

LONDON

No. 3—4

AUGUST—DECEMBER, 1939

NATIONAL MINORITIES

Publication concerning Minorities and
the realisation of Minority rights

Published by the
Central Bureau of Minorities
10, quai Gustave Ador, Geneva

London Secretariat :
29, Onslow Gardens, S.W.7
'Phone : KEN. 8394

Price one shilling

Volume III

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To the Reader.

In demanding, ever since its inception, the improvement of the unhappy lot of the millions of European national minorities, the Central Bureau of Minorities in Geneva has, albeit indirectly, worked for the maintenance of peace. These efforts of ours—together with those of others—have unfortunately proved to have been in vain, because the war, which most of us would so much have liked to avoid and which this periodical very reluctantly had to foretell in its columns, has presented us with new problems. Peace, which for the time being is lost for belligerents and neutrals alike, must soon be regained. Profiting by the lesson of the past the new peace must of necessity be based on understanding and justice.

The Central Bureau of Minorities wishes to take its part in the effort towards peace and, within the limits of its powers and aims, to prepare the ground by putting at the disposal of those in authority reliable information, the possession of which will make impossible the repetition of the terrible mistakes and injustices of the last peace treaty.

For this reason the Central Bureau of Minorities has decided, as from 1940, to transform "NATIONAL MINORITIES" — hitherto a quarterly review — into a bi-monthly, so that, together with "VOIX DES PEUPLES"—our monthly in the French language—it should provide ampler opportunities for the information of those interested in one of the most important problems of present-day Europe.

The subscription rate of "NATIONAL MINORITIES" will in future be five shillings per annum, while each individual issue will still be obtainable at the old price of one shilling. We hope that all those who have followed our work with interest and were readers of or subscribers to our publications, will continue to support it and thereby help us in our work for a new and just European peace.

The League's Responsibility.

By GENEVICUS.

Nobody could foresee the consequences of the present war; it is, however, clear to everybody that in the new Europe an order which would follow it must be free from all explosive matter and capable of maintaining lasting peace.

In order to eliminate the explosive matter which was partly responsible for the present war, it must be one of the first considerations of those responsible for the new Europe, to solve the problem of the Continent's national minorities and by this reduce the number of tens of millions of discontented people.

The makers of the new Europe must not overlook the fact that minority movements had assumed a militant and dangerous character and had in some cases led to serious disturbances or to catastrophe only in countries where oppression of national minorities was permanent and deliberate.

There is a view current abroad that minority movements came to be organised largely among such groups which were detached from the neighbouring mother country and thus these movements were not the natural consequence of the life instinct (or rather that of the fight for individual existence) on the part of the race, or of loyalty to old traditions, to culture and to language, and that these movements had been artificially created or fostered—from without—with an aim at disrupting the unity of a country and undermining its safety.

This view is entirely false, and nothing could prove its falsehood better than the fact that in countries where

the ruling race gave a fair treatment to its minorities, the latter had never strayed from national extremism and never wished to join any other country. In countries where, for example, the German minority was subjected to suppression, this had inevitably resulted in a strong, nationalist reaction on the part of the minority, whereas in Denmark, the country which had treated her German minorities well, the latter had never expressed any desire to join the Reich.

In the joint interest of both national minorities and the countries in which they live, it would have been, therefore, most desirable that the League of Nations should have taken seriously those of her obligations, whose fulfilment she had guaranteed and which are known to international law as "Minority Treaties."

It must be noted, however, with regret that the League had never in the course of her existence made a serious move in the direction that minority rights should be respected by her member states. On the contrary, her various—and sometimes—deliberate actions had given encouragement to those who had subsequently treated the Minority Treaties as if they had not existed.

The League had never given satisfaction to those minorities who had approached her with confidence, and had asked for her help against the tyranny of governments ruling over them. Since 1920 more than one thousand minority petitions had been received by the General Secretariat, out of which the tiny fragment of six had ever reached the Council, and even these had been dismissed.

The League's procedure in minority matters is a subject which by its nature and interest deserves special studies—it had indeed inspired the authors of a couple of successful books. It seems, however, important to note here, that the minority petitioner had never been regarded by the League of Nations as such (that is as an individual who

had certain rights arising out of his minority status). He was looked on instead as a kind of informer (and a nuisance) whose role was finished the moment he had filed his petition. He had after this ceased to exist from Geneva's point of view, so much so that the Secretariat did not consider him worthy of even such a small attention as to notify him that his petition—as a rule unfavourably—had been dealt with.

It is interesting to note, furthermore, that petitioners from territories under a League of Nations' Mandate, were free not only to hand in petitions, but also to appear as petitioners in person at the competent organisation of the League. National minorities—as a contrast to this—had no such rights. It may not be relevant from the point of view of equal justice; it is, however, a fact that the petitioners from the Mandated territories were, for the most part, primitive, coloured natives, while minority petitioners—quite often—had represented the highest intellectual class.

There were years when the minority section of the League of Nations had spent the sum of Sw. Frs. 400,000—about £20,000—without the slightest moral use deriving to the minorities from this regrettable waste.

As time rolled on, the League of Nations' work in the interest of national minorities had gradually diminished, as it could be seen only too clearly from the following few lines, which the General Secretary of the League had "devoted" to national minorities out of a report of two hundred pages odd:

"PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.

"During the year from June 1st, 1938, to May 31st, 1939, four minority petitions were received of which one

was declared to be receivable and three to be non-receivable, in virtue of the Council resolution of September 5th, 1923.

"The Committees appointed to consider these petitions, as well as those received in previous years the examination of which had not been completed, held sixteen meetings during the period in question. The examination of five petitions was completed during the year. No petition was submitted to the Council during the period under review.

"The number of petitions at present under examination by Minorities Committees is eleven."

Territorial Revision is not a German Interest.

By CONSTANTIN FILIPESCU (Bucarest).

As a Rumanian patriot I recognise that one of the most important duties of Rumania is to find the way to an early and sincere understanding with our neighbours in general and with Bulgaria and Hungary in particular.

It would not be fair on my part if I refused to admit that this understanding does not at present exist because our Governments in their dealings with the Bulgarian and Hungarian racial minorities have not shown that justice and sincerity without which no country can expect loyalty from its subjects. I voice this criticism because, I repeat, I am a patriot who first and foremost wishes to consider the interests of his own country and people.

While I regard it as Rumania's first duty to extend fair treatment to her racial minorities, I must at the same time say that neither the Hungarians nor the Bulgarians can rely, whether openly or in secret, on Germany's friendship. They are, therefore, thrown on their own resources and have to work together for the happier solution of their problems.

These two racial minorities of Rumania cannot count on Germany's friendship and all that this may imply, because Germany is working exclusively to further her own selfish aims. In order to illustrate this statement of mine and to supply adequate proof of it, it is enough to quote this example of the activities of the German minority in Rumania.

These Germans, who for the most part live in the areas of our country which had been parts of pre-war Hungary, form two racial groups: the Saxons and the Schwabians.

The former have never liked Hungarians, whereas the latter have always proved themselves loyal subjects of St. Stephen's Crown. Yet lately the *Banater Deutsche Zeitung*, the official newspaper of the Schwabians, shows a most hostile attitude towards Hungarians in general and towards the Hungarian minority in Rumania in particular. Since the change of attitude dates from 1933, it is obvious that the paper has been instructed by Berlin to adopt this policy. It is, in any case, interesting to know that the Schwabian political leaders responsible for the views of the paper—such as Prelate Blaskovitch and others—were known as ultra-patriotic “Hungarians” before the Peace Treaties gave Transylvania to Rumania. It is easy to understand that at the time of the triumph of Hitlerism such people must have been confronted with a Nazi opposition of ever-growing strength on the part of their own people—and the fact that they may have been ashamed of their “Hungarian” past has driven them to extremes. This is merely theory, but it is an undeniable fact that the anti-Hungarian attitude of the Schwabian minority in Rumania started after a secret conference at Timisoara in January, 1933. This conference was organised by the *Stuttgart Auslandsinstitut* and its members included the late Prof. Bleyer, leader of the German minority in Hungary, as well as the representatives of the Schwabians of Banshag, the Transylvanian Saxons and the Germans of Yugoslavia. This conference decided that while the undermining of Czecho-Slovakia by revisionist propaganda was very much in the interest of the German ideology of the *Drang Nach Osten*, a Hungary made powerful by the

success of her revisionist policy was not in the interest of German imperialism.

The German minorities of Rumania and Yugoslavia must therefore adapt an anti-revisionist policy. Moreover, in case of a plebiscite, the Germans of Rumania and Yugoslavia must vote against Hungary; not, however, at the same time for Rumania or Yugoslavia either, but, if possible, for an independent German republic to be formed out of the Banate Banshag and Barania. When the resolutions of this conference leaked out, they took Germany so unawares that the Nazi Government did not even issue a denial. It is beside the point to argue whether this resolution represented the policy of Berlin official circles or whether it merely reflected the views of an anti-Hungarian section of the German minorities in Rumania. It cannot be denied, however, that after the conference the Schwabian minority's policy in the Banshag was identical with that of Rumanian anti-revisionist movements fostered by M. Titulescu and the newspaper *Universul*.

From this it is clear that the Bulgarian and Hungarian minorities of Rumania must not for a moment imagine that their claims and ambitions towards revision will ever be satisfied by Germany. They are therefore best advised to strive to prepare the ground for a sincere friendship with us Rumanians so as to contribute towards the possibilities of a freer and happier Central Europe.

War Aims and Minorities.

By ADALBERT DE POKA-PIVNY.

We can say without exaggeration that the main causes of the outbreak of the first World War were minorities.

Alsace and Lorraine were claimed by the French on account of the large French-speaking populations annexed by Germany in 1871.

Servia and Rumania claimed alien territories on the ground that they wanted to "liberate" Serbs and Rumanians living beyond their boundaries; Italy's decision to join the belligerents in 1915 was prompted by similar considerations.

Russia based her foreign policy in the XIXth Century on the assumption that she had to protect the kindred peoples of the Balkans against oppression.

We here see three groups of minority claims.

The French claimed territories which *belonged to them* until 1871.

The Serbs, the Rumanians and the Italians claimed provinces which never belonged to them, but were *partly inhabited by their kinsmen*.

The Russians claimed a *political influence* the very presence of which was sufficient to arouse suspicion, fear and war preparation, mainly in the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

Versailles was nothing else than the creation of a still more confused, more controversial and more unstable minority world.

Fifty per cent. of Masaryk's Republic; thirty per cent. of King Carol's kingdom, a third of Poland, a quarter of Jugoslavia were aliens, minorities who didn't wish to be "liberated," who weren't "kinsmen" and who were simply annexed because a larger Czecho-Slovakia, a greater Poland, an aggrandised Jugoslavia, an inflated Rumania conformed to the misbegotten French conception to replace the Hapsburg Monarchy with the Little Entente.

Forty million minorities were the result of this post-war policy. The number of these people grew in such an alarming way that it was imperative to do something. The outcome of the long deliberations was the minority clauses of the Peace Treaties and their guarantee by the League of Nations. The readers of this review know well that they amounted to worthless promises, cursed and mocked by desperate millions.

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The driving power behind the more recent European policy is again mainly the minority question. Austria, the Sudetenland, Danzig were claimed for reasons of relationship and intolerable treatment by the majorities. The basis of Hungarian and Bulgarian revisionism is also the result of the persecution of millions by the new masters. Russians and Ukranians were in the last months re-annexed to Russia on the same foundation. The re-awakening Russian imperialism will probably not tolerate the prolongation of the Rumanian rule over the Russians of Bessarabia and Bukovina and a process of re-settlement will set in in the Balkans as well.

Neglect or tendencious misrule couldn't fail to produce its poisonous fruit. The leading nations of the Western civilisation are at war and the rest of the world looks upon the developments with anxiety.

Nor does the widespread discussion of War Aims seem to be very satisfactory for minorities. One eighth of the population of our continents (such is the proportion of the minorities) wonder why their fate is disregarded by those who try to formulate the principles of the new international order.

We read and hear abundantly about federal up-building of Europe, but the devisers of the system leave the minority-regions out of account.

We see daily articles and studies about war and peace aims, but the improvement of the fate of minorities doesn't figure amongst them.

It is to be feared therefore that the problem of minorities will be dealt with again in the last moment with the same superficiality, and this at a moment when the delegates are tired after the discussion of the chief political items.

Dissatisfied populations, mutilated countries are always liable to be influenced or stirred up by propaganda. Since Versailles, the South Eastern regions of our continent were the hot-beds of different sorts of "spheres of influence," and "schools of thought," etc., all devised again but none for the well-being of minorities.

The famous Brazilian expert of the League of Nations, Senor Melo Franco, preached for instance the theory of amalgamation, the merging of the minorities in the majorities.

Colonel Beck, on the other hand, simply dismissed the duties and obligations resulting from the minority-treaties in the General Assembly of the League of Nations with the explanation that Poland is a Great Power which couldn't, without losing her prestige, be cited before

international committees to answer for her minorities while other Great Powers are free of these implications.

Smaller States adopted other shrewd methods ranging from imprisonment, confiscation of property and expulsion of minorities to mere trumpery excuses. A new Balkan method, a mixture of legal and administrative tricks, a combination of propaganda and law-manufacturing, was invented and put into practice by the newly inflated countries with the result that just grievances were silenced or overlooked.

Those who, although inspired by the noblest ideas, but ignoring all the past, work out War Aims without providing for the perfect solution of the minority problems, do thus a great harm to the cause of the future European peace.

Associations concerned with international affairs, universities, parliaments, the press should concentrate on this vital problem and certain elementary principles should be borne in mind.

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We have no space here to enter into details. Moreover, the minority question has a voluminous literature to guide the student. But we wish to emphasise that the practice of the prevailing abuses must stop. A great step forward has to be made. The elements of a new order must need take into account at least the following principles :

1. Wherever it is possible, the right of self-determination should be applied in order to re-incorporate nationals separated without their consent from their mother country and to reduce the number of minorities as far as possible.

2. Neutral zones or neutralised States should be created in regions where large populations are mixed, again in view of taking minorities out of the hands of the oppressors.

3. New minority treaties should be created for the security of the populations which will have to live with majority-peoples in the same State. These treaties should be drafted in the light of the experience of post-war times. They should be based on a convention signed and ratified equally by the Great Powers and the small States, subject, at the same time, to the control of international bodies and mainly to the judgment of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

4. Provisions should be made for the transitional safeguard of expelled, refugees, apatrides, etc., *i.e.*, funds and refuges, for the victims of abuses who will have to leave the State and will need material help during the examination of their case by the international authorities.

Nothing could be more democratic than to find a sound basis for the constructive settlement of the minority question.

Democracy is nothing but the constant endeavour of all who live in a community to develop the capacity for mutual toleration and service in such a way as to satisfy the needs of the largest possible number of citizens.

If we take separate countries or else regions of Europe or the whole continent as a "community," the democratic idea will remain a utopian dream until this burning question is satisfactorily solved.

It would be tragic for humanity if the new possibility, the coming settlement would fail to emancipate from oppression a large part of the European community.

Transfer of Minority Populations.

By L'ABBE CAPEAUX.

During the World War, when hundreds of thousands of Armenians were driven like herds—or still worse—from their homes towards unknown and uncertain destiny, we used to say: "Of course, these Asiatic Turks, these non-Christians... What else could we expect of them?... It is a nice Committee of 'Union and Progress' which the Turks set up, etc..."

The enforced migration of the Armenians has been and remains a black page of the history of the XXth Century. Its lack of humanity couldn't be thoroughly justified by the facts that the Armenian population has been disloyal to the Turkish rule and that war was being waged.

There was a second chapter to the Armenian tragedy which lives none the less vividly in our memory: the post-war persecution of this race so terribly silenced. English speaking races have shown their generous compassion for oppression practically the first time after the World War when they tried to heal the wounds of this unfortunate race.

President Wilson's dream, an independent Armenia, never came true. Attacked by the Red troops in the East and by the Kemalists from the West, abandoned by the Allied forces, the fate of this people was sealed.

The immediate post-war times brought about another classical example of grand-scale transfer of minority populations. The centre of it was again Turkey.

When the Peace Treaty of Sévres tried to mutilate Turkey in the same iniquitous manner as similar peace treaties dismembered Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria, the nationalist armies of Kemal turned against the Greeks, whose aim has been to acquire considerable territories in the West of the geographic unit which constitutes the present-day Turkey, and routed, the Greek army was forced to evacuate the Asiatic shores.

As large Greek masses were already killed off or fled, the Greek Government consented to withdraw the Greeks from Asia Minor, while Turkey undertook to remove the Turks living on Greek territory.

This time, the solution was more equitable. An elaborate scheme was worked out and the migration took place under the financial assistance of the League of Nations.

Thus, the principle of populations being transferred *en masse* became part of the international law and order. Sentiment apart, the most elementary rights of the minorities were at least safeguarded.

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There is another case of enforced migration of hundreds of thousands of minorities which took place nearer to Western Europe, in the Danubian region. When Hungary, the greatest martyr of the post-war diplomatic settlements had to hand over the largest part of the territory of St. Stephen's Crown to Rumania, when the whole North went to Czecho-Slovakia and the whole South to Jugoslavia, the new masters started a policy of ruthless extermination of the Hungarians. Civil servants, officers, landed proprietors, etc., had to flee, leaving behind them very often all their possessions, at any rate

the splendid civilisation which their ancestors had built up during a thousand years.

Hungarian pride is averse from the detailed description of the hundreds of thousands of family tragedies the main characteristic of which is that they practically have not ceased even to-day. We are in the presence of an unhealed wound. The new masters, violating the very articles of the Peace Treaty of Trianon which awarded them the territories more cultivated than their own, refused to recognise the citizenship of the Hungarians. The unfair treatment of the minority grievances by the League of Nations only encouraged them in their practice. For years the Hungarian refugees led wretched lives in railway trucks and when they were provided with housing, newcomers had to take their place.

There was a recrudescence in 1934 when, after the murder of King Alexander of Jugoslavia, tendentious propaganda spoke of Hungarian hospitality given to Croatian patriots implicated in the plot, an accusation which has been proved unfounded by the League of Nations itself.

Since the Rumanians feel that the territories seized from the Russians (Bessarabia), the Hungarians (Transylvania and other territories) and the Bulgarians (Dobrudja) are not secure, the expulsion of patriots still continues without mercy.

No wonder that irredentism is rife in the Carpathian region where every third Hungarian has been subjected to foreign rule since 1919.

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The last months brought a new phase of the minority population transfer, initiated by the German Government.

While the Turkish transfer of Armenian population was due to enmity and reduced the Armenians to the direst

misery and while the mass-expulsion of the Hungarians was the result of a Balkan spirit of revenge and of an instinct of acquiring position and wealth without compensation, the newest forms of population exchange are more regulated, and certainly brought about without spirit of revenge or spoliation.

The recent transfers of population were initiated between friendly nations, namely, between Italy and Germany, between Germany and the Baltic States, between Russia and Germany, and may be grouped in two classes. The Italo-German and Balto-German agreements are based on a *unilateral* exchange of populations; the Germano-Russian agreement on the other hand is *bi-lateral* and provides for the simultaneous transfer of Germans by the Russians from their newly acquired Polish territories to Germany and of Russians (resp. Ukrainians) from the Polish territories under German rule to Russia.

The unilateral agreements couldn't be helped to be considered as a means of acquiring foreign currency for the empty German coffers. On the other hand, the exchange of populations between Germany and Russia seems to be more natural and also justified by the diametrically opposed political regimes of these two dictatorships.

All the different examples appear to show that wherever colonists, settlers, newcomers are re-transported to their mother country, a natural solution, a population barter, can be found. The Turks returning from Greece or Greeks from Asia Minor, Baltic or Volhynian Germans or settlers of the Trans-Brenner returning to their mother country are cases which are capable of placating the mind and of making forget dear and deeply rooted memories mainly if economic provisions accompany them in an equitable way.

But nothing can justify the brutal expulsion of the Bulgarians after the cruel mutilation of Bulgaria. Nothing could explain away the enforced migration caused by the Balkanisation of Hungary, where the lack of international collaboration tolerated a perfectly reverse process to be introduced, whereby not the infiltrated Rumanians, Serbs and Croats repatriated who took refuge during the Turkish advance in the XVth and XVIth Centuries, but the Hungarians were driven out of their thousand years old country under different pretexts ranging from "strategic considerations" or "economic necessities" to historic reasons based on the old Roman Empire (of which the Rumanians claim to be the descendants) or on the legendary Slavonic Kingdom which fell to pieces at the time of the advance of the Hungarians in the IXth Century.

We expect that the transfer of minority populations will be, in the future, regulated by suitable international conventions based on the elementary rules that:

- (a) the original inhabitants keep their land and the newcomers will be repatriated from the regions where they settled in more recent times;
- (b) the material welfare will be always safeguarded and the transfer will take place in human form, in adequate time limit;
- (c) the very fact that a large part of the minority population has been subject to a transfer agreed upon by the two Governments, does not free the one Government, party to the agreement, to wipe out the non-transferred minority remaining under its rule or the other Government to renounce once for all the inalienable rights of those minorities which refused to answer the call of return.

The Situation of Minorities in the Succession States.

By G. DE KOVER.

Very few people realise that the present war and the tense international situation was partly caused by the problem of the national minorities, an important issue which in the twenty-five years following the Great War was not squarely faced.

There were no fewer than forty million people living in Europe after the peace treaties who were listed among national minorities, and this number does not include the non-Russian population of the U.S.S.R. which is roughly half of the population of the greatest European country.

After the Great War the map of Europe was re-drawn on the so-called Wilsonian principle, that of the right of Self-determination. Of the great powers, they had smashed up the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; of the smaller countries, Montenegro disappeared and Turkey was left a tiny corner of the European continent. Some countries already existing emerged from the melting-pot with their territories greatly enlarged, others were crippled, and new countries like Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and the Baltic states were called into existence.

Some of the inhabitants of these new countries, and some of those already existing—including Russia—were separated from the majority of their kinsfolk. These people figure in common parlance as well as in international law as "national minorities" and some of them are protected by so-called Minority Treaties against the possibilities of suppression or denationalisation.

The idea that the minority races might become loyal subjects of a country provided that the country's rulers respected the minorities' particular and assured rights, is more than a mere theory and a figment of idealistic or utopian imaginations. Canada and Switzerland are two very good examples of the practical and just solution of the minority problem. In these two countries whose populations are made up of various races, the racial components or racial units live together peaceably and happily. This is all the more remarkable because in neither of these two countries are minority rights guaranteed by any kind of international treaty.

It is, therefore, obvious that those national minorities which in 1920 were put under the League of Nations' protection could likewise have been made happy and reasonably prosperous, had they been well treated. And no danger whatever could have been caused to the countries concerned if justice to their minorities had resulted in the collective satisfaction of their citizens.

It is perhaps unnecessary to enlarge upon the causes which have made the system of international protection of national minorities in the last twenty years so very imperfect. And it would not perhaps be fair to try to find a scapegoat for the present troubled and unsolved state of the minority problem. It is quite enough if we repeat here what has already been said, namely, that in the last twenty years the League of Nations has not taken her duties seriously in this respect.

Now when Europe is involved in a new war, of which no one can predict the outcome, all of us, belligerents and neutrals alike, must adopt a common attitude: we must work for peace, for a peace which must come soon and for a peace whose just character must serve as a guarantee of its durability.

In order, therefore, that we should prepare ourselves for the peace, it is important that we should get ourselves well acquainted with the causes of the present war, and particularly with one of the most burning, the most important : the problem of the national minorities.

According to the popular booklet, "Essential Facts about the League of Nations," which is published by the Information Section of the League :

"Since 1919, a number of countries have assumed obligations in respect of the protection of their nationals belonging to racial, religious and linguistic minorities."

"The documents governing the work of the League in this respect comprise :

"1. Five special 'minorities' treaties :

- (a) Poland : Treaty between the United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and Poland, signed at Versailles on June 28th, 1919.
- (b) Czecho-Slovakia : St. Germain - en - Laye, September 10th, 1919.
- (c) Yugoslavia : St. Germain-en-Laye, September 10th, 1919.
- (d) Rumania : Paris, December 9th, 1919.
- (e) Greece : Sévres, August 10th, 1920.

"2. Four special chapters embodied in the following treaties of peace :

- (a) Austria : Treaty of Peace of St. Germain-en-Laye, September 10th, 1919. Articles 62 to 69.
- (b) Bulgaria : Treaty of Peace of Neuilly, November 27th, 1919. Articles 49 to 57.

- (c) Hungary : Treaty of Peace of Trianon, June 4th, 1920. Articles 54 to 60.

- (d) Turkey : Treaty of Peace of Lausanne, July 24th, 1923. Articles 37 to 54.

"3. Six Declarations made before the Council :

- (a) Finland for the Aaland Islands : June 27th, 1921.
- (b) Albania : Geneva, October 21st, 1921.
- (c) Lithuania : Geneva, May 12th, 1922.
- (d) Latvia : July 7th, 1923.
- (e) Estonia : September 17th, 1923.
- (f) Iraq : Geneva, May 30th, 1932.

"4. Special Chapters embodied in two other treaties :

- (a) Germano-Polish Convention relating to Upper Silesia, concluded at Geneva on May 15th, 1922. Part III.
- (b) Memel : Article 11 of the Convention concerning the Territory of Memel, between France, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom of the one part and Lithuania of the other part, signed at Paris on May 8th, 1924, and Articles 26 and 27 of the Statute annexed thereto."

Of the four categories described above those countries against which the highest number (about 90 per cent.) of the petitions were made belong to the first category. It is, therefore, important to examine these countries from the point of view of their racial composition.

Sooner or later there would be peace again in Europe and the basis on which this peace would be built cannot be an immaterial consideration. The statistical information which follows gives a clear picture to everybody who wishes

to get acquainted with the racial composition of those of the victor countries where the problem of national minorities had not been solved. The knowledge of these facts—let us hope—might prevent a second Versailles with the dreadful consequences of the first.

These figures are representing the situation before September 3rd, 1939.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

If we take the figures of the last census (1930) the various nationalities found in Czecho-Slovakia were the following :—

Czechs	7,308,900
Slovaks	2,379,870
Germans	3,231,688
Hungarians	691,923
Ruthenians	549,169
Jews	186,642
Poles	81,737
Total	14,429,929

While in the cases of Poland and Rumania the official statistics were obtained after all kinds of pressure had been imposed on the minority populations, in the case of Czecho-Slovakia they were obtained by means of ingenious stratagems.

In actual fact the number of the Germans subjected to the Czecho-Slovak State was 3½ millions, while the Hungarian minority was very nearly one million.

When we recall the fact that the Slovaks were treated by the government as second-rate citizens of the country

with which their name is associated, and that they formed a real minority, one is presented with the paradox of a Czecho-Slovak republic in which six different national minorities who together made up the majority of the total population of the country, were oppressed by a weak majority (the Czechs) which could only be regarded as a majority if each of the other component races was taken separately.

A large number of petitions were sent to the League of Nations against the Czecho-Slovak republic. These were either rejected by the Secretariat or "closed" by a Committee of Three. This procedure, invariably gone through by Geneva, gave such confidence and assurance to the Czech authorities that they naturally never felt it necessary to restrict themselves in any way. They sincerely believed that they were permitted to do anything they liked.

And here is another paradox :

Always encouraged by the League, the Czechs had succeeded in oppressing millions and millions of their subjects, while in the eyes of the world they had never ceased to appear as champions of democracy and humanitarian ideas.

M. Edward Benes, Foreign Minister of the Czecho-Slovak republic, who wished to play the part of Supreme Arbiter of Europe, and the orchestra which he conducted in Geneva with the help of his friends in the Little Entente, were strong enough to shut from the ears of the world the echo of the sufferings of these oppressed millions.

As we write these lines the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia is no more than an echo of the past. And although it is always an unfair thing to say ill of the dead, we are forced to remember that the short existence of that

country was quite as deplorable as her end was without grandeur.

After the disappearance of Czecho-Slovakia—whose national minorities, no matter how much they were suppressed, had a better lot than their brethren in the other Succession States—all the nervousness as regards their future, of those countries which had not profited from the dreadful lesson of Czecho-Slovakia, is completely justified.

GREECE.

According to the last official census (1928) Greece had 6,205,000 inhabitants, of whom 445,000 belonged to national minorities. The following is an official list of the various nationalities of the country :—

Greeks	...	...	5,760,000
Tziganes	...	...	5,000
Albanians	...	...	19,000
Armenians	...	...	34,000
Bulgars	...	...	17,000
Spaniards	...	...	63,000
Italians	...	...	3,200
Koutzo-Valaques	...	...	19,700
Macedonians	...	...	83,600
Russians	...	...	3,300
Turks	...	...	191,000
Other nationalities	...	...	6,200

In compiling these figures the authorities took notice only of the subject's language, excluding ethnical considerations. Thus, the Jews, not mentioned in the list, are presumably included among the 63,000 "Spaniards."

If one could accept the statistics supplied by the minorities themselves, then the number of minority nationals is much larger, there being very many more Bulgarians, Macedonians and Turks.

If we examine Greece's national minorities in this light we note that the national minorities of the country make up at least 700-750,000 souls or about 12 per cent. of the total population.

From the time of the passing of the Madrid Resolution, 20 petitions were addressed to the League of Nations on the subject of Greece's minority policy. Needless to say, however, all these petitions were dismissed.

JUGOSLAVIA.

According to the last official census (1931) the population of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was divided in the following manner :—

Slovenes, Serbs and Croats...	11,888,516
Germans	499,326
Hungarians	468,185
Albanians	342,150
Rumanians	63,853
Slovaks	176,482
Turks	132,310
Italians	9,450
Russians	46,000
Poles	15,000
Bulgars	5,000

Total ... 13,646,272

These figures do not give a reliable picture of the situation of the country's national minorities. They are considerably distorted by the fact that the actual figures for the first large group (Slovenes, Serbs, Croats) are given in a lump, though, since the first days of the Kingdom's existence, the Serbs cut out for themselves the lion's share and ruled over their so-called "brethren."

Should one wish to see the true picture one must examine the various components of the Serbo-Croatian group separately, all the more so as their "unity" never existed except on paper.

Carefully prepared minority statistics supply, as we shall see later, figures which are substantially different from those given by the Yugoslav authorities as a result of the census of 1931.

The frontier separating the Croats and Serbs is altogether religious, while those which separate the Serbs and Montenegrins are of political and historical origins. The inhabitants of Montenegro still remain much attached to their national traditions. Finally, according to the best European ethnologists of the 19th century, the true criterion which separates the Serbs from the Bulgars is the difference in their languages.

Besides these ethnological groups, animated by a well developed national consciousness, we may consider as a separate group Croatian-speaking Moslems of the Szanszak of Novi Bazar, because they apparently do not possess a real national sentiment.

Hereunder we give statistics worked out on the basis of the above principles, of the different racial groups which go into the making of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Serbs	...	5,167,300 = 37.08%
Croats	...	4,010,000 = 28.88%
Bulgars	...	1,165,100 = 8.32%
Slovenes	...	1,101,500 = 7.90%
Germans	...	498,600 = 3.58%
Albanians	...	478,600 = 3.43%
Hungarians	...	467,300 = 3.35%
Montenegrins	...	234,100 = 1.75%
Moslem Slavs	...	231,000 = 1.72%
Rumanians	...	134,300 = 0.96%
Turks	...	132,200 = 0.95%
Slovaks	...	71,500
Tziganes	...	64,900
Czechs	...	52,200
Russians	...	36,600
Ukrans	...	30,900
Spanish Jews	...	27,600
Poles	...	18,600
Italians	...	9,100
Greeks	...	3,300
Others	...	4,500
Total	...	13,939,200

Thus, in the "national" state of Yugoslavia, none of the nationalities has an absolute majority. There are four nationalities whose populations are over the million mark and eleven which are more than a hundred thousand strong. The Serbs—the ruling race according to their own statistics—do not make up more than 37% of the country's population.

The Croats form the absolute majority in the three historic regions: in Croatia proper (including Srijem and Medjumurje) their percentage is 66; in Dalmatia 81.3 and in Bosnia-Herzegovina 53. These three provinces have

altogether 6,081,135 inhabitants. Before 1912 the Serbs were in the majority nowhere except in Serbia proper, that is to say, in an area which had then 3,208,000 inhabitants. The Bulgars are in the majority in Macedonia, the Slovenes in Slovenia, the Montenegrins in Montenegro, while in the Voivodina, which comprises the provinces of Bacska, Banat and Baranya, taken from Hungary, none of the various nationalities can show an absolute majority. The Serbs themselves are not more numerous here than 32% of the population.

When we recall the fact that the Croats emigrated from Croatia in large numbers on account of the persecutions to which they were subjected by the Serbs, and when we know that 1,476,000 of them went to America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa their number can be computed at 5,486,000, while the number of the Serbs, who are to be found now all over Jugoslavia, is only 5,167,000.

Contrary to current general opinion the Croats, therefore, form a racial group which is larger than that of the Serbs.

This difference could be still further accentuated if the preceding statistics had not placed the Moslem element of the Sandjak of Novi Bazar in a separate group. The Croats, themselves, do not admit this distinction, referring to the fact that this group speaks Croatian and forms a cultural community which is identical with the Moslem Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

They point out, furthermore, a permanent falsification of the official statistics in favour of the Serb element, in that the figures given by the Roman Catholic Church and the Moslem religious community of Bosnia-Herzegovina indicate a percentage of Roman Catholics and Moslems far higher than that of the official Serb statistics, and that Zagreb possesses a larger electorate than Belgrade, in spite

of the fact that the latter has, according to the official government figures, 50,000 more inhabitants than the Croatian capital.

Briefly, if we proceed to correct the official figures in the light of the Croatian figures we obtain the following list of the most important racial groups of Jugoslavia:—

Serbs	...	...	4,697,000 = 35.7%
Croats	...	...	4,441,000 = 31.9%
Bulgars	...	...	1,165,000 = 8.32%
Slovenes	...	...	1,101,000 = 7.90%

In spite of the enormous difficulties with which the country has had to deal since the beginning of its existence, on account of the multiplicity of its component elements and the dissatisfaction caused by the imposition of a permanent dictatorship by the Serbs—one can clearly detect that Prince Paul's Regency has resulted in a general improvement. This improvement is not evident only in the external relations of Jugoslavia, but also in the harmony among the various nationalities of the country.

Jugoslavia has concluded several treaties with her neighbours in favour of certain national minorities over which she rules and it is to be hoped that the greatest danger to the smooth functioning of the machinery of the new State, *à savoir*, the rivalry between the Serbs and Croats, may finally be eliminated.

The time is perhaps not far off when the various groups which go to the making of Jugoslavia will collaborate in the heart of a pacified country, uniting its different nationalities in an atmosphere which reflects liberty and reciprocal toleration.

POLAND.

If the figures of the last census (1931) are to be believed, Poland's total population was 32,137,936 and of these 9,929,860—or 31 per cent.—were members of minority populations.

These figures are official and they differ considerably from those supplied by representatives of the minorities themselves. According to them, the national minorities of Poland are the following:—

Ukrainians	...	...	...	6,000,000
Jews	...	...	...	3,000,000
Germans	...	...	...	1,200,000

It will be noticed that the Czechs, Russians, Tziganes, Lithuanians and other less important minority groups are omitted from this list.

It follows from the above figures that the minority population of Poland is 11-12,000,000, or in other words, it forms about 40 per cent. of the total population.

Since 1929, no fewer than 68 minority petitions against Poland were received and rejected by Geneva. This number does not include those which were first rejected by the Secretariat.

As a result of an agreement concluded between Germany and Poland, the conditions of life of the German minority in Poland were improved; the rest of the minorities, however, especially the Ukrainians and the Jews, have a good deal to complain of. Their cultures are suppressed and they seem to be the targets of a permanent political and economic oppression. Poland being, however, a semi-dictatorship, it is not always easy to see clearly the general discontent of the mass of the population, the particular discontent of the national minorities.

It should be recalled that Poland, a member State of the League declared in 1934 through her permanent delegate, Count Raczynski, that she would no longer take part in the League's work on behalf of the minorities, which in other words meant the gallant—or otherwise—repudiation of an obligation Poland had previously undertaken.

RUMANIA.

According to the Census of 1930, out of her total population of 18 millions, Rumania had the following groups of minorities:—

Hungarians	...	...	...	1,387,000
Jews	...	...	...	829,000
Germans	...	...	...	775,000
Ukrainians	...	...	...	457,000
Bulgars	...	...	...	370,000
Turks, Tartars and Tziganes	...	...	...	230,000
Russians	...	...	...	310,000
Serbs, Poles and Slovaks	...	...	...	150,000

Total ... 4,508,000

These figures are again official and come from the Bucarest government and were only obtained after the operation of a merciless and permanent oppression by the Rumanian authorities. It is safe to assume that in actual fact national minorities in Rumania make up a much greater proportion of the whole population than the 25 per cent. that these figures represent.

The Hungarians alone form a group comprising at least 1,800,000 souls, even making allowance for the fact that a large number of Hungarians had left Rumania in

consequence of the moral and economic oppression continually exercised by the Rumanian authorities. Deprived of their land and their goods or expelled from their jobs and leaving the country without means of support, nearly 200,000 Hungarians decided to look for places of refuge not only in Hungary itself but in many other parts of the world.

As for the Bulgarian minority in Rumania, Bulgarian figures show that it reaches the million mark. The Bulgars, in fact, are to be found in other parts of the country besides Dobrudja. They are very numerous in the regions around Bucarest; indeed a large proportion of the Rumanian capital's population is of Bulgarian origin.

The number of Russians and Ukrainians in Bessarabia is again considerably larger than official statistics would have us believe. But since these populations are submitted to cruel methods of subjugation, which prevent any political organisation, it is almost impossible to establish their exact number.

Briefly and generally, it can be said without exaggeration that in Rumania there are more than 6 million members of national minorities of which the most important are the Hungarian and Bulgarian, these forming compact groups.

The areas north of the River Maros together with the so-called "*Szekely*" counties, excluding Maramaros, form a large island the majority of the inhabitants of which are Hungarian and where only the mountains are populated in a very scattered fashion by Rumanians.

An identical state of affairs obtains in the areas adjoining the Bulgarian frontier, where the population is very largely Bulgarian.

In 1938, Rumania, after four periods of camouflaged dictatorship, transformed herself into an open dictatorship. The rights of the Rumanian minorities were from the beginning disregarded. But after the internal upheaval, when the Government became openly nationalist, the already painful situation of the minorities was considerably aggravated. In other words, the change of the *régime* simply meant that the oppression became more cynical. In the past it had been regarded prudent to hide the "iron hand" in a velvet glove when it came to dealing with the non-Rumanian population of the country.

It is not perhaps unnecessary here to recall the fact that in formal contradiction of the Minority Treaties, whose authors had pre-supposed that Articles 2-8 of the Treaty would be placed on the Rumanian Statute Book, these articles have never become part of the Rumanian legislation.

The number of petitions against the Rumanian Government "closed" (*i.e.*, dismissed) by the League of Nations since 1929 was 40. And here again we do not include those petitions which the League's Secretariat rejected as not conforming with the rules of procedure.

It can be said that of all the countries with large minority populations Rumania is the one in which the internal situation is the most aggravated. This deplorable state of affairs is due to the complete failure of a policy for assimilating the minorities continued for years with a zeal worthy of a better cause.

From 1938, that is to say since the hidden Rumanian dictatorship came into the open, the political parties were dissolved and the minority groups were placed under the control of various officials whom the government had

appointed without regard to the feelings of those principally concerned.

When we remember that the Rumanians are considerably less cultured than the national minorities over whom they rule (with the possible exception of the Tziganes) we can appreciate why it is that the position of the minorities in that country is worse than it is anywhere else in Europe.

Owing to the scarcity, in Rumania, of educated men, capable of bearing the serious responsibilities of administrative office, a collection of half-educated civil servants has taken the place of German, Hungarian, Bulgarian or Russian predecessors. And these people, who have no qualification except their membership of the Rumanian governing majority, evidently discharge their functions with all the narrowness of mind which one may expect from parvenus.

That is also the reason why Rumania, which is perhaps the richest country in all Europe in raw materials and all kinds of material possibilities, still remains a place where civilisation is in its infancy and an agricultural country where a good many people are actually under-nourished.