

POLITICAL MOSAIC

BARON NICHOLAS DE WESSELÉNYI

This article deals with an event that in ordinary times would have had no connection with foreign politics. What links it up with them are the happenings that form its background.

On the second anniversary of the liberation of Zilah from Rumanian rule the town, amidst impressive celebrations, restored to its former position the statue of Baron Nicholas de Wesselényi which had been removed from its pedestal by the Rumanians. This event recalls two dates. The first was the day when Rumania took possession of Transylvania, which was an integral part of Hungary, and — to say nothing of the historical enormity of that act — committed deeds of vandalism in throwing down and smashing Hungarian monuments. Among the statues destroyed was one of Baron Nicholas de Wesselényi, a world-famed masterpiece by the immortal Magyar sculptor John Fadrusz. The second date recalled was the day of reparation, the day when Magyar life returned to this ancient Magyar soil, bringing in its train not only historical right and justice, a policy of tolerance towards minorities and the recognition of their lawful demands, but also the re-erection of the demolished monuments: *the return of culture to take the place of vandalism.*

Who was Nicholas de Wesselényi, and what did his statue symbolize? *Wesselényi was a man who fought for human rights and for the rights of the people of Hungary. He preached the doctrine of equal rights for every inhabitant of Hungary irrespective of origin, and insisted that the cultural and other specific demands of the peoples of non-Magyar race and tongue should be satisfied.* And this man's statue was among the many demolished by the Rumanian regime, this man's, of whom Andrea Saguna, Bishop of the Rumanians of Transylvania and one of their most outstanding personalities, said: —

"In Nicholas de Wesselényi the sentiments of a great Magyar patriot were combined with a loving understanding for the peoples of non-Magyar race and speech, *When he urged the liberation of the serfs, this enlightened man made no distinction between Magyars and Rumanians or the serfs of any other nationality. He demanded constitutional rights, not only for the Magyars, but also for us.* His doctrine was that liberty is complete only if no barriers of rank or race are recognized."

The Rumanians removed the statue of this Nicholas de Wesselényi who contributed largely towards the liberation of all

serfs no matter to what race they belonged and towards the legal recognition of the specific rights of the nationalities and their equality before the law. And they did so just in *County Szilágy* where before 1848 there were a considerable number of Rumanian nobles and where, amongst others, *the names of the ancestors of Julius Maniu figured on the list of the landed gentry.*

Amongst those present at the celebrations were M. Eugène Szinyei Merse, Minister of Education, and M. Andrew Nagy de Tasnád, Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament, along with representatives of the Lower House, the Transylvanian Party and various municipalities and institutions. In his speech the Minister of Education said: —

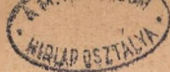
"Baron Nicholas de Wesselényi was one of the first to espouse the sacred cause of the much-suffering Hungarian peasantry. This Magyar noble took up the scythe and mowed with his serfs to show his respect for every kind of honest work. This statue truly represents his exemplary activity: *Wesselényi did indeed raise up the people to himself and did so without reservation and with all the devotion of his human heart.* Baron Nicholas de Wesselényi, a great Hungarian nobleman, recognized what Magyar work and the community of Magyar interests meant at a time when these ideas had not even been formulated."

RUMANIAN CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN TRANSYLVANIA. GENERAL MEETING OF CENTRAL BUREAU

The Kolozsvár "*Tribuna Ardealului*", the official organ of the Rumanians of Transylvania, contains a long article dealing with the general meeting of the "*Plugarul*", the central bureau of the Rumanian co-operative societies in Transylvania.

This general meeting was held in the Kolozsvár "*Albina*" House, with the president, Dr. Emile Hatieganu, in the chair. The two hundred co-operative societies belonging to the "*Plugarul*" were represented by 126 delegates, among whom were the representatives of the various co-operative stores, credit co-operatives and timber co-operatives. They were addressed by Dr. Emile Hatieganu, who spoke of the events that had preceded the formation of the "*Plugarul*". He said that for a long time the formation of a central bureau had presented great difficulties, because the co-operative societies of *Nagybánya, Máramaros, Ugocsa and Bihar* (in the region known as the *Partium*) were treated otherwise than those in the interior of Transylvania. Finally, however, an arrangement had been arrived at with the Government in terms of which it had been possible to establish a *uniform co-operative system* with headquarters at Kolozsvár.

After the chairman's speech the business of the day was discussed. In his report M. Victor Sioldea, president of the "*Regna*" Co-operative Society, spoke of the aims of the Rumanian co-



operative movement and paid tribute to the valuable work done by Dr. Emile Hatieganu and Vice-President Costan.

After various opinions had been expressed, the general meeting passed the budget and elected the committee. The Rev. Lawrence Curea proposed a vote of thanks to Dr. Emile Hatieganu for his valuable work. After thanking the delegates for their appreciation Dr. Hatieganu declared the meeting closed.

NATIONALITY POLICY AND ITS FULFILMENT.

Hungary's nationality policy, particularly in respect of the treatment of the Serbian minority, has always meant understanding, the acknowledgement of the rights guaranteed in the Hungarian Constitution and the Hungarian laws and a readiness to fulfil all the obligations involved. That is what this policy means today also; and this readiness on the part of the Hungarian Government to fulfil its obligations not even those regrettable events proved able to prejudice which occurred in April, 1941, on the occasion of the entry of the Hungarian National Defence troops, and early in the present year, in a few villages and one or two towns of the re-annexed "Bácska" region. The spirit permeating the nationality policy of the Hungarian Government may be seen — not only in theory, but also in practice — from the examples of its working given below.

The two commissions appointed to supervise the demands and applications of *those in need of war relief* completed their activity in the southern districts of the country during the month of July; and *the claims of 12,445 of the 17,639 (persons applying for relief were acknowledged as legitimate*, while the applications of 2358 persons who had not annexed the required documents were returned in order to enable those applicants to make good the deficiencies. While during the twenty-two and a half years of their rule in these districts the Serbians had acknowledged the legitimate character of only 5500 disabled soldiers, war widows and war orphans and rejected the applications of more than 7000 Magyars and Germans (merely because they belonged to the Magyar or German minority respectively), — and this circumstance in itself sufficiently illustrates the differences between the two methods of treatment —, the two Hungarian commissions recognized as legitimate the claims endorsed at the time by the Serbian authorities, only in a very few cases (in altogether 146 out of 5500 cases) withdrew the war relief allowances granted to Serbian or other Slav disabled soldiers. The cases of those persons who have been called upon to supplement the annexes to their applications are to be discussed and settled definitively between October 15 and November 15 of the current year.

A section of the Dobrovoljatz settlers (war volunteers)

settled on the estates taken chiefly from Magyar landowners for the purpose of weakening and intimidating the Magyars of the southern regions remained in their new homes after the re-incorporation in 1941 of the "Bácska" and the Baranya Triangle; these are at present in a relatively serious material situation. In order to ensure the proper medical treatment of the sick children of the struggling "Dobrovoljatz and other Yugoslav settlers the Serbians of Ujvidék have established a private hospital under the management of a Serbian doctor; and — as a result of the intervention of M. Milan L. Popovitch, Serbian Member of the Hungarian House of Deputies, — the Hungarian Ministry for the Interior is granting this hospital a *monthly subsidy of 6000 pengő*.

Another fact characteristically illustrative of the difference between the respective procedures of the former Serbian and present Hungarian authorities is what happened in connection with the 1940 Ujvidék floods. For the relief of the inhabitants — mostly Magyars — of the Adamovitz (now once more Darányi) settlement most severely affected by the floods the Magyars of Ujvidék made a general collection; apart from other donations the "*Reggeli Ujság*" collected from its subscribers the sum of nearly 500,000 dinars (50,000 pengő), and the sum thus obtained was distributed by the Editor among 774 persons suffering serious damage as a result of the floods — though the local Yugoslav Red Cross Society demanded that the money collected should be handed over to be distributed among the sufferers exclusively by its organs. Later on, when the town and the Red Cross also granted the sufferers from the floods some assistance, the management of the Red Cross required the Magyar families (most of them very poor) to give bills of exchange, including in the amounts for which the bills were made out also the sums originating from the collection made by the "*Reggeli Ujság*" and distributed as gifts by the Editor of that paper. And recently, at the end of July, the Magyar mayor of Ujvidék — on the suggestion of the socialpolicy department of the municipality — invalidated the injurious measure taken by the former Yugoslav Red Cross and — ordaining that the bills illegally demanded should be cancelled — exempted the inhabitants of the Darányi settlement affected by the floods from the obligation of repaying the relief allowances given to them under such circumstances.

The August 13th, issue of the "*Délvidéki Magyarság*", a paper published at Szabadka, tells us of another very important example of reparation. The town of Szabadka had already prior to the first Great War granted on a *twenty-five years' lease to 650 families (mostly Magyars)* a strip of land with a sandy soil 8 kilometres long and 2 kilometres broad. These lessees thus put in possession of a long-term contract of leasehold were

encouraged to build houses and farm buildings on the lots leased by them under the contract. The two homestead-settlements thus brought into being were given the names of "Hajdú" and "Vágó" Hundreds. In the early days of Yugoslav rule, when the carrying into effect of the so-called agrarian reforms was begun by an Order in Council issued on February 25th., 1919, — a reform which reduced to beggary thousands of Magyar farm servants, tenants and agricultural labourers employed by the *latifundia* and of Magyar smallholders, the Magyar lessees farming these two homestead settlements were thrown out of these settlements under the pretext of "house redemption", being granted indemnification amounting to barely 1—2000 dinars, while the rights guaranteed them under the contract were set at nought and the places of the lessees were taken by imported Dobrovoltz, Tchetnik and other Yugoslav claimants. After the territorial change ensuing in the April of last year the Serbian settlers who had been all put there to act as veritable marchmen returned for the most part to their original homes; and the lots of land, together with the houses and farm buildings, were restored to the former lessees; though no longer in the form of leaseholds, but as freehold to be purchased on a very fair amortisation basis to run over thirty years. *The same equitable treatment has been meted out also to the former Bunyevatz lessees*, — an additional proof of the correct tendency of Hungary's nationality policy and of the fact that that policy ensures an absolutely unbiassed reparation of all legitimate grievances.

In cultural matters too the Hungarian Government is making every effort to provide that the legitimate wishes of the non-Magyar nationalities shall — notwithstanding the great difficulties caused by the war — be as far as possible fulfilled. This endeavour was what inspired the Ministry of Public Worship and Education too when arranging the four weeks' continuation courses for practice in languages at Pécs (closed on August 5th.) and at Ujvidék (opened on August 10th.), the latter also to last several weeks, *for the benefit of teachers engaged in "nationality" schools*. The number of students — middle and elementary school teachers — attending the Pécs courses was 180, that of the students now attending the Ujvidék courses being 118. The object of their studies is, apart from acquiring a knowledge of up-to-date pedagogical methods, to enable them to obtain as thorough a knowledge as possible of *the languages of the various non-Magyar nationalities*.

And all this is being done by the Hungarian Government amid the awful ordeals and formidable dangers of a world conflagration; that Government is inspired, in its nationality policy based upon the traditions of a thousand years and upon sober reflection, not by any desire to requite the persecution (often of

an absolutely ruthless character) inflicted upon the Magyar minority by the Yugoslav authorities during their twenty-two and half years of rule, but solely and exclusively by a sincere and serious endeavour to bring about a reconciliation, to eliminate antagonisms and to unit all forces in the work of furthering the common interests of the country as a whole.

HUNGARIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION IN CROATIA DEMANDS HUNGARIAN SCHOOLS

In one of our recent numbers we published a report on education in the independent State of Croatia in which we described the situation of the German racial group in this respect. Compared with German education in Croatia Hungarian education, though the number of Magyars is not much less, is wholly neglected. *In order to make up these deficiencies and right these wrongs the Hungarian Cultural Association is doing, as it has always done, what it can, and its main object is to ensure elementary education in the Hungarian language for Magyars.* Recently this association approached the Croat Ministry of Public Education in this matter, as may be seen from the following circular letter addressed by the committee of the association to its local groups:

"The leaders of local groups are hereby notified that the Ministry of Education cannot be asked to open more Hungarian sections than the number of Hungarian-speaking teachers available. *Seeing that more than 30 local groups have so far demanded Hungarian sections, while there are only 21 teachers registered,* it is impossible that the request of every local group should be granted. Our aim is to establish if possible in every political district a Hungarian elementary section, primarily in places where the number of Magyar children of schooling age is the greatest. In choosing such places we had to be careful to ask for Hungarian schools in localities where teachers were willing to go. For the present we cannot send any of the small number of teachers available to villages in out of the way districts. Local groups are notified that this arrangement is not definite yet, since the approval of the Ministry of Education has still to be obtained."

Until the Croat Ministry of Education gives permission to open Hungarian elementary school sections the Hungarian Cultural Association is trying to prevent the spread of illiteracy by means of courses of instruction.

A short time ago the examinations at the course for children

established by the Cultural Association at Eszék took place and *the results were more than satisfactory*. When the course began most of the children, far from being able to read and write, could not even speak their mother-tongue properly. After the course those children were able to read and write Hungarian practically without mistakes.

When the course at Eszék was opened 38 Magyar children registered, but later on several of them dropped out because their parents moved to other places. They had lessons of two hours' duration twice a week. The subjects were chiefly reading and writing, besides which they were given instruction in history, geography and arithmetic. (See Croatian newspapers.)

All this, of course, is merely a modest beginning in the field of Hungarian education in Croatia, but it is certainly an improvement on the state of matters that existed during the twenty-two and a half years of Yugoslav rule, when the Magyars in Croatia and Slovenia — in number about 100.000 — had not one single Hungarian school.

WHAT ARE THE CHETNIKS?

Through her own Government's fault Yugoslavia became involved in a war that brought ruin in its train. After her complete defeat bands of Serb insurgents, hiding in the trackless primeval forests and practically inaccessible fastnesses of the mountains in Serbia, began a widespread guerilla campaign, and since then the international Press has been writing more and more about the so-called "Chetniks", who are playing an important part in that warfare. As anti-Axis propaganda presents these guerillas to uninformed public opinion as the zealous and unselfish protagonists of liberty and the Serb national cause, the "Pester Lloyd" of 7th August thought it necessary to publish extracts from their service regulations that reveal the real character of those "heroes". These service regulations were issued twenty years ago at the very beginning of the new order created by the Paris Peace Treaties, when the Chetnik organization was founded, and they were issued with the approval of the Minister of the Interior of the S.H.S. State.

A literal translation of §. 3 of these regulations runs as follows: "The bands to be employed on the northern frontier must be organized with due regard for the (Serb) national idea... Their chief task will be to act in a manner calculated to frighten the enemy, demoralize the population and put the (enemy's) army

aut of action. The path of the Chetnik bands must be marked by assassinations, blood and ruin."

According to §. 4, the Chetnik bands were no longer free troops but part of the regular army, and as such were bound to obey their leaders without question, who in turn were told not to forget that none of Yugoslavia's neighbours was to be spared.

The next paragraphs set forth the chief virtues required of the Chetnik leaders. Amongst those bloodthirstiness and a total lack of moral or any other restraint play an important role.

§. 14 deals with their training. Among the things to be learned were the destruction of means of communication, the blowing up of bridges, roads and buildings, the cutting of telegraphic lines and the polluting of wells and reservoirs with poison or bacteria.

§. 15 regulates the payment and other emoluments due to the Chetniks, and §. 21 instructs their leaders how to obtain the various uniforms used by the armies of enemy countries from the army stores in Belgrade, where also the identity cards and certificates used by foreign armies were to be had.

The next paragraphs deal with the organization of the Chetnik bands. Three men go to form a "troika", from two to four troika a "grupica" and three or four grupica a band, which as an independent fighting unit is under the control of a regional commander.

§§. 31 to 36 deal with the behaviour of Chetniks in war-time, §§. 37 to 60, on the other hand, contain instructions regarding their duties in peace.

§. 37 treats of propaganda, which should be engineered and directed in such a way as to make the people of foreign countries believe it originated in their own countries, for this, it was said, was the method that afforded the greatest possibilities of undermining morale and weakening discipline in the enemy's camp. Where sabotage was used the most important thing was to destroy food and clothing. When drinking-water was to be polluted the poison was not to be thrown into running water, but into wells and reservoirs, and phials containing disease germs were ordered to be emptied into pools. Where murders were decided on, the people to be killed were the guardians of public security, agricultural and industrial workers, politicians and public officials.

§. 45 contains special instructions for spies. Those who offered themselves or were designated for that service were told

to choose an occupation that gave them comparatively the greatest freedom of movement (peddling, fishing, driving carts, waiting in restaurants, etc.)

The last paragraphs contain general instructions concerning the methods of guerilla warfare. Prisoners and the wounded were to be killed, also in many cases women and children who might be able to betray important information to the enemy, Chetniks taken prisoner were ordered to commit suicide, as there was no hope of their being pardoned.

In conclusion §. 60 says that the mobilization of the Chetnik bands was to be ordered by the head of the General Staff of the Yugoslav army.

These in brief were the service regulations issued to the Chetnik organization, the members of which, with their senseless and brutal behaviour and wanton work of destruction, gave so much trouble in the southern areas restored to Hungary last year and who, together with organized Communist bands, are still causing terrible suffering to the peaceful inhabitants of Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro.

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