

HOW MINORITIES LIVE

INSTEAD OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION THE LITTLE ENTENTE PROMISES PROTECTION OF "SPIRITUAL NOBILITY" TO MINORITIES

The attitude adopted by the recent Little Entente Conference in Sinaia towards the minority problem (the closing communiqué of the Conference is silent on the subject) was defined by the political editor of the "Curentul" as follows: "The Little Entente will to the fullest extent support the Rumanian standpoint as announced to the League of Nations Council. Our countries wish to respect the rights of all their subjects, but are not willing to take lessons on the subject of their domestic policy from strangers living beyond their borders. Consequently, the minorities which place themselves under the protection of Rumanian spiritual nobility will always be well treated. Those, however, which think that foreign countries will be able to secure them privileges in our countries, will be treated according to their deserts as people standing without the walls (extra muros)". ("Curentul", May 6).

The minorities alas! have had very little experience in the past two decades of Rumanian or Little Entente *spiritual nobility*; they have therefore no special reason to wax enthusiastic over this resolution of the Sinaia Conference, which is directed against the League of Nations and the Great Powers.

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CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

RECRUITING OF ADHERENTS FOR THE UNITED HUNGARIAN PARTY FORBIDDEN

Charles Szilárd, a retired notary, and Béla Kántor, a farmer, both inhabitants of the village of Nyék, are being prosecuted for a crime against the "Terror Act" by the Prosecutor General's Office in Pozsony (Bratislava). The charge against them is that they have appealed to the Hungarians to join the United Hungarian Party.

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A CZECH WITH NO KNOWLEDGE OF HUNGARIAN PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE EXAMINING HUNGARIAN TEACHERS

According to the "Slovak" of 12th May, the Pozsony (Bratislava) Board of Education has appointed a Czech Socialist

named Jiri president of the committee of examiners of Hungarian teachers. Neither the temporary President whose place Jiri has taken nor Jiri himself can speak a word of Hungarian. Despite this he will examine the Hungarian candidates. — y —

CZECH AND SLOVAK OFFICERS MAY NOT MARRY HUNGARIANS

At a meeting of the Senate on 18th May Senator Coloman Füssy (Hungarian Party) said that Czech and Slovak customs officers, excisemen, and officers and non-commissioned officers in the Czech army, would not receive permission from their superiors to marry Hungarian women. — y —

THE POZSONY WIRELESS STATION IGNORES OFFICIAL HUNGARIAN NAMES OF TOWNS

In an appeal to the Post-Master-General, M. Béla Szilassy, Senator of the United Hungarian Party, has protested against the broadcasting station at Pozsony (Bratislava), in its Hungarian broadcasts, refusing to use the Hungarian names even of those towns which have officially recognized Hungarian names. Moreover, the Senator demands that the Hungarian broadcasts should be placed under the charge of the Hungarian Cultural Association in Slovakia, in order to put an end to their anti-Hungarian tendency. — y —

RUMANIA

PRINCIPAL ANTI-MINORITY PROVISIONS OF NEW RUMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LAW

The décret lège dealing with public administration promulgated the other day contains provisions seriously affecting the national minorities in Rumania. In terms of §§ 24 and 25 only the two Rumanian (Greek Oriental and Greek Catholic) Churches are guaranteed the right to a seat each on the Parish and Municipal Councils. This provision places the minority denominations in an inferior position. Compared with the Public Administration Act of 27th March, 1936, the new décret lège is a further curtailment of minority rights, for under the former this restriction applied only to Parish Councils.

The use of minority languages has also been further restricted by the new décret lège. For § 40 makes it dependent on the permission of the higher authorities whether in places where the majority of the populations are minority subjects the minority members of the Parish Councils may express their opinions in their mother-tongue, in which case, however, their speeches must be immediately translated into Rumanian. In the Public Administration Act of 1936 this provision applied only to Municipal and County Councils. In this connection we would

note that in pre-War Hungary the use of their mother-tongues was fully guaranteed by law to the nationalities in every sphere of self-government (Parish, Municipal and County Councils).

The provision contained in § 52, which does away with the ancient frontier between Transylvania and Older Rumania (the Regate), is a severe blow to the national minorities in the former province. For the new arrangement has divided the country into seven provinces in a manner calculated to ensure that in each of the provinces Transylvanian counties, where civilization is on a higher level, will be combined with those of the Regate, where the standard of culture is low.

Two new decrees seriously affecting the minorities were published in the April 15th issue of the official gazette. The one dealing with "the maintenance of order within the State" contains amongst other things the provision that "No political organization may be formed, or may pursue any activity, except on the conditions stipulated in a special law to be framed for the purpose". This provision precludes the possibility of organizing any parties to take the place of those of the Hungarians and other national minorities in Rumania which have been dissolved, although they were ethnical rather than political parties.

The minorities are also seriously affected by the decree concerning "the control of funds maintaining periodical press publications", for in terms thereof any press publication appearing at least thirty times a year may not be published except by a joint stock company, which, as its owner, may not engage in any other business. The enormous expense of converting themselves into joint stock companies and the excessive company taxes will prove a heavy and unjustifiable burden to the minority newspapers. The decree will be responsible for numerous minority papers having to cease and will thus plunge many minority citizens into want.

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NEW MINORITY DEPARTMENT

For the first time since Rumania was expanded territorially by the Peace Treaties has a legal measure dealing with the minorities been issued. (The population of Rumania, according to the official statistics, is roughly 18 million souls, of whom 4.862.000 are minority citizens.) But the décret lege consisting of six paragraphs, published in the official gazette on 4th May, does not codify the actual situation of the minorities; it merely determines the sphere of action of the minority department attached to the Prime Ministry. The minority directorate which has hitherto operated in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, was a bureau of information on minority

questions of an ethnic and denominational nature. The sphere of authority of the new minority department (comisariatul general) extends to the control of the manner in which regulations are being applied to the minorities. Besides this, it will investigate questions arising in connection with the minorities and will suggest to the authorities concerned ways and means of solving questions of that sort. Before taking action the administrative authorities must ask the opinion of the department on all important minority questions (religion, education, institutions, etc.).

The statement contained in the address issued by the Premier, Patriarch Christea Miron, to the youth of Rumania, in which he said that the minorities were entitled to progress in Rumania, was made in connection with the establishment of this new department. What the Premier said was: "We Rumanians, though we live and die for Rumania, respect the rights of the minorities". Unfortunately the venerable Patriarch forgets that hitherto the Rumanian Administration has not fulfilled a single one of the undertakings given to the Allied and Associated Powers in the minority treaty concluded in Paris on 9th December 1919.

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EVEN MINORITY NEWSPAPERS OBLIGED TO ADOPT RUMANIAN TITLES AS WELL

In April the Ministry of the Interior prohibited the further appearance of the local daily paper "Ujság" published at Szatmár. The Rumanian press authorities are exercising an ever-increasing pressure on the minority press. The general tendency seems to be to Rumanianise the minority papers successively. The German and Hungarian papers published at Temesvár have been compelled to add Rumanian titles to their original ones. Any information in the title page (such as the subscription fees, etc.) must be printed in Rumanian only; the same applies to the date of publication.

The "Banater Deutsche Zeitung", the favourite paper of the Swabian population in the Banate, has likewise been ordered to change the spelling of its title — against the principles of German orthography — and print "Banat-er" instead of "Banater" in its title. A few days ago the same paper had to print the Rumanian translation of the title under the original German title: "Ziarul German Banateau". Another German paper, the "Temesvárer Zeitung", was ordered to change its title to "Timisoarer Zeitung" (the Rumanian name of the town of Temesvár); later on the paper was invited to spell its new title in the same manner as the one mentioned above (i. e. "Timisoara-er Zeitung"); finally it had to adopt a double title: "Timisoara-er Zeitung, Ziarul Timisoarei". Similarly, a Hungarian paper published at Temesvár, the "Déli Hirlap" (Noon Mail) has to add the new Rumanian title "Cotidian de Dimineata".

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HOW ASSETS OF SAXON UNIVERSITY HAVE BEEN PARTITIONED

The law published in the official gazette on June 3, 1937 (No. 126) — as we have already mentioned — ordered the dissolution of the Saxon University, an institution that had been in existence for many centuries and possessed enormous material resources; it was, in fact, the symbol of Saxon self-government. The remainder of the University's assets — which had already been reduced to almost nothing by the land reform — has been distributed in such a way that 75% has been given to the Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek Catholic Cardinal of Balázsfalva, while the Saxon Lutheran Bishopric of Nagyszeben has received only 25%. A royal decree issued on May 6, 1938, now provides for the final settlement of the division. Out of the 75 million lei paid out by the Ministry of Finance only 17.5 millions have been given to the Lutheran Church, while the Metropolitan of Nagyszeben has received 52.5 millions and the Cardinal of Balázsfalva 2 millions, i. e. 75% of the total amount. (Siebenbürgisch Deutsches Tageblatt, May 8).

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YUGOSLAVIA

THE CONDITIONS OF THE SOLUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY PROBLEM

In connection with the Conference the Serb Press, on the strength of a statement made by Premier Stoyadinovitch, wrote that no complaints had been forthcoming from the Hungarians as regards the lot of the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia; the Hungarians enjoyed in the fullest measure the right guaranteed in the minority treaties and therefore an agreement could be arrived at in a few hours between Hungary and Yugoslavia. We are ready to admit that under M. Stoyadinovitch's régime a certain improvement has been noticeable during the past two years in the lot of the Hungarian minority, but only in that the ruthless persecution and molestation of the Hungarians by the authorities has been replaced by a more lenient treatment and that little or no restriction is now placed on the activity of Hungarian cultural and social associations. This improvement, however, by no means signifies that all the rightful demands of the Hungarian minority are being fulfilled.

Were the Government really willing to solve the Hungarian problem, the least it could do would be to accede to the following minimum demands.

1. *In the sphere of politics and administration.* The organization of an independent political party, with a proportional, or at least a fairly proportional, representation in both Houses of Parliament. Proportional representation in the Hungarian settlement areas in the self-governing bodies (Parish,

Municipal and Banate Councils), Inland Revenue Committees, Chambers of Advocates, Doctors, Commerce, Industry and Agriculture and their Boards, and a fair share of posts in public offices. Hungarian villages should have Hungarian notaries.

2. *In the sphere of education and culture.* The introduction of Hungarian as the language of instruction in all so-called "Hungarian" sections of the elementary schools and the establishment of such sections in every town and village where the number of Hungarian school-children justifies such a measure. The extension to the Hungarians of the educational and other privileges enjoyed by the German and Rumanian minorities. The employment of teachers of Hungarian nationality in the Hungarian sections of schools. The establishment of Hungarian infant schools. Permission to establish private Hungarian schools of any type, and the repeal of the relevant prohibitive provisions of the Education Act.

3. *Social organizations and the use of minority languages.* Full liberty to form Hungarian social organizations, with no restrictions on their activity. Permission to organize a general union of Hungarian societies. Permission to form Hungarian sport clubs. In keeping with the provisions of the minority treaties, the right to use the Hungarian language in the courts of justice, public offices and business life.

4. *In the sphere of economics.* Hungarian undertakings and enterprises should receive a proportional share of public contracts. Permission to establish Hungarian banks and co-operative societies. A suitable modification of the Co-operative Societies Act in conformity with the interests of the Hungarian minority. The payment of the sums fixed by law as compensation for the lands taken from Hungarian landowners under the Land Reform.

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IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION IN HUNGARIAN SECTIONS OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Peter Batta has appeared before M. Stankovitch, the Minister of Agriculture, and informed him of the impossible situation prevailing in the Hungarian sections of the elementary schools in Magyar-Kanizsa. Among other things he mentioned that in the outlying environs of the village the teachers of the Hungarian sections are faced with an almost insoluble problem; thus at Oromhegyes one teacher has to teach 247 pupils, at Adorján 185, and at Tótfalu 124 pupils. Dr. Batta, therefore, asked for the appointment of at least six teachers, in order to be able to cope with the present impossible situation. M. Stankovitch made a solemn promise — for the sixth time — to fill the above-mentioned vacancies at Magyar-Kanizsa and to redress the grievances of the Hungarian minorities in the near future. ("Napló", April 29).

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HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE GRIEVANCES

The head-teacher of the State Elementary School of Doroszló (Doroslovo) has forbidden the Hungarian pupils to be taught Hungarian church hymns. The Roman Catholic parish priest reported the case to the Bishop of Szabadka (Subitica), who thereupon applied to the Ban's Office. It depends now on the decision of the Ban whether the Hungarian children of Doroszló will henceforth be allowed to sing Hungarian church hymns.

One evening (on May 8) a party of Hungarians assembled in the Merchants' Club listened to the Hungarian songs played by the gipsy band there. "Enraged" by this, a Serb customs official assaulted the conductor of the band and stabbed him twice with his knife.

According to a Government decree (No. 1875/1938.) recently published in the Yugoslav official gazette, dancing must henceforth be taught "exclusively in the Serbo-Croat language". Dancing masters must be Yugoslav citizens who have a full command of the national language.

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