but this latter finding was not final yet. The *Roman Catholic Studies Fund* is at present under the care of the college of *Roman Catholic bishops in Rumania*, which is presided over by Cardinal Cisar of Bucharest; this state of affairs was confirmed by the Concordat concluded between Rumania and the Holy See. The *Cardinal president* appealed against the above finding, but his appeal was rejected in spite of the fact that the Concordat — which had been ratified by law — declares that the *Studies Fund* is to be looked upon — as it was in the past, — as an artificial person, so that there can be no question of legal succession on the part of the Rumanian State. — (*Brassói Lapok*, November 13. 1939.).

NO SUBSIDY TO MINORITY SCHOOLS IN ARAD

In spite of the fact that the city of Arad is largely inhabited by minorities, especially by Magyars, it has not granted any subsidy to the minority schools, which the minority churches are now maintaining with the utmost difficulty. (*Hirlap*, October 15.)

STATUS OF TWO HUNGARIAN SCHOOLS STILL UNSETTLED

The city of *Temesvár (Timisoara)* had for many years had one single Hungarian secondary school — the *Roman Catholic grammar school* of four classes — which the Government

deprived of its right to figure as a public school some years ago, because — it was alleged — the school authorities had omitted to provide for certain acquisitions. After this the number of pupils began to decrease rapidly, so that the school was faced with the most critical situation. When after repeated enquiries the official authorities were satisfied that the school had actually provided for the necessary acquisitions, the school authorities obtained permission to re-open the first public class of the school in 1938. At the same time, they were told that the permission would be successively prolonged for the re-opening of further public classes; this prolongation has, however, not been granted so far either for the second or for the third class and is thus three years overdue now. The Hungarians of the Rumanian Banate have every right to claim the re-opening of the only Hungarian secondary school of their chief provincial city. — In the city of Arad on the Hungaro-Rumanian frontier the Hungarian population has, again, only one Hungarian secondary school, the Roman Catholic grammar school, which has only three public classes. All attempts to obtain permission for the re-opening of the whole school have hitherto failed. (*Magyar Ujság*, November 18.)

TEMESVAR APPLIES FOR HUNGARIAN KINDERGARTENS

The State is maintaining four German kindergartens in the city of Temesvár with a full staff appointed and maintained by the State. The local leaders of the Hungarian Community have now started a similar movement to ensure the opening of Hungarian kindergartens by the State. (*Déli Hírlap*, October 19.).

MORE MILITARY COURT SENTENCES AGAINST MAGYARS

Military court proceedings taken without cause are one of the most "popular" means of annoying the minorities. Even if the trial ends with the acquittal of the defendants, the whole procedure means for them endless suffering and material sacrifice. The Rumanian newspapers have, now dished up a few of the latest cases, among them the case of M. *Imre Zubor*, a solicitor in Arad. He had been accused of hostility against the State, because certain phrases in a letter written to one of his friends were misconstrued by the authorities, and because copies of foreign newspapers had been found in his home. The military court had annulled two verdicts passed by courts of lower instance: in the first place M. Zubor was sentenced to three years imprisonment, then to three and a half years; in the meantime he was, of course, kept in confinement. The third, and final, quashing of the sentence and the acquittal of the defendant took place some time ago, when the military court found that M. Zubor was not

guilty of the charge brought against him; he was, however, found guilty of a minor offence in so far that he had had copies of newspapers in his home which had not been seen by the Censor; in view of his protracted preliminary arrest, however, he was released at once. (*Hirlap, November 18.*) — The Rev. Samuel Csóg of Nyárszó was also acquitted of the charge of concealing arms; it was found that an old revolver — completely out of order — had been concealed in the loft of the parson's house by one of its former occupants. (*Esti Lap, November 14.*) — Two inhabitants of the village of Kovászna, Sándor and Barabás Nagy, were acquitted of the charge — brought against them by a personal enemy — of infringing the honour of the Rumanian nation and the State. (*Népujság, October 21.*) — The military court of Brassó acquitted the farmer Péter János Székely of *Türkös* (County of Brassó) of the same charge, which had been brought against him by the local gendarmes. (*Népujság, November 13.*)

SZEKLER JOINT TENANTS TO PAY ILLEGAL PENALTY OF 2.600.000 LEI

In the three Szekler counties (*Csik, Háromszék, Udvarhely*) of Transylvania — a province annexed to Rumania by the Treaty of Trianon — most of the land consists of forests and high mountain pastures. This property has never been suited for private cultivation, so that it was turned — many centuries ago — into an indivisible property of the entire population ("*compossessoratus*") In other words, these Magyar counties gradually developed a peculiar form of private ownership, i. e. the system of "joint tenancy", which was based partly on tradition and partly on the laws of the country (Art. 55, 1871). The Magyar population of these counties was thus in possession of a considerable amount of property, which — ever since the beginning of the Rumanian régime — all successive Rumanian governments have endeavoured to weaken or to take away entirely from its lawful owners, with a view to giving it to Rumanians. The Rumanian Land Reform dealt a heavy blow to the system of joint tenancy, so that the amount of confiscated property represented a value of many hundred million lei. At the same time, official inquiries are being incessantly conducted against the Szekler joint tenancy. The following is a glaring example: A storm recently tore up many trees in the common forest of Csikszentdomokos, a village in the County of Csik. In pursuance of the orders of the forestry authorities the leader of the joint tenancy had the fallen trees removed from the place and sold the material in accordance with the terms of the official permit. Although he had notified the authorities of the progress of the sale, a commission was nevertheless recently sent to the village to examine the books of the joint tenancy; as a result of the

enquiry the commission "found" that the joint tenancy had omitted to notify the authorities of the exact amount of wood it had sold. The tenancy was therefore compelled to pay a fine of 2.600.000 lei, which is the price of 14.000 cubic metres of wood, plus the tax which — the commission declared — the tenancy had omitted to pay. The tenancy thereupon appealed against this decision and submitted its proofs of the fact that it had always duly notified the authorities of the sale of wood, so that there can be no question of a failure to pay taxes.

NO PENSIONS FOR DISABLED SOLDIERS

Those disabled officers and subalterns belonging to the late *Austro-Hungarian Army* who now live in Transylvania have not yet received their pensions from the Rumanian State, although the problem has by now been settled satisfactorily by all Western States; the majority of the men are either Magyars or Germans. No change has been effected by the Law of 1933, which provides that these disabled soldiers are entitled to claim the same pensions as the disabled soldiers of the Rumanian Army. The enforcement of the law was postponed — it is said — owing to the lack of necessary funds. The Hungarian Community has now repeatedly appealed to the Government for the settlement of the problem of disabled soldiers' pensions. (*Brassói Lapok*, November 20.).

SLOVAKIA

DEMONSTRATIONS IN POZSONY ON NOVEMBER 2nd

On November 2nd, the anniversary of the Vienna Award — to which both nations had subjected themselves — demonstrations were held in *Pozsony (Bratislava)* by Slovak nationals dissatisfied with the award. The demonstration — which was an offence against the two great powers responsible for the award — ended in the smashing of the windows of Hungarian shops. (*Uj Hírek*, November 5.)

IS THIS A "CRIME" TOO?

The Magyars in Slovakia endeavour to save their impoverished cultural institutions by the occasional arrangement of public street collections. On November 19th the Hungarian Party arranged its third public collection since the establishment of the independent Slovak State; the contributions to this collection amounted to 120.700 crowns. Some of the contributors bought a considerable number of tickets and stuck them in their button-holes. The Slovak authorities considered this as a form of demonstration, whereupon the Hungarian Party instructed its

members to wear not more than three tickets in their button-holes. (*Uj Hirek, November 21.*)

HOSTILE TREATMENT OF HUNGARIAN WORKERS

M. Tibor *Neumann*, the Hungarian Deputy Commissioner of the Government in Pozsony (Bratislava), on November 23rd informed the municipal council of the Slovak capital of the grievances of the Hungarian workers in the city. He demanded that the authorities should put an end to the hostile treatment of Hungarian workers by various municipal bodies, especially by the Labour Bureau; the grievances, he pointed out, could easily be remedied if the Hungarian nationals were represented at this office by a delegate. (*Uj Hirek, November 26, 1939.*)

RESTRICTION OF IMPORTATION OF HUNGARIAN BOOKS

In 1937 Hungary exported to *Czechoslovakia* 3,298 quintals of Hungarian books and periodicals representing a value of 778,000 pengő, or 5,446,000 Czechslovak crowns. The value of books to be imported to Slovakia has now been restricted to 600,000 Slovak crowns, not quite one tenth of the above amount. At the same time the Hungarian Government raised the value of printed matter to be imported from Slovakia to three times the amount of 1937. (*Uj Hirek, November 24.*)

YUGOSLAVIA

TEACHERS' APPOINTMENTS AND MAGYAR MINORITY

The majority of the teachers employed in the called "Magyars sections" of *Yugoslav* schools are not Magyars, but either *Serbs* or *Croats*. This also explains the fact that — contrary to the provisions of § 45, of the *Yugoslav Elementary Education Act and Art. 9* of the Minority Agreement — most of the subjects, too, are being taught in the State language and not in the children's own language. This scarcity of Hungarian teachers might possibly be counterbalanced — at least to a certain extent — by the appointment of those young teachers who received diplomas in the Hungarian section of the State Training School of Belgrade in June last. So far, however, not more than seven out of the thirteen graduates have been appointed by the Government, which is by no means a proof of good will and readiness to help the Hungarian schools in the solution of their problem.

APPOINTMENT OF BANATE COUNCILLORS, AND MAGYAR MINORITY

M. Jovan Radivoyevich, head of the *Danube Banate*, has recently relieved 13 Banate Councillors of their office and appointed new councillors to the vacancies. There is not one single Magyar among the newly appointed councillors, which is a glaring breach of the repeated assurances of the Serbs concerning equal and just treatment. Another striking proof is the fact that of all the members (90 in number) of the entire *Banate Council*, only two are Magyars, in spite of the fact that on account of its official percentage (18%) the Magyar population of the Danube Banate is entitled to be represented by at least 16—17 Banate councillors.

GERMANS ALSO COMPLAINING

A similar complaint is voiced by the German minority paper "*Volksruf*", which, on October 27th, referred to the numerous promises made by the Yugoslav authorities concerning the settlement of the *German* minority school problems. The *Belgrade* paper "*Politika*" on August 21st reported that 530 out of the 560 teachers applications had been favourably settled by the Ministry of Education, but the number of teachers appointed to the German sections of the elementary schools was not more than three. Of the 22 teachers qualified by the German training school in June this year, only *one* — a woman — has been appointed; she, too, was appointed to a school in the Zeta Banate, although her husband is teaching in a school in the Danube Banate. The other 30 applicants — including the above mentioned 21 newly qualified teachers — are still waiting for appointments.