

NATIONALITY
POLICY
IN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

CZECHOSLOVAK SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS

No 22

NATIONALITY
POLICY
IN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Speeches
by DR. HODŽA,
the Premier, and Cabinet Ministers
Messrs. FRANKE, NEČAS, and DÉRER
in the Czechoslovak Parliament

1 9 3 8

"ORBIS" PUBLISHING CO., PRAGUE

PRINTED BY "ORBIS" PRAGUE XII

The Budget debate of the Czechoslovak Parliament, which took place in both Chambers and their respective Budget Committees in the latter half of November and the early half of December 1937, provided an occasion, as in past years, for a whole series of statements, criticisms and exchange of views upon the work accomplished by the Czechoslovak Government, and on the main economic, social, and cultural tasks of the Czechoslovak State. That work and those tasks were examined from the angle of the interests of the State as a whole, from that of the requirements and interests of the individual categories of the population, and last but not least from the nationality standpoint.

One of the leading questions of the moment—what is the spirit of the policy pursued in Czechoslovakia in regard to the racial minorities, and to what extent the State management of affairs and the estimates of the various departments reflect the practical lines of nationality policy as laid down in the Agreement of 18th February last—claimed special attention during several weeks of debate, and produced, in the speeches of deputies and senators representing both the majority and the

minority, a great deal of material concerning the practical policy that is being pursued in respect of nationality matters. The great speech made on the 17th of November in the name of the Government by Dr. Hodža, the Prime Minister, presented, within the broad scope of his remarks on the position of the State and its economic and cultural policy, an outline of the ideological bases upon which the Czechoslovak Government pursues its policy towards the minorities in the country. At the same time the speech also presented notable proofs of the practical application of that policy in the various departments of administration. Other Cabinet Ministers, as heads of their respective departments, supplemented the remarks of the Prime Minister and submitted further material in this connection.

It seems to us not out of place to present the speech of Dr. Hodža, the Premier, together with the documentary material submitted by the other Heads of departments, to public opinion abroad, where of late such distinct interest has been displayed in the racial problems and nationality policy of Czechoslovakia. In these speeches will be found the most authentic proofs of Czechoslovakia's policy.

Dr. MILAN HODŽA
THE PRIME MINISTER
ON NATIONALITY POLICY
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA
SPEECH DELIVERED BEFORE
THE BUDGETARY COMMITTEE
OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
ON THE 17th NOVEMBER 1937

I.

TO-DAY'S TASK: COMPLETION OF THE WORK OF LIBERATION

The international tension of our day manifests itself in every country in straining all energies to the utmost in national defence, in the economic, the political and the moral spheres. This intense rivalry has laid upon Czechoslovakia similar if not still greater tasks than those facing all other countries. If the task for our country is relatively greater it is because we are a State which finds itself geographically at the crossroads of conflicting ideological currents. From the standpoint of the security of the State this exposed situation has the advantage of causing Czechoslovakia to be recognized as a European necessity. We must, however, consolidate this advantage not only by readiness and competence for every form of cooperation in the maintenance of peace and also by showing ourselves as a country of exemplary order, of social and racial justice, but also by equipping ourselves with a sound economic system, solid finances and an army.

Looking to-day in the light of history at the tasks which now confront the Czechoslovak Government and the Czechoslovak legislature, these tasks seem to us in substance a consolidation of what we attained on the 28th and 30th of October 1918, that is to say as a culmination of the work of Czechoslovak liberation and independence.

Our present-day tasks thus confront Czechoslovak democracy with a third great test—perhaps the most difficult test it has so far experienced. The first presented itself immediately after the War in the form of eliminating from our national organism those germs of infection produced by the then social crisis from which Central and Eastern Europe was suffering. Our democracy accomplished this task not by means of a mere temporary compromise but in organic fashion. It triumphed over the difficulties, and triumphed a second time in its struggle against the world economic crisis when, by means of a consistent, constructive policy, it enabled our country to link up with the general world-wide improvement—an improvement that was not, and is not, confined to the armaments boom but which embraces practically every branch of revival in production. The security of a State depends, of course, in the first place upon the quality and readiness for action of its defence forces, but these defence forces in their turn rest upon economic and moral bases. This also implies insti-

tutions that guarantee social and racial justice, and it implies, too, a mobilisation of all the moral forces of the people of this country. We are well aware of lacunae and shortcomings, but we are also conscious of the positive results secured by our policy as a State, for we are systematically fulfilling all the conditions for the integral defence of our State. Czechoslovak democracy will not allow itself to be robbed of a triumph in this, the severest test of all.

Varied are the paths by which the European regimes are achieving defensive preparedness. The dictatorships simply provide for it by decree both in organising and in financing their armies. The old traditional democracies, great and small have carried out this task by relying upon their tradition, whether that of their democracy or that of their defensive forces, or both at once. Czechoslovak democracy is naturally only in process of forming a tradition. So far it has done so successfully. Confronted with its present task it has naturally had to concentrate upon what was up to now the basis of its triumph and what is already its characteristic feature, it has had to *concentrate upon its voluntary discipline*. This self-imposed discipline on the part of our democracy, this self-imposed discipline of our political parties and also of our non-political economic groups has enabled the Government to submit to Parliament a Budget showing an inevitable increase in expenditure on

national defence, and measures providing for funds to meet this new expenditure. The Government started to draft this Budget as early as June last and based it upon two principles: firstly on the principle of real equilibrium and secondly on that of strict economy. To these principles there has been added not only good will but also the firm determination to make the necessary sacrifices and accept the responsibility for these sacrifices. It is a handsome proof of the self-discipline and patriotism of our parliamentary democracy that its representatives in the Economy and Control Committee as well as the chairmen of committees and rapporteurs of the parliamentary clubs of the parties supporting the Government adopted towards the Budget and the fundamental principles that it represents a wholly positive attitude, so that the debates, intense and of keen fighting spirit as they were, centred ultimately in the form of reasonable compromise and in full harmony in the light of supreme responsibility for the State.

The Government thus submits to Parliament a Budget and Bills providing for the necessary expenditure—measures which are the outcome of the Government's collaboration with numerous and responsible representatives of the legislature. I regret that there was no opportunity for an informative exchange of views with the representatives of the Opposition. I do not wish to regard that as

a precedent. The Government submits this Budget, this defence Budget and the Bills making provision to meet its expenditure, in the firm confidence the debates will be marked by endeavours to enable democracy to fulfil its great financial and defence tasks with the same readiness and celerity as the dictatorships, and to fulfil them even better, since only democracy gives the assurance that the burdens they involve will be distributed as uniformly as possible.

A serious answer, however, is demanded by the question—will the Republic and its people be able to bear the expenditure of the inevitableness of which it is convinced? The Government and parliamentary factors have discussed this question in long debates. Why should not the Prime Minister of a democratic Government now tell our Parliament and the whole public in all candour that those discussions profoundly and painfully touched the judgment and the conscience of us all. Gladly and proudly I am able to say that in those discussions all mere party spirit disappeared in the presence of the plain interest of the people and the State as a whole. It is therefore with a clear conscience and with the sense of honest work accomplished that we lay before you this Budget and the measures providing us with the means of meeting the expenditure.

II.

THE ECONOMIC AND MORAL STRENGTH OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNSHAKEN

The Government does not attempt to deny that it is asking a great deal of the people of this country. But it would be underrating the political and moral maturity of our people if we did not tell them plainly what is needed in order that in the coming years of international confusion we may stand our ground honorably and securely. We could not, of course, but hear what is being said about us abroad. It is a great satisfaction to us to know that precisely in connection with this Budget there has practically nowhere been expressed any serious doubts as to the economic and moral strength of Czechoslovakia. The only exception was one of our big neighbours, whose press deemed it necessary to circulate reports that this Budget was going to hurl Czechoslovakia into economic catastrophe. We are anxious to elucidate our economic situation and the strength of our State to all persons, including our powerful neighbours, and therefore—though we naturally allow for the political bias in the doubts expressed—regard it as useful to set out in a sober statement, objectively and concretely, the grounds upon which we base our capacity to bear our burdens.

The devaluation of our currency last year fully achieved its purpose. It linked us up with the up-

swing in economic conditions and caused no serious rise in prices.

In the labour market, in addition to a considerable decline in the unemployment figure, there was recorded the important fact that the increase in the number of insured workers, compared with last year was approximately 300,000
compared with 1935 about 350,000
and the increase in 3 years about . . . 600,000.

If we add the number of those who in the past three years have found work in callings which are not included in the existing insurance statistics, especially in the trades, we see that the Czechoslovak labour market has in the last three years given an opportunity of work to more than 650,000 persons.

The labour market development has also been favourable in the German-peopled districts of our Republic, although it had seemed that permanent unemployment was an outcome of the structure of the industries there. Many factories which had been working short time have increased their hours of work. There are also numbers of factories which had been shut down and have this year recommenced operations.

According to the returns issued by the Provincial Labour Office for North Bohemia at Liberec the number of unsuccessful applicants for work to the labour exchanges in October this year in North Bohemia was 59,086. In September the figure was

58,098, the lowest level registered not only this year, but in any years since 1931. *Compared with October 1936 the October unemployment figures showed a decline of 40.1%.*

Foreign trade, in the first 10 months of this year, shows a very notable increase compared with the like period of last year. *The total volume is 18,600 million Kč, or 6300 million Kč more than last year, an advance of 53%. Compared with the period of January to October 1933 it is an increase of 8900 million Kč, or nearly 100%. The surplus of exports over imports in the first 10 months this year is 825.6 million Kč, compared with 241 million Kč in the like period of 1936.* The expansion of Czechoslovakia's foreign trade in the past 10 months is worthy of very special notice, for the reason that in that period we have imported foreign raw materials and other import requirements in increased quantities. In the January-October period we have imported raw materials for 1964 million Kč more than in the preceding year, and yet our trade balance has remained favourable because the increase in exports of finished goods was even larger. In the first 10 months of the current year we have exported *finished goods for 7035 million Kč, that is, for 2410 million Kč, or 52%, more than in the corresponding months of last year.* The surplus value of exports of finished goods in the first 10 months of 1937 over the value of imports of raw materials is about 1050.8 mil-

lion Kč, a sum which has a decisive influence upon our balance of payments and upon our exchange situation. We are allowing for the fact that the present economic improvement has to-day reached its peak after the swing of the pendulum from the profound depression, and that this favourable situation will not be maintained on this maximum level, but will become stabilised at some lower level. We have reckoned with this development in our economic and financial calculations.

The Czechoslovak market in the period I am reviewing has been adequately supplied with both domestic and foreign raw materials in all sectors where economic activities demanded such materials. Nowhere in our country has unemployment been aggravated because of any lack of rawstuffs compelling the industries to slow up operations or stop work. This is one of the favourable aspects of the development in the past few months—a feature which has been fully appreciated especially by observers and economic experts in those countries where a shortage of rawstuffs has caused serious economic and social anxieties. We shall continue to see it that, by providing our industries with adequate raw materials, we save our industrial and economic world from the menace of dislocation in production and from unemployment.

Our position in regard to stocks of exchange has of late developed favourably. The influx of foreign exchange in the last few months has shown

all doubters that *in our relations with foreign countries we are again on the right side in respect of mutual payments*. Proof of this is to be seen in the fact that our uncashed export assets in the free markets abroad on the 30th of June last were 508 million Kč in excess of the figure at the like date in 1936, and totalled 1923 million Kč. Our export assets in the clearing countries of course declined in that period. Our reserves of foreign exchange on the 15th of November last were on the whole the same as on that date last year, although throughout the intervening 12 months abnormal calls upon the reserve had been made owing to the rapid rise in imports. Even if other sources were availed of to finance these imports (for example, the Swiss loan of 50 million Swiss francs), those sources were more than offset by the increase in our uncashed export assets in the free markets for the past year.

It is clear that in the past year Czechoslovakia, after the devaluation, successfully accomplished an unusually difficult task—*that of financing out of her own resources and without raising any foreign long-term loan, the abnormal import requirements, without, too, any restriction of imports or of the allocations of foreign exchange*. At the same time we remained, as we shall continue to remain, faithful to our principle of *meeting with absolute promptitude all our financial obligations to other countries*.

This favourable development was supplemented by the recent arrangement made between our National Bank and the Bank for International Settlements, under the terms of which it is possible to discount in advance our export assets existing in free exchange abroad. The branches of industry working for export trade will, by the advance sale of their foreign exchange, thus be relieved of the risk of loss on exchange. The arrangement made by our National Bank with the Bank for International Settlements is thus to be assessed not only as a means of securing increased liquidity for our home money market but also as an instrument of assistance for our export branches. It is now only a matter of making adequate use of these new facilities.

The growth of our assets in the free markets abroad is to be explained by the fact that Czechoslovakia's commodity trade with the countries untrammelled by exchange restrictions, especially the Anglo-Saxon countries, is steadily increasing. In the first 9 months of the current year the increase was one of 73.5% compared with the like period of last year. From the 10.4% registered in 1921, the share of the Anglo-Saxon group of countries in our total trade in the first 9 months of 1937 increased to 21.7%, and is thus in excess of the share taken in our trade by the Germany-Austria group.

In the devaluation of the year 1936 we had of course to avoid going so far as to provoke an inevitable dislocation of the price level and thus menace economic equilibrium at home. The Czechoslovak devaluation was not the outcome of either of doctrinarism or of compromises of interests and views of doubtful value. It was simply an effective measure and manifestation of economic and financial realism. Czechoslovak agricultural interests acceded to the Government's request and did not demand any increase in the price of breadstuffs, while the industrialists did not ask to be allowed to make any increase in the price of their output in so far as it was produced without imported raw materials. Peace in the sphere of wages also contributed to the relative stability of the price level and the preservation of social peace. This success we achieved at a time of general rise in world prices.

The cost-of-living index for the family of a clerk at Prague on the 15th of October 1937 was 724, that is, only 29 points, or 4.2%, higher than in October 1936. The cost-of-living index for a worker's family at Prague in October 1937 was 721, that is, only 14 points, or 2%, higher than at the corresponding period in 1936.

The relative stability of the price-level in Czechoslovakia becomes apparent when we compare it with the development of the indices in other countries. In France the rise of the wholesale com-

modity index, according to the latest returns, is about 50%, and that of the cost-of-living index in the past quarter about 14.3% compared with a year ago. In Switzerland the wholesale commodity index rose by 14.2%, and cost-of-living by 5%; in Italy the cost-of-living index by about 12.2% and the wholesale prices by nearly 20.2%; in Holland the wholesale prices by 22.5%, and cost-of-living by 6%. England too, though it is a country whose currency has not been adjusted of recent years, is passing through a period of considerable price increase which, according to the latest statistics, is 6.7% in the case of cost-of-living, and 11.7% in wholesale commodity prices. A similar process is taking place for instance in Belgium (rise of 10.5% of cost-of-living and 16.1% in wholesale commodity prices), in Norway (9.6% in cost-of-living and 18.4% in wholesale commodity prices) and in Poland (8.1% in cost-of-living and 10.7% in wholesale commodity prices).

This comparison with price conditions in other countries shows that *the policy of the Czechoslovak Government in respect of prices has proved, and continues to prove, the right one.*

The index of wholesale prices of industrial raw-stuffs and manufactures declined between the 1st of September and the 1st of October this year from 810 to 805, and again to 786 on the 1st of November. Compared with November 1936 this is an increase of only 39 points, although the ave-

rage rise in the first 10 months of the year was 108 points. The so-called price shears—the margin between the wholesale prices of industrial output and foodstuffs and beverages—is thus closing again, the disparity between the prices of industrial and agricultural output is gradually vanishing.

Owing to the reduction in rates of interest and conversion of Government stock, the service of the National Debt, despite an increase in the Debt itself, does not exceed the amount required for the service on the smaller Debt some years ago, in fact, the amount required for service is somewhat smaller.

We are setting up a Sinking Fund Treasury for the National Debt, so that the amortisation service will be ensured by law. This measure will strengthen the security of State credit.

Special receipts will be reserved for this Sinking Fund Treasury in addition to the sums which at present are allocated in the Budget towards the amortisation of the National Debt. These sums can also be increased by further items, such as surplus payments of taxation. The Sinking Fund Treasury will receive a further special increase in revenue in that it will be allocated sums accruing from the partial realisation of certain State property which is not connected with the functions of the State, and the management and maintenance of which is a superfluous burden upon the State finances. In this way we secure on the one hand

relief for the country's economy and on the other hand benefit State credit and help to lessen the National Debt.

III.

OUR AIM: A MODUS VIVENDI IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Czechoslovakia is thus undertaking on a big scale the strengthening of her State consciousness with a feeling and certainty of internal security. She is doing so also as a factor in the international equilibrium of Central Europe, and thus as a State which by virtue of its reliable strength is capable not only of her own defence but also of loyal, lasting and reliable collaboration in the maintenance of peace. Our international political treaties are firmly based. When our treaty with France was specially emphasized recently in M. Delbos's speech this was a handsome gesture which contributed towards a strengthening of the policy of peace. The close collaboration of the States of the Little Entente has manifestly been intensified by the activities of the Entente's Economic Central Bureau at Prague, by the conferences of the Foreign Ministers of the three States, as well as by the mutual visits paid by other Cabinet Ministers and heads of departments. The Little Entente gains in international importance the more its policy is a joint and collective one. If we compare the relations of the Little Entente—and Cze-

choslovakia's relations as a member of that alliance—to our Danubian neighbours Austria and Hungary as they are now and as they were but a year ago, one sees a substantial progress made in the direction of international understanding in the Danubian area. The overwhelming majority of public opinion in Czechoslovakia welcomes the fact that in the Danubian area the factor of European solidarity, peace and collaboration with neighbours is growing—on the principles of mutual non-intervention, equality and cooperation. No disturbing elements have during this period marked the relations between Czechoslovakia and Germany. The Government of the Republic perseveres consistently along the path which can lead to a *modus vivendi* in Central Europe—to an understanding that is the great interest of European policy and European peace.

IV.

FOSTERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SLOVAKIA AND CARPATHIAN RUTHENIA

In the sphere of internal politics we can already note the excellent results of efforts towards a systematic uplift of Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia to the level obtaining in the West of the Republic. Slovakia is advancing in the cultural sphere and in her intellectual output as well as in the upbuilding of her economic structure by the addition of a modern industry that will prove

a permanent institution. Under the terms of a new Railway Act the Ministry of Railways is completing its preparations for a new system of tariffs which will mean a further contribution to the economic unification of the entire territory of the State. The inauguration of a denser network of communications coupled with notable technical progress is making of Slovakia a "promised land" for tourist traffic, to rank alongside Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia in this respect. In so far as it has been possible to adjust corn prices by means of official control these prices have been so adjusted that the prices paid to the farmers in the remote districts of South Bohemia and in Slovakia are now almost on the same level. The first stage of the *modus vivendi* arrived at with the Vatican makes it now possible to proceed in Slovakia to a definitive organisation of the Roman Catholic Church and its institutions there. The same applies to a definitive organisation of the Uniate Church in Carpathian Ruthenia and for the Ruthenian minority in the East of Slovakia.

A series of important Bills already submitted to Parliament dealing with the unification of laws, as well as other Bills that are in process of drafting, signify a decisive step towards uniformity of law for the entire territory of the State. The more compact this framework of uniform law for the entire State is, the easier will it be to decentralize administration. The powers of the

Provincial councils to issue bye-laws must be extended to ever wider ground. The Government has drafted for submission to Parliament a Bill to extend the powers of the governors of the Provinces. The Government Bill on school councils can also extend the self-government of Slovakia in an important sector of education, including adult education. The Act of Parliament adjusting temporarily the legal position of the Governor of Carpathian Ruthenia and the measures of organisation connected therewith represent the first stage of autonomy for Carpathian Ruthenia. The Government hopes that this first stage will be followed as soon as possible by the second stage—that of elections to a Carpathian Ruthenian Diet. As far as the Government of the Republic is concerned the newly organised Carpathian Ruthenia will be ensured all the primary conditions to enable it to prepare for that important step as soon as possible.

V.

MINORITY POLICY

By its resolutions of the 18th February last concerning its policy towards the minorities the Government presented a proof that in all sectors of State administration it desires to expand the permanent collaboration of Czechs and Slovaks, commenced in the year 1926, with the Germans as well as with all the other minorities in the Republic.

While we endeavour to secure a due proportionality for the various nationalities in the State administration we have no desire to make of that motto a mechanical criterion of actual requirements or of humane treatment. There are whole numbers of cases in the cultural, economic and social spheres where the share of the Germans in the help and relief accorded to the Germans is in excess of the share they are entitled to on the basis of their proportion to the whole population of the Republic. In many directions a consistent application of the principle of strict proportion would be regarded by the Germans themselves as an injustice. On the other hand there are other sectors where the share of the minorities does not reach the proportion which is their due according to their numbers. It must be borne in mind, however, that sometimes this disproportion is a natural consequence of the fact that the Germans declined to reconcile themselves to the unalterable fact of the existence of the Czechoslovak State, and that a large number of Germans for years after the War directly boycotted the civil service of the State. For this dislocation in the evolution of a due proportion of posts neither the Czechs nor the Government of the Republic can accept any responsibility. The disproportion will decrease all the more rapidly the more convincingly the minorities will, without any mental reservations, take part in positive collaboration in the State in

which for more than a thousand years they have shared with us a common home and common lot.

Prior to the February resolution of the Government, the State employees pertaining to the minority groups did not in all sectors represent such a proportion of posts as would correspond with their numerical share in the entire population of the country. There were of course branches in which again the percentage was quite a due one. The Germans form $22\frac{1}{8}\%$ of the total population. In the department of Justice the employees of German nationality represented 11.8% of the whole, but among the judges and public prosecutors the proportion was 22.6% and among the public health and clerical officials as much as 25%. In the offices pertaining to the Ministry of Education the number of Germans employed represented 11.4% of the whole, but of the district school inspectors for Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia the German proportion was 34.13%, and of professors, teachers and other staff of the schools and institutions pertaining to this department 21.11% were Germans. Of the permanent and assistant railway employees the Germans were 11.25%, of the employees in the finance departments they represented 13.33%, among them the workers and salaried employees in the Tobacco Monopoly represented 33.69%, while the employees in the postal, telegraph and telephone services were German to the extent of 10.39%. These few examples show, it

is true, a lack of proportion and inequality in the number of Germans employed in the individual branches of State administration, but on the other hand the figures relating to judges, and especially those relating to teachers and professors demonstrate convincingly that Czechoslovak democracy takes due care, by appropriately meeting the actual needs of the situation and by going even beyond the due proportion in favour of a minority nationality, that the administration of justice and education of the people shall be fully ensured also from the standpoint of the nationalities. It would be a grave error to assume that the Czechoslovak public are on principle opposed to the application of due proportionality for the minorities in the public services. It is after all the vital interest of every nation that distribution of its people among the various callings should be in due proportion, and that the classes of public employees should be in correct relation to the classes earning their living in independent callings.

The personnel department of the Cabinet Council has, with the consent of the Ministries concerned, been increased so that it can, in the spirit of the Constitution and of the February resolution, closely follow the whole policy of recruiting the civil service. The Estimates for 1938 also allow for the possibility of the most urgent measures of re-systematization.

For the purpose of carrying out these principles

there has been set up, in accord with the Government Resolution of 18th February last, a standing conference of representatives of all departments under the aegis of the Cabinet Council. In addition to that, all the central departments submit to the Cabinet Council regular quarterly statements showing how many new employees have been taken into the State service in that period, and how many of them are members of the various national minorities. In future, these statements will be accompanied by information for the Cabinet Council as to the number of vacancies in the individual categories or groups of employees which are likely to be filled in the succeeding period.

In the first quarter after the passing of the February resolution 4,048 new employees were taken into the State service. Of these, 88.61% were Czechoslovaks, 8.52% Germans, and so on. Further, 17,982 assistant workers and casual labourers were taken on, of whom 84.95% were Czechoslovaks, 14.83% Germans, and so on. In the second quarter 2,847 new employees were taken on, of whom 83.18% were Czechoslovaks, 12.6% Germans, and so on. Assistant workers and casual labourers were taken on to the number of 11,618, of whom 81.85% were Czechoslovaks and 14.09% Germans.

In the second quarter after the February resolution the number of members of minority nationalities taken into the State service was already

percentually higher than in the first quarter; in the case of the Germans, for example, the number was 4% more absolutely, that is more than 50% relatively. The reasons why the percentage proportionate to the nationality scale (the proportion of the Germans to the whole population) was not yet attained, is due to the fact that in some departments there were few applicants for certain categories of posts who possessed the requisite qualifications, while for other categories there were very few applicants at all from the ranks of the minorities. Thus, for example, in the latter period, the applicants for posts in the Ministry of Railways were lacking in the necessary qualifications, especially in the matter of languages, while there were no applicants at all for the lower categories of posts under the Ministry of Justice. The same applies to the Post Office, in which case there were, for example, practically no Polish applicants.

On the basis of the experience acquired and of the opinions submitted from the various departments, the Cabinet Council has elaborated the draft of detailed instructions and suggestions for the acceptance of new applicants for posts in the State service with special regard to their nationality. These instructions have already (on the 3rd of this month) been sent round to the central departments, and will be submitted to the Government in definitive form for approval.

At the beginning of November the Government decided that officials who, according to the existing prescriptions, should retire on pension, shall be actually pensioned off without delay. Apart from officers of the Army and railway officials, there were in all still employed on the 1st of October last 376 civil servants due for retirement on pension. As regards the views publicly expressed from time to time in the press or otherwise to the effect that the question of married women employed in the public services ought to be dealt with so that the posts vacated by their dismissal could be filled by fresh candidates I would only remark that *de lege lata* the hope for success would scarcely be attained. On the 31st of January 1937—apart from the married school-mistresses and the married women workers in the tobacco factories of the Monopoly (the former number 10,349, and the latter 4,690)—there were 4,084 married women in the civil service, of whom 2,677 are clerks and other office employees or persons in the III. service-class. The rest, 1,407, are accounted for by the remaining categories and groups of State employees, the bulk of them being married women professors (457).

For the near future the Government intends in particular to improve the lingual qualifications of the State servants. The civil servants, in addition to knowing the State language, which is of course a self-evident condition, must also know

the language of the racial minorities. A knowledge of at least one minority language will therefore be generally laid down as a condition of the acceptance of a candidate in any of those sectors of the Government service where the population who speak a minority language come into regular touch with the authorities, for example, the central administration, revenue and police authorities, etc. In this connection appropriate changes will be made in the service instructions and regulations so that the minority languages shall find due application and appreciation.

Not only a knowledge of the minority languages, however, but also a knowledge of the local conditions of all the most varied areas of the Republic is an important factor in the sphere of public administration. In this connection too the Government is subjecting the existing regulations to a revision. In particular, measures will be taken to ensure that in those sectors of the public service where there is special need of a wide outlook, experience, and understanding on the part of an administrative official for the needs of the local population, every official shall spend some years in the daily round of offices of the lowest instance, and unconditionally of the like offices in regions with a racial minority population. Without such an official course of training no leading position in offices of the I. and of II. instance will in future be given to any official, nor will it be permissible

to transfer him to service in any central department of State. The provisions of § 69 of the civil service rules no longer suffice now, and they will be supplemented by the condition I have just enumerated.

The extent to which taxpayers of German nationality have benefited by the remission of taxes is a proof of the manner in which the Czechoslovak authorities pay regard to the economic and social needs of the citizens irrespective of the due measure of nationality proportion. In the year 1936 the proportion of tax remission in the industrial (textile) areas was: in the inland revenue district of Náchod 13%, Aš 18%, Varnsdorf 50%, Rumburk 80%; in the mixed industrial-agricultural areas: in the inland revenue district of Hradec Králové 17%, Kolín 19%, Cheb 39%; and in the agricultural areas: in the inland revenue district of Louny 13%, Roudnice 20% and Žatec 20%. These figures show that in the districts with a German population (Aš, Varnsdorf, Rumburk, Cheb, Žatec) the proportion of tax remission, in view of their economic and social conditions in the past year, was far greater than in the districts with a Czech population.

Much the same language is spoken by the statistics relating to the allocation of State guarantees.

Up to the 18th of November 1936 the State took over the guaranty for export credits to a total amount of Kč 676,818,850. Of that total,

Kč 335,856,927, or 49.4%, was for Czech firms, and Kč 340,961,923, or 50.6%, for German firms. Up to the same date State guarantees had been promised to a total of Kč 629,075,000, in which Czech firms participated to the amount of Kč 580,343,000, that is 92.3%, and German firms to the amount of Kč 48,742,000, or 7.7%.

Under the terms of the Finance Acts of the years 1935 to 1937, there had been granted or promised up to the 1st of October last State guarantees for the procuring of indispensable supplies in the public interest to a total amount of Kč 175,122,699. Of that sum, Kč 137,722,699, or 78.6% was accounted for by Czech firms, and Kč 37,400,000, or 21.4% by German firms. In the same period State guarantees were granted under the Finance Acts in respect of mortgage loans for industrial enterprises to the amount of Kč 152,649,000. Of this, Kč 58,720,000, or 38.5% was for Czech concerns, and Kč 93,929,000, or 61.5%, for German concerns.

In December last year under the terms of the Government Decree for the liquidation of the Central Bank of German Savings Bank and the Carlsbad Federal Bank, the Government took up a subsidiary guaranty for the bonds issued in settlement of the debts of these banks to an amount of approximately 550 million Kč, and under the terms of the Government Decree of June of this year relating to the liquidation of the Deutsche

Landbank at Děčín and the Deutsche Volksbank at Litoměřice a subsidiary guaranty was likewise taken over for the issue of bonds by the General Foundation in settlement of the debts of those two concerns to the amount of about 100 million Kč.

No guarantees whatsoever of this kind were taken over in the years 1936 and 1937 for Czech financial institutions. Merely through administrative channels were guarantees taken up for Czech banks to the amount of 8 million Kč.

VI.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS AND PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS

In the department of the Ministry of Public Works contracts for work and supplies in the sectors of building (exclusive of the upkeep of State buildings), water conservancy, road and bridge construction, and in connection with the State mines and ironworks, throughout the whole territory of the Republic, were granted involving a sum of approximately 437 million Kč. In the Western territories of the Republic contracts representing a sum of about 127 million Kč, that is some 29%, were given to districts with a 20 or more per cent of German population. In the first three quarters of the current year contracts for such work were given throughout the whole State to a total amount of 391 million Kč. Of that sum,

more than 126 million Kč; that is, about 32½% of all the contracts fell to districts in the West with a 20 or more per cent German population.

Out of the current receipts of the Road Fund from its inception to the 30th of September last there has been granted and promised for the improvement of the non-State roads and bridges and for the purchase of steam rollers and road machinery in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia a sum of approximately 849 million Kč. Of that sum over 260 million Kč, or about 31% has been laid out in districts with a 20 or more per cent of German population. Out of Budgetary funds there has been granted during the past 3 years for the construction and reconstruction of non-State roads in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia over 10 million Kč, of which the districts with a 20 or more per cent of German population have received 5,790,000 Kč, that is 55%.

Out of the subventions ratified for the electrification of the rural districts since 1936, 29½% of the sums allocated to Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia have gone to districts with a 20 or more per cent of German population, and 23½% of the sum allocated to the entire Republic—that is to say, far more altogether than the quota of 22⅓% represented by the proportion of the German population to the entire population of the State.

Not less notable are the figures relating to the

sums invested in the undertakings of the Czechoslovak Post Office. Contracts for building operations for the postal authorities in places with a German majority of population represented in Bohemia 32% of the entire expenditure in 1936 and 43% of that for 1937; in Moravia-Silesia 32% for 1936 and 41% for 1937. In the erection of telephone exchanges the districts with a majority of German population participated to the extent of 14% in the total amount expended in 1936 and 3% in the amount expended in 1937 in Bohemia; to the extent of 17% in the amount expended for 1936 and 39.5% of the amount expended in 1937 for Moravia-Silesia.

The outlay of the Ministry of Agriculture, the contracts, productive investments and subventions in the mixed Czech-German districts and districts with a German majority population amounted in 1935 to 25.54% of the whole, in 1936 to 26.26% and in 1937 to 26.38%. Contracts, investments and subventions out of the State Fund for river regulation and land reclamation in such districts represented 17.45% of the whole in 1935, 20.07% in 1936, and 19.79% in 1937; the investments of the State Forests and Domains were 12% in 1935, 13% in 1936, and 19% in 1937; the contracts, investments and subventions of the State farms, agricultural schools and agricultural research institutes were 16.72% in 1935, 16.33% in 1936, and 12.62% in 1937.

A particularly large share is secured by German concerns in contracts for the State railways. In order to ascertain this share an examination has been made of the tenders invited and approved of by the Ministry of Railways, representing fully 90% of all purchases. From these have been deducted all direct purchases from abroad which have no significance for this question, and also supplies coming from firms the nationality of which is not easily ascertainable or upon which doubts might be cast—these are mainly large concerns working with international capital or concerns with German capital and management but operating in districts where there is not a German majority of population, although doubtless at least half of these supplies of material, equipment and rolling stock could well be included among supplies coming from a German area. According to the results of this investigation it may with absolute certainty be taken for granted that the German supplies for the railways represented 49.26% of the whole in 1935, 43.27% in 1936, while for 1937 the figures so far known show that there is very little change for 1936 (42.24%).

If we examine the shares of the various nationalities in respect of supplies for the Ministry of Education in the past 3 years in so far as secondary, technical and high schools (Universities) are concerned, we find that the minorities generally participate in proportion to their numbers, and

that the German minority participates indeed in greater measure than its proportion of the whole population justifies.

Of the allocations for the secondary schools in the individual provinces the German secondary schools and teachers' training institutions have received in 1936 and this year the following shares: in Bohemia 33% and 32.2%; in Moravia-Silesia 31.7% and 29.3%, and in Slovakia 7.5% and 5.8%, thus in all the provinces, and particularly in Moravia-Silesia the German secondary schools system received a far larger share than the Germans are entitled to in respect of their proportion to the population. Of the expenditure on technical schools the German institutions in 1936 and in 1937 received in Bohemia 31.9% and 30%, in Moravia-Silesia 27% and 27.3%, in Slovakia 1.8% and in Carpathian Ruthenia 0.01%. In these cases, too, German education received a higher share, except in the case of Slovakia. There the allocation is not in proportion to the share of the Germans in the population, but this is entirely logical, for industry declines as one goes eastwards and therefore technical education does, while at the same time the regions inhabited by the Germans are of more industrial character than other districts.

Out of the actual Budgetary credits advanced in 1935 and 1936 the Magyar schools in Slovakia received 15% and 14.2% respectively, and in Car-

pathian Ruthenia 12% and 11.7%, which means that the expenditure on Magyar secondary schools in both those provinces was merely 2% to 3% below the quota to which they are entitled on the basis of Magyar population to the whole population. As regards technical schools, the Magyar institutions in Slovakia have in the past two years received 8.3% and 8.4%, and those in Carpathian Ruthenia 9.6% and 9.7%, quotas that fall below the level to which the Magyar population are entitled by their numbers—obviously because the Magyars there live in predominantly agricultural districts, where there is scarcely any industries, and where trade is also less brisk.

In particular the Germans cannot complain in respect of higher education. The share of expenditure on the German University is 24.5% of the whole, and that on the Colleges of Technology 29.04%. Thus the expenditure for the Germans on the University and other colleges and scientific institutes represents 25.46% of the whole outlay, whereas the German population of the Republic is only 22.32% of the entire population. If we calculate the average outlay per student in all the university and similar institutions just named at a level 100, the outlay on each Czechoslovak University student is 96.4 and on each German student 113.9; on each Czechoslovak student at the Colleges of Technology 97.4, and on each student at the German Colleges of Technology 106.7.

VII.

THE MAGYAR AND POLISH MINORITIES

In pursuing her minority policy within the scope of her democratic Constitution, Czechoslovakia of course endeavours to meet the justified demands of all the racial minorities and to carry out their suggestions where possible.

The Magyars have submitted a series of complaints, demands and suggestions. Most of them have been subjected to official examination, and are gradually being dealt with. Certain demands have already been fulfilled. As an example I may quote the fact that the State Magyar Teachers' Training Institute at Bratislava has been placed on an independent basis, that a Lecturer in Magyar legal terminology has been nominated at the Faculty of Law of the Comenius University, and that a number of minor demands have been carried out.

Of the Magyar demands I will to-day mention three categories: the first category includes the solution of the problem of those citizens of former Austria and Hungary who are now without citizenship, though at the moment of the revolution they were domiciled on territory now part and parcel of Czechoslovakia and have lived there uninterruptedly ever since. They did not become citizens of a foreign State but they did not opt for Czechoslovakia. This problem will be settled within the scope of the Bill which is being drafted

for submission to Parliament and which will unify the conditions under which citizenship of the State is acquired and lost.

The second category of Magyar demands refers to the practical application of the principles of language rights in public administration with special regard to the Magyar tongue. In this connection concrete complaints were first of all investigated. In substance the point at issue is merely that the language regulations in respect of the minority languages in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia in the sphere of public administration shall not be disregarded even by oversight. It is a matter of a solution to make the position the same as in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia. A special subject of investigation was the question of the use of the Magyar language in the Czechoslovak State Railway service and the Post Office. In this connection, too, matters have been settled.

The third category of Magyar demands may be said to comprise the demands in respect of education and cultural facilities. These demands have, in part, been met, while in part they will be gradually fulfilled in all cases where their fulfilment is possible in principles and Budgetary funds are available.

The Polish minority have likewise submitted their complaints, demands and suggestions to the Government departments. Just in the last few days we have been discussing these matters on

their merits with the delegates of the so-called Committee of Understanding set up by the Polish parties, after a series of questions had, in the course of preliminary negotiations, been elaborated for final decision. Polish parallel classes have already been established at the Commercial School at Orlová, the railwaymen of Polish nationality who had been transferred elsewhere will gradually be brought back to the Těšín and Bohumín areas, and the Polish Modern School at Orlová has been made a State institution as from the 1st of January, 1938.

I am convinced that in view of the existing quieter conditions in the Těšín area the negotiations will continue to be conducted in a friendly atmosphere and will be crowned with success.

In our minority policy we do not content ourselves with solemn proclamations and pacts, nor do we attach all too much weight to such things for we give our minorities a guarantee of much higher value. This guarantee consists in the voluntary determination of Czechoslovakia as a democratic State to ensure for our Germans, as also for our Magyars and Poles, all that a just *patria* can give them, reserving only one condition— that *the minorities and their policy shall signify a positive contribution to our joint State and its democracy.*

The Czechoslovak Constitution is broad enough that in it is easily to be found a place for every

just, moral, national and social interest. If the spirit of the Czechoslovak Constitution were to express itself in the concrete characteristics of our nationality policy it would be formulated approximately in the sense that Czechoslovakia does not desire, indeed rejects, every kind of denationalisation, that she guarantees in this respect all her inhabitants their own particular process of development supported by all the primary conditions of cultural, moral and economic advance. The Czechoslovak Republic does this on the basis of its sovereignty as a State. A nation which in the course of its history has had to overcome so much oppression as we have, will never lend itself to conduct that wrongs others, and will always be conscious of the fact that the strength of the State and its own position in the State will be the more permanent and durable the more organically it works into the fabric of the State a sense of justice and of equal rights for all, irrespective of differences of nationality, class or religion.

As regards putting our public administration on an up-to-date basis, allow me to refer to what I said at Bratislava on the occasion of the Congress of Czechoslovak Jurists about the future programme of action of the Government. I will confine myself to-day to stating that I accept the proposal made by M. Remes, the general rapporteur, that the Cabinet Council shall set up an executive government organ for the carrying out of both

sectional and general reforms in the sphere of public administration.

Despite the fact that the State will have to appeal constantly to the Czechoslovak money market for funds to carry out its programme of national defence, we do not intend to abandon any of our projects for improving technical facilities in connection with our transport and communications, the development of our rural districts and of our towns. The City of Prague is negotiating with the Government for a whole series of building projects which the Capital has in view in order that it may worthily welcome our friends and visitors on the occasion of the forthcoming international exhibition. The Government has already drafted a Bill which will enable far-reaching improvements and adjustments to be made not only at Prague and at Bratislava but in a whole series of other towns throughout the Republic, especially those in which improvement and expansion would indirectly mean productive investment from the angle of tourist traffic. The Government is preparing to set up a special commission for the Tatra Mountains area, and this commission will be equipped with full powers in all sectors of public administration in order that the all-round development of this region may be adequately fostered, accelerated and given appropriate direction. We are carefully studying the conditions upon which we might decide for the

construction of an Oder-Danube canal. The economic system of Czechoslovakia is strong enough to meet the great demands made by her national defence, but she would be glad to secure from her own resources the necessary funds for such an immense technical undertaking as would be a canal that, as a joint economic enterprise, would bring us and the German Empire closer to the like aims in the sphere of civilisation. The Government is ready to appoint its delegates to a commission that, jointly with delegates of the German Reich, would study the projects put forward. We regard the Danube as a unique instrument of organised cooperation with all the countries of its basin, and we are improving our ports not only upon it but also upon its tributaries, the Morava and the Váh. In the past year alone we have increased the tonnage capacity of our Danubian fleet by 10%, and its draught power by 33%. We are therefore not only making advance on the Elbe but we are making good much of that which we have hitherto fallen short of on the Danube.

*

We have entered upon the jubilee year of our Republic. It will not merely be a year of celebrations and display: we desire to examine with critical eyes what has been accomplished, and to redouble our efforts for an honourable settlement of all problems.

Dr. EMIL FRANKE
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
ON THE SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION
FROM
THE ANGLE OF NATIONALITY

Czechoslovakia's education policy is just to all the racial minorities, a fact which is best proved by the school statistics. If at times some dissatisfaction is shown in this connection as regards certain small cases it must be remembered that similar complaints are forthcoming from the Czech side. These cases are exceptional ones that occur in places where the races and nationality interests interlace, where the composition of the population from the nationality standpoint is always undergoing change. Such cases will always be difficult to deal with from a strictly impartial point of view. Exceptional cases, however, cannot of course provide a serious basis for any general condemnation. As regards the German area, an objective survey of the situation can be given only by the sum total of German schools in our Republic and their proportion to the whole number of schools generally.

The figures I give relating to the *elementary schools* are based on the data as of 31st October 1936, published by the State Bureau of Statistics in its "Reports".

Upper elementary schools in Czechoslovakia in

which German is the medium of instruction number 455.

The number of pupils attending these schools is 85,783, so that on an average each German upper elementary school is attended by 188 pupils. The number of upper elementary schools in which the instruction is given in the Czechoslovak language is 1,516. These schools are attended by 362,537 pupils, so that there is only 1 school for every 239 pupils. It might perhaps be supposed that this disproportion between Czechoslovak and German nationality in favour of the latter was caused by the fact that in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia the network of upper elementary schools is not so dense as in Bohemia and in Moravia-Silesia, and that this causes a certain distortion in the picture. Such is not the fact, however, for in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia there is one upper elementary school per a less number of pupils of German nationality than is the case in the Czechoslovak upper elementary schools. In Bohemia, for example, there are 60,103 German pupils attending 302 upper elementary schools, so that there is one such school per 199 pupils; the Czechoslovak pupils, however, numbering 188,966, attend 835 upper elementary schools, so that there is 1 school only for 226 pupils. In Moravia-Silesia, where there are 22,802 pupils attending 140 German upper elementary schools, there is 1 school per 163 pupils, whereas there is 1 Czechoslovak upper elementary

school only per 215 pupils, the total number of pupils being 107,785 and the number of schools 501.

The advantage which the German upper elementary schools possess has its origin elsewhere. The total number of German pupils attending upper elementary schools is 88,403, or 19.1% of all pupils (461,802) attending such schools throughout the Republic. The German upper elementary schools, however, number 455, or 22.4% of the total number of such schools (2,028). As the relative number of schools is higher than the proportion of the German population to the entire population of the State, which is 22.32%, the number of pupils, in view of the declining birth-rate among the Germans, is smaller. Thus it happens that in this sector of education the German minority are better provided for than the Czechoslovak majority. This also manifests itself in the number of children per class. In the schools where Czechoslovak is the language of instruction the average number of pupils per class is 40, whereas in the case of the German schools the average is only 39 per class.

Elementary schools in Czechoslovakia which have German as their medium of instruction number 3,311. Out of the total number of children in Czechoslovakia attending elementary schools (15,466) this represents 21.4%, or slightly less than the proportion of German population in the

Republic. As, however, the proportion of all German pupils attending elementary schools is only 18.9% (333,072 out of a total of 1,761,536), the number of schools in this case too is more favourable to the Germans than the Czechoslovaks. The pupils attending German elementary schools number altogether 326,607, so that there is 1 school for every 99 pupils. The elementary schools in which the teaching is imparted in the Czechoslovak language number 10,579, and they are attended by 1,204,981 pupils, so that there is 1 pupil for every 114 pupils. The average number of children in a class in the German elementary schools is 35.7, in the Czechoslovak schools 38.2.

Secondary, Technical and High Schools (Colleges and Universities) have been dealt with by the Prime Minister in his speech to the House.

I should like to supplement all the data he submitted by describing and emphasizing the administrative measures from which the German cultural sphere, already highly developed and traditionally well-organized—has further benefited.

Up to the present in the 1936-37 school year the State educational authorities have established 6 new kindergarten, 5 elementary schools, and 3 German parallel classes in schools where the medium of instruction is other than German. The case of another is under consideration. In the higher grade 4 new upper elementary schools have been provided, together with 17 IV. standards in existing

upper elementary schools. I should like to emphasize the fact that these figures include the care we are devoting to the German element in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia—a circumstance not long ago referred to in complimentary terms by the Reich press in Germany. According to the official returns, which do not include the new schools and classes just referred to, there are 6 German upper elementary and 132 German elementary schools in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. This in itself is a great advance on the pre-War condition of things, but the effect is more far-reaching than the mere figures would indicate, for it means that German education is now organized there as compared with the pre-War mere haphazard conditions. In the sphere of secondary education the Teachers' Training Institute at Ústí n/L. has been made a State institution, and a Higher Grammar School has been established at Hostinné (Arnau).

Technical schools, too, have not been neglected by the Government, although they were already on an excellent footing. A convent school for the training of dietetic nurses has been licenced at Chomutov, vocational workshops have been inaugurated at Žatec and Liberec, and a one-year technical course has been established at the technical schools for women's vocations at Liberec, Ústí n/L., and Brno.

In the field of higher education we are giving our attention in the first place to the German Uni-

versity at Prague, where we are negotiating for the erection of college buildings for the Faculties of Law, Philosophy and Medicine, etc. We have supplemented the inventory of the Astronomical Institute, and now, after many years, the Chair there has again been filled; we have continued our work in fitting out the Technological Library which is for the joint use of the Czechoslovak and German Colleges of Technology and so on.

I made mention last year of the measures taken for the support and relief of high school and University students. I would only like to add this year that the increase in the Budget allocation is enabling me to help in this matter more abundantly than before.

In the sphere of art I may say that it was made possible for me to grant 2 State Prizes on Independence Day (28th of October) for German works of art, in place of only 1 Prize awarded in 1936.

To complete my remarks I will note the participation of the State in German popular (adult) education. Among other things I have given my consent to the establishment of a section for German students at the State Librarians' School at Prague.

I believe that this enumeration of the more important administrative measures presents a picture of impartial conduct on the part of the State educational authorities, and of the real living cult-

ural apparatus which is here at the disposal of our citizens of German nationality.

Having devoted so much place to German cultural institutions, it will certainly be only appropriate if I make at least a passing reference to Magyar and Polish cultural institutions, in order to call attention to the improvements which the State educational authorities have up to now made in these spheres.

The Magyar share in the State cultural and educational institutions has been further increased to date in the 1936-37 school-year. Thus 6 elementary schools have been instituted—in addition to one that is just under consideration—we have established a new upper elementary school at Nové Zámky, and we have placed three such schools on an independent basis. The problem of IV classes for upper elementary schools which affects the Slovak and Carpathian Ruthenian school system, is also of importance for the Magyar system. We have inaugurated 3 new IV. classes to meet the requirements in question. Last year a question was put to me in the Senate about the Magyar Teachers' Training Institute at Komárno. This year I can say that the Institute has already been ratified by the State authorities. In addition to that, however, the Magyar Teachers' Training Institute at Bratislava now secures independence. Magyar art in Czechoslovakia receives the same careful attention as Czechoslovak and German art.

This year a State Prize was awarded it on the 28th of October. We have an equally good appreciation of Magyar popular education, and follow all activities in that line.

Finally, I will mention the Polish sphere of education and culture in our Republic. An important contribution has this year been made by providing a Polish section at the Commercial School at Orlová. Negotiations have also just concluded for making the Polish Modern School at Orlová a State institution, which will henceforth be maintained by the State. I may add that to meet the wishes of the Polish minority I have agreed that for the present in place of the Polish parallel class in the I. Form of the Teachers' Training Institute at Slezská Ostrava there should be established a Polish parallel class in the I. Form of the Kindergarten Teachers' Training Institute.

I believe that this outline of our activities reveals a wholly definite line in our entire educational and State policy—a line that cannot lead us astray. We desire, that is, in the cultural sphere, to provide each language with all that is essential for its further development and for the creation of spiritual and cultural values. This is our tolerance and sense of justice—but it is also our strength.

M. JAROMÍR NEČAS

MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE

ON SOCIAL RELIEF

FROM THE ANGLE OF NATIONALITY

In reply to the reproaches made by Deputy Knorre to the effect that the districts inhabited by Germans are neglected in the matter of social welfare, and that in the struggle against unemployment the same intensity was not shown in the districts with a German population as in Czech districts, the Minister of Social Welfare first of all refuted the assertion that unemployment in the German districts was fourfold what it was in Czech districts, and presented detailed figures relating to the drop in unemployment in the districts in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia with a majority of German population (over 50%). According to those figures the decline in unemployment in those districts is very pronounced, and it is impossible to speak of a mere insignificant recovery. The figures speak for themselves (the first figure following the name of each district is that of the number of unsuccessful applicants for work on 31st October 1933, the second the like number on the 31st October 1937, and the third figure the decline in unsuccessful applicants for work between the above two dates) : Aš 5,695, 1,148, 4,547; Bílina 2,632, 1,112, 1,520; Broumov 5,885, 2,885, 3,000;

Děčín 9,374, 5,994, 3,380; Duchcov 4,952, 2,756, 2,196; Falknov 4,397, 4,288, 109; Frýdland 5,953, 3,220, 2,733; Cheb 5,841, 3,999, 1,842; Chomutov 8,299, 2,991, 5,308; Jablonec n/N. 10,979, 3,832, 7,147; Jablonné N. 2,318, 1,297, 1,021; Jáchymov 1,894, 527, 1,367; Kadaň 3,944, 1,625, 2,319; Kaplice 2,378, 1,147, 1,231; Kraslice 7,384, 4,171, 3,213; Krumlov Český 1,158, 809, 349; Liberec 12,127, 7,702, 4,425, Lípa Česká 9,931, 2,711, 7,220; Litoměřice 1,608, 1,173, 435; Loket 4,846, 3,597, 1,249; Most 7,655, 2,973, 4,682; Nejdek 6,137, 4,693, 1,444; Planá 1,423, 1,134, 289; Podbořany 1,889, 601, 1,288; Přísečnice 3,352, 1,889, 1,463; Rumburk 5,036, 1,695, 3,341; Stříbro 3,118, 1,324, 1,794; Šluknov 6,212, 2,705, 3,507; Tachov 3,456, 2,802, 654; Teplice-Šanov 6,372, 5,056, 1,316; Trutnov 6,119, 3,067, 3,052; Týn Horšovský 3,736, 1,794, 1,942; Ústí n/L. 7,358, 4,718, 2,640; Varnsdorf 3,224, 1,050, 2,174; Vary Karlovy (Carlsbad) 11,440, 6,275, 5,165; Vrchlabí 2,566, 1,420, 1,146; Žatec 1,389, 552, 837; Žlutice 317, 201, 116; Beroun Mor. 2,379, 1,142, 1,237; Bruntál 5,709, 3,031, 2,678; Frývaldov 5,642, 1,326, 4,316; Krnov 6,864, 3,830, 3,034; Mikulov 450, 348, 102; Rýmařov 1,964, 1,170, 794; Šternberk 7,890, 1,649, 6,241; Šumperk 8,901, 872, 8,029; Třebová Mor. 6,062, 2,886, 3,176; Znojmo 3,405, 1,234, 2,171.

These figures show how substantial has been the systematic decline in unemployment in the districts

with a population that is predominantly German. *It is of course not quite correct to speak of German and Czech districts for in the former there are numerically strong Czech minorities, nor is it again right to compare industrial regions with agricultural regions.* The districts with a German majority of population are industrial regions, while those with a Czech and Slovak population are more of an agricultural character. *It is only natural that the industrial districts have suffered more from unemployment than the agricultural regions where there is a larger number of persons earning an independent livelihood, that is, not wage-earners.* Thus, for example, taking the areas of Czech district administrative offices: in Jičín, out of 30,216 persons engaged in some occupation or other, 14,503 were working on their own account; in Tábor out of 33,505 persons, 15,949 were working on their own account; in Pelhřimov, out of 19,745 such persons, 10,021 were on an independent footing, and in Dačice, out of 20,319 such, 9,385 were working on their own account. On the other hand in the German districts: in Kraslice, out of 20,555 persons engaged in some calling, only 4,479 were on an independent footing; in Nejdek only 3,870 out of 20,351; at Loket 4,813 out of 19,460, and at Rumburk only 3,647 out of 17,390. These figures show conclusively that there is a totally different social and economic distribution of the population in the districts on the one hand with

a predominantly Czechoslovak population and on the other hand with a predominantly German population. Unemployment naturally manifests itself in more pronounced fashion in the case of wage-earners (workers) than in the case of persons engaged in an occupation on their own account.

All the loyal citizens amongst us feel it therefore very deeply when the unemployment figures are put forward in biased or incorrect manner, when deductions are made therefrom that the German districts in Czechoslovakia are suffering from starvation, and when these reports are spread abroad. The book entitled "Two Hundred Thousand Sudete Germans Too Many" circulated in large numbers in Germany is a classic example of such biased and incorrect description of the situation which must incense even the calmest of Reich Germans who have any social sympathies whatsoever. Abroad the book must arouse the impression that Germans in the Sudete areas are actually starving to death. *Not only in our country but in others there are great differences between unemployment in industrial districts and unemployment in agricultural districts. This applies to the United States just as it does to the so-called depressed areas in England, or again in neighbouring Germany. Thus, for instance, according to the Reichsarbeitsblatt of this year the number of unemployed in the industrial Saar and Rhineland is more than six times as large as in agricultural East Prussia.* If we

compare other Reich statistics touching the number of unemployed, likewise published in this year's Reichsarbeitsblatt, we find similar but even more eloquent figures. *Thus it can be deduced from the official German statistics that in agricultural East Prussia the relative index of unsuccessful applicants for work is 0.2, in the country districts of Rhineland 0.9, in the city of Cologne no less than 35, in Dresden 28, and in Chemnitz 28.* From these figures it will be seen that the industrial areas in Germany that are contiguous to our frontiers have a level of unemployment approaching that in our industrial areas. It is therefore quite wrong in comparing unemployment to speak of German areas and Czech areas. In making such comparison we ought to speak of industrial and agricultural areas. In this respect the phenomenon is not a Czechoslovak one, but a world-wide phenomenon which is found in every country.

Replying to the assertion made by Deputy Knorre that the districts with German population have not benefited much from the so-called armaments boom, the Minister recalled his previous pronouncements to the effect that he did not regard the boom in armaments as the only factor of economic improvement, since in districts where there was practically no armaments (mainly metal-working) industry, the revival was relatively favourable, as the unemployment figures showed.

Dealing with Deputy Knorre's argument that

our export trade was being undermined by a whole series of obstacles placed in its way, the Minister declared that the Government was aware of those difficulties, and was doing its best to remove them. This was obvious from the rise that had taken place in exports. That rise—one of nearly 100 per cent on the worst of the past few years—1933—was no matter of mere chance but the result of a series of measures that had been taken in addition to the natural conditions of revival. As regards the Jablonec industry in particular, which several German deputies had mentioned in Committee, the Government had neither ruined it nor caused the well known difficulties and international difficulties there; the serious situation had been caused first and foremost by price-cutting which had brought down both the price and the quality of these goods in amazing fashion—goods that had then as non-quality ware gradually lost their world markets. It was also untrue when it was said that no public works were being carried out at all in the frontier regions. The Minister laid before the Budget Committee a large bundle of documents dealing with the items of public work which had been carried through in only a single sector of operations in districts with a predominantly German population. These were the so-called productive investments by means of which the parishes and districts carried out their public works (with subventions from the Ministry of Social

Welfare). Under this title alone there had been allocated to the areas with a predominantly German population so many subventions that it had been possible to carry out work entailing an outlay of approximately 1000 million crowns.

Unemployment pay under the Ghent system, and contributions to local feeding schemes, are far larger in the German than in the Czech districts, since we appreciate the difficult situation in which the former find themselves. This year, for example, a whole series of Czech areas had been deleted from the food, bread and milk provision schemes, but only one German district in Bohemia had been so deleted.

As regards the reference made by Deputy Knorre and Dr. Jilly to the child relief measure that was in process of drafting, the Minister declared categorically that it contained nothing that showed even the slightest tendency towards a policy of denationalisation.

Deputy Lokscha had broached the question of families with many children. The Minister recognized the importance and necessity of supporting such families, and agreed with all the steps taken and the motions brought forward in Committee. He agreed that it was a problem of unusual importance. We ought to levy suitable taxes upon bachelors as upon childless couples. Such a measure would not only be just, but it would also be welcomed by the public, and would provide the

means of helping needy large families. Deputy Polach had touched upon a whole series of social questions to which written replies would be given.

The Minister likewise replied to the remarks made by Deputy Bergmann regarding the distribution of potatoes to the needy. Frequent references had been made to this matter in the press. Precisely in the areas where we cannot obtain potatoes or only get them at high prices have the biggest protests been raised when we have supplied potatoes there from the Německý Brod district. The procedure is as follows: We ensued by contract that the potatoes should be of good quality and sound. Every consignment that is not up to the mark can be returned. Several cases of complaint have already occurred, and they were all at once settled in favour of the unemployed. Wherever we could secure cheaper potatoes than at Německý Brod we left it to the local population to get supplies themselves. Where potatoes inclusive of transport were cheaper if obtained from the Německý Brod area we made use of them, otherwise we employed potatoes secured locally. Thus the whole scheme was less costly and we were able to supply all the more potatoes. The Minister added that in the cases where the consignments of potatoes had had to be changed because of objections raised to them the persons supplying them had never proved unreasonable.

Answering the deputies who had drawn a pa-

rallel between the budget of the Ministry of Social Welfare and expenditure on national defence, Minister Nečas said that in his opinion the defence of the State was not well looked after unless the health of the population was attended to and when a whole series of social problems were awaiting solution. Care for the health and social needs of the population ought to be regarded as essential matters from the angle of the State. He was sure every decent Czechoslovak shared that view with him.

Sometimes the question of relief was regarded merely from the fiscal angle, and people could not see living souls for mere figures. It was most desirable that the latter of relief should be judged solely from the practical angle and from a higher angle—that of the essential defence of the State. The Minister hoped that in the administration of relief there would now be a definite simplification, following the introduction of a uniform system of account-keeping. This would of course involve certain difficulties for the trades unions.

Finally the Minister referred to the situation of the social insurance institutions which had been mentioned by Deputies Dembovský, Martinásek and Knorre. Deputy Dembovský's reproach that Slovakia was at a disadvantage in the matter of these institutions touched the Minister himself, for he paid very special attention precisely to such things. Deputy Dembovský's assertion that the

Slovaks were oppressed must be repudiated. In the matter of the financial position of the General Pensions Institute and the Central Social Insurance Institute the Ministry of Social Welfare was fully informed in its function of supervising body, and he could declare that the assertions made in Committee did not answer to the truth. In a number of written replies to questions, by means of oral information and items supplied to the press, the Ministry had dispersed the fears that had been voiced. It was understandable that to-day the economic crisis and a number of other circumstances adversely affected the development of the social insurance institutions not only here but also in other countries. A feature, which was welcome to the Minister of Health as well as for all of us—the prolongation of the average human life—had a serious effect upon social insurance, as it was in conflict with the actuarial basis of insurance estimates on which the system had been built up. Difficulties had also arisen from the fact that for many years past people had been unemployed and that we have low wages. These circumstances have naturally had their effect upon the financial development of the institutions in question. The Ministry had therefore set up expert commissions for a solution of the questions centering round these institutions and for a new regulation of these main branches of social insurance. The technical aspect of the matter had been entrusted to special

actuarial sub-commissions. During the past two years the position of the General Pensions Institute had improved as a result of the recovery in economic conditions. Whereas in 1935 the income from contributions amounted to 472 million crowns, it totalled 495 millions in 1936. For 1937 it will probably be in excess of 540 millions. The same applies to the Central Social Insurance Institute. There, too, similar commissions have been appointed as in the General Pensions Institute to occupy themselves with an adjustment of social insurance and a solution of the question of meeting the losses that arose in the period of crisis. The Minister then went on to answer in detailed fashion the accusations brought forward by Deputy Dembovský, and put him right in respect of his contention that the Slovaks were not adequately represented in the social insurance institutions in Slovakia. In reply to Deputy Dembovský's reproach that Slovakia had also been harmed by the policy of the General Pensions Institute in the depositing of its funds, the Minister pointed out that of the funds of the Institute 478 million crowns were due to be deposited in Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia; as a matter of fact, however, 559 millions were deposited there, or 81 millions more than need be. No injury had therefore been done to Slovakia. Equally unfounded was the assertion of alleged high expenses of management of the Institute. The fears that had been

expressed on this point were exaggerated. In 1936 the quota of expenses of management was 6.7%. The Institute had thus attained a quota which was almost in accord with the estimated quota despite the fact that the decline in income from contributions as a result of the crisis was bound to lead to a higher percentage of management expenses. The Minister pointed out that the great social insurance institutes were doing their duty in excellent fashion by assisting the State, public and other corporations, and individuals in securing cheap credit, thus contributing to a revival of economic activities. It would be well not to undermine confidence in these institutes. Answering Deputy Dembovský's complaint that the management of these institutes was one-sided, the Minister said that in order to take the sting out of such complaints he had more than once urged the appointment of new organs for the General Pensions Institute, but so far the political parties had been unable to reach agreement in the matter. The latest proposal of this kind was so formulated that there was possibly a reasonable prospect of it being accepted in the near future. The Minister then quoted figures showing to what a great extent the social insurance institutes participated in the country's economic system, and pointed out that the General Pensions Institute and the Central Social Insurance Institute had, by means of the loans they granted, contributed towards the pro-

sperity of Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia to a much greater extent than was their duty.

In conclusion the Minister regretted that it was not possible for him to enter fully during the Budget debates into the problem of combatting permanent unemployment, but he hoped to be able to speak on that matter and on the measures which had been taken to reduce that type of unemployment in the Social-policy Committee. His report would then be distributed to the members of the Budget Committee. He thanked the members for the attention they had devoted to the vote for the Ministry of Social Welfare, and Deputy Chalupa in particular for his concise and apposite report.

Dr. IVAN DÉRER
MINISTER OF JUSTICE
ON THE
CZECHOSLOVAK SYSTEM OF JUSTICE
FROM THE ANGLE
OF NATIONALITY

Members of the Sudete German Party have touched upon several questions connected with the department of justice, and I should like to be allowed to deal in particular with the remarks of Deputy Neuwirth. He complained that in our administration of justice it was possible to note a certain lack of humanity in political trials. I must in most decided fashion repudiate this accusation. I would note that Dr. Neuwirth's complaints did not apply to our civil courts nor in general to our criminal procedure, but only to certain political trials, in particular trials for espionage.

Before I deal with these complaints may I be allowed to make a reference to the reproaches brought up against us by the honourable member in the matter of the confiscation of newspapers by our State and judicial organs.

All the delicts in question—the cases of espionage I will refer to specially later—are connected with certain political agitations. If there had been no political agitation it would naturally not have manifested itself in the offences committed. That a certain agitation exists and that it is carried on in a more intensive manner than in quieter times

there cannot be the slightest doubt. Political offences particularly of the kind that fall within the law of press confiscation issue here, as they do everywhere else in the world, from political agitation. Before the War, conditions were different, for in those days we had no democratic institutions. Before the War political agitation did not assume the same dimensions as it does now, especially in countries that are organized on a democratic basis. Democracy of course brings it about everywhere that the masses take part in political life, and that it is essential to inform these masses and in so doing to employ the idea and means of political agitation. As long as such agitation is kept within definite reasonable bounds I think we may regard it as politically wholesome, politically desirable and politically essential. In the post-War era, political agitation, as a result of the well-known development in a number of European countries, has degenerated, and such agitation has been proclaimed, I would say, as almost a principle of State. We see a whole series of countries where this principle has found expression in certain State institutions. In many European countries Ministries of Propaganda have been established—in other words, ministries of agitation, agitation conducted by the State and with public funds for the benefit of that class who have seized the political power in the particular country and have made their agitation a State agitation, a State affair. At the

same time they make every other kind of agitation impossible. The result is that such agitation and propaganda has become the main means of conducting political affairs, and the broad masses of the population are continuously being influenced and unsettled by this agitation and propaganda with the object of enabling the regime that has introduced the system to maintain its hold as long as possible on the reins of power.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that this political system which goes beyond a healthy political development in magnifying, exaggerating and carrying out agitation, has to a certain extent been introduced into our own country, into the Czechoslovak Republic. This continuous unsettling of the broad masses of our population through excessive agitation and propaganda which it is difficult to reconcile with the reasonable principles of a democratic State, brings about the results of which the gentlemen to-day complain, namely that trials occur which we may call political trials.

But, as I have already told Dr. Neuwirth, he judges of this matter from a too one-sided standpoint. The best proof of the one-sided attitude he adopts is the fact that we can prove on the basis of statistics that despite the increased intensity of abnormal agitation abroad the number of political trials in our Republic has not increased but has, on the contrary, in the last few years as well as in the present year, shown a downward tendency.

The fact is that we have now less political trials than before. I am not referring to espionage trials of which I shall speak separately. Political trials—apart from espionage cases—for offences against the Defence of the Republic Act are to-day substantially less in number than in past years. Such are the facts, the incontrovertible facts. These facts demonstrate the opposite of what Deputy Neuwirth tried to show when he contended that the executive in our country has a great influence upon the courts, that it is undermining our system of justice, and when he characterized our judicial system as “die wankende Justiz”. I repeat, the fact that the number of political trials in our Republic has declined, proves the very opposite.

I will take this opportunity of referring also to the latest amnesty promulgated by the President of the Republic, Dr. Beneš, this year on the occasion of the 87th birthday of President-Liberator Masaryk. On the basis of that very broad political amnesty a great number of so-called political trials were dropped. I would almost say that it made a *tabula rasa* in regard to political trials, that it made a clean slate, so to say. This act on the part of the President, and of course on the part of the Czechoslovak Government which had recommended the amnesty and takes the responsibility for it, is the best proof that there is no desire on our part to fabricate any superfluous political trials and to incense our population, particularly our racial

minorities. We have no such intention even when we see the very intensive agitation which has manifested itself of late and has very grave features.

I must most emphatically repudiate the imputations launched against our courts and administration of justice to the effect that they have succumbed to some outside influence, to some administrative or other pressure. I think that when we compare our system of justice in the matter of independence, and when we compare conditions in this country from the angle of legal security and the angle of constitutional rights—*Rechtsstaatlichkeit*, to use Dr. Neuwirth's expression—we can with a good conscience say that in these respects our courts and judicial system compares very well with the courts and judicial conditions in other democratic countries and the older States that recognize the rule of law. There are countries in our vicinity where the courts are wholly subordinate to the administrative and executive power in the State. There are even regimes which do not recognize the independence of judges, but on the contrary regard the courts as instruments of the executive power of the State, indeed more, as the executive instruments of the programme and ideology of the political party that happens to be in power. In those countries no recognition is given to the principle proclaimed by the greatest thinkers of the Western nations, the principle secured by the French Revolution and adopted in the modern

European legal order—the principle of separation of the judicial from the executive power. In such countries that principle is declared to be obsolete, outlived, a Liberalist lie that had to be eliminated by a new revolution that has thrown over all the principles come down from the old French Revolution. When, gentlemen, we compare the legal conditions in this connection in Czechoslovakia with the conditions that exist in the countries where these new principles are applied, I think you will find it impossible to reproach our judicial system with lack of independence, as Dr. Neuwirth has done on such a sweeping scale at least in the matter of political trials and the confiscation of newspapers.

As regards the confiscation of newspapers, it is true that to a certain extent the Ministry of Justice is responsible, in view of the fact that where we have representative organs of the State the confiscation of papers is carried out by those organs. I have already mentioned the very intensive and abnormal political agitation abroad, and yet, on the other hand, we can point to the fact that the number of confiscations in our country is on the decline. Every year, during the debate on the vote for the Ministry of Justice I have called the attention of the Committee to the declining number of cases of confiscation. This year I can again point to it, as you will see from the following facts. In the year 1933 there were 2,905 cases of con-

fiscation of newspapers; in the year 1934 there were 2,138, in 1935 the number was 1,825 and in 1936 it was 1,653. This year—the figures are from the end of last month, and thus cover the first ten months of the year—there have been only 1,193 cases. A similar trend is shown in respect of non-periodical publications, in which the number of confiscations has fallen from 430 in the year 1933 to 253 in 1936, while this year (1937) there have been only 176 cases. Only in respect of foreign periodicals has there been an increase in the cases of confiscation.

I should like to add another thing: in our Republic we have no system of preventive censorship, and it is only possible to confiscate printed matter in cases where an offence has been committed as laid down in our criminal code or other laws. But even in other cases the confiscated matter is not subject to the arbitrary judgment of the State administrative organs or the police. The State administrative organs can, it is true, order confiscation on the ground of a punishable offence, but this confiscation is subject to supervision by independent judicial organs. Every case of confiscation must come before a court, and must be examined *ex officio* by the court. It is a matter here of judicial procedure, and when Deputy Neuwirth criticizes it in this place, it is for me as Minister of Justice, very difficult to take up a standpoint as I must respect the independence of

the judges, and naturally cannot treat the matter with the same freedom as could Deputy Neuwirth in his rôle of critic. None the less I regard it as my duty to defend the vice-president of the District Court at Cheb and to repudiate the accusations made against him by the Deputy when he said that the judge should change his judge's robes for the garb of an administrative official. That at least was the sense in which I understood the honourable member's remark. Let me add that the cases of which Deputy Neuwirth complained did not come before the vice-president as a judge sitting alone, but they were cases tried by the whole bench of judges. Deputy Neuwirth complains that an article which was published in the *Prager Presse* without any objection being raised was confiscated when it appeared in a paper published by the Henlein Party. I cannot, nor do I wish to, express any opinion in this particular case, but I must say that it is not correct to assert generally that a particular text which appears in one paper without being confiscated should become a priori incapable of confiscation in another. In judging of whether a certain text is in conflict with the law, it is not the text alone that is decisive but the manner in which the text is published. If some article appears accompanied by critical and mischiefmaking comments it must be judged of differently than if it appears with laudatory comments.

And now let me deal with what Deputy Neuwirth had to say about the practice of our courts in cases of espionage. In this matter, too, I must say that Deputy Neuwirth looks upon the matter from a biased angle. We cannot seriously contend that the Czechoslovak Republic and the military measures which she has been compelled to take in the past few years have not been the subject of increased attention on the part of those who have an interest in knowing what is going on here in the military sphere. It is impossible to deny the universally known fact that we have the honour of entertaining an increased number of foreign spies in our midst. Unfortunately, too, increased activity in this connection is shown by individuals among the domestic population. I would say, however, that there is nothing abnormal in this unpleasant phenomenon. It is a natural consequence of our military measures. All Europe is arming, all the countries around us are arming, and naturally Czechoslovakia too must arm. We are fortifying our frontiers against possible attack. Every such measure, every item of armament results in those who have an interest in knowing the details of these measures spying out the facts which, under our laws, they may not spy out, and the spying out of which entails punishment. That as a consequence of these conditions there has been an increase in espionage cases is a wholly natural and comprehensible feature. There is nothing to re-

joyce at in this, we do not like to see it, but it is a fact which is the outcome of existing conditions. In the circumstances, however, I contend that the number of espionage cases we have to deal with are in no way in proportion to the great danger in which the Republic and its defensive interests stand. If a person unacquainted with the details had to-day listened to Deputy Neuwirth's remarks he must have left this chamber convinced that there is an endless number of espionage cases and that our citizens are being persecuted in unheard of fashion. Such is not the case. You will be surprised, I am sure, when I tell you the number of espionage cases that are now in process. In the circumstances and in the conditions under which we are living at this moment I venture to assert that 926 cases of espionage now awaiting trial in our country are not only no very large number, but in comparison with the espionage cases in other countries are, I may assert with good conscience, a record low figure. Of the 926 accused, 226 are Czechoslovaks, 423 Germans, 220 Magyars, 27 Ruthenians, and 30 of other nationalities. Deputy Neuwirth complained in particular of our German fellow-citizens being persecuted with espionage charges. To make the situation quite clear I may say that the number of 423 Germans under accusation includes not only Czechoslovak citizens of German nationality but also Germans from abroad. I have not at hand at the moment details

of how many foreign Germans are included in the number, but as far as I am acquainted with the situation from the current reports of my department I may say that the number of foreigners is considerable, and I am not making any error to the detriment of our German fellow-citizens when I state that at the present moment charges of espionage are awaiting investigation against not more than 350 of our German subjects. I referred to a record number. Assuredly 350 is not such a number as can justify Deputy Neuwirth in asserting that every day, "Tag für Tag", people are dragged out of their beds to be flung into jail and haled before the courts on a charge of espionage. I would ask you to consider 350 accused at a time of such strained conditions! Judge the matter impartially! I think an impartial mind could not possibly draw from these facts the deductions drawn by Deputy Neuwirth.

Deputy Neuwirth, however, also complained of some of our methods of investigation in these cases. I must emphasize that the judicial organs—and here I can speak only for such organs—have always acted correctly and in accord with the law, and that no complaints have ever been made against them on this account. Never, either to me or to my department, has Deputy Neuwirth or anyone else made a complaint that any judge, or any magistrate conducting preliminary investigation, or the public prosecutor, or any other organ of

justice whatsoever has been guilty of improper treatment of an accused whose offence was being investigated or who was being tried. Whenever in this connection suspicions or complaints have been forthcoming against other organs I have immediately issued the strictest orders and taken steps to have a medical examination made at once of any person who complained of having been badly treated, with the object of ascertaining whether the complaints had any real basis. You must bear in mind that in espionage affairs all sorts of people come together. Deputy Neuwirth must himself admit that very frequently the persons concerned are professional spies and people of very low morality, that in the majority of cases espionage is carried on not from ideal motives, that is, not because of national or patriotic conviction, and that in very many cases the courts have to do with people of very degenerate morals. Such persons naturally avail themselves of every possible means of defending themselves. They very frequently make use of false and unfounded complaints against the organs investigating their case. In the prisons, accused persons, even if they are never together in one cell, often find means of communicating with one another. In every prison there exists a certain psychosis characteristic of prisoners and persons awaiting trial. This manifests itself most among persons accused of espionage. It is not to be wondered at that not only persons who

are morally degenerate and carry on espionage as a profession are affected with this psychosis but also persons who have become involved either through being led astray by other offenders, or who by some unhappy force of circumstances or lack of firm character have committed some criminal offence. Naturally enough, such people are affected by the psychosis in question to a greater extent even than the professional criminals, and it frequently occurs that they make unjust and wholly unfounded accusations against the organs investigating their case in the hope that they will improve their situation at the trial. I would therefore never suspend any case on the ground of such accusations, and every such defence put forward by an accused must be regarded very sceptically.

The judicial authorities have taken all possible measures to ensure procedure being accelerated, especially in espionage cases. We have done all we can to prevent espionage trials being protracted. The public prosecutors have received appropriate instructions in this matter. You may be sure that it is in the interests of the judicial authorities to occupy themselves with various difficulties in this connection. On the other hand, however, I must emphasise the fact that, in the matter of possibilities of investigation, espionage cases are after all a special chapter well known to every lawyer, and that by virtue of their very character it is impossible to compare them in all respects with

other normal cases. But even if the judicial authorities acknowledge the special character of these espionage trials, they none the less devote all the means at their disposal to give these trials the same course as all other normal criminal cases.

On behalf of the Sudete German Party Deputy Kundt broached the question of the share of the Germans in the staffs of the courts and legal administration. The number of judges of German nationality on the roll of our courts is very considerable and, I would say, closely approaches the proportion of the German population to the entire population, taking the country as a whole. The complaints put forward by Deputy Kundt in this connection are unfounded. I admit that in the office staff of the courts the proportion of Germans is not what it should be, and that it is considerably less than in the case of the judges. This is the result, however, mainly of the conditions prevailing in the early years after the War when our German fellow-citizens did not apply to be taken on the staff of the offices because they were not well enough acquainted with the State language. The consequence is that the Germans are not yet represented in the office services by such numbers as their proportion in the whole population would require. Among the judges, however, the case is substantially different. The total proportion of Germans among our judges is 21.5%, while the German proportion of population is 22%.

Judges and stipendiary magistrates of German nationality in the Republic number 730, those of Czechoslovak nationality 2,430, and those of other nationality 213. In this connection it is impossible to bring forward any substantial complaints. Naturally the Germans are not represented uniformly in all categories of the judicial staff. For instance in the district courts in Bohemia we have 65.2% only of Czech judges and 34.4% of judges of German nationality, although the German proportion of the population of Bohemia is approximately 32%. In Moravia-Silesia the proportion of Czech judges is 73%, and that of German judges 26%, while the German proportion of population is only 22%. From these figures it is obvious that in the case of the district courts the number of German judges both in Bohemia and in Moravia is in excess of the German proportion of the population. As regards court counsellors, that is judges sitting in the courts of the provinces, the numbers are also instructive. In Bohemia, within the jurisdiction of the High Court at Prague we have 295 court counsellors of Czech and 123 of German nationality, so that 29% are German. In Moravia, within the jurisdiction of the High Court at Brno, 121 of the court counsellors are Czechs and 55 of German nationality, that is, 31% are Germans. This is not only the position in the lower instances, that is in the provincial and district courts. At the High Court at Brno, that

is the court of last instance (sitting with bench of judges) for the whole of Moravia we have among the high court counsellors 20 Czechs and 8 Germans, the latter thus forming 28%. The position of the Germans is worse at Prague where the High Court has only 12 German judges, inclusive of all the high court counsellors functioning within the jurisdiction of this High Court. In the posts included in the III. Scale of Salaries, that is, those of the vice-presidents of the High Courts and the presidents (presiding judges) of the provincial courts we have in Bohemia 7 Czechs and 3 Germans, that is, 30% of Germans, and in Moravia 4 Czechs and 1 German, that is 20% Germans.

I have brought forward these figures merely to show the House that it is impossible to speak of any injustice to German judges in our judicial system, and that there are even categories of judges—sometimes very numerous as in the case of the district judges and the counsellors of the district and provincial courts—in which there are more German judges than is justified by the German proportion of the whole population.

I must stress the fact that the Ministry of Justice, too, is naturally taking care that the resolutions of the Government of 18th February last shall be strictly observed. It stands to reason that where the number of posts filled by Germans does not yet attain the level equivalent to the German proportion of population a remedy cannot be found

at one stroke, but the efforts of the judicial authorities and their practice follow an unswerving line—that the resolutions of the 18th February shall gradually be carried out in the sphere of administration of law wherever, for the reasons I have already given, they could not hitherto be carried out.