CZECHOSLOVAKIA

RUTHENIA

§ I. GEOGRAPHY, POPULATION, HISTORY: THE RUTHENE QUESTION

The remaining territory allotted to Czechoslovakia under the Treaty of Trianon is the Autonomous Territory of Ruthenia. I Politically, it differs from Slovakia, and indeed from any other area with which this volume is concerned, in that it possesses a right, guaranteed by international treaty, to a wide degree of autonomy: a condition imposed by the Powers in 1919 in recognition of the fact that the Hungarian Ruthenes, for whom it was intended to constitute a sort of 'national home', are racially and linguistically a distinct nationality. It possesses, therefore, a whole series of political problems of its own, although many of these bear very close analogies to those of Slovakia, while its economic problems differ from those of Slovakia, as a rule, only in degree—being nearly always more acute—but not in kind. Geographically, Ruthenia is a pendant of Slovakia; if the one forms an elongated tail attached to the body of the Historic Lands, the other forms the tail's tip. Such, indeed, is its shape. Like Slovakia, it consists of a section of the inner slopes of the Carpathians, with a small strip of the adjacent plain. On the west, the boundary (in theory still provisional) with Slovakia forms a simple cross-section of mountain and plain. Of the two longer sides, the upper, which coincides with the old boundary between Hungary and Galicia, runs along the watershed of the Carpathians, curving gradually from an easterly to a southerly direction as those mountains reach and pass their extreme north-eastern extremity. At the apex of the arch, where Poland, Ruthenia, and Romania meet in wild and lofty mountains, the frontier (hereafter dividing Ruthenia and Romania) curves back westward, at first cutting across mountains, then following the course of the Tisza, which at this part of its journey is a turbulent and fast-running mountain stream. When the Tisza emerges from the foot-hills, the latter draw sharply back, so that the line of them runs from south-east to north-west, while the river takes an

[1]The name 'Ruthenia' will be used here for the sake of brevity, and as being unambiguous enough for our purposes. The official title to-day is 'Podkarpatska Rus', usually translated 'Sub-Carpathian Russia' or 'Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia', or 'Carpatho-Ruthenia'. It is well, however, to remark that the question of nomenclature is the center of one of those political controversies so exciting to Central Europe and so difficult for Western Europe to appreciate.

See below, p. 207.

irregular course, full of loops and meandering, although westward in its general trend. The political frontier follows a fairly straight line westward, cutting the river in two places, and leaving on its right a widening triangle of plain. The whole forms an area of 12,639 square kilometers (4,886 sq. m.), of which mountains occupy some three-quarters.

There is no need to describe in detail either the plain—a typical stretch of the Hungarian Alföld, the haunt of storks, buffaloes, and the Fata Morgana—or the mountains which, with their forest-clad slopes, open, pastoral summits, and narrow intervening valleys, are own brothers to those of Slovakia, while lacking any of the grander peaks of the Tatra. It is, however, worth while emphasizing the close geographical and economic connection of mountain and plain, which is even more marked than in Slovakia. In the western third of the country only one road which is practicable even by the most modest standards traverses the mountains from west to east. In the center there are two; in the east none at all, and all traffic must descend to the plain to pass from the valley of the Rika to that of the Tisza. Across the plain, on the other hand, runs an important railway which forms the link between the Slovak system and that of North-Eastern Hungary and Northern Transylvania. Branch lines run up the main valleys. The passage across the mountains into Galicia is not difficult, and two railway favorable.

The chief towns--- Užhorod (Ungvár), Mukaèevo (Munkács), Sevljuš (Nagy Szöllös), and Chust (Huszt)—lie at the valley mouths, while a few market centers, the largest of which is Berehovo (Beregszász), lie out in the plain. The mountain centers of population, although sometimes strung for miles along the valleys, are all small. The natural resources of the Ruthene mountains are smaller than those of Slovakia. The only mineral deposit of value is salt. The Ruthene districts of Hungary formerly produced nearly 40 per cent. of the country’s total output in quantity, and over 50 percent in value. The frontier now runs through the salt-field, leaving Akna Slatina, the largest and most valuable of the three mines, in Ruthenia, while the other two are in Romania. After this, by far the most important of the country’s resources is the timber, which covers 48.8o percent of the total area. A considerable number of men and women find employment, in good seasons, in the forests and sawmills, and a few factories existed before the War for by-products of the timber industry, such as furniture-making and the distillation of wood alcohol. The industrial establishments employing more than 20 persons, however,

only numbered 5o in 1910, with a total of 4,943 employees, while another 16,622 persons were employed in smaller enterprises. The increase, as compared with 1900, had been rapid (63.4 per cent. for the larger industries, 33.4 per cent. for the smaller), but the development still lagged far behind that of the Slovak counties.

Apart from the forests, and the few quarries or salt-mines, the mountains are suited only for a little stock-raising and dairy-farming, and for the cultivation of meager crops of rye, oats, maize, and potatoes, of which only the potato is produced in quantities nearly sufficient for the needs of the population. For their other essential supplies, the mountaineers of pre-War Ruthenia resorted largely to the seasonal migration to the plains at harvest time which has been noted in the chapter dealing with the Slovaks. A large fraction of the 'Verchovina' (as the poverty-stricken mountain district is known) depended for a large part of its annual supplies on this seasonal work. In some years the emigration organized by the Highland Commission alone rose to 15,000; usually it varied between 8,000—10,000.

Overseas migration was high, although not so high as from Slovakia, or even from the German districts of Hungary. Between 1899 and 1914 some 50,000 Ruthenes emigrated from Hungary (44,000 of them permanently), and the Ruthene colony in the U.S.A. amounts to-day to nearly 300,000. Emigrants' remittances formed an important item in the pre-War budgets of many families. Some of them also earned certain sums as ghillies and beaters on the big estates—Ruthenia was really treated by the Magyars as a great deer-forest—although the population as a whole undoubtedly lost far more by the ravages of the game than it gained by this work.

In 1898 the Hungarian Government instituted a special action for relieving the poverty of the mountaineers. This was in the hands of the so-called 'Highlands Commission', which, besides organizing the harvest labor, introduced the beginnings of a co-operative movement and spent sums which were considerable for that time on the purchase of land for settlement, the distribution of agricultural machinery, the introduction of improved strains of live stock, crops, and fruit-trees, and even such varied objects as the establishment and maintenance of osier-beds and the breeding of crayfish. The founder of the Highlands Commission was a Hungarian Government official of Irish origin, named Egan, whose sympathies had been stirred by the miseries of the people. He was assassinated in a lonely spot by persons unknown, and it is still locally believed that he was made away with by Jewish middlemen, whose profits he was undermining.

Some of the local estate-owners helped with this activity, but

it cannot be said to have made any very deep impression on the conditions, particularly in view of the constant and rapid increase of the population. Still, a certain *modus vivendi* had been established, based on the natural interdependence of mountain and plain, which assured a living of sorts to most of the mountaineers. Very much more, however, remained to be done before the position could be regarded as at all satisfactory.

By contrast, the plains, with their rich harvests of wheat and maize, and the foot-hills, with their excellent vineyards, which deserve to be more widely known, hold great natural wealth and were able to support a prosperous population.

The censuses of 1910 (Hungarian) and 1921 and 1930 (Czechoslovak) give the following figures for the population of Ruthenia:

	1910 (maternal language).	*1921 (nationality).*		*1930*
Ruthenes . .	319,361	Ruthenes, Russians, and Ukrainians .	372,500	446,911
		. . . .	103,690	109,472
Magyars	169,434	.	10,326	13,249
Germans	62,187	. . .	10,810	12,641
Romanians	15,387	Czechs and Slovaks	19,775	33,961
Slovaks .	4,057	Jews . . .	79,715	91,259
Others .	1,062	Poles . . .	298	.
.		Gypsies .		1,357
		Others		278
	571,488		595,114	709,128

While the 1930 figures show a normal development from those of 1921, comparison of the latter with those of 1910 must be made subject to the same reserves as in the case of Slovakia. The figures are particularly affected by the fact that the Hungarian census of 1910 officially reckoned the Yiddish ‘jargon’ as German; no less than 53,942 persons entered in that year as ‘German-speaking’ (besides 30,680 listed as Magyar-speaking) were of Jewish origin.[1] The general distribution of the two main nationalities is, *mutatis mutandis*, the same as in Slovakia, viz, a Slavonic peasant mass in the mountains and a Magyar peasant mass in the plains, with a small Magyar population of landowners, officials, railway employees, and industrial workers scattered among the Ruthenes; but the border-line is no more clear-cut in Ruthenia than in the Western Carpathians. Here, too, as a result of past migrations (chiefly connected with the advance and subsequent retreat of the Turks), Magyar villagers had settled in Ruthene territory and Ruthenes in Magyar. Nearly all the former are

[1] Cf. Molnár, op. cit. The figures quoted by Molnár for the 1910 census are slightly higher than those reproduced in the official Czechoslovak publications

Ruthenized to day. Most of the Ruthenes in the plains, who were substantially the more numerous, Magyarized very quickly, but the process was not yet quite complete in 1918, and there are still Ruthene and partly Ruthene villages south of Užhorod and Mukaèevo, including a few even south of the present frontier. There were also many villages which had lost their Ruthene language but betrayed their ancestry by their membership of the Uniate Greek Catholic Church, which was practically a local specialty of the Ruthenes, shared, among their neighbors, by the Romanians alone, while the true Magyars, the Germans, and the Slovaks were either Roman Catholics or Protestants. Ninety-seven per cent of the Ruthenes were Uniate in 1918.

On this ground, both Czechs and Ruthenes attacked the Hungarian statistics in 1919 as showing too low a number of Ruthenes, since the religious statistics gave *567,867* Uniates in North Eastern Hungary, after deducting the Romanians of that creed. All these, according to the Ruthenes, ought to be reckoned as Ruthenes; and if nationality is to be reckoned by ancestry, their contention was undoubtedly correct. In some cases, however, the process of Magyarization had been completed generations back.

Broadly speaking, then, the Ruthenes are the mountaineers, the Magyars the plain-dwellers of Ruthenia; but before leaving the question of distribution it should be recalled that the Ruthene area of settlement extends both westward and eastward of the present frontiers of Ruthenia. The eastern outlines consist only of a few thousand souls in the valleys of the Black Tisza and the Visa, now under Romanian rule. In Slovakia, on the other hand, the Ruthene area of settlement reaches in a gradually diminishing wedge as far westward as the foot of the High Tatras. The Czechoslovak census registered *85,628* Ruthenes in Slovakia in 1921, and 91,079 in 1930, while the Ruthene claims (partly, here also, based on religion) put the figure considerably higher.

Of all the nationalities of pre-War Hungary the Ruthenes, who are now, in theory, the dominant nationality of the Autonomous Territory, were perhaps the poorest and most neglected. The prosperity which they are said to have enjoyed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had given place to a long decadence. The outer world hardly knew them, save when they descended in their droves at harvest-time and stood about the market places of Debreczen or Nyiregyháza for hiring. In their very mountain homes they were disregarded. Such industry as existed was exclusively in Magyar, German, or Jewish hands and employed workmen of the same nationalities; the Ruthenes were not thought fit for any better employment than lumbering, acting as ghillies

on the huge deer forests which covered most of the country, or scratching a miserable livelihood out of the tiny plots left to them under the shadow of the trees. Only the nobleman or his bailiff driving to the castle passed between long rows of cabins built of log or clay, with floors of beaten earth and chimneyless roofs of decaying thatch; the smoke, eddying through the single room, revealed dim outlines of a promiscuous crowd of cows and children, geese and grandparents. In the muddy lane, half-naked infants fled from under his wheels, or grown men avoided them with greater difficulty as they strove to master the fiery brandy which formed their chief solace and a large proportion—and perhaps the most sustaining part—of their diet.

Their mental poverty equaled their material destitution. Not that the Ruthenes are fools, for they have a clear enough natural intelligence, and a fund of imagination and even poetry, as evidenced in their beautiful native ballads, which were largely used as a source by the creators of the Ukrainian literary movement across the Carpathians, embroidery, domestic and church architecture, and house-craft, as well as in the remarkable level of technical efficiency attained by their numerous witches. But their natural aversion from sustained effort of any kind, for which they are justly renowned, was indulged to the full by the customs of their church, which allowed the pious among them to celebrate the saints' days of two separate and exceedingly hagiophilous, not to say hagiodoulous, calendars.[1] The scattered nature of their habitations made it difficult for the authorities, with the best will in the world, to enforce school regulations in the face of the ingenious and persistent resistance of parents and children combined, nor were the authorities particularly anxious to overcome that resistance. If they did not, as their enemies to-day aver, leave the Ruthenes in ignorance of set purpose, in order to keep them docile and loyal, they were at least in no hurry to take up the problems of this remote corner of their kingdom. One way and another the percentage of illiteracy stood as high as 9V8 in i88o, and at 77.1 as recently as 1910.

How this people remained for so long without any national consciousness to deserve the name, and how, when the awakening came, it brought with it a confusion of hopes and beliefs easily surpassing even that of the Slovaks, is a story which involves a brief glance at their history.

The Hungarian Ruthenes were long held, on the strength of

[1] Before the War some villages in Galicia kept nearly zoo holidays in the year. Even to day the workers in the State forests of Jasina observe, I am told, an average of 131 holidays in the month. I can confirm from personal experience that the office of His Excellency the Governor in Uzhorod is little, if at all, less punctilious.

certain passages in the sprightly but unreliable 'Anonymous Chronicler of King Bela IV', to be the autochthonous inhabitants of their present homes, and were, indeed, one of the few peoples of Hungary to whom the Magyars were willing to concede historic priority. Modern Hungarian historians, however, now hold that when the Magyars entered Hungary (which they did, according to tradition, by the valleys which lead through Ruthenia to the plain of the Upper Tisza) this remote and savage territory was entirely, or almost entirely, uninhabited. For a long period thereafter the Magyars left it in this virgin state, according to their usual custom, as a barrier against invasion, using it, at most, as a royal hunting-forest, and it was not until the advent of less turbulent times that the land was granted to various lords, lay and spiritual, under whose auspices the ancestors of the present population were settled as colonists, or squatted uninvited in unoccupied areas.' In either case, the Ruthenes must have been the first actual inhabitants of the mountains (the first settlements in the plains, all traces of which were swept away in later wars, were German), but can make no claim to a pre-Magyar State; nor, to do them justice, have they attempted to do so.[2]

Many districts have certainly been settled quite recently. The earliest colonies are recorded towards the end of the thirteenth century, while new arrivals were still coming in 400 and even 500 years later. The local origin of the different groups of settlers also varies considerably. The Hutzuls round Jasina (Vereczke) are identical with the mountaineers of the same name who inhabit the highlands of Galicia and the Bukovina, immediately across the frontier. The ancestors of the Boiki and Lemki, who now live a little farther south, seem to have come from the plains of Galicia; while the 'Dolišani' or lowlanders immigrated from what is now the Soviet Ukraine, via Moldavia and Transylvania.

In every case the country of origin appears to have been some part of the enormous Ukrainian linguistic area, and the various local dialects, of which there are great numbers,[3] appear in every case to be at bottom variants, strongly and diversely corrupted by local elements—Polish, Slovak, or Magyar—and by Russian and Old Slavonic terms, of the Ukrainian language. In this sense it is correct to classify the Ruthenes as Ukrainians.

It may reasonably be asked why, if this be so, they are not

[1] *See on this especially 'Die Ungarländischen Ruthenen', by A. Bonkáló (Ungarische jahrbücher, vol. i, 1922, pp. 215 ff.—with full bibliography).*

[2] *No such claim was ever put forward at the Peace Conference, except in the single, and completely disregarded, intervention of the West Ukrainian Government.*

[3] *A recent philologist has counted 14 dialectal groups, while even the most modest calculations allow 3 main groups with intermediate sub-groups, cf.*

4 Martel, La Ruthénie sub-carpathique (Paris, 1935), p. a6.

universally called by that name. To answer this question (which is of academic interest) a short digression is necessary.

The name of 'Ukraine' in itself simply means 'frontier', and refers to the southern frontier of the old 'Russian land', the district from which the Ruthenes came. At the date, however, when they left their homes, no separate national consciousness had developed among these 'frontier-men', and the inhabitants of the entire 'Russian land', whether coming from the north (the present Great Russia) or from the south (the present Ukraine), described them-selves equally as 'Russians'. The Ruthenes thus brought with them the name of Russian (in their dialect, 'Russin'), which name was translated by the scribes of Central Europe with the dog-Latin 'Ruthenus'. The north Russian variant of the same original word 'Russian' is 'Russkia', and when relations between Central Europe and Russia grew closer, a pragmatic distinction was made: the subjects of the Tsar were described as 'Russians', while the men of the same stock who had gone under the rule of Central Powers—the group in Hungary with which we are now concerned, and the much larger body inhabiting Volhynia, Eastern Galicia, and the Bukovina which was incorporated first in Poland, later in Austria - continued to be entitled 'Ruthenes' by their rulers. The adjective formed from 'Russin' is 'ruskij', and when the Ruthenes wished to distinguish between themselves and the subjects of the Tsar they did so by adopting for the latter the name 'russkij' with two s's. It will be seen that the distinction is a nice one, particularly so when applied by a people some 90 per cent. of which was totally illiterate and the remaining io per cent. not much better.

It is a commonplace that nations of identical stock may develop quite distinct national consciousnesses if subjected to different historic and cultural influences. The Russians and the Ruthenes had, of course, different histories, and an important cultural distinction arose between them when the latter were converted in 1598 to the Uniate creed, which combines Orthodox ritual with spiritual allegiance to the Holy See. When the importance to the spiritual life of the Slavonic nations of their national churches is remembered, it will be seen that in the nineteenth century there was some ground for expecting that the Ruthenes would develop an entirely separate national consciousness, such as has evolved, for example, in the U.S.A. or in the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America. On the other hand, the differentiation had not been carried so far as to eliminate all possibility of reversing the process. The most simple and effective method of doing this was by re-conversion to the Orthodox Church, and whenever Russia saw her opportunity to bring about such re-conversion she seized

it with an energy which was often crowned with considerable success. The Governments of Poland, Austria, and Hungary, on the other hand, emphasised by all means in their power the distinctive 'Ruthene' characteristics of their subjects.

As though this Ruthene-Russian imbroglio were not enough, when Moscow attempted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to impose a uniform 'Russian', i.e. Great Russian, nationality, the inhabitants of the Ukraine, injured in their particularist feelings, began to insist that they were not Russians at all, but 'Ukrainians'—a thesis strongly opposed by the Great Russians, who at the most allowed their southern neighbours the status of a national variant and their language that of a dialect, 'Little Russian'. The dispute did not remain confined to the subjects of the Tsar, but spread to the Ruthenes, who had now three possible national identities between which to choose: Ruthene, Russian, or Ukrainian.

The struggle began to grow acute only towards the latter half of the nineteenth century, and was working up towards a climax in the years before the War. In East Galicia it seemed likely to end in the elimination of the Ruthene tendency and the predominance of the Ukrainian, which the Austrian authorities had been obliged, unwillingly enough, to tolerate and even to foster in order to counter the more urgent danger threatening from a political and pseudo-religious Great Russian and Orthodox propaganda liberally financed and energetically propagated from Petersburg, through the so-called 'Galician Benevolent Society'.

All this manoeuvring and counter-manoeuvring, however, passed over the heads of the little group of Hungarian Ruthenes who, ever since they crossed the Carpathians, had lived a life of extraordinary isolation. Partly owing to the influence of geographical conditions, partly by the set policy of the Hungarian Government, they had had little commerce even with the inhabitants of East Galicia, immediately behind the passes at their backs. They had not, indeed, even any great consciousness of their own national individuality or unity, as among themselves. The average Hutzul, for example, even to-day habitually describes himself under that name, looking down on the Lemki and the Dolišani as 'foreigners' and inferior creatures; as will be seen, the Hutzul interpretation in 1919 of the doctrine of self-determination was to set up neither a Ruthene nor a Russian nor a Ukrainian State, but a Hutzul Republic. The natural tendency towards disunity was, of course, enhanced by the Hungarian political system. There was no unified Ruthene territory, the highest organisation, under Budapest, being the County, and the different Counties had little connection with each other.

On the other hand, the relations of the Ruthenes with Hungary had always been of the closest. As the mountains at their back shut them off from their kinsfolk in the north, so the easy valleys drew their life constantly down to the plains at their feet. In medieval times their attachment to the Hungarian Crown earned them the name of 'gens fidelissima'; and this was fortified during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when, in their sheltered position, they enjoyed considerable economic prosperity. The armies of Rákóczi, the great Hungarian national hero of the struggle against Austria, were largely composed of Ruthene peasants. Of all the Hungarian 'nationalities' they seem, after the Suabians and the Jews, to have taken least part in the anti-Magyar movement of 1848—9, and if some faìnt strivings of national life, some flickers of a desire for autonomy, showed themselves during the 'Bach' era, they were soon extinguished again after 1867.'

In this connection the role of the Uniate clergy was very im-portant. Unlike the Uniate priests of Eastern Galicia, who led the local Ukrainian movement, or the Roumanian Uniates of Tran-sylvania, who, after a doubtful beginning, had become once more excellent Roumanians, the Ruthene clergy eagerly absorbed Magyar culture for themselves, and from the genteel heights thus attained looked down on their flocks, too often, with indifference or contempt. Far from leading any national movement, they were among the chief obstacles, which prevented such a movement from arising.

In these circumstances it was not surprising that the political evolution of the Hungarian Ruthenes proceeded along quite different lines from that of the Galicians. The Ukrainiàn movement left them practically untouched. One or two writers before the War had attempted to substitute in their works the purer Ukrainian for the usual local vernacular; but this hardly scratched the surface of the local life, and there was certainly no Ukrainian national movement up to 1914.

The Great Russian movement was hardly more active, since its first stirrings in 1848, after which Great Russian had for a while been adopted as the local literary Language. The 'rolling rouble',

[1] *According to M. Krofta ('Die Podkarpatska Rus und die Tschechoslovakei', Prager Rundschau, 1934, pp. 410 ff.) they welcomed Paskievitch's Russian armies when the latter entered Hungary in 1849, and both M. Krofta and M. Beneš, in his speech to the Ruthenes (Prager Tagblatt, May 4th, 1934), lay stress on the importance of the 'Messianic Russophi1ism' of those days. The movement cannot, however, have been very widespread. It is specifically denied by the earlier geographer, Reclus, writing in 1878, and I have found no mention of it in the contemporary histories. Under Bach, a Ruthene named Dobrjanskij was appointed Imperial Commissary for North-Eastern Hungary, residing at Košice, and introduced Ukrainian into the schools and administration. In 1862 the Ruthenes asked for territorial autonomy within Hungary, but they do not seem to have pressed the point, and the movement died away after 1868.*

which circulated so freely in Galicia and the Bukovina in the opening years of the twentieth century was slow to cross the Carpathians. Eventually, however, it made its appearance there also, if in diminished quantities, and a few thousand persons were converted to the Greek Orthodox Church. The agitation, nominally religious, was in reality purely political, and culminated in a famous 'monster trial' at Sighet (Máramaros Sziget) in 1914, when thirty-two peasants were condemned to a total sum of 39~ years of imprisonment for treasonable activity. It is quite certain that the agitation was introduced and financed from Russia, had sprung from no spontaneous feeling in the population, and had awakened no perceptible response among it. Most of the defendants in the famous trial were peasants who had obviously been actuated by the simplest and oldest of all motives.'

Unmoved by the rival blandishments of Russian and Ukrainian, the Ruthene peasants continued to be Ruthenes, and hardly even that. There was no Ruthene national party and little desire for one. The intelligentsia and middle-class, so far as such existed,
not only did not resist, but welcomed actively, the opportunities offered it after 1867 to Magyarize itself.

'They Magyarized with enthusiasm', I was told by one informant, himself a Ruthene. 'They were ashamed of being Ruthenes', said another. It is a fact that one nationalist leader of to-day sued a newspaper for libel during the War for calling him a 'Rusnyak'; and Count Károlyi, when in 1919 he honestly sought for an educated Ruthene to become Minister for Ruthene Affairs in Budapest, could not find one speaking his mother tongue. With the full consent of the persons concerned (some of whom took the opportunity thus offered to rise to high positions in Hungary), all higher education had been completely Magyarized, with the sole exception that instruction was given in Great Russian, two hours weekly, in the 'gymnasium' of Užhorod and Prešov, where the Uniate priests received their training.

The Magyarization of the elementary schools began later, but this also was far on its way towards completion by 1914.

In the first years after 1867 there were still some hundreds of purely Ruthene schools; but by the outbreak of war only a handful was left in which a few subjects were taught in Ruthene, the rest in Magyar, while in all the others the language of instruction was purely Magyar.2

[1] One of the agitators who escaped to Russia before the trial lived there until the revolution, when he returned to Ruthenia and settled there. I had the pleasure of meeting him in 1934.

[2] The general situation is clear, although the statistics vary. A memoir from Hungarian sources sent to the League in 1923 *(La Situation des.Slovaquie et en Russie sub-carpathique)* says (p. 51) that there were 285 elementary

Administration and justice were entirely Magyarized. The county administrations and assemblies were Magyar, or run by Magyars, in Magyar. The position to which the Ruthene language (or languages) was relegated may be judged from the fact that in 9110, according to Hungarian official statistics, there were only 542 persons of Ruthene mother tongue in all Hungary practising 'intellectual professions'. Even this unpretentious figure may give rise to exaggerated ideas unless closely analysed. Scrutiny reveals that of the 137 persons employed in the service of the Church, were choristers and sacristans, and of the 244 persons concerned with 'public health', no less than 243 were village midwives. A single Ruthene-speaking person practised literature and the arts.' The Ruthene-speaking contingent of the 64,797 public employees and State school teachers in Hungary numbered only 21

Here we may leave the Ruthenes, as they were in 1914; a poor, remote, and backward people of dwarf-holders and woodcutters, scattered about the hills and valleys of one of Europe's remotest corners; their intelligentsia estranged from them, their affairs ordered for them by others, themselves, it appeared, destined in another half-century or so to lose their own nationality in the Hungarian.

Of the other local nationalities the Magyars need no special description. The Rumanians are a tiny linguistic island of three villages, separated from their kinsfolk in Romania only by the Tisza, which forms the local frontier. The Germans inhabit several villages near Mukaèevo, where their ancestors settled in the eighteenth century. The 'Czechoslovaks' were represented before the War only by one or two Slovak villages near Užhorod; the present large increase is due to the immigration under the new regime of Czech officials. The Jews are a larger and more important element—so large as to give the casual observer the impression, on first sight, that they outnumber all the other local nationalities put together. It is hard to believe that a century ago

schools in which the language of instruction was exclusively Ruthene; also 3 training colleges. *The Hungarian Peace Negotiations,* vol. iii, p. 264**,** give, on the contrary, only ~ elementary schools in Ruthene, and 771 Greek Catholic (Uniate) elementary schools, 570 of them in the territory claimed by the Czechs, with Magyar language of instruction. A private informant tells me that in these schools Russian was taught for two hours a week, all other instruction being in Magyar; the teachers received a special award of 100 crowns if the inspectors found that the children had a good knowledge of Magyar. The Czech documentation to the Peace Conference and the League says that there were 353 Ruthene schools in Ruthenia in 1871, which number sank to *45* in 1910**,** 18 in 1914, and o in 1915 *(Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,* presented by the Czechoslovak Government to the League of Nations, n.d. (1922). Another version gives 479 Ruthene schools in 1868, 571 in 1874, 23 in 1906, and in 1913 only 34 Church communal schools in which Ruthene was used for teaching religion, singing, and language *(L.N.O.J.,* March 1934, p. 355).

[1] *Hungarian Peace Negotiations,.* vol. iii. A, p. 143. [2] Ibid., p. 286.

things were quite otherwise; but in fact the large-scale Jewish immigration into Ruthenia began only after 1867, when a great wave from Galicia first overtopped the mountains, while quite a large contingent arrived only during the World War. By now they are firmly ensconced not only in all the towns—in Mukaèevo, particularly, they form over 50 per cent. of the whole population— but even in the centre of every considerable village. They are, indeed, so numerous as to have óverflowed all the traditional Jewish occupations. Besides controlling most of the economic and much of the intellectual life of the country, they also work in the factories, the vineyards, the forests, and even on the roads, where, contrary to general anticipation, they make excellent labourers; while even more live a wretched existence without any discernible means of support whatever.[1] Only a small fraction of them belong to the 'neologs'—that fraction of Hungarian Jewry which seceded from the main body in 1906, and favours the most complete assimilation to Christian habits and appearances, short of religious conversion—although in such towns as Užhorod the commercial classes are largely Neolog Jews. Most of the Ruthene Jews are strictly Orthodox, preserving the traditional Jewish tenets, habits, and appearance, and speaking among themselves either Yiddish or Ashkenazi Hebrew. A few even belong to the strange Podolian sect of the Chassidim, with its weird, semi-oriental rites and its wonder-working Rabbis. It should be added that although Ruthenia can boast a few rich Jews, especially axnong the corn-brokers of Berehovo, the community as a whole is not wealthy, and actual destitution is by no means rare; further, that in pre-War days almost all the Ruthene Jews were excellent Hungarian patriots—the Neologs by inclination, the Orthodox in obedience to the injunctions of the Talmud to respect the temporal power. In practice the .Jewish innkeeper, the Magyar local magistrate, and the Magyarone priest formed a slightly incongruous but quite harmonious trio, who directed the affairs of their Ruthene village with a despotism which did not altogether lack benevolence.

§ 2. UNION WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Even as late as 1918, few could have foreseen that the following year would find Ruthenia a component of Czechoslovakia. Throughout the early part of the War, at least, the 'gens fidelissima' fairly preserved its repute, although the contact of the

[1] According to the Czechoslovak Statistìcal Office, in I921, 40 per cent. of the entire Jewish population of Ruthenia had no regular profession whatever; they were what is expressively known in Gerrnan as 'Luftmenschen'.

soldiers with other Ruthenes, and of the civilian population with the Russian armies, which penetrated the northem fringe of the country, seem to have led to some vague Pan-Slav or Russophil manifestations. The movement does not appear to have been extensive; the Government interned three priests in all for subversive activities.[1] At this time (1917) the Hungarian Government thought it worth while to found a Ukrainian newspaper with centralist tendencies in Budapest. The movement was not, how-ever, strong, and Czech official documents themselves admit that few of the Ruthenes possessed enough energy or national feeling even to dream of liberation. 'Their liberation came from without, from their Czech and Slovak brothers, from the Ruthenians of America, and from the Entente.'[2]

The first step towards any national movement seems to have been taken on November 8th, 1918**,** when a Ruthene National Council constituted itself at Lubovna, on the Slovak border, and demanded self-determination for the Ruthenes and dissolution of the connexion with Hungary. A resolution to this effect was forwarded to the Slovak National Council. The ideas of this meeting seem to have been somewhat vague, but they are said to have inclined to union with Galicia. On November 19th the council moved to Prešov and extended its membership.[3]

On November 9th a second council constituted itself in Užhorod.4 This body, on the contrary, declared its loyalty to Hungary (it is fair to point out that just as Prešov (Eperjes) was half Slovak, so Užhorod, or Ungvár, was mainly a Magyar and Jewish town, and a centre of Hungarian administration), greeted with enthusiasm the new Hungarian People's Republic, repudiated all separatist tendencies, but demanded for the Ruthenes 'the same rights as the Republic would be granting to the other non-Magyar nationalities of Hungary': autonomy for the Uniate Church; and social, political, and cultural reforms. These demands were afterwards worked out in greater detail and sent to Budapest. The idea in the minds of the council was to give the Ruthenes a status similar to that enjoyed by Croatia-Slavonia in the old Hungary. The Hungarian Ministry of Nationalities attempted to meet these wishes, and on December 25th issued

[1] Martel, op. cit., p. 47, says 100; the figure of 3, with detai!s of their cases, has been supplied to me officially by the Hungarian Government.

[2] League of Nations Document, C. 6o8 H. 281 (19Z3) I.

[3] Szana, op. cit., p. 232.

4 There was also a third (Hutzul) Council in Jasina, which set up what amounted to an independent republic. Repressed by the U~horod Council, it re-established itself in January and continued in power until dispersed by the Roumanians on June ~ ith. The Hutzuls confined themselves strictly to their own business, and made no attempt to settle any one else's fate.

' Szana, op. cit., p. 232.

an Autonomy Statute (People's Law No. X of 1918) to the following effect:

The Ruthene districts of the counties of Máramaros, Ugocsa, Bereg, and Ung to be united in an Autonomous Territory, to be known as Russka Kraina, which should enjoy complete autonomy in religious, educational, and cultural questions, and in internal administration and justice. 'Common affairs' were to be regulated in common with the Hungarian Republic; these comprised foreign affairs, war, finance, private and criminal law, economic questions, communications, and social policy. The legislative organs were the Ruthene National Assembly and the common Parliament. The head of the administration was the minister for Russka Kraina, who was •responsible to both legislative organs, while a governor resided in Russka Kraina.[1] The Act was brought into force immediately, and a minister was actually discoveréd (not without difficulty) and appointed in the person of Dr. Oreszt Szabo, a gentleman of Ruthene origin who, although speaking not a word of Ruthene, was prepared to act in the interests of his countrymen. On January 8th, 1919, he issued a proclamation reassuring the Magyar population in North-Eastern Hungary, promising that no districts with Magyar majorities should be included in the Russka Kraina, and that the rights of minorities should be respected.[2]

Meanwhile, however, events had been taking a very different turn in the west. The Allies as such do not seem to have occupied themselves with the question, for although Tsarist Russia seems to have entertained plans of annexing all the 'Little Russian' territories of the Dual Monarchy, these came to nought when the Tsardom fell.[3] Knowledge of those plans may have influenced the Czechs, from whom the decisive initiative seems to have come. Professor Masaryk relates that while in Russia (in 1918) he discussed with Ukrainians then the question of incorporating the Hungarian Ruthenes in his future State,4 and when he reached the U.S.A., in May 1918, he was 'soon in touch' with the Ruthene colonies there, particularly with one M. Žatkoviè, a local leader. On July 23rd, 1918, those colonies held a meeting at Homestead, U.S.A.,5 where they decided in favour of complete independence if possible, failing which the Hungarian Ruthenes should endeavour to unite with their brothers in Galicia and the Bukovina; failing that again they should demand autonomy, 'though under what State', says Masaryk in his narrative, 'they did not say'.[6]

1 Szana, op. cit., p. 251. *2 Ibid., p. 257.*
3 Martel, op. cit., pp. 39—44. *4 The Making of a State, p. 239.*
5 There appears to have been a preliminary meeting ten days earlier at McKlensport.
6 Masaryk, op. cit., p. 240.

M. Žatkoviè, with a few friends, formed a 'National Council of the American Ruthenes', which on October 21st, 1918, approached President Wilson with its three alternative desiderata. The Presi-dent informed them that the first two were not practicable and would certainly not be favoured by the Allies, and referred them to Masaryk to negotiate on the third.[1] On October 23rd the Ruthenes were received as a separate nationality, entitled to self-determination, into the 'Central European Union', a polyethnic body of which Masaryk was President,[2] and the negotiations began on October 25th. The next day the so-called 'Philadelphia Agree-ment' was signed by Masaryk and Žatkoviè, guaranteeing the Ruthenes autonomy if they would join Czechoslovakia, while Masaryk also promised that 'the boundaries will be so established that the Rusins will be satisfied'.[3] On November izth the National Council met again at Scranton, U.S.A., and adopted a resolution in favour of union with the Czechoslovak State on a federative basis, on condition that the Ruthene State should include 'the now partly Slovakized, but originally purely Ruthene Hungarian Coun-ties of Spiš, Saris, Zemplén, Abauj, Gömör, Borsod, Ung, Ugocsa, Bereg, and Máramaros'. This resolution was shown to Masaryk, who expressed his satisfaction, while warning the authors that the Peace Conference would have the last word.~ A referendum was then taken among the Ruthene parishes of the U.S.A. Sixty-seven per cent. voted in favour of the resolution, 28 per cent. for union with the Ukraine, less than **i** per cent. each for union with Galicia, Hungary, and Russia respectively, and less than 2 per cent. for inde-pendence. The result of the plebiscite was cabled to Beneš in Paris.

Copies of the agreement and resolution were sent to President Wilson, Žatkoviè retaining the originals. Žatkoviè afterwards set out for Paris, where he arrived on February 13th, 1919.

It is evident that the American delegation to the Peace Conference, at least, was fully initiated into the result of these negotia-tions, for the 'Outline of tentative Reports and Recommendations, prepared by the Intelligence Section, in accordance with Instruc-tions, for the President and the Plenipotentiaries', as early as January 21st, 1919, already recommended the union of the Hun-garian Ruthenes with Czechoslovakia, either as a protectorate or. (preferably) as part of the State, with exactly the same arguments as used by Dr. Beneš a few days later: the 'intense hatred' of the Ruthenes for the oppressive Magyar rule; the undesirability of

1 Krofta, 'Ruthenes, Czechs and Slovaks', in Slavonic Review, vol. xiii,p.622.

2 The other nationalities represented on this body were the Czechoslovaks, Poles, Yugoslavs, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Roumanians, Greeks, Italian irredentists, Armenians, Albanians, and Jerusalem Jews.

3 Zatkoviè, Exposé. *4 Ibid.*

allowing Russia to get a footing across the Carpathians or Hungary to thrust a wedge between Czechoslovakia and Roumania; and the general advantages of Czechoslovak rule for the Ruthenes.' Dr. Beneš then restated this case to the Supreme Council on February 5th.

An official memorandum forwarded about this time to the Peace Conference develops these arguments, criticizes the Hungarian population statistics, and suggests a frontier with Hungary which would leave within Ruthenia the important lateral railway line (a concession which had not, incidentally, been claimed by the Ruthenes themselves). The Ruthene-Slovak frontier, it was stated, had been fixed provisionally, in conformity with the frontiers of the Czecho-Slovak State, whose limits are those of the Užhorod and Bereg Comitats. This could be altered and improved, if so desired, by a special treaty between the Czecho-Slovak State and Carpathian Russia.[2]

The Supreme Council referred the fate of the Ruthenes to the Commission for the study of Czechoslovak questions, which decided to advocate in principle the formation of an autonomous Ruthenia, guarantees being given for freedom of transit between Hungary and Poland, as well as between Czechoslovakia and Roumania. The final decision was referred back to the Supreme Council. There the matter rested for the moment, the Committees being engaged on other work.

Throughout these negotiations Dr. Beneš regularly declared that Czechoslovakia was not claiming this area—which would be a burden to her—but was putting its inhabitants' case for them.~ It is clear, however, that he was keener than he allowed it to appear.[4] The strategic consideration which in fact lies at the root of most of Czechoslovakia's interest in Ruthenia was probably already present in his mind; for Czechoslovakia and Roumania had already reached a close understanding, while Poland and Hungary were equally a1ready showing signs of making common front with regard to Czechoslovak questions.

At any rate, he was taking all necessary steps to lend weight to his arguments. Czech troops had occupied Prešov on Decem-ber 28th, 1918, Užhorod on January 13th, 1919, and the valley of the Už during the following days. On January 20th the Inter-

1 Hunter Miller, Diary, vol. iv, pp. 231—2.

2 Problem of the Ruthenes in Hungary. This undated document seems to be identical with the 'Memoir No. 6' presented by the Czech Delegation to the Conference.

3 Hunter Miller, op. cit., loc. cit.

4 See the rather obscure note in Nicolson's Peacemaking, p. 239. Particularly intriguing is the remark that 'the Galician Ruthenes being mostly Jews do not want to go to Russia, still less to Roumania'.

Allied Commission recognized all territory west of the Už as lying within the Czech sphere of occupation. On February i3th. a courier from Paris, one Captain Pisecky, arrived in Užhorod, bringing Masaryk's copies of the Philadelphia Agreement and the Scranton Resolution, in order to show the Council the feelings of the American Ruthenes and the advantages of the Czech solution. The Užhorod Council rejected the overture and declared its wish to remain with Hungary; in fact, the autonomous Government had already begun functioning, if somewhat uncertainly, with its Governor in Muka~evo. The Prešov Council proved more accom-modating and its Chairman, M. Beškid, left for Paris, where he, with Žatkoviè and the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Council, M. Gardos, established a General Commission representing all Carpatho-Ruthenes. Through the intervention of Dr. Beneš, this Com-mission obtained interviews on February I7th with Colonel House and on February 24th with M. Tardieu, on whom they pressed the advantages of the Czecho-Slovak solution. On March 3rd they were informed that the Council of Five had decided in favour of their proposals. They then drew up a further set of demands, known as the 'Fourteen Points', which they handed to Kramá~ and Beneš, and on March 4th Žatkoviè and Gardos set out for Prague, leaving Beškid in Paris. On March ioth Žatkoviè conferred with Masaryk, handing him all the documentation of the case. He then set out for Užhorod, breaking his journey at Bratislava, where he interviewed Dr. Srobár, and at Prešov, where the local representa-tive of the Prešov Council approved all they had done and author-ized them to try to unite the nation in favour of their proposals.[1]

Meanwhile the situation had been still further complicated by the appearance of a fresh foreign claimant, backed by another National Council. The Roumanians were showing signs of mean-ing to advance into Ruthene territory. Hereupon Ukrainian de-tachments from East Galicia arrived, first in the person of a lieutenant and three soldiers, who entered Máramaros Sziget on a locomotive on January 9th, but seem to have returned by the same route.[2] On January i7th a larger detachment appeared, to protect their brothers against the Czechs and Roumanians and to assure them freedom of self-determination.[3] Four days later they also retired, being expelled by the Roumanians and by bands of the local inhabitants, but not before they had organized the constitu-tion of yet a third Ruthene National Council ìn Chust.4 This declared for union with the Ukraine, and requested the Ukrainian Government in Stanislawów to represent it in Paris and to secure fulfilment of its wishes. M. Sidorenko, head of the Ukrainian

1 Žakoviè, op. cit. *2 Szana, op. cit., p. 259* *3 Ibid., p. 262*
4 It was at this time that the Chust Council, referred to above, reasserted itself.

delegation inParis, in fact asked the Peace Conference to incorporate Ruthenia in the Ukrainian State on ethnographical and historical grounds (the latter being entirely baseless) and on the strength of the request of the Chust Council.' In these circumstances an American officer, Col. Goodwin, was sent down, in early March, to inquire into the situation, but his report had no influence on the Conference, which had, indeed, already made up its mind.2

In March the Hungarian Governor of Russka Kraina actually managed to carry through elections, which gave a large majority for the 'autonomist party', i.e. that party which desired autonomy within the Hungarian State. A few days later the Ruthene Diet was convoked, and the Minister addressed it in glowing terms. The deputies, however, with rare good sense, decided that their deliberationswould, in the circumstances,serve little purpose. They sent an ultimatum to Budapest declaring that the frontiers must be laid down definitively, and in a manner satisfactory to themselves (a rumour had gained ground that the Hungarians proposed not to include the Sevijuš basin in the Kraina). Otherwise they would claim a free hand. They then adjourned,never, as the event proved, to reassemble.

The last thing that the unfortunate Hungarian Government was in a position to do was to determine any frontiers whatever. On March 31st it fell. A People's Commissary succeeded the bourgeois Governor in Mukaèevo. The Bolshevik Government preserved its predecessor's work to this extent, that it ordered the constitution of a separate Ruthene Council; but the activities of Council and Commissaries did not last for long. The Roumanians (acting, it appears, at least in part on the request of some of the local bourgeoisie) advanced, and by May had occupied the whole eastern half of the country, as far as the town of Mukaèevo, where they were met by Czechs coming from the west, the latter having received permission to advance east of the Už through the personal inter-vention of Žatkoviè, who went to Paris for the purpose.[3] Each of the future allies administered half the town.

This was the situation when Žatkoviè arrived in Užhorod to inform the local leaders of the emigrants[3] decision, and of the course which events had been taking in Paris. On May 8th a new Central National Council, purporting to represent all three earlier Councils, met in U~horod under the chairmanship of M. Vološin. The Hungarian solution had lost much of its popularity under Kun's régime; no one wanted union with Roumania; and it was agreed that a Ukrainian solution was impossible. The meeting, therefore voted unanimously to accept *the fait accompli* of theCzech

1 Szana, op. cit., p. 263; also private information.
2 Hunter Miller, diary, vol. Xvii, p 161 *3 Žatkoviè, op. cit.*

solution (perhaps all the Iess reluctantly since Czech troops were occupying the town and Czech police actually keeping order in the hall). A delegate asked what was the guarantee that Czechoslovakia would really grant autonomy; Žatkoviè replied that the guarantee was given by 'the fraternal relations between the Czech nation and Ruthenia'. The resolution adopted by the meeting stipulated however, that although foreign, military, and financial affairs should be common, Ruthenia should enjoy internal autonomy with its own government and administration, Ruthene regiments and their own officers, and use of Ruthene in the local schools and religion. The Council held five further meetings to discuss its demands in detail. Finally, on May 22nd, a deputation of 112 persons went to Prague to present Masaryk with a resolution in favour of union. It was stipulated that Ruthenia should remain 'an independent State within the Czecho-Slovak Republic' and that pendingthe final delimitation of the frontiers (which was to take place by negotia-tion and be embodied in a treaty) it should include not only the mainly Ruthene counties of Máramaros, Bereg, Ung, Ugocsa, and Gömör, but also the portions inhabited by Ruthenes of the four counties of Abauj, Zemplén, Sáros, and Szepes. Pending final arrangements the government was to be in the hands of a Ruthene Minister appointed by the President of the Republic (the deputa-tion asked that Žatkoviè should be given thi spost), and a draft Statute of Autonomy was appended, which was based closely on the Hungarian Law X.

These demands were forwarded to Paris, where Dr. Beneš had already on May x5th been interviewed by the Committee on New States, to which the question of Ruthenia had been referred. Beneš said that any decentralization would have to be gradual, and that the Central Government would have to remain in charge for some years; but within these limits he was anxious to give Ruthenia 'all possible autonomy'. He submitted a draft, which was closely modelled on the Hungarian Law X, providing for a Governor, a Minister without Portfolio in the Central Government, and a local Diet competent in linguistic, educational, and Church questions and in any other questions which might be attributed to it by the laws of the Republic. Ruthene Deputies were to sit in the Prague Parliament, but not to vote on matters dealt with in their own Diet.'

The Czechoslovak Committee unanimously approved this plan in its entirety.z The New States Committee afterwards recast it to harmonize with the form of the other Minorities Treaties, and in doing so omitted some of the details of Beneš's draft. Strangely enough, it does not appear (so far as the records show) to have

1 Hunter Miller, Diary, vol. Xvi, pp. 360-2.
2Ibid., vol. Xvi, p. 359

considered the resolution of the National Council, although it is clear from the similarity of all the documents that Dr. Beneš's own draft had been based on the wishes of the Ruthenes, as understood by him at that date. Žatkoviè, however, accepted it as satisfactory, on the understanding that 'local autonomy' meant full internal autonomy.[1] In its final form it was signed on September ioth, 1919, as a special chapter of the Czechoslovak Minorities Treaty.

The old Hungaro-Galician frontier was adopted unchanged on the north. The line with Roumania was only fixed finally by treaty between the two Powers on June 3oth, 1921. It left three Roumanian villages, which lie on the right bank of the Tisza, in Ruthenia, and a somewhatlarger number of Ruthenes in Roumania. The line approximates fairly closely to the ethnographical boun-dary, although it would probably have been more advantageous to the Ruthenes themselves had Ruthenia received the whole basin of the Upper Tisza, for, remote as Ruthenia is from Prague, Romanian Maramureº is even more effectively cut off from Bucharest. It is stated that Czechoslovakia could have obtained better terms had she been willing to make a payment, which was not in all respects regular, and declined to do so. The line with Hungary was drawn far enough south to include in Ruthenia the railway line with Èop eastward.

The Hungarian protest against these decisions may be sum-marized in the following contentions:

The Ruthenes had always been loyal to Hungary and would wish to return to her. They were, moreover, mixed with other elements which would also remain irredentist. Hungary's historic right to the territory was, moreover, incontrovertible.[2] Further, stress was laid on the economic independence of the mountains and the plains, and on the misery which would be inflicted on the Ruthenes if deprived of the possibility of seasonal labour in the plains.3 Further, the salt, timber, and stone of Ruthenia were essential to the Hungarian lowlands, while the proposed frontier would cut across the complicated system which had been devised for regula-ting the waters of the Tisza and its tributaries. As to the part of thé plain destined for Ruthenia, it was almost purely Hungarian.4

These protests had no effect, and the territory was duly assigned to Czechoslovakia.

As regards the western frontier, Žatkoviè was still negotiating fruitlessly with Masaryk, when news arrived from Paris that the Allies had decided to fix the river Už as the definitive boundary. Žatkoviè hurried to Paris to interview Beneš, who confirmed the report. Beneš refused to consider the alternative line proposed by

1 *Žatkoviè, op. cit.*

2 *Hungarian Peace Negotiations, vol.ii, p. 39.*

3 Ibid., p. 43.

4 Ibid., pp. 54-7.

Zatkovië, saying that the Slovaks would never accept it; but agreed, on Zatkoviè's request, to ask the Conference to leave the question open, to be settled by later negotiation between the two parties.

§ 3. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS, 1919—27

Meanwhile, that portion of Ruthenia which was under Czech control (the Romanians did not retire until July 1920) was in practice administered through the machinery of the old Hungarian Counties, and by the several, rather than the combined, efforts of the military, of some Czech officials who had been hurriedly sent down, and of such of the former staffs as had not resigned or been expelled. Returning from Paris on July z5th, Zatkoviè resumed his efforts to get a settlement of the whole question, including the boundary, with Slovakia.' He proposed to Masaryk a 'temporary contract', under which all territory east of the Uz ceded by Hungary to Czechoslovakia should be definitely assigned to Ruthenia, while that territory west of the U~ claimed by the Ruthenes and marked as Ruthene on Tomašev's ethnographical map should be called 'disputed territory'. In this area a census should be taken by a mixed commission, between May and August 1920, and a final boundary laid down on the basis of ethnographical, economic, geographical, and administrative considerations. Masaryk objected to the form of the 'contract' but consented to conclude an agreement. Zatkoviè wanted to return for a short time to the U.S.A., and therefore, failing to conclude the agreement in time, drafted a 'Proclamation', dated August 12th, 1919, to the effect that he had himself been appointed head of an Autonomous Directorate of five members who would administer Ruthenia temporarily, in con-junction with General Hennocque, who was in command of the local military. When the Peace Conference had reached its final decisions, the Ruthene State would be established with full internal autonomy, and the final boundary settled. All the Counties of Bereg, Máramaros, and Ugocsa and parts of the Counties of Szepes, Sáros, Zemplén, and Uzhorod would definitely belong to Ruthenia. The other areas desired by the Ruthenes would remain neutral until a census was taken by a mixed Ruthene-Czechoslovak Commission.

This proclamation was viséd as correct and in order by Masaryk's secretary. Zatkovië then left for America, where he informed the Ruthene emigrants of his work, and received their approval of it. Returning in October, he found that no steps had been taken in

1 The following account of Žatkoviè's resignation (except the paragraphs relating to the Czechoslovak Constitution, which is based on the published text of that document) is drawn from the ex-Governor's own *exposé.*

his absence either to settle the boundary question or to appoint the Directorate. The wearisome negotiations recommenced. On November i8th a ‘general Statute for the Organisation and Ad-. ministration of Ruthenia’ was issued, providing for a Provisional Administrator, who appointed and controlled all officials, and a Provisional Directorate, of which Žatkoviè was to be head, with advisory powers in cultural, educational, and linguistic questions, and in questions of local administration. Differences between the Administrator and the Directorate were settled by the President of the Republic; and both acted only until the entry into force of the autonomy. Elections were to be held not later than ninety days after the elections to the Czechoslovak National Assembly.

Armed with this document, Žatkoviè proceeded to Užhorod; but the appointments to the Directorate hung fire, the boundary question was left unsolved, and in other respects also the General Statutes were not carried into effect. Meanwhile, the Czechoslovak Constitutional Law, promulgated on February 29th, 1920, modified the provisions of the Minorities Treaty in certain important respects. The Governor was made responsible ‘to the Ruthene Diet *also’,* and the President of the Republic was allowed a veto over the legislation passed by the Ruthene Diet which was more absolute than that which he enjoyed against the Parliament of Prague. The distinction between the Deputies from Ruthenia and the other members of the Prague Parliament was reduced by omitting the provisions under which the former were not allowed to vote on certain questions. It was provided that the law fixing the boundaries of Ruthenia should, when enacted, form part of: the Constitution.

After renewed negotiations, in the course of which Žatkoviè and the appointed members of the Directorate offered their resignations, the General Statute was revised on April z6th. The Government now consisted of a Governor, a Vice-Governor, and a Governing Council. The Governor represented Ruthenia in negotiations with Prague, acted as Chairman of the Governing Council, and signed all administrative decrees and orders, including the appointment of such officials as were not appointed by the central authorities. The Vice-Governor was the immediate head of all the civilian administration, acted as intermediary between the officials and the Government, and countersigned all documents signed by the Governor. The Governor could veto any unconstitutional actions committed by his second in command, but any point on which the two could not agree was referred to the Central Government.

The Governing Council was planned to consist, besides the Governor and Vice-Governor, of ten members elected by the local

constituencies and four nominated by the Government. The Central Government had the right to dissolve the council, or to dismiss individual members of it for neglect of duty.

Žatkoviè was re-appointed 'Provisional Governor', while the all-important post of Vice-Governor was entrusted to a Czech, Dr. Ehrenfeld. It was agreed that the delimitation of the boundary should be left to the Czechoslovak Parliament and the Ruthene Diet. Meanwhile, the higher (and many of the subordinate) posts in the Government service were filled by Czechs (and, to a lesser degree, Slovaks).

Žatkoviè set to work at once on drafting an electoral law and a Constitution for Ruthenia. After three months he reported to Prague on the situation and received a promise that elections to the Ruthene Diet should be held in January 1921. It proved, however, impossible to reach agreement on various points, including the delimitation of the frontier between Ruthenia and Slovakia: the Slovak representatives strongly resisting Žatkoviè's territorial claims. Moreover, the officials in charge of the census which was taken in Slovakia in January 1921 (without the participation of Ruthene representatives) issued circulars informing the population that the boundaries had already been settled by the Peace Conference and that the 'Rusin agitation was only Hungarian revisionist propaganda'. After vainly endeavouring to secure the adoption of his proposals, Žatkoviè resigned his post on March i6th, 1921. His resignation was accepted on May i3th, and he returned to America. No successor was appointed, the administration being carried on by Dr. Ehrenfeld. The Central National Council mean-while continued in being, and has, indeed, not yet been officially dissolved; but it has long since died of inanition. The question of the frontier was never taken up again.

During the next two years, the process of centralisation continued. The fragments of Counties were drawn together into three units, with their head-quarters in Uzhorod, Mukacevo, and Sevljuš respectively; but the old Hungarian system of a :Lord Lieutenant (Föispán) nominated by the Government, a Deputy Lieutenant (Alispán) elected by the County, and an elected County Assembly was abolished, the powers of these organs being transferred to the Vice-Governor and to a Government-appointed Lord Lieutenant (Zupán) in each County. The Hungarian municipal system was replaced by the Czech; Berehovo lost its municipal autonomy, while that of Užhorod and Mukaèevo was greatly re-stricted. In 1926 the counties were abolished altogether, all Ruthenia being constituted as a single unit.

Several petitions were addressed during this period to the League of Nations. The regular reply was that all preparations

224 CZECHOSLOVAKIA

were being made for introducing autonomy as soon as possible, but that various circumstances made it impossible to grant it immediately. One of these circumstances was the absence of a definitive frontier with Slovakia, lacking which, it was stated, the elections to the Diet could not be held, nor the Autonomy Act promulgated.[1] The dilemma of the Prague Government was serious, since, on another occasion, it stated that the frontier could not be fixed until the Diet was convoked. Stress was also laid on the lack of general and political education among the Ruthenes, and it was frankly pointed out that the mass of politically influential opinion in Ruthenia was still Magyar.

In 1924, after the Communal elections had been held, a new Ruthene Governor was appointed in the shape of M. Beskid, who had been President of the National Council of Prešov which had first voted for union with Czechoslovakia. The Vice-Governor was again a Czech, M. Rozsypal. In the same year elections to the National Assembly were held in Ruthenia for the first time, with the somewhat disconcerting result that the Communists obtained 40 per cent. of the total poll, and more than three times as many votes as the next largest party—and that was a Magyar party. The 1925 elections, however, saw a considerable diminution in the Communist vote.

The last stage (up to the time of writing) in the political development of Ruthenia was ushered in by the Law of July I4th, 1927, described above.2 Under that Act, Ruthenia was placed in precisely the same situation as the other three provinces of the Republic, with the sole differences that its position is still in theory provisional, and that it still sports a gentleman bearing the honorific title of Governor, who is housed, appropriately enough, in the local museum.

§4. THE RUTHENE QUESTION: POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

It is quite impossible to deny that Czechoslovakia is under a twofold obligation to grant autonomy to Ruthenia: a treaty obligation towards the Powers, and an obligation of honour to the Ruthenes. It is no less clear that these obligations have not been honoured—the breach of faith being, indeed, a compound fracture, for considerable areas which are preponderantly Ruthene in population are still included—if on1y ‘provisionally’—in Slovakia. These do not enjoy even the shadowy pretence of autonomy enjoyed by the province of Ruthenia; but even in that province it is no more than a pretence, and one which is not kept up with any great conviction by anybody. In fact, as every one knows and almost every

1 Memoire concernant la Russie sub-charpatique, cit. Supra. *2 p. 118*

Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique, **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

one admits, Ruthenia is not ruled by its Governor, nor by its Diet, with its twelve elected members and six Government nominees, nor by its local councils, with their strictly limited functions. It is ruled most efficiently by its Czech President, assisted by a bureaucracy in which all the important and responsible posts are exclusively in the hands of Czechs, or, in rare instances, of entirely trustworthy local personalities or émigrés. In the middle ranks of the hierarchy, the local population is admitted cautiously, and not in such proportions as to affect its essential character; in the lower ranks, which entail neither responsibility nor power, local elements, including members of the national minorities, are strongly represented, although even here the lump is leavened with Czechs.[1] This is the system established by Czechoslovakia to safeguard its hold upon Ruthenia; and although her leaders have from time to time, either spontaneously or in response to polite inquiries from the Council of the League of Nations, made declarations that they will one day put into force the autonomy guaranteed by the Treaty,

1 The following figures were kindly supplied to me by the Zemski Urad in 1935:

Figures for the Central Administration in 1935

	Czechs	*Ukranian Emigrants*	*Russian Emigrants*	*Ruthenes*	*Magyars*
Heads of the provincial administration	7	1			
Head of districts	7	1	2	2	
Chief of notaries	1			1	
Notaries and assistant notaries	163	11	3	42	29
Assistant to heads of administration	21	4	1	3	
Clerks	497	20	12	85	54
Servants	24		1	6	6

In 1921 the figures for the notaries were: 104 Czechs and Slovaks, 69 Ruthenes, 65 Magyars, 4 Jews, 1 Romanian, 1 German. Thus the proportion of Czechs has actually risen substantially since that date.

	Czechs.	*Ruthenes*	*Magyars*	*Jews*	*Germens*
Employees in principle and district head officers	352	126	11	15	4
In notaries offices	142	85	17	2	2
Financial administration (includes customs and exise)	455	181	99	11	33
Roadmenders	13	202	19		
Employees in hospitals	48	73	8	4	

In the 3 highest administrative grades in the Zemski Urad were 6 Czechoslovaki 2 locals; in the 4th 10 Czechoslovaks, 7 locals; 5th, 2 Czechoslovaks, 17 locals; 6th, 5 Czechoslovaks, 10 locals; 'concipists', 2 Czechoslovaks, 6 locals. In this junior gradonly locals are now employed.

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

these promises have grown less rather than more concrete as the years have gone on.'

In many respects the position of the Czechs in Ruthenia reminds the traveller strongly of that of the British in India. Užhorod's prosaic but efficient looking new quarter of Galago, built by the Czechs since the War to house the new army of civilian and military authorities, recalls the European compounds on the fringes of so many Asiatic cities; and the analogy goes much deeper. The Czechs are not only a ruling class, but also a foreign one. They have their own clubs and coffee-houses, patronize, to a large extent, their own shops, and mingle little with the natives, except to order their destinies. They are paid on a scale which is modest enough in itself, but still high by comparison with the excessively low local standard of living. They are well lodged, their children are more than amply provided with schools; and there is a grain of truth in the saying that the 'public works' under-taken by the Republic in Ruthenia consist largely of offices into which the Ruthenes penetrate no farther than the waiting~rooms,2 or motor roads along which only Czech cars circulate. It is true also that most of the Czech officials feel that they are living in a foreign land. They regard the Ruthenes as 'natives', and many of them sigh frarikly enough for the day of retirement when they will be enabled to leave 'Asia' behind and settle down on their pen-sions at home, viz. in the Historic Lands.

The further charges sometimes made against the Czech officials seem to the writer, on the other hand, to be almost entirely un-founded. It is often said that Ruthenia is for the Czechs a sort of Siberia, to which the least desirable of their officials can con-veniently be banished. There were, it is true, a few regrettable scandals during the early period, but, in the main, the Czech officials in Ruthenia to-day are certainly an intellìgent, honest, and

1 A bill is now (end of 1936) before the Prague Parliament, submitted by the Coalition parties, which, if it becomes law, will abolish the office of President. The head of the administration will be the Governor, who will be appointed by the President of the Republic on the proposal of the Government, wilI be responsible to the Government (pending the Constitution of the Diet), and will represent Ruthenia in negotiations between the Government and the President of the Republic. He will have the power of final decision in all linguistic, religious, and local administrative questions. Pending the constitution of the Diet, he will be assisted by a Governing Council, which will be an advisory body, consisting of the members of the Provincial Council and of six members nominated by the Government on the proposal of the Governor.

2 I cannot resist quoting here the following story: a new prison had been built, and a very high Czech official came to attend its inauguration. Seeing an old Ruthene peasant regarding the building with awe, he said to him jocularly:
'Well, bácsì (uncle), how would you like a spell in there?' The old man did not realize that the building was a jail, but took it for another housing estate for Czech officials, and replied in his huMi1ity and innocence: 'Ah, panitsa (little master), that is no place for a poor old peasant like me; it is rich gentlemen like yourself who should be in there.

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

Even devoted set of men. Here and there one of them may occasionally try to make a good thing out of the natives in this remote corner where the eye of supervision does not penetrate easily. Many more of them, however, are living a life of service genuinely devoted to the welfare of the people entrusted to their care. From the purely administrative point of view, it is unlikely that Ruthenia would have been as well governed by any other set of men Ruthenes, Magyars, Poles, or Romanians who might possibly have sat in their places had the Peace Conference taken less on trust in 1919. This is a point on which the writer has taken pains to satisfy himself, and which he desires to emphasise. The paradoxical result is that the Ruthenes, whilst denied anything more than the merest shadow of self-government, yet certainly enjoy more political liberty than the inhabitants of many national States in Europe. In particular, the censor must—to judge from the tenor of the local press—be about the most liberal in Europe. And when all allowances are made, the Czechs have done a great deal for Ruthenia, and at a considerable cost to themselves. The total annual revenue from the country has never amounted to much more than 50 per cent. of its expenditure, and in making up the remainder, the Central Government has spent very substantial sums, amounting up to 1933 to no less than 1,6oo,ooo,ooo è kr. Thus even if the Czech officials are rather numerous, the Ruthenes have not had to pay more than a fraction of their maintenance, and they have enjoyed in return very substantial benefits. Public security is adequate, and yet maintained without such a show of force as to make the country appear police-ridden. The judicial system inspires confidence. Communications have improved considerably, with the construction of a great arterial road across the plain, from east to west of the country, and of numerous bridges; the posts, telegraphs, and telephones have multiplied. The Tisza has been regulated, and drainage and reclamation works carried out. Attempts have been made, which deserve all recognition, to raise economic standards by starting handicrafts, introducing improved methods of cultivation, &c. The public health services have been reorganised and largely expanded, with results plainly to be seen in the rapid diminution (one cannot yet speak of the disappearance) of epidemic disease. Much of this work has only been rendered possible by the utmost devotion on the part of the Czechs and Russians who have carried it out.' But the subject to which more attention has been paid than any other has been that of education. Of the total sums spent by the State in Ruthenia'

1 *An account of the public works carried out in Ruthenia is given in Technickd Práce v Zemi Podkarpatoruske 1919—1933 (Užhorod1, Czechoslovak Chamber of Engineers, 1933 (in Czech)).*

since 1919 (excluding the budgets of those ministries not locally administered, e.g. railways, posts, and telegraphs, national defence, justice, and social welfare) about 40 per cent. was devoted to education, being ten times as much as the amount spent on health and five times that spent on agriculture. A great part of the former leeway has now been made up. By 1931' the Ruthenes already possessed *45* kindergartens, 425 elementary schools, 16 burger schools (13 of them 'mixed'), 4 higher schools, and 3 teachers' training colleges, with a certain number of vocational and specialist establishments. Illiteracy among the Ruthenes has been very largely reduced, and is rare today in the younger generation. There are even the beginnings of a vigorous, if somewhat shallow, intellectual life, chiefly expressed (as is usual in such cases) in the existence of a multitudinous and scurrilous local press. Culturally, as a neutral observer said to me, the country has advanced fifty years since the Czechs came to it. But here we are passing already from the domain of pure administration into that of politics. Not that the Czech zeal for educating the people is prompted solely by political motives; the Czech has always shown a singular enthusiasm for an appreciation of the value of education, and it is perfectly true that even the economic progress of the Ruthenes must be slow and doubtful until education has cleared away the innumerable superstitions which at present clog its wheels.2 Nevertheless, just as Hungary pursued her own national policy, before the War, by installing a very extensive system of secondary education in Magyar, while leaving primary education in a rudimentary state, so Czechoslovakia has found it her interest to reverse this system and to provide a primary system capable of checking the old tendency to Magyarization. In doing so, however, they have involved themselves in complications which demand a chapter to themselves; for the educational question raises not merely scholastic issues, but the whole problem of the national identity of the Ruthenes.

§ *5*. THE RUTHENE QUESTION: CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC, AND NATIONAL

While before 1918 Ruthenia possessed anything between a dozen and a score of peasant dialects, and such written literature as existed hovered uncertainly between Great Russian, Ukrainian,

1 These figures are taken from an official publication, issued in 1933: *Školství na Podkarpatské Rusi v pøítomnosti.* They are probably too low for the present date, especially as regards Czech and Ruthene establishments. The figures quoted above take no account of the 22 mixed elementary schools.

2 For example, the Ruthenes cannot be persuaded to build chimneys to their cottages, because they take the whistling of the. wind in the chimneys for the voice of a particularly malignant ghost.

RUTHENIA

and a local idiom, this confusion of tongues was almost irrelevant when the exclusive language of administration . and of genteel society was none of these, but Magyar.

The position became very different when the problem facing the authorities was to reverse the process and replace Magyar by some other idiom. Which of the various claimants to choose? Each, of course, maintained itself, with passion, to be the only true and natural language of the people, while denouncing all others as the artificial importation of foreign intrigue. But in fact, the linguistic position, viewed from a purely philological point of view, was amazingly indeterminate. It seemed that it should be possible to impose on the population, without real violence, any one of three languages: literary Russian, literary Ukrainian, or some development of their own local dialect. This being so, political considerations were bound to obtrude themselves. National feeling must be expected to follow language, and according as to which idiom was chosen, the Ruthenes might be expected to develop a Russian, a Ukrainian, or a local national consciousness. Neither the Ruthenes themselves, nor the Czechs, could fail, being human, to ask themselves which of these possible developments would be politically most agreeable to them.

The incredibly complicated system which has arisen is due to the competition of purely philological with political considerations; the latter again being exceedingly various and often mutually contradictory. To begin with, the different Czech parties (and Czechoslovakia has invariably been governed since the War by coalitions of several parties) have inclined to take up different views, according to their feelings towards Russia. Most of the Czech bourgeois parties, and notably the National Democrats, who have an old Russophil tradition, have naturally inclined to foster all things Russian. The Social Democrats and Communists have been pro-Ukrainian; the Agrarians have been divided.

But Russia has not been the only country on which the Czechs have naturally been impelled to keep an eye. There has also been Poland—Czechoslovakia's neighbour, herself possessing a large Ruthene, or Ukrainian population. Poland for years was at logger-heads with her own Ukrainians. When Polish-Czech relations have been strained, an obvious and easy way for Czechoslovakia to score off Poland has been to encourage the Ukrainian movement in Ruthenia. If, on the other hand, Czechoslovakia wished to cultivate Poland's friendship, she would naturally repress any exuberant Ukrainophily in her own population; while if, again, Poland made her peace with her own Ruthenes, but quarrelled with Czechoslovakia, the situation might be different once more.

Again, it could hardly fail to occur to the minds of authority

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

that either the Russian or the Ukrainian movement, if allowed to develop, would probably, in the end, give rise to separatist am-bitions. From this point of view, the Ruthenian would be the safest solution of all. The danger in this, during the earlier years, was that this had been the policy of Hungary, who had carried• it through with so much success that local feeling had become almost identified with pro-Magyar feeling. Finally, it would be easy and not very cynical to say that the greatest safety would probably be in numbers, and to allow no one movement to get too strong, but to play each off against the other.

It will be seen that the possible factors, linguistic, religious, or political, which might determine the national policy to be adopted in Ruthenia, are almost innumerable. It is, therefore, not sur-prising that the course followed should have proved somewhat wavering. It has in fact resulted in provoking a glorious confusion of tongues and sentiments, such as could hardly have been more effectively achieved by an absolutely consistent policy of *divide et impera;* but this is probably due only in part to intention, and more to the interaction of conflicting policies.

President Masaryk, when first discussing thë question with ~atkovi~, seems to have favoured developing the local dialects gradually into Ukrainian, which should be used in the schools and public offices, with minority schools in Great Russian for those who preferred it.' Žatkoviè seems also to have been pro-Ukrainian; and as the Academy of Sciences in Prague, on being consulted, pronounced the Ruthenes to be a branch of Ukrainians, it seemed likely at first that the course would be Ukrainian. On the other hand, few Czechs knew Ukrainian, while it was possible to find and dispatch to Ruthenia a certain number who understood Russian; and since the people called themselves 'Russin' and had pronounced in May 1919 for the 'Ruskij jazyk', and since the language of higher education in Hungarian days, in so far as it existed at all, was a sort of Great Russian, most of these officials seem to have assumed that the Ruthenes, even though admittedly of Ukrainian origin, would wish to speak Russian. Another factor which cer-tainly influenced the situation at the time was the strong belief then current among the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie that the Russian revolution would not endure, and that an intellectual class must be maintained among the émigrés to take over thé leadership of Russia when the counter-revolution came. Largely for this reason, Russian émigrés were welcomed very hospitably in Czechoslovakia, and many of them found their way to Ruthenia.

Thus, from the very first, two different tendencies seem to have been at work, each of them straightforward enough in its own way.

1 *Masaryk, op, cit., p. 240*

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

RUTHENIA

The situation became far more acute in the spring of 1921, when the Russian contingent was suddenly reinforced by several hun-dred members of the Church Militant, Orthodox priests evacuated in the previous November with General Wrangel's army from the Crimea to Constantinople, thence dispatched to Serbia and for-warded by the Serbian Patriarch to Ruthenia. In this case it is hard to believe that some wish was not present to weaken the Uniate Church, which, up to that time, had proved obstinately Hungarophil. At all events, no shrewder blow could have been struck at that institution. The Russians at once began to propagate their faith with great fervour and with a sweeping success which owed something to material considerations; for the Uniate priests had been in the habit of demanding tithes in kind, which were most irksome to Ruthene pockets. The Russians were less exact-ing in their demands, both material and moral, and were also in no way identified with foreign rule. A robust schism occurred. Whole villages went Orthodox overnight, often violently ejecting their previous spiritual pastors. The Czechs, true to the principle of religious liberty, cheerfully handed over the Uniate Churches and Church property to the converts wherever they could show them-selves to be in the majority. A religious war (not wholly metaphorical or bloodless) went on for some years, until the Government, confronted with an endless series of lawsuits, solved the immediate question by compelling the return to the Uniate Church of such of its property as had been seized, paying out of State funds the dues to the Uniate clergy formerly paid by their parishioners, and granting the Orthodox communities subsidies to build their own churches. But the unity of the people had been broken. Whereas in 1918 97 per cent. of the Ruthenes belonged to the Uniate Church, the figure was now only some 8o per cent.'

With the advent of the Russian priests, the Great Russian movement took a long stride forward; for it goes without saying (since the Church is the veritable bulwark of national life among the Slavonic peoples) that the dispute did not remain confined to theological issues. On the contrary, the Russian priests propagated vigorously not only the Orthodox creed, but also the Russian language and the Russian national idea; denouncing Ukrainianism, as Russians will, as a mere heresy, fallacy, and delusion. But their triumph (to continue the story) was short-lived. Hard on their heels came a fresh wave of immigrants, even more numerous and no less determined. These were Ukrainian-minded Ruthenes from East Galicia, whose struggle against Poland for independence had iust ended in defeat. Czechoslovakia, whose relations with Poland

1 In 1910 386,812 inhabitants of Ruthenia were Uniate and only 577 Orthodox; in 1930 the figure were 359,166 and 113,034 respectively.

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

were at that period thoroughly unfriendly, welcomed these new arrivals no less warmly than she had the Russians, and even founded universities for them in Prague and Podiebrad. Very considerable numbers of these Ukrainians found their way to Ruthenia, where they were largely employed in the schools and, in part, in the administrative services also.

Under the influence of these Ukrainian immigrants, who were no less energetic than the Russians in spreading their idèas, cultural, religious, and national, a Ukrainian movement arose in its turn, equally opposed to the Russian and the local 'Ruthene'. Both Ukrainian and Russian movements organized actively, their centres being the cultural societies known respectively as the Prosvita (Ukrainian) and the Duchnovica (Russian). From these fastnesses they issued books and pamphlets, arranged for theatrical per-formances, &c., and attacked each other with unabating energy.

The Czechoslovak Government has generally professed itself entirely neutral in this question, declaring itself willing to follow ây course on which the parties might agree - if only they would agree. It has, in fact, made various endeavours to bring them to terms, being frustrated in each case by the recalcitrance of one or the other party. It appears, however, to have supported the Ukrainians the more strongly of the two up to 1930**,** when a certain change took place. In that year the National Socialist Party (Dr. Beneš' former party) sent in a memorandum to the Govern-ment urging the necessity of' breaking with the Ukrainians in order to facilitate a rapprochement with Poland, and for that, and other reasons, asking that Great Russian should be substituted for Ukrainian in the schools. No radical change in the curricula seems to have been made, but thereafter the balance was held, perhaps,•. rather more evenly, with the result that both parties, instead of only one as theretofore, thenceforward accused the authorities of terrorizing their supporters and distorting the natural sentiments of the nation. More recently still, an attempt was made to revive the Ruthene tendency, which had now lost most of its dangerous Magyarone proclivities and which, it was hoped, might develop. into a pronouncedly Czechophil movement, particularly if by sage and imperceptible degrees the local dialect might be brought to approximate more closely to the Slovak. Incidentally, it is even easier to hold the.balance between three movements, provided that they are all mutually irreconcilable, than between two.

At present there is no uniform plan. In most of the elementary schools, the teaching is in the local dialect, with a tendency towards Ukrainianism due to the fact that the present head of the Ruthene teachers' training college is at this moment a leading light of the Ukrainians. In the higher schools Ukrainian again

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

RUTHENIA

predominates, but not to the exclusion of its rìvals. One school teaches in one Ianguage, another in another; in some schools, different languages are even taught in different classes.

The Czechs are freely accused by all parties - fraternally united on this one point alone - of having brought about this situation by Machiavellian design, to destroy the unity of the Ruthenes and to thwart their proper national ambitions. These accusations contain some modicum of truth. Yet one must also say that this oppor-tunity was freely, indeed, most lavishly offered, and that the Ruthenes themselves are at Ieast as much to blame for their dis-unity as the Czechs (not to speak of the other neighbouring nation-alities which occasionally drop a hook into these troubled waters).

As regards the second main culturâl grievance of the Ruthenes - the Czech schools - Czech policy is less easily defensible, even if, here too, the opportunity and the excuse havebeenlavishlypresented by the dissensions between the various Ruthene groups. Czech schools have been introduced into Ruthenia on a scale unwarranted even by the considerable number ofofficials. The figures for Czech educational establishments in Ruthenia in 1920/1 and 193 i/z were as follows:

	Kindergarten	*Elementary School*	*Burger School*	*Teacher's Training Collages*
1920-21	*4*	*22*	*1*	..
1931-32	*43*	*158*	*14*	*1* [1]

Thus the Czechoslovaks, who compose only 496 per cent. of the population, possess nearly as many facilities for higher education as the Ruthenes and far more than the Magyars, while there is one Czech elementary school for every ziz Czechs in Ruthenia, the corresponding figures for the Ruthenes, Magyars, and Germans being *997~5,* 945, and 779 respectively. This extensive establish-ment clearly could not be kept up at all if it was expected to confine the Czech schools to Czech pupils. In the burger schools in **1931,** for example, there were 6i Czech classes for only ~8 Czech pupils.2 The plethora of Czech schools can, therefore, only be regarded as a measure of attempted Czechization. This is, indeed, carried on much more circumspectly and less extensively than the old Magyarization. Although cases are said to have occurred when the Czechs have taken advantage of quarrels between the Ukrainian and Russian parties, each refusing to learn the rival Ianguage, to introduce Czech as a ‘neutral’ solution, the elements to whom these facilities are chiefly offered, and who take freest advantage

1 Parallel classes.
2 L.N.O.J., March 1934, p. 341 (M.Yuhasz's petition)

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

of them, are not the Ruthenes, but the Jews, who form the chief clientèle of the Czech burger schools and even of the elementary schools.' The Czechsjustify their action on this ground, arguing that 'no one can refuse the Jews the right to have schools in which the language of the State is taught' and declaring that no elementary school with Czech language of instruction has been set up except at the request of the local population.2 The procedure seems, however, to be tactless, to say the least of it, and to tend towards the creation of a situation which is certainly not in accordance with the spirit of Ruthene autonomy by its encouragement of a Czech-speaking middle class. It has, moreover, the effect of setting one class of the local population still further against the others. The Jewish authorities themselves have recognized the potential dangers in the situation, and have requested the Jewish parents in the villages to send their children to Ruthene schools rather than to Czech schools. As for the Czechs, while they always deny that their action has really amounted to attempted Czechization, yet they seem to have recognized that it at least gives rise to possible misinterpretation. A party among them has always disapproved, on grounds both of expediency and morality, to the plethora of Czech schools, and some plans for still further developing Czech higher education were recently cancelled by the Government.

§ 6. THE ECONOMIC POSITION

If the Czech cultural policy has been wavering and its results ambiguous, yet one way or another great cultural progress has been achieved. True, some of the Ruthenes to-day learn Ruthene, others Ukrainian, others Russian, others Czech; but nearly all of them learn something, and the general standard of culture and education has undoubtedly risen very greatly. It is otherwise, unfortunately, with the economic situation. No detailed descrip-tion of the situation in this respect is necessary, since it differs little from that of Slovakia, save in being in almost all respects less favourable still. Ruthenia is even less industrialized than Slovakia, and her industry, such as it was, has suffered even more by the change in frontiers. The salt-mines (which possess almost a monopoly for Czechoslovakia) have kept up their output, but of the larger industrial undertakings proper, existing in 1914, some

1 In 1931, according to M. Fenzig (Karpatorusskij Golos, May 8th, 2935), the pupils in the Czech burger schools were composed of 572 Czechs, 66 Ruthenes, 58 Germans, 388 Magyars, ~ Poles, 31 Romanians, 1,415 Jews, and 3 others. On the other hand, according to the Czechoslovak reply to M. Yuhasz's petition (L.N.O.J., March 1934, p. 358) only 1,266 out of 7i,343 Ruthene children were attending Czechoslovak schools on October ~ i st, i 93 I, while a considerable number of Czech children were attending Ruthene schools.

2 L.N.O.J., loc. cit.

70per cent. (according to an estimate from a reliable source) have been liquidated, in many cases deliberately, without any serious attempt to replace them; the subsidies granted for encouragement of home industries and handicrafts have been a mere drop in the bucket. A considerable amount of building went on for some years, but practically all industrial undertakings now existent work for a strictly local market, and in nearly all of •them unemployment is very high.

More even than Slovakia, Ruthenia has been reduced to a purely non-industrial country devoted exclusively to agriculture and forestry, in which no less than 67.78 per cent. of the occupied population, or 66•29 per cent. of the total population, are engaged. It must be noted in this connexion that forestry is even more important for Ruthenia than it is for Slovakia, since nearly 49 per cent. of her total area is covered by forests, while only 1833 per cent. consists of arable land. The welfare of her timber industry is thus vital to her prosperity, and the only reasonable market for her timber is Hungary, since on the home market she cannot compete even with Slovakia.

It might, therefore, still be possible to maintain a modest level of prosperity by cultivating close commercial relations with Hungary, on the old basis of exchange between mountain and plain; to which would have to be added resumption of the seasonal harvest migration. Unfortunately, the migration has been at a standstill since the War, and the timber trade was cut off in 1930 when trade relations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia were severed. The effect of this, serious for Slovakia, has been simply disastrous for Ruthenia. Many of the saw-mills have had to close down, while others have been kept at work only by drastic wage reductions. At the same time, the rise in the price of food-stuffs has struck a further severe blow to the population.

Thus forestry has gone the way of industry; not dead, but almost moribund and with little hope at present of reviving. There remains agriculture. Can this be so developed as to afford the population a reasonable standard of living?

As we have said, the Government has made considerable efforts to improve local standards of production, and with a success which deserves recognition. There is room for much further improvement still, for methods in Ruthenia are still exceedingly backward, and the production of nearly all crops, even on the existing acreage, can, and doubtless will, be raised substantially. More drastic methods do not seem, however, likely to be very effective. Much was hoped, for example, from the agrarian reform, and at the Peace Conference the misery of the Ruthenes was attributed very largely to the unsound distribution of land. In practice, however,

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

it was found impossible to effect any very large reform. 230,908 hectares (18.83 per cent. of the total) were put under sequester, but only *45,379* of these were arable land, the rest consisting mainly of forests. A small further area was acquired by exchange. A total of 21,191 hectares was distributed to 9,216 small proprietors; 24 residual estates were created, with an area of 2,773 hectares, and 8o other larger estates with an area of 9, 147 hectares (1,903 arable); most of these were co-properties or communes. 10,159 hectares (2,203 arable) were taken over by the State. In 1929 29,084 hectares had been restored to their former proprietors; thus no less than 170,434, or 702 per cent. of the total area sequestered, still remained at the disposal of the Land Office.

The attempts to relieve the land hunger by colonisation in the plains proved exceedingly disappointing. Few applicants came forward, still fewer satisfied the conditions imposed by the authorities, and only a mere handful succeeded in establishing themselves. Indeed, the Ruthenes were so laggard that the authorities committed the extraordinary political blunder - even less excusable here than in Slovakia - of settling Czech colonists in the plains. There were in 1929 a total of 11 colonies in Ruthenia, with 249 undertakings.

These measures, however well meant and well conducted, have so patently failed to solve the problem, or even substantially to alter the relation between large and small holdings,' that a plan is now on foot for carrying through a second agrarian reform, which would involve clearing portions of the forests for agricultural settlement. Given the present situation, this measure may prove inevitable, but it is a bitter commentary on the conflict between politics and economics that valuable timber should be destroyed for the purpose of growing crops which cannot (given

The figures for land tenure in 1930 were as follows:

.Size of Holding.	*Number Absolute.*	*Per cent.*	*Total Area.*
Up to 0.1 ha.	2,416	2.1	238.14
0.1 " 0.5 ,,	10,424	9.2	3,365.72
0.5 " 1	11,939	10.6	8,892.19
I " 2 ,,	25,575	226	37,982.82
2 " *5* ,,	34,465	30.5	114,955.33
5 " 10	18,486	16.4	128,480.79
10 " 20 ,,	6,790	6.0	91,006..53
20 " 30 ,,	1,215	1.1	29,262.62
30 " 50 ,,	596	0.5	22,72I.98
50 " 100 ,,	346	0.3	24,085.18
100 " 200 ,,	289	0.3	40,678.87
200 " 500 ,,	244	0.2	76,507.76
Over 500 ,,	175	0.2	653,692.08
Total. . .	112,960	100.	1,231,870.01

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

the climatic conditions) be other than second-rate, literally within sight of the Hungarian plain, with its treeless stretches teeming with super-abundance of corn. Hungary, meanwhile, is afforesting the Alföld.

Over all these endeavours lies the shadow of the population problem. The Ruthene is incredibly prolific. The density of population has risen from 31 per square kilometre in 188o to 5.7 in 1930, rising from 48 in the decade 1920—30 alone. The birth-rate has fallen slightly from the flgure of 44'5 per thousand which it reached in 1901—5, but it still stood at 404 in 1930. As the death-rate has fallen much more strongly (from z88 in 1901—5 to 184 in 1930 and 1931) the annual natural increase still amounts to about 20 per thousand.

Emigration provided a certain outlet before the War, but the restrictions since introduced have, of course, largely blocked this safety-valve. During the years 1922—32, io,i8z passports were issued to natives of Ruthenia for overseas emigration, and 6,287 for European countries. During the same period, about 4,500 persons reemigrated.[1] The net relief given by emigration amounted, therefore, to only some 10 per cent. of the total increase of population. Internal immigration within the Republic is small. Of all the provinces of Czechoslovakia, Ruthenia is that with the least mobile population; in 1921 78.1 per cent of the population were residing in the commune of their birth.[2] Conditions are extremely unfavourable for the Ruthene to emigrate to the Historic Lands, in which unemployment is already very high. Even were there a demand for workers, the Slovak would stand a far better chance of engagement than the Ruthene, who labours under the twofold handicap of his foreign language and his non-industrial habits (including his propensities to drink and holidays). Thus only a few Ruthenes have taken the plunge, and they have found only the roughest and worst-paid work. In this respect, the situation of the Ruthenes seems to be worse than it was before the War, when there was a small but steady drift into the towns of the plain, followed by Magyarization.

Thus the economic outlook for Ruthenia is gloomy indeed. Terrible as was the poverty reigning in the mountains before the War, even sources highly favourable to the Government admit that the general standard of living has sunk considerably since. that date. It iš true that part of this deterioration may be put down. to the general economic crisis which has hit all parts of Central

1.) I.L.O., The Rural Exodus in Czechoslovakia, pp• xo5, 107. Of a total of 66,323 re-immigrants for the whole Republic, 3,822 gave Ruthenia as their destination and 6,459 did not specify the province.
Ibid., pp. 845..

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

Europe in varying degrees; but the evil in Ruthenia seems to be more than merely cycliçal, and though a certain improvement may be anticipated, it is hard to see a basis for real prosperity so long as the existing political frontiers are coped by the present com-mercial policies.

§ 7. POLITICAL FEELING AMONG THE RUTHENES

Political life in Ruthenia before the War was engagingly lucid. It was the simple habit of the authorities to present the populace with the choice between two candidates, one representing the Govern-ment and the other the Opposition, but both Magyar gentlemen and in most respects indistinguishable. The populace, in so far as it was enfranchised at all, would take the line of least resistance and greatest safety, and register its votes for the Goyernment.

After the War the Hungarian parties retained their organization but deftly transmuted themselves into the so-called 'Political Party of the Ruthenes in Hungary'. Although denounc~d by the Czechs as a pure sham and totally unrepresentative of the Ruthenes this party undoubtedly commanded, at the time, the allegiance of a large fraction of the Ruthenes (who, as has been said, were far on the road to Magyarization).

Those Ruthenes who had accepted the Czech solution then organized two parties which, they hoped, would prove representa-tive of the real Ruthene nation: a Social Democrat Party to repre-sent the workers, and an Agrarian Party to represent the peasants. This was done in anticipation of the grant of autonomy, which was then confidently expected to occur in a few months. When, however, this receded. into the future, faster than the passage of time, the leader of the peasant party, Dr. Kaminski,' founded a so-called Agrarian Union, which besides its peasant interest was principally devoted to the struggle for autonomy, and thus definitely oppositional.

Such was the situation for some three years. During that time no elections of any kind had been held, the Czechs frankly ad-mitting to the League of Nations, when questioned on the subject, that the electorate as a whole was still too strongly under Magyar influence to be consulted without disconcerting results.2 In 1922, then, the Czechs introduced their own party system into Ruthenia, with favourable results. Many of the Ruthenes, including even many who felt quite strongly on the question of autonomy, yet

1 Dr. Kaminski had held a post in the Government of the Russka Kraina, and afterwards served under the Czechs as first Zupán in Užhorod, but resigned when autonomy was delayed.

2 See in particular League of Nations Document C. 6o8 M. 231, 1923, I, where this is stated with an engaging candour and obvious (and in fact well justified) confidence that the Powers would appreciate this point of view.

RUTHENIA

thought it more practical, in view of the *defacto* situation, to throw in their lot with the bigger parties in the rest of the Republic. The Agrarian Union came to terms with the Czechoslovak Agrarians, and many of the other parties, including those of the national minorities, followed suit, fusing or striking bargains with the main parties. There remained, of course, a certain number of Ruthenes who felt that the question of autonomy must take precedence of all others. These founded separate parties, the oldest and most important of which is the group formed at the end of 1923 by secession from the Agrarian Union when the latter joined the Czechoslovak Agrarians and known as the Agrarian Opposition, or more usually, from the name of its founder, as the Kurtyak Party. This has roughly the same objects as M. Kamin-ski's earlier group, namely autonomy as guaranteed in the Treaty, with support of peasant interests.' A second specifically auto-nomist party, that of M. Fenzig, combines the advocacy of auto-nomy with the propagation of what are often vaguely described as Fascist ideas: strong methods, the principle of 'leadership' and a dash of anti-Semitism. The minor parties, which are exuberantly numerous, particularly at local and municipal elections, need not be described in detail here.

After the agreement had been concluded between the Ruthene and the Czech Agrarians, municipal elections were held (late in 1923) with a result of some 40,000 votes to the Ruthene parties, 15,000 to the Communists, 55,000 to the Magyar and Jewish parties, and 21,ooo to 'middle-class groups and local groups of a non-political character'.[3] General elections, held on March i6th, 1924, gave the Communists 1oo,ooo votes, the Magyar and

1 In the 1935 elections this party co-operated with the Slovak People's Party.

2 The following table, which shows the parties contesting the municipal elections at Užhorod in 1931, and the votes cast for them, will give some idea of the complexity of local political life in Ruthenia.

United Magyar Parties .	2,123	Socialist Party of Trade and Industry	252
Communists . . .	2,059	Economic Party . . .	256
Jewish Party . . .	830	Two small parties whose names have escaped me .	67 and 85
Jewish People's Party .	250	Republican Party of Trade and Industry	338
Orthodox Jewish Party .	5 12	Christian People's Party ..	340
Czechoslovak Social Democrats	588	Czechoslovak National Democrats	228
Russian Bloc . . .	261	Czechoslovak Economic Party .	234
National Socialists . .	662	Czechoslovak Labour Community	360
Magyar Social Democrats .	186		
Czechoslovak Agrarians .	589		

Total, 10,320 votes among 19 parties, two of which are coalitions.

The Czechs are sometimes accused of fostering this state of things in order to break the unity of the Ruthene front, and with this purpose, of founding small parties before each election, but it wou1d be unfair to consider them as doing more than aid and abet a natural tendency.

1 League of Nations Document, C. 221 M. 310, 1923, I.

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

Jewish parties 55,000, the Agrarian Opposition 21,000, and the remaining Ruthene parties 6o,ooo.' The Parliamentary elections of 1925, 1929, and 1935, respectively, gave the following results:

	1925	1929	1935
Communists	75,669	40,582	78,994
Czechoslovak Agrarians . .	34,916	77,419	60,747
,, Social Democrats	18,183	22,925	30,729
,, National Socialists .	15,571	10,025	11,272
People's Party .	7,402	8,779	7,321
Minor pro-Government Parties	3,168	..	..
Minor Opposition Parties . .	13,812	..	..
Agrarian Opposition (Kurtyak).	28,799	48,609	4.4,982
Fenzig Party	..	..	28,956
Magyar Parties .	29,102	30,455	34,186
Jewish Party . . .	19,121	..	..
HenleinParty	..		1,535
German Social Democrats			1,183
Debtors' Party . . .	..	..	366
.	253,743	239,794	300,271

These figures, like those for Slovakia, can give only a very rough indication of the development of political feeling in Ruthenia since the War; a feeling which, in the case of the Ruthenes themselves, is doubly difficult to estimate on account of the vast complexity of the national question. The position of the Ruthenes is so far parallel to that of the Slovaks in that they have ceased to regard Magyarization as the natural corollary of advancement in life. While in 1914 it seemed possible to foresee a not distant day when the whole nation would have become Magyar speaking and thinking, this process has now been definitely arrested. On the other hand, the most complete uncertainty reigns as to what is to take its place. The idea of Czechization may probably be dismissed. The attempts made by the authorities to bring it about were never more than sporadic and half-hearted, and were always discountenanced by a large section among the Czechs themselves. They seem to have aroused little but resentment among the Ruthenes.

There remain, then, the three rival national tendencies: the Ruthene, the Great Russian, and the Ukrainian. None of these has yet gained a decisive advantage over the others. If a census of the whole population were taken to-day, probably the vast majority of the peasants, above whose heads the whole controversy has really passed, would still describe themselves, either by some local appellation such as 'Hutzul', or as 'Rusins', meaning thereby their own local brand of Carpatho-Ruthenes.

1 *League of Nations Document, C. 331 M. 107, 1924, I. The above are votes for the Chamber; the votes for the Senate are slightly lower in each case, but the proportions are much the same.*

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

If, however, we look to the future, the Ruthene cause is probably the least hopeful of the three. A Ruthene nationality was possible within the great Austro-Hungarian Empire, when it could have numbered several million adherents. But Czechoslovakia is not Austria-Hungary, and cannot do things on this spacious scale. A Carpatho-Ruthene nationality of, at the most, a million souls is impracticable. A very important factor is that the population of Eastern Galicia has strongly repudiated 'Ruthenism', and now includes among its national demands the complete substitution of the name 'Ukrainian' for that of 'Ruthene'. Scant as are the relations between Galicia and Ruthenia, they do exist, and the influence of the Church in particular, as represented notably by Monsignor Szeptickij, the able archbishop of Lvov, is not inconsiderable.

The intelligentsia, with few exceptions, have rejected the Ruthene solution altogether (a recent attempt by a small group to revive it has met with little success, the more so as Czech pressure is suspected behind it). Their younger members are Ukrainian or Russian to a man. Of these two parties, the Ukrainian seems the stronger, although, oddly enough, both the main autonomist parties, the Kurtyak and Fenzig parties, are Russo-phil. Neither of them is, however, solely interested in this parti-cular question, over which many of the followers of both probably take a different view from their leaders. M. Fenzig has recently been somewhat discredited by his too open attachment to the Polish cause, while the other Great Russian groups, which centre chiefly round small bands of émigrés, represent for the most part an ultra-conservative point of view which no longer appeals to youth~.

The Ukrainian movement was admittedly the work of the Galician immigrants, but they have shown extraordinary energy and perseverance which has met its reward. The Prosvita is a much larger organization than its Russian rival and its 'National House' in Užhorod contains a museum, a library, and even. a theatre. Vigorous propaganda is conducted, even in the remotest villages, and the press is well organised. The Ukrainians are strongly represented in the educational system. In June 1934, according to their bulletin, there were 1,874 Ukrainian school-teachers in Ruthenia, of whom 1,318 belonged to the association, i.e. were active workers in the Ukrainian cause.' M. Vološin, the head of the Greek Catholic Teachers' Training College in Užhorod, has, after sundry vagaries, ended as an Ukrainophil, and the great majority of the young priests who pass through his college, as (so far as can be judged) of the lay students, are fervent adherents of the same cause.

The outcome of this national dispute, if an outcome is ever

1 Martel, op. cit., p. 139.

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

reached, will clearly affect political feeling among the Ruthenes very deeply. If, for example, the Ukrainian movement definitely wins the day, and if the future should bring the establishment of an independent Ukraine comprising all Ukrainian territories beyond the Carpathians (including East Galicia) then the national urge to join that State may become so strong as to drown all other considerations. Under the present circumstances, however, the national dispute is largely academic, and does little more than confuse the immediate political issue. It should be emphasised that the political ambitions of a given group are not to be deduced from its attitude on the national question. The Czechs have favoured all three tendencies at one period or another. Both of the two main autonomist parties to-day are Great Russian on the national question; but one is reputed to enjoy the sympathies of Budapest (which before the War would have put down any such movement with great decision), the other of Warsaw. Most of the Communists are Ukrainian rather than Russian.

The chief question which the present work must try to answer is whether the populations taken from Hungary under the Treaty of Trianon prefer their new situation to their old. Clearly, this question cannot be answered on the basis of the negotiations which took place in 1918 and 1919. The bulk of the population was never consulted; it is, indeed, unlikely that most of them knew that Czechoslovakia existed at the time when their ambition to join that State was being interpreted for them to the Conference. In 1919 the simple peasants of the Verchovina came flocking down the valleys as usual, scythe on shoulder, and remarkable scenes are said to have been enacted when the authorities tried to explain to them that they had now been liberated. They listened politely, but impatiently; it was kind of the noble gentlemen to make them such long speeches, but they were in haste to reach the hiring-fair at Nyiregyháza, and they entirely failed to understand why they were being held up by people in strange uniforms. . .

Today their attitude towards the Magyars has, of course, changed; they regard them as fellow beings rather than as natural masters and social ideals. Friendliness and even attachment to Hungary remain, however, very strong. This is due partly to material considerations, for the fall in the standard of living is unmistakable and even the most ignorant peasant understands that the change has been economically disastrous. Partly it is due to natural conservatism and to the extraordinary persistence of social ideals—feelings which will die with time, but not quickly. The Kurtyak Party is well known to have strong sympathies with Budapest, and these are certainly to be found in circles far wider than that of this single party. Many persons in Ruthenia (not

[1] ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

RUTHENIA

Magyars) have expressed to me their belief that a plebiscite to-day would still give a majority among the Ruthenes for a return to Hungary; at any rate, if this could be accompanied by a guarantee of autonomy similar to that proposed under the **1919** Law. The Czechs, in their hearts, probably share this view. It is fairly clear that the chief quality which keeps the Ruthenes, like the Slovaks, 'unripe for autonomy' is their unfortunate tendency to prefer Hungary to Czechoslovakia.

Yet one cannot speak of a strong pro-Hungarian movement among the Ruthenes, nor of a strong anti-Czech movement. The Czechs point to the fact that more Ruthene electors vote for the centralist parties than for the autonomists as evidence that most of the population has now accepted the Czechoslovak State. This, while true of the Slovaks, is much less certainly true of the Ruthenes. It certainly does not mean that only the autonomists resent the denial of autonomy. There is, on the contrary, very general indignation over the Czech dual breach of faith in reducing Ruthenia to its present limits, and in withholding the promised autonomy, as well as such auxiliary offences as the introduction of Czech as official language (equal with Ruthene), the multiplication of Czech schools and, above all, the monopoly of the higher posts by Czech officials. The last-named grievance is increasing rather than diminishing as the younger generation of Ruthene-speaking intelligentsia grows up. Few outside the little circle of direct beneficiaries of the new order do not share this resentment, which may easily become intense in a few years' time. If most of the electors do in fact vote for the Centralist parties, this is because elections are not held on the question of autonomy versus centralism, and because many believe that they can do better for themselves by hanging on to the skirts of the Government than by persisting in a struggle which, given the relative strength of the parties involved, must be futile and might involve un-pleasing personal consequences. Some indication of the disillusionment which has come to many, even of those who welcomed the change in 1919, may be found in the change of attitude of those American Ruthenes whose voice was really decisive in bringing about the original union. Today these same communities openly express regret for what they did.' True, they are only foreigners; but they are in far closer touch with their homeland to-day than they were in 1918. The feelings which they have expressed are shared by many in Ruthenia.

1 See the pamphlet, Wilson's Principles in Czechoslovak Practice, issued by the Rusin Council of National Defence in U.S.A. (Homestead, Pa., 1929), especially p. 59, which contains a strong protest against Czech methods. As in 1918, the Ruthene communes were consulted on this document; 94 per cent. voted in favour of it, and none against it.

But this feeling, again, must not be exaggerated. The attitude of the Ruthenes to the Czechs is generally one of opposition, but it is a resigned, philosophical, and even half-humorous exasperation rather than anything more active. The Czechs and Ruthenes live separate lives, but as different rather than hostile communities. The country does not require large garrisons to keep it quiet, nor even a very large force (measured by local standards) of police and spies. The average Ruthene will freely acknowledge the more obvious merits of the Czech rule; he will, at any rate, not hesitate to admit that he is better off under the Czechs than his brothers in Poland or Romania. Honest fulfilment of the pledge of autonomy, with rectification of the Slovak frontier, would probably content a large number of the Ruthenes, at least as a temporary measure, although few would regard it in their hearts as a final solution.

§ 8. THE MINORITY QUESTION

Little need be said on the minority question in Ruthenia, since it differs in hardly any respect from the similar problem in Slovakia. There is the same small Magyar ex-ruling class throughout the country and larger towns, the same Magyar peasantry along the southern fringe; more Jews than in Slovakia, but fewer Germans; relatively rather more gypsies, and a tiny frontier minority in the shape of three Romanian villages on the right bank of the Tisza.

The laws governing minority questions are the same as in other parts of the Republic, and are similarly applied. There is the same circumscribed, but considerable, freedom in non-political matters, and the same indirect but effective methods are adopted to paralyse the political influence of the Magyars. By a strange parallelism, the Magyar-speaking population in Užhorod, just like that of Bratislava and Košice, has dipped slightly but quite effectively below the 20 per cent. mark. The non-Magyar minorities, and particularly the Jews—far the most important minority in Ruthenia after the Magyars themselves—are enlisted as allies of the authority against the Magyars, special efforts being made to equip them with a separate cultural life of their own. The culture of the Jews, in particular, has been encouraged by every possible means. The Orthodox Jewish community (which comprises the bulk of the. local Jews) possesses complete autonomy in its cultural and religious affairs' and maintains a complex organisation, with 27 principle communes, i6 branches, and 45 rabbis. The larger communes levy substantial budgets for charitable and educational

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

RUTHENIA

purposes. There are two Hebrew secondary schools and seven primary schools, while Talmud schools for religious instruction are maintained where no complete Jewish school is available. The Germans and Romanians have sufficient primary schools, and even the gypsies have a school of their own—said to be the only specimen of its kind in the world.

As in Slovakia, the Magyars now have to content themselves with the schools to which their numbers strictly entitle them. The 5 kindergartens and 101 elementary schools which they possess seem to meet their needs adequately, as regards primary education. Beyond this, however, they have only 5 burger schools and parallel classes in a single gymnasium, and are said to have been refused permission to collect money and build a purely Magyar gymnasium for themselves.

The political effects of Czech policy have been the same in Rutthenia as in Slovakia. The Magyars are in every way weaker than they were in 1918. Their influence over the other nationalities, both Ruthenes and minorities, has diminished, and they themselves have been reduced to a state which ranges from the active support of the Czechoslovak regime of a small fraction to the vigorous opposition of a somewhat larger body, through the more or less resigned acquiescence of the majority. As regards the other minorities, the Germans are, for the most part, playing at Nazis; the Romanians are too few to count;[1] nobody bothers about the gypsies. The position of the Jews, however, requires a special word.

Being nearly all Orthodox or Chassidim, the Jews of Ruthenia were far more easily detached from the Magyar body than the Magyarized Jews of Western Slovakia, or of south-eastern and Southern Hungary. Appreciation of Czechoslovakia's encouragement of their national feeling, gratitude for her liberal policy, respect for the Talmudic precept which enjoins obedience to the local authority, worldly wisdom ('we Jews always take the most practical course', said one of them to me) all combined to bring about a very speedy and complete reorientation of their policy. By 1930, 88.3 per cent. of them already described themselves as Jews, and not all of the remainder called themselves Magyars; a certain number preferred to be known as Czechs. The Magyar-ones were reduced to a very small minority, and most of the remainder were vociferous upholders of the Czech regime. They are usually reckoned today, by all parties, as a sure pro-Czech element if and when the question of Ruthenia's future is ever

1 I am informed that in the 1935 elections the Romanians voted with the Magyar parties, but they have since formed a party of their own which has affiliated with the Czechoslovak National Socialists.

raised. And yet the question cannot, one feels, be left there. The Jews form so large an element in the population as to raise a multitude of further problems, besides that of their relations with the Magyars. Firstly, while the true Magyar is, or was, content to reserve for himself positions of social advantage, leaving industry, commerce, and finance to the Jew, the Czech is himself a business man, and Czech business has entered into serious rivalry with Jewish Ruthenia Hitherto, indeed, most of the Czech business men, except M Ba•a, have burnt their fingers, but they are likely to try again, and a rivalry will spring up which can hardly fail to result in mutual ill feeling

But much more important is the relation of the Jews to the Ruthenes One is impressed by the serious fashion in which the Czech officials regard the Jewish question, not in their own interest, but in that of the Ruthenes. The Jews at present form a class of middle-men which is far too large for the capacity of the country, and sooner or later this problem will have to be attacked far more seriously than either Magyar or Czech has ever yet attacked it. It is also safe to prophesy that the anti-Semitism of which there are at present only faint signs (the Ruthenes joke about Jews, rather as the English do; they do not hate them as the Romanians or the Germans do) will grow stronger as the Ruthenes swing into line with modern cultural fashions. Then the Czechs will have to choose to some degree between the Jews and the Ruthenes, and it will prove an unenviable choice. If they choose the latter, the Jews will swing back towards Hungary; the conversion is, after all, only skin-deep—according to many Czechs, who complain bitterly that in the towns even the Jewish children still speak Magyar, not even that—and the Talmud would be obeyed with just as good a grace if Ruthenia were returned to Hungary, as it was when it was assigned to Czechoslovakia. Should the Czechs prefer the support of the Jews, this would add mightily to the present discontent among the Ruthenes.. It is a dilemma which is none oft he Czechs' making, but may prove serious for them.

§ 9. CONSIDERATIONS FOR AND AGAINST REVISION

What chiefly distinguishes the problem of Ruthenia from that of all other districts affected by the Treaty of Trianon, is the relatively greater importance which can reasonably and indeed must be attached to considerations other than those of nationality. In 1918 national feeling among the Ruthenes was so faint that no great violence was done to it by assigning them to Czechoslovakia (although the same argument might equally well have been used

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

RUTHENIA

for leaving them with Hungary). To-day, the sense of nationality is, indeed, awake among the intelligentsia, who are now numerous enough to give a lead to the masses, but it is neither uniform nor coherent. Moreover, even if all the Ruthenes were to agree on one single national objective (and nothing is less likely than that they will ever do anything so sensible), it will certainly be one which will prove difficult to satisfy. Are they Carpatho-Ruthenes? Then they will hardly prove able to stand alone in the hurly-burly of modern political life. They will become too easily the pawns of intriguing neighbours. Are they Russians? A solid bloc of Ukrainians will cut them off from their kinsfolk. Are they Ukrainians? Then, indeed, they will be contiguous with the mass of that great people, a solid bloc of some 40 million people, reaching from the Už to the Don, and their situation will call for serious consideration, since it will form a part of the great Ukrainian problem—perhaps the biggest unsolved political question of Europe to-day. They might, indeed, be regarded to-day as preserving in some sort the nucleus of a future Ukrainian culture, and especially worthy of consideration for that reason.

Yet they will never be quite an integral part of any Ukrainian State. They will still be an extreme outpost of their people, divided from their brothers by a formidable natural barrier, with quite other cultural and historical traditions, and altogether different economic interests. Even if all the other Ukrainians now under Soviet, Polish, and Romanian rule were to be united in a single national state, there would still be a case for hesitating before including the Carpatho-Ruthenes in it, if other considerations were present which might weigh against such a decision. And it is likely that such considerations would be advanced. To give either the USSR or a Ukrainian State, whether Bolshevik or capitalist in structure, a foothold on the south of the Carpathians would be so revolutionary an act that one can well imagine the statesmen of Europe hesitating very long before committing or sanctioning it.

Thus it appears feasible, and may even prove necessary, to allow strictly ethnographical considerations to be over-ridden, in this particular case, by other claims; and the balancing of such claims is a very difficult and delicate matter.

Excellent as the work of the Czechs has been in Ruthenia since the War, and greatly as it has benefited the Ruthenes politically, socially, and culturally, yet it seems to the present writer that in view of the economic connections of the country, the course most advantageous to the Ruthenes themselves, as well as to the Magyars, at least, among the national minorities, would be to return the whole district to Hungary on condition that this could

[1] ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

be done under a rigidly enforced statute of autonomy. It would be economically advantageous if the district on the left bank of the Tisza were added to Ruthenia, while on political grounds the frontier with Slovakia should also be corrected. If this solution were adopted, then the purely Magyar districts along the southern frontier could be returned to Hungary proper. Under any other plan, only the most trivial frontier corrections would be possible, since it is imperative to allow transverse communications between the valleys.

If this were done it would be essential, in order to prevent a renewal of Magyarization to which the Ruthenes would no longer submit, to have a resident international commissioner, acting either for the League of Nations or for the Powers, in Ruthenia; and further to conclude arrangements similar to those in force to-day in the Polish Corridor, for allowing Czechoslovakia and Romania uninterrupted communication across Ruthenia.'

The economic advantages of this would not be confined to Ruthenia. Hungary would undoubtedly benefit, and Czechoslovakia would not be any the poorer—except, indeed, that she would have to buy her salt from abroad: no irreparable loss. Against this she would be relieved of the heavy expenditure now forced upon her in administering Ruthenia, educating its inhabitants generally and politically, and keeping them from starvation.

In the present state of national feeling among the Ruthenes, many of them would, I believe, welcome this change, provided that they could get guarantees against a renewal of Magyarization; whole masses of the peasants are still in so primitive a stage that the economic argument far outweighs any other in their eyes.

But in the minds of many, the real and dominant consideration with regard to Ruthenia is neither the national proclivities nor the economic welfare of the Ruthenes, but the strategic position of their habitat. To-day, the only land route by which Czechoslovakia can communicate with her colleagues of the Little Entente, either by road or by rail, without touching the potentially unfriendly territory of Germany, Austria, or Hungary, runs through Ruthenia, which, conversely, interposes between Hungary and Poland. And in the chain which binds Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia, Ruthenia is much the weakest link. It is the narrowest point, and it comprises that part of the Carpathian chain where the passes are easiest and most frequent; it is a traditional route between north and south. Further, it is most remote from the centres of Czechoslovakia and Romania, who

1 At the Peace Conference it was at first proposed to secure the communications of Poland and Hungary across Ruthenia in the same way, but this idea died away.

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

RUTHENIA

cannot possibly send troops thither save at the cost of much time and danger, nor support large armies in it without also occupying the adjacent plain. Small wonder if the Little Entente trembles for it while clinging to it.

This aspect of the problem has never been quite hidden from keen observers. It would be a gross disparagement of Dr. Beneš' intelligence to suppose that it had escaped his notice in 1918 and 1919. Indeed, the more one reads the documents of the period, the clearer it becomes that although never once stated publicly, this was really, even then, the supreme consideration. Dr. Beneš himself put the position exceedingly frankly in the 'speech to the Slovak nation' which he delivered at Nove Zamky on December 7th, 1933.

Without Slovakia and Ruthenia [he said], the Little Entente would have been simply and purely impossible, and so would have been its whole conception of an organisation of Central Europe in which our liberated countries have been their own masters, without the pre-dominating influence or domination of any Great Power. This is the great idea which forbids us to renounce anything in Slovakia; the great idea which makes us refuse frontier revision, and never, I affirm and I repeat, never shall we abandon Ruthenia, for **it** is precisely on Slovakia and Ruthenia that we build up our policy of the Little Entente, our policy in all Central Europe, and in genera1, our policy of the distribution of nations in the future and of the affirmation of the rights of the small nations of Central Europe in the European battle. . . . As on the one side the Czech lands stretch out a hand to France and Western Europe, so through Slovakia and Ruthenia we join hands with Rou-mania, Poland, and Russia. . . . It is Slovakia and Ruthenia which have rendered possible the whole conception of our foreign policy in collaboration with Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia, and it is that collaboration which makes us, in the eyes of France and of all Western Europe, a force in the whole policy of Central Europe. We sha1l therefore never allow our territorial link with Romania to be cut. . . . [1]

One thing has, indeed, altered since Dr. Beneš spoke: his speech was delivered before that strange political reshuffle in Eastern Europe which took place in **1934,** before the formation of a revisionist entente between Germany, Poland, and Hungary and the answering Czechoslovak-Soviet Alliance.

These surprising events have brought into the field a new competitor for little Ruthenia's favours, in the shape of Poland, who had been comparatively disinterested so long as her relations were good with Czechoslovakia. Since 1934, however, she has developed a very lively propaganda in the country. It is no secret that she has been the patroness of M. Fenzig, to whose organ, as it was discovered, the Polish Consul in Užhorod contributed a

1 *Reprinted in Le Monde Slave, February 1934, pp. 55 f*

· ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**

series of articles violently attacking the country to which he was accredited. She has also been working hand in glove with Hungary to foment anti-Czech feeling. The present psychological approach to the problem seems to be to let Poland, as a Slavonic State, occupy the front of the stage, with Hungary in the background; the theory being that if Poland ever obtained Ruthenia, she would hand it back to Hungary. The intricate revolution of wheels within wheels is well shown by the fact that both M. Fenzig's party, with its Polish connections, and the Kurtyak party with its Hungarian sympathies, are Russian on the intellectual issue. All this has not diminished Czechoslovakia's interest in Ruthenia, which is now an important link in her communications, no longer indeed with Poland, but with the still mightier USSR And since Germany thinks it her holy mission to thwart the U.S.S.R. in all things, she, too, has begun to look towards Ruthenia. Thus the importance, real or imagined, of the little country has transcended the bounds of the middle Danube Basin, and this Cinderella of the old Hungary is wooed to-day by more courtiers than any of her better-favored sisters. Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Poland, in the foreground; behind them that Great Ukrainian people, still divided and subjected to alien rule, only recently become conscious of its own soul and still not fully aware of its own strength; behind this again the still more enormous bulk of the Soviet Union, within which three-quarters of the Ukrainian people are organized to-day—truly no part of old Hungary is the plaything of such vast destinies.

Whether such considerations of *Weltpolitik* ought to outweigh the interests of the populations themselves is a question which the present writer hesitates to answer. He can do no more than state his opinion as to where those interests lie, and to indicate the many difficulties in their path.

[1] ***Mémoire concernant la Russie sub-carpathique,*** **cit. supra. p.ii8.**