

CZECHOSLOVAK CABINET MINISTERS
ON THE
COMPLAINTS
OF THE SUDETE GERMAN PARTY
IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK
PARLIAMENT

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No 17

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CABINET MINISTERS
on the
COMPLAINTS
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SUDETE GERMAN PARTY
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FOREWORD

In the comprehensive debate on the Budget for 1937 which occupied the bulk of the November and December sessions of the Committee and plenum of the two Chambers of the Czechoslovak Parliament attention was devoted to all the tasks facing the State administration—economic, as well as social and cultural tasks. The nationality question was also brought to the fore, mainly by the deputies of the Sudete German (Henlein) Party. These members put forward numerous complaints, which, despite the correct outward form in which they were couched, were directed substantially to the same end towards which the policy of that Party tends. They were an attempt to show that the German minority in Czechoslovakia is neglected—that the State does not do its duty by that minority. The manner in which these complaints were presented to the German citizens of the State in the press of the Sudete Party, and the circumstance that extracts from the speeches in question were sent round to the diplomatic representatives of foreign countries

in Prague, to foreign newspapers and press agencies, shows that in general the attempt was not so much an effort to uphold the due interests and needs of the German minority as it was a species of propaganda against Czechoslovakia and an attempt to smirch her good name.

We therefore submit for the benefit of public opinion abroad a resumé of the main speeches in which the responsible Czechoslovak Ministers replied in the course of the Budget debate to the complaints put forward by the representatives of the Sudete German Party. These speeches are a proof that the Czechoslovak Government, Dr. Hodža the Premier, and other Cabinet Ministers, devote continual attention to the German problem, that they admit the importance of finding a solution for it, that their relations with their German fellow citizens are of a cordial nature, and that they endeavour to meet whatever justified demands they put forward. Good will on the part of the Germans has always found an echo in good will on the part of the Czechs and Slovaks for collaboration with them in furthering the democratic progress of the State and in solving the present crisis and nationality relations on a democratic basis.

I.

DOES THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT
GIVE DUE ATTENTION TO NATIONALITY
QUESTIONS?

Dr. ALFRED ROSCHE, Deputy of the Sudete German Party, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 4th of November 1936, said :

“You pay no attention to the nationality question. The nationality problem is the cardinal point in the State, for upon it depends satisfaction there in respect of both internal and external policy. From a psychological standpoint it is quite incomprehensible that no initiative is taken up on the Czech side in these matters.”

Dr. MILAN HODŽA, the Prime Minister, in the course of his speech in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 10th of November 1936, said:

“Allow me to refer to the German problem. During the past few months very much of our time, in fact practically all our time—the time of the Government and the legislative bodies—has been taken up by what you all will agree to have been work that it was impossible to postpone. It was work connected with economic and financial problems, and with the problem of national defence. Now that these problems have been duly settled and we can see that the path we took was the right one, there is certainly no reasonable—in particular no political—cause why we should not go ahead with a settlement of the problem of internal administration, a problem involving regional and minority matters. National sentiment is, and will continue to be, one of the decisive forces in political doings. Czech and Slovak nationalism, that is, Czechoslovak nationalism, which reached its culmination in the at-

tainment of its aspirations and its programme in an independent State is faced with the task of ensuring that independence, that existence as a State, among other things by eliminating all such points of internal friction as might develop into elements of a permanent organic crisis. We are strong enough from a national point of view to cherish the conviction that our national sentiment is not incompatible with national equality and permanent collaboration with our minorities, and that, too, in every branch of State policy.

The first step towards such collaboration was taken in 1926. I intentionally recall this date for the reason that this turn in our State policy meant cooperation with the German political parties, that it was the expressly nationalistic parties which were responsible for that turn, and that the authors of it were Czechoslovak statesmen who were distinctly nationalist. I gratefully recall my own cooperation on the one hand with Dr. Šrámek, and on the other hand with Dr. Kra-
mář, of whose nationalist sentiments there can be no shadow of doubt, and without whom the first participation of the Germans in the administration of this State would have been unthinkable. It can safely be said that by 1929 the entire democratic thinking public of Czechoslovakia were at one in their view, their conviction, that in Czechoslovakia a share in the administration of

the State was to be given to the German minority.*)

In proof of the fact that the Government is now entering upon a period of activity in minority matters we have taken steps to remove one great misunderstanding in the sphere of lingual rights. This misunderstanding was one which cropped up in the exchange of correspondence between certain central departments and particularly the district authorities on the one side and the parish authorities on the other. It is in the interests of smooth working that a parish or township, the burgomaster of which does not understand a word of Czech should receive orders from the district authorities in his own language—this is in the interests of effective work, and is common sense. Moreover it is a matter of the language of our minorities whose members are the citizens of our State. The second paragraph of our Language Law contains provisions of such a character as gave rise to doubt whether it was possible on this basis for the district authorities to conduct their

*) Up to 1926 all the German parties remained in Opposition. In that year the German Agrarians and the German Christian Socialists joined the Government. In 1929 the German Social Democrats also entered the Government ranks. All three parties remained in the Government until the last general election in May 1935. After the election the German Christian Socialists for a short time remained outside the Government ranks, but now again all three parties are represented by a Minister each in the Czechoslovak Cabinet.

correspondence with a German parish in the minority language, or whether it was possible in case of correspondence in the State official language to annex a German translation of the orders, instructions or correspondence. This was a doubt which was emphasized by decisions of the Supreme Court. At present we regard it as wholly superfluous to alter the law and the constitutional structure of our State. The Government sought—and I think found—a way, without touching upon the Language Law, to enable all the German, Hungarian and other minority parishes, effectively and on commonsense lines, to have their correspondence conducted smoothly and free from unnecessary hindrances, and to have translations also annexed to the correspondence of the district authorities. These translations could so far be obtained subsequently by request at the cost of the parish. We regard that as an unnecessary burden. The result is that we have no objection to the district authorities, in the course of their correspondence with German parishes, supplying gratis, and without even being asked for it, a German translation.

In agreement and cooperation with those of our colleagues in the Cabinet and in the Government majority who call themselves Activists) we are*

*) Activists are called those German parties which are represented in the Government.

entering upon this epoch of solution of minority problems. By their conduct so far they have gained much psychological ground in our public opinion, have disarmed much distrust, and finally in view of their experience are pre-eminently qualified to join with us in the solution of such grave problems of State. Does this mean excluding the Opposition? It means nothing of the sort!

Dr. Rosche has brought forward several demands within the scope of a certain declaration of principles, and this constrains me all the more to give an answer to the unpronounced—or at least only formally pronounced—question as to what is the relation of the Government majority and of the Government itself to the oppositional Sudete German Party. If you will bear with me for a while I should like to devote a quarter of an hour to this matter. The history of the relation between the Government majority and the Government on the one side and the Sudete German Party on the other shows that neither the Government nor, in general, those who direct the policy of the Government majority, true to their democratic principles, have ever rejected *a priori* any discussion with the Sudete German Party.

In this connection I would like to point to matters that date from prior to the last election. It is no secret, nor was it any secret at the time, that one of the German parties adhering to the

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Government was in direct negotiation with the Sudete German Party, and most certainly it would not have entered into such negotiation if the Government majority had *a priori* taken the standpoint that it would not discuss any political problems with the Sudete German opposition then beginning to make itself felt.

But we remember most distinctly that even after the elections neither the Government nor the Government majority refused to enter into discussions on political problems with the Sudete German Party. Those discussions, it is true, did not lead to anything. My own standpoint towards the Sudete German Party was this—I asked that first and foremost that Party should act on the fact that democracy and the democratic system in this Republic is no mere mechanical formula but the direct essence of our moral, national, political and economic existence. This means that an exchange of political views, not to speak of collaboration, is possible within the framework of the democratic system and of democratic methods. This is no mere empty theory; it has its practical aspect.

We were absolutely unable to accept that principle of the Sudete German Party which *a priori* regards the Sudete German Party as the exclusive representative of the German minority, ignoring thus the so-called "Splitterparteien", that is, those

political party groups that have existed for years, and that have not only accepted with all its consequences the democratic system of our State policy but have also on their own part contributed to perfect that system. To refuse to recognize the smaller parties merely because they are smaller—representing only 34% of the population while the Sudete German Party represents some 60%—would be absolutely incompatible with democratic principles, and particularly incompatible for the reason that in the meantime an event has occurred that has passed without notice, or has at least not been generally noticed and is underestimated, but is one that merits our full attention, especially to-day. We are to-day in the situation that the recognized leader and chairman of one large Opposition party is not a member of Parliament. There would be no objection to this if this chairman were more or less only decorative, as it were, or nominally chairman, such as is the case at times, but when we see that a chairman who is not a member of this Parliament has for long months past made authoritative and directive utterances in the name of the Party, discussion of any kind with, and relations with, such Opposition are really difficult.

This is so not only for reasons of the theory of parliamentary democracy, but also for reasons of political practice. When the legislative bodies

were to discuss the Bill for a loan for national defence purposes an exchange of views took place between the Coalition leaders and the Sudete German Party. I myself as Prime Minister had an exchange of views with the representative of the Sudete German parliamentary Club, and these discussions subsequently led to an agreement. From that agreement issued a resolution passed by the Chamber of Deputies and Senate embodying, from the standpoint of the nationalities, the minorities and the State, a very serious obligation to the effect that the works of productive investment to be carried out on the basis of the loan should be allotted in due proportion to the territories with a German population, that is to say, that German manufacturers and *entrepreneurs* on the one hand and German workers on the other should have a due share in the investment work undertaken with funds to which the German portion of our population had contributed. This course of action was assuredly democratic and based upon the fair and noble principles not merely of parliamentary democracy but also of human sentiment as between representatives perhaps of divergent standpoints but of those who are conscious of their great responsibilities.

This idyll did not last long, for soon afterwards came the Cheb speech of this chairman of the Sudete German Party who is not a member

of Parliament.*) That was a speech concerning which I was obliged to make a declaration in the Senate, a declaration which was approved of by the Coalition and in which I had to reproach the non-parliamentary but none the less authoritative leader of the Sudete German Party with having in particular in tendentious and incorrect manner—I use very mild terms—distorted the attitude, the psychological attitude of Czechoslovakia, especially of the Czechs and Slovaks, to the German Reich. It is wholly superfluous to say that such a speech as that made at Cheb was absolutely at variance both in substance and in principle with the good intention, the sound tendency which had manifested itself in the negotiations or even in the mere exchange of views between the Government Coalition and majority on the one side and the representatives of the Sudete German Party on the other. After such experiences is a discussion of serious questions touching the German minority possible? After these experiences, paths would have been followed as if one had acted on the principle that the shortest route from Cheb to Prague led via Geneva, Berlin and London.

*) Konrad Henlein declared at Cheb on the 21st of June 1936: 'It is essential that Prague should create a new, decent relationship to the entire Germanic race and particularly to the German Reich. . . . I prefer to be hated in company with Germany than to draw any advantage out of hatred of Germany.'

What a huge mistake! What values can be lost, what civic virtues menaced by such a long path, and what superfluous outlay on such long journeys when contact with Prague is so easy. At one time the principle was advanced that the Sudete German Party desired to act as a bridge, as an intermediary—not assuredly in a diplomatic but in a psychological sense—between Prague and Berlin. The case we are discussing has been one of such gravity that the bridge has collapsed under it. I regret this, for I regard good, sound relations between the majority and Opposition factors as a primary condition of parliamentary democracy, and I regret it, too, because a solution of nationality problems would be all the easier if all the interested parties participated in such a solution. The Czechs and Slovaks in their evolution since the close of the War have safely negotiated this stage that is decisive for their national independence and their constitutional sense. After 1918 we were all pacifists, but an invasion from Budapest aroused us from that pacifism, and we realized that we must have an army. Our public opinion, however, relapsed again for the most part into a state of indifference to the great interests and eventualities of the nation's policy. It was the epoch of defeatism. But it is past, and done with. To-day I think I may say that in this country there is no Czech

and no Slovak who does not share the opinion that this nation, if faced with some test of its political and military-defensive preparedness, must, and would in all circumstances, successfully stand that test. We have to-day arrived at the stage where we represent a State that is consolidated from the angle of defence, of moral and economic strength, where we are an ally of value. All this means that by the consolidation we have already achieved, we have done service for the preservation of peace, for an end has been put to all illusions as if there were some defeatist element here that, hearing a bugle call, would lose its presence of mind and be traitor to the moral bases on which the State rests. Only such a consolidated State wins due recognition from its neighbours.

What issues from all this? *The Sudete German Party, despite the promising beginnings to which I have referred, namely, the negotiations in connection with the national defence loan, which were followed by a disavowal by its own leader, has not found the path to us.*

As to a territorial autonomy I prefer not to discuss it in any sense. Autonomy in this case could only lead to a separation of the German from the Czech element. Territorial autonomy would mean sacrificing 380,000 Czechs domiciled on territories peopled by a German majority, and

vice versa sacrificing 730,000 Germans on the remaining territories of the State. Neither the one nor the other thing is possible. The significance of the German minority—if we are to discuss it from the international angle—lies in the fact that, being actually domiciled in this State, they are here alongside Czechs and Slovaks and are paving the way for an internal political synthesis which must be an ideal for world politics.

Of proportional treatment, as far as the participation of Germans in civil service of this country is concerned, it will be possible to speak when the State need not fear that if it accepts a person for an official post that person will not serve with some mental reservation where exclusively the interests of the State should be served. This is a psychological state which has long been known amongst us. Take my words as those of one who has personally and politically exposed himself for collaboration with the minorities, particularly for collaboration with the German minority in this State. I was present at all the negotiations which, after the close of the War, were conducted with Lodgmann and Seliger under the premiership of Tusar, and I think I am not incorrectly interpreting either the political or the psychological development. I would therefore ask you to admit, that if due proportion

is to be observed in the employment of German subjects in the State service there must be complete proportionality of unconditional loyalty to the State which they serve. I am convinced that it will come to this.”

II.

IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

THERE IS NO DENATIONALISATION

Dr. HANS NEUWIRTH, Sudete German deputy, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 12th of November 1936, said:

“The Sudete German Party is honestly concerned to be the supporter and co-creator of a really constructive evolution on the part of the non-Czech group of nationalities. A primary condition for this is there shall be no denationalisation whatsoever, and that this renunciation of denationalisation shall be laid down by law and put into effect in public life, so that we can say that the State, judged by its actual constitutional status, is absolutely a State where justice is law. We have never shown a lack of understanding of the vital interests of the Czechs and Slovaks. But effect can only be given to these vital interests to an extent that corresponds to the given conditions of development. Where national interests go beyond the conditions of national development they are destroyed by the higher moral idea of justice. Where might take precedence of right, all the ties of justice and law are undone.”

Dr. IVAN DÉRER, the Czechoslovak Minister of Justice, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 13th of November 1936, said :

“I should like to refer to several questions broached in this debate by Deputy Dr. Neuwirth. I must first express my appreciation that Deputy Neuwirth’s remarks, in their form, maintained a high level, and that in the merits of the matter itself he showed an endeavour to judge of conditions as far as possible with objectivity. I think the assumption from which the speaker for the Sudete German Party started is not true when he states that the guiding policy of our State—this is the sense and substance of his remarks—is the denationalisation of the racial minorities, and that even the political administration and to a certain extent, in his view, the legal administration, too, is harnessed up to this political system.

As to the assertion that our Republic and its State administration pursue a policy of denationalising the racial minorities and members of the German nation in our Republic—this assertion is absolutely incorrect and untrue. In our case

there can be no possible question of denationalisation. As we frequently meet with this assertion in the political speeches of members of the Sudete German Party I must here draw attention to one particular circumstance.

We who came to this State from former Hungary,*) a country which by all the political means at the disposal of its State authorities strove to denationalise its racial minorities—and this fact was admitted by the politicians and leading statesmen of pre-War Hungary—we know only too well what the denationalisation of racial minorities means. The Hungarian régime of old wished to denationalise us as well as the members of your nation, the Germans, in Slovakia. This was their express political programme, openly proclaimed on the whole by a great number of responsible Hungarian statesmen. But even though the entire State administration in former Hungary pursued this end, even though the entire scheme of administration, the courts and the schools were brought into the service of this State policy, it nevertheless failed in former Hungary, substantially at any rate, to lessen the status of the former national minorities in that country. Though we lost a large number of our Slovaks and though a large number of persons of German nationality were Magyarized in the Hungarian State, substantially we, Germans as well as Slo-

*) Dr. Dérer is a Slovak.

vaks, preserved our national standing. Even that undemocratic régime, manifestly aiming at the denationalisation of all the non-Magyar nationalities, attained no successes to speak of. That is for us a political experience of such character that we should never venture in our new, and moreover democratic, State to adopt a policy of denationalisation of the racial minorities, for it would prove a totally vain effort and a policy that could lead to no substantial results of gains. In a State which is democratic and possesses a universal franchise in such measure as perhaps no other country in our surroundings, in a State that applies this franchise even to the tiniest minorities so as to give them due representation, in a State which seeks on every side to bring democratic principles into practice—in such a State denationalisation is impossible, nor is possible in view of the educational and cultural policy which our Republic has pursued from the very outset.

As to cultural possessions and number of schools—if we take account of the great increase in the number of German schools in Slovakia, where under the former régime the German education had suffered from the same oppression as Slovak education, we may assert as a fact that the Germans in Czechoslovakia have substantially maintained their educational and cultural facilities upon the same level as they possessed them in former Austria. Certainly so as regards the num-

ber of schools. This is the policy of our State, and I think that in these circumstances it is impossible to speak of either denationalisation or of a denationalising tendency; in the case of some inferior mind it is possible that some such tendency might be found, but taking the Government policy as a whole, it is not possible to attribute to any Czechoslovak Government designs of that nature.

Deputy Neuwirth referred to a speech made by the present President of the Republic at Bratislava prior to the general election of 1935. I have obtained the text of that speech and can say that I find nothing in it from which it can be deduced that the President proclaimed any denationalisation of the racial minorities. He only said that in thirty or forty years there would be some 15,000,000 Czechoslovaks out of a total population of 20,000,000. In saying this he was only referring to the special conditions in Slovakia, where as everyone knows, there is a considerably greater growth of population than in the historic lands, that is Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. He was referring particularly to the vitality of the Slovaks and Carpathian Ruthenians, and desired to demonstrate from the Slovak angle that the Slovaks in the course of future developments would have a numerically bigger share in the united Czechoslovak nation, so that they need not fear any assimilation as is continually being suggest-

ed in certain circles in Slovakia. From this speech it is impossible to construe any policy of denationalisation of our German minority. On the contrary, the whole construction of the speech shows that the President pointed to the fact that the vitality which increased the number of the Czechoslovaks issued from the Eastern parts of the country, and that it was there that the fundamental increase in the total number of Czechoslovaks occurred. I think, therefore, that even from this angle there is no ground for the assertion or insuation that the State has any intention of pursuing a denationalisation policy.”

Dr. LUDWIG CZECH, Czechoslovak Minister of Health and Physical Culture, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 20th of November 1936, said:

“Let it be asserted in all due form that any attempt whatsoever to interpret the population conditions of our State from the standpoint of nationality policy must shipwreck upon the fact that—as the statistics for Bohemia show—the birth rate and death rate among both Czechs and Germans move in nearly parallel lines, that the number of children of Czechoslovak nationality born during the past ten years averages 82,999 per annum, the number of German nationality

in the same period 39,564, and that the proportion of deaths is analogous, namely, an average of 64,863 per annum among the Czechs, and an average of 32,425 among the Germans.

A comparison of the number of births and deaths in Bohemia in the past ten years shows an average excess of births over deaths on the Czechoslovak side of 17,436, and on the German side of 7,139, thus giving an excess of 3.71 per 1,000 head of population for the Czechoslovaks, and one of 3.07 per 1,000 for the Germans.

Population conditions in Bohemia thus show practical equilibrium between the Czechs and Germans. Not quite the same but in much the same way do the vitality statistics for Moravia and Silesia work out, while Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia present a totally different picture. There the excess of births is such as to outweigh the declining rate of population increase in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia."

III.

ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE CULTURAL
NEEDS OF THE GERMANS
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Deputy F. KARMAŠIN of the Sudete German Party speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 13th of November 1936 said:

"We have to complain that attempts are made to bring education, and in particular the elementary and upper-elementary schools, very strongly under influences that we must, from the standpoint of the German population, depreciate.

As regards the school classes the conditions are still worse. On the German side there is a decline of 10.2%, on the Czech side a decline of 0.9% in Bohemia. In Moravia the conditions are different —on the German side a decline of 11.7% and on the Czech side an increase of 3.6%."

Dr. EMIL FRANKE, the Czechoslovak Minister of Education, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Senate on the 10th of December 1936, said:

“As regards German education the situation as a whole is obvious from the average number of children per class. Comparing these it is seen that the like principles determine the development of both Czechoslovak and German education. According to official figures the average number of children in Bohemia in a German elementary class is 36.2 and in an upper-elementary class 40.1, while the average number in a Czech elementary class is 35.3, and in an upper-elementary class 40.5. In Moravia-Silesia the figure for a German elementary class is 35.5, in a Czech elementary class 35.9, in a German upper-elementary class 38.9 and in a Czech upper-elementary class 38.6. These figures confirm the absolute equity of the school system.

In Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia there have been established 5 new German kindergartens, 1 affiliated school, and 1 upper-elementary school, and the establishment of 15 fourth classes has

been approved of in upper-elementary schools; in Slovakia, German parallel classes have been established at Bratislava and Spišská Belá in Czechoslovak upper-elementary schools and 1 new fourth class of an upper-elementary school; in Carpathian Ruthenia 2 new State elementary schools, and 1 fourth class of German upper-elementary school have been established. At the State German Teachers Training Academy at Prague a course for upper-elementary school teachers has been newly established with German as the language of instruction.

The position of German secondary schools can also be described as satisfactory when compared with that of Czechoslovak secondary schools. The average number of pupils per class in a Czechoslovak secondary school is 39, in a German secondary school 36.

Of the outstanding changes, I should like to refer to the re-opening of the 4 upper grades of the German Real Gymnasium at Hostinné (Arnau).

As regards other departments of education I will only refer by way of example to social welfare for students. In this connection there has been a certain improvement in favour of German students, and a similar development may be expected for the coming year. Similar assistance has been given to the German Theatre at Prague where difficulties arose through the staff being

paid for only 11 months in the year. A remedy has been found for this.

One of the most pleasing features of Chapter X of the Budget for the coming year is the vote for popular education which has been increased by Kč 612,000 to a total of Kč 2,246,000. Of the importance of the upbringing of the broad masses of the people to be orderly, loyal and democratic citizens there will, I think, be no doubt. The increase in the vote will enable this species of education to be extended, and in particular a part at least of the demands of the minority population to be met. Their demands have, indeed, as far as budgetary considerations allowed, always been considered. Proof of this may be seen in the expansion of local public libraries, which has taken place with the active participation of the Ministry of Education. Thus in 1920 there existed 458 German local public libraries with 282,255 volumes, in 1921 there existed 1,656 German libraries of this character with 602,734 volumes. At the close of 1935 these German libraries numbered 3,570 and possessed 2,020,893 volumes, thus showing a growth of over 100 per cent.

The usefulness of the German local public libraries is augmented by a system of travelling libraries which is ensured by the German Zentralwanderbücherei (Central Travelling Library) at Prague, an institution founded and supplemented by the

Ministry of Education. This library possesses 5,295 volumes of select reading matter."

Dr. Franke concluded his speech with an appeal to the German senators to admit that in the sphere of education and culture the Ministry acted with all-round fairness: "I never hear anything from you but complaints. Why do you not recognize, at least by a word or two, what I have just said about the equity or parity that exists between German, Czech and Slovak schools . . ." (Senator Pfrogner: There can be no talk of parity as long as the Czech minority schools are so patronized as they are in the German districts). "As to that word 'patronized' I can assure Senator Pfrogner that equally unjustly—for I am impartial (Senator Pfrogner: I am convinced of that), am I reproached by a certain section of the Czech press for not caring adequately for Czech schools in the minority districts. They bring up concrete cases from the Kaplice district, and ask how it is that I can allow that no provision has as yet been made for the education of Czech children there. I have also seen German schools, and just as you have said that you cherish no envy, neither do I cherish any so far as the Ministry of Education is concerned, and I can assure that your secondary schools are far more representative for a foreigner—a Frenchman, Englishman, German or Italian—than are our secondary schools in Prague, and if I wished to

show a foreigner a model secondary school in this country I should choose rather a German school than one of our Czech secondary schools. By this I wish to say concretely that we have many and great shortcomings in our educational system, and that we have not everything just as we should like to have it in our own State.

I look to our Hungarian, German and Polish fellow-citizens also to acknowledge these shortcomings which we cannot help. I shall defend myself with the cleanest conscience against the reproach that we leave the Germans with anything bad because we do not like them. That annoys me."

IV.

THE ECONOMIC POLICY
OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE
GERMAN MINORITY

Deputy ERNST PESCHKA of the Sudete German Party speaking in the Budget Committee of Chamber of Deputies on the 18th of November 1936, said:

"The most important measure for economic recovery is the encouragement of export trade. With us that is only possible in the way of a general revision of our economic policy, and for the following reasons can show no decisive success.

The commercial policy of our State has paid no regard to the fact that Czechoslovakia is an exporting country, and that consequently in her commercial policy Czechoslovakia must start from different angles than the other countries.

The improvement of our internal economic condition through the provision of cheaper credits has often been demanded, but the demand has not been met.

Regulation of prices, protection against the carrying on of trades by unqualified persons, protection of the taxpayer, and a due share for the Germans in Government contracts are among the most important demands for ensuring the position of tradespeople and the commercial element."

Dr. MILAN HODŽA, the Prime Minister, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 10th of November 1936, said:

“It is a fact that in the past two years we have found work for 300,000 persons who were previously unemployed. The placing of 300,000 persons in work signifies of itself an increase of the national income, but above all it means a stronger and more stable class of consumers. We must, of course, examine this new situation in respect of employment from the angle of stability. It is an interesting and I think significant feature that in the month of October the number of employed persons did not decline, but has increased. This is a feature in sharp contrast to previous experience, for the month of October has always been a direct signal for an increase of unemployment from seasonal causes. In industrial Bohemia in October this year there were 73,471 less unplaced applicants for work than in the like month of last year. This year there were 246,000, last year 319,480. Bohemia and Moravia which are more industrial than the rest of the Republic even show

a decline of unemployment this year compared with 1935, a trend which, as I have said, is in direct contrast to the normal seasonal trend.

Take the special case of the Liberec district.*) That industrial region in October shows a decline of unemployment as against September. In September the figure was 9,284; in October it was 8,582. That an increase in industrial activities is now taking place is proved not only by the general statistics but also by the concrete returns coming in from the various branches of industry and from the various industrial areas. We observe particularly in the past four weeks that even the export-industry areas, which hitherto have been unable to benefit to any great extent from the gradual economic betterment, report a revival of activities. Since the devaluation, such reports have come also from the distressed areas in North Bohemia. Many factories which not so long ago announced that they were shutting down have now withdrawn those notices, having in the meantime received orders from abroad. Many factories that have been closed for years are now preparing for a resumption of work. All this is again assuredly a convincing proof of reviving industrial activity, and a confirmation of the fact that we

*) The Liberec district is one of those German districts that are suffering most severely from the economic crisis, for in it is concentrated the German textile industry which has lost its foreign markets.

have so far taken the right steps to secure that Czechoslovakia should link up fully to the economic recovery which has manifested itself through the world for some years past.

The Advisory Committee for Investments and Economic Matters attached to the presidium of the Cabinet Council has received from several of its members complaints that local German firms of contractors have been passed over and preferences given to Czech firms at a distance. These complaints have been made the subject of objective investigation. We reject tendentious complaints but we remedy matters in all cases where complaints are justified. The object of the work is to improve the standard of living in the distressed areas, and we invite all, especially the representatives of those areas, to assist in the work. By this work a great deal more can be done for those areas than by any tendentious propaganda of any sort.

A further cause of the crisis, especially in certain areas of the North Bohemian textile industry is the obsolete character of the technical equipment. To revive economic life in the distressed areas, and to enable them to compete fully in the world's markets is only possible—this we see from the striking example set by England—with factories and mills that by the perfection of their technical equipment, the studied character of their output, and their commercial

organisation can hold their own against foreign competition. Even industrial battles can only be won with the most up-to-date arms. I note these circumstances for the reason that—as I have elsewhere emphasized—in a great number of cases the reduced capacity of our North-Bohemian industry can be explained by the fact that the machinery and plant in a whole series of branches of industry are distinctly obsolete.”

Dr. KAMIL KROFTA, the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 11th of November 1936, said:

“The reproach has been made that we neglect matters of commercial policy, the commercial aspect of our department, particularly in our relations to Germany, and the deduction has been drawn therefrom that that has unfavourable consequences for our economic existence, and that it is a contributory factor of our economic crisis. This is no small error. From the very outset we have devoted great attention to commercial relations with Germany. There have been difficulties in negotiating treaties, but these have been difficulties arising more out of the economic policy of Germany than out of anything else. All the same, our economic and commercial relations

are entirely normal and we continually adjust them by agreements.”

Dr. JOSEF KALFUS, the Czechoslovak Minister of Finance, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 24th of November 1936, said:

“In the Budget debate the question of the efficacy and the necessity of further encouragement of our export trade has been discussed. Allow me to say a few words on this matter. In the views which our public have of this question there is a considerable lack of clarity. Neither the Government nor the Ministry of Finance has considered the introduction of special support in the form of bonuses for export. Negotiations have been, and are still being, carried on merely as regards a re-adjustment of the refunding of commercial taxes. In this connection we already have regulations dating from the year 1928. It is a matter of a refund of the coal tax, the turnover tax and transport taxes. The aim of these refunds is really to place our export industry, if necessary, on the same competitive basis as such industries abroad which are not burdened by these so-called commercial taxes. It is both a question of justice and a question of economic expedience. The State cannot proceed so far in its fiscal

demands as to impose taxes that have to be included in the cost of production to such an extent as to make export impossible, especially when we bear in mind the difficulties we have with transport in comparison with foreign countries that can utilize sea transport.

As I have remarked, it is not a matter of any new measure, but of a procedure that was in operation as early as 1928. In the course of the investigation which we are making into the matter it has, on the contrary, been ascertained that in certain branches of production even these measures are inadequate to enable those branches to compete fully in international markets, since there are still other elements which have to be included in the price calculation, and these act as a burden upon our production. I may, for example, point to the burdens of a social character. In social policy we have arrived at a substantially higher level than many other countries, and this we can book to our credit. But on the other hand, of course, we must realise the consequences for production and the industries for which these social charges mean burdens that enter into price calculation, increase the price of the product and weaken our capacity to compete in the world's markets.

I think there is no doubt that we must persevere along this path in cases where there is real need to do so. The finance authorities have decided to

refund commercial taxes only in absolutely essential cases, in substance only in those cases where 50% or more of the output is destined for export. In such branches output has not enough support in the home market as to be able to offset export losses by sales at home. The branches concerned are particularly the glass, textile and porcelain industries.

There is one more circumstance that is of importance in judging of the matter from the angle of domestic policy. It is well known that the export industry which this question mostly concerns, is for the most part located in the frontier zone with German population. At the outset of the Autumn session the Government made it clear that they wished to secure an improvement in conditions in those areas relatively most seriously affected by the crisis. I think that this effort will awaken a good echo among all those who regard the problem from the angle of the general policy of the State.

As regards the question of language I think I may refer in this connection to the answer given to an interpellation put to us. In that answer I emphasized the fact that care is taken in all offices, including those where there is a minority population, that every taxpayer shall have his matter attended to and information given him in his own tongue."

Dr. J. KALFUS, the Minister of Finance, speaking in the Senate on the 5th of December 1936, said:

“In close connection with the money market is the matter of a final adjustment of certain conditions in banking. In this connection *the question of the Central Bank of German Savings Banks**) and that of the *Carlsbad Bank* are to be the subject of solution in the immediate future. This adjustment has been prepared by the ministerial departments concerned.

It is a matter of an important problem from both an economic and political standpoint. The moratorium enjoyed by these institutions and the impossibility of liquidating claims as against their secured creditors has for a number of years past withheld from the economic life of the country

*) The Central Bank of German Savings Banks in Czechoslovakia with head office at Prague was established in the year 1922. In addition to conducting ordinary banking business it acted as a centre for the German savings banks and several other popular banking institutions.

Losses in connection with the Bank appeared first in the year 1924, mainly in the item of participations, in advances on War loans, and claims on industrial undertakings. To meet these losses the Bank received a sum of Kč 2,500,000 out of the Special Fund for mitigating losses arising from past-War conditions. In 1932, however, further losses came to light of a considerably bigger extent, and to meet these the Bank received from the above-mentioned Fund a “sanitation” aid of Kč 44,000,000, as well as a State guarantee for

a sum of nearly 1100 million crowns. Immediately on the legal adjustment of the matter this sum will flow to the money market and enable the depositors and banks affected to strengthen their economic existence and mobility, an aim towards which the Government strives for all the citizens of the State irrespective of their nationality. An attempt has been made to describe this Government measure as unfavourable for those of German nationality. This attempt was doomed to failure in advance. The unhappy financial condition of the two institutions—their losses are to-day estimated at nearly 300 million crowns—was not caused by any action at all on the part of the State, and its causes are to be sought not so much in the economic crisis as in the grave incompetence of those to whom other people's funds were entrusted. On the occasion of the 'sanit-

the Bank's credits up to the amount of Kč 15,000,000. Aid to the amount of Kč 8,000,000 was also given to the Carlsbad Bank, all the shares in which are held by the Central Bank of German Savings Banks. Despite all these measures of rehabilitation, however, the Bank was unable to regain public confidence. With the intensification of the economic crisis, and in no small measure in consequence of careless management, the Central Bank found itself in such a situation that any idea of its continued existence became hopeless, and it was necessary to proceed to its liquidation. This liquidation is now being carried out by the new Central Bank of all Czechoslovak Savings Banks with the aid of public funds and on the terms laid down in a Government Decree of 18th December 1936.

ation' of the banks these two institutions received, proportionate to the losses they had reported, a sum of 54.5 million crowns from public funds. If, after that time, their affairs are so deteriorated that to-day a loss of nearly 300 millions is shown, the blame for this unfortunate state of affairs can only be attributed to the irresponsible conduct of the former management of the institutions in concealing the extent of the losses. If from the ruins of that mismanagement there has been saved as much as possible for the depositors—on the basis of a certain measure of self-help but to a greater extent by means of help from the State—the State authorities certainly cannot be reproached with having paid little regard to the interests of those adversely affected.

Attempts have been made to minimize the value of the State assistance given to German banking, and it has been stated that that assistance was disproportionally small compared with the total sacrifice which amounted to 3500 millions, this being the sum that the sanitation of the banks generally was said to have cost us.

The rehabilitation of German banking has, including sums still to be paid, cost approximately *1000 million crowns*, apart from the further thousands of millions which the State shouldered when it honoured the old War loans—a debt which it was under no obligation to pay.

By way of example let me say that War loans held by the *German Savings banks* alone were honoured to such an extent that they made an addition of more than 1000 million crowns to the National Debt. At the same time it was a matter of preferential securities which for a number of years paid 5% interest—the cash subscription for which remained for several years in possession of the savings banks till the 6% securities attained par, whereupon the State accepted these securities in place of the original subscription sums in cash.

I therefore reject the reproach that the State authorities—for whom the sole criterion in allotting support to banking was the economic position and needs—acted with less understanding and consideration towards the German banks than towards the Czech banks.”

M. FRANTIŠEK MACHNÍK, the Czechoslovak Minister of National Defence, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, on the 11th of November 1936, said:

“Deputy Dr. Peters has complained that tenders by open competition were not invited for work on fortifications. Tenders in this case were not so invited for the reason that it was essential to have the work done quickly, as is the case else-

where, and, as a result, those in charge of the fortification works and the General Staff of the Czechoslovak Army took the shorter course of allotting orders. The Management of the fortifications secured information as to the reliability of the individual firms contracting, and after being assured of their reliability took regard only to the amount for which they contracted to do the work and to nothing else, following the line of greatest economy. I cannot admit the contention that German workmen were not taken on for fortification works. Some three weeks ago I went through perhaps all our works of fortification, and if I had not been able to speak German I should not have been able to converse fully with the workers, since the majority of them were of German nationality."

M. JOSEF V. NAJMAN, the Czechoslovak Minister of Industry, Commerce and Trade, speaking in the Budget Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on the 18th of November 1936, said:

"Deputy Peschka has spoken here as if the Ministry of Commerce has paid no regard to German traders and German industry. I have in my hand documents which show, for example, the regard paid them in respect of the supply of

military uniforms. For 1937 ample orders, in so far as the associations have asked for them, have been given to 13 German tailoring associations, for example, at Svitavy, Klimkovice, Cukmantl and other places. These were orders for 3,000 summer trousers, for 2,000, for 2,500, etc. I can assure Deputy Peschka that where tenders are suitable regard is paid to them. German societies at Boží Dar, Horní Blatná, Nýdek, Teplice, and the German Bootmakers' Society in Brno have been given contracts altogether for the supply of 27,000 pairs of laced and top boots for the army. German industrial exhibitions, as for instance at Olomouc and elsewhere, have received subventions from us. In 1936 German firms were given contracts for the supply of 474,700 metres of various textiles, 62,000 articles of textile, etc. German apprentices' institutions have also been supported. I only regret that I cannot give more such report, but the German trades have relatively few apprentices' institutions. All who have applied have received support. We also support efforts to improve export trade, and give subventions to German trade cooperative societies and federations. For this year, for example, 270,000 crowns are to be thus given. I ask you to rest assured that we pay no regard to nationality and that we have not the slightest intention of harming our German fellow-citizens in any way."

V.
SOCIAL WELFARE
OF CZECH AND GERMAN
CHILDREN

Question put by Deputy Dr. T. JILLY of the Sudete German Party on the 4th of November 1936 to the Minister of Social Welfare complaining of unequal treatment in the distribution of food by the State to needy children :

"The manner in which German Child relief is neglected in connection with the distribution of food by the State to needy children is absolutely amazing. Every year the Ministry of Social Welfare allots money for this distribution to the German and Czech provincial Child Relief Societies, and these distribute the money among the district Child Relief societies. We might therefore imagine that the amount of State support given would be fixed according to the economic condition of the area controlled by the appropriate provincial Child Relief Society so as to enable it by adequate contributions to support especially those districts which are most affected by unemployment. But the very opposite is the case. The State contributions to the Czech provincial Child Relief societies are disproportionately higher. The Czech centres for child relief can therefore pay out from the State contributions to the Czech district child relief societies which are everywhere established in the German frontier area such high sums that, if we reckon them per head of Czech population, make two to six-hundred-and-seventy times as much as is allotted per head of German population. This means that Czech children living in the German frontier area can be fed whole months at the expense of the State, while the much lower State support in money for German children of the like district scarcely suffices for a fortnight."

Answer of M. JAROMÍR NEČAS, the Czechoslovak Minister of Social Welfare, delivered in the Chamber of Deputies on the 3rd of December 1936, to the Interpellation of the Sudete German Party concerning State relief.

“As early as the 6th of November last the leading journal of the Sudete German Party contained a reference to the interpellation before it was submitted to Parliament. On the same day the Ministry of Social Welfare informed the Editor of the ‘Zeit’ as well as the Secretariat of the Sudete German Party that the data contained in the interpellation as to the amount of contributions for the relief of Czech and German children was incorrect, and that the amount of relief was given strictly according to the nationality scale, that is, for example, the proportion of 2:1 was observed in Bohemia, the Czech district child relief societies receiving Kč 1,025,000 and the German• Kč 512,000. The ‘Zeit’, after several urgent reminders published a correction of its previous assertion the next day, doing so in a few sentences among local news.

The interpellation was nevertheless not withdrawn, but was printed and distributed in Parliament, and on Wednesday, the 2nd of December again appeared in thick lettering and in prominent make-up in the ‘Zeit’ under the heading ‘Equality in Bohemia—Subvention to the Czech Child Re-

lief 670 times bigger than the subvention to the German Child Relief'.

As both the 'Zeit' and the Secretariat of the Sudete German Party had had their attention called in emphatic manner to the matter, it is clear that this was a manifest intention to arouse in the German population a feeling of oppression and injustice which reacts even upon underfed children. In addition to this these figures are made use of abroad, and provoke against us our German neighbour in the North, as may be seen from articles in the newspapers of the Reich which reproduced the interpellation. In especially characteristic fashion was the matter dealt with in Saxony, for example, in the 'Chemnitzer Tageszeitung' which published the interpellation under the heading of 'Equality of Rights in Czechoslovakia—Even Underfed German Children are Oppressed'.

I regard it as my duty as Minister of Social Welfare and member of the Government to declare that all the data relating to alleged oppression in the distribution of food for children and in other forms of relief are not in accord with the facts, that they are presented in one-sided fashion and tendentiously, and that they are in this connection abused.

As regards the relief measure which forms the subject of the interpellation the facts are these :

The organisation of the State scheme for the feeding of needy children was entrusted to the provincial child relief centres which are not State organs but societies for the care of the young based on the nationality principle. These carry out the feeding scheme on autonomous lines through their branches, the district child relief societies. The Ministry of Social Welfare contributes money to this scheme, while the other necessary means are obtained by these bodies themselves from local factors. The allocation of the State contributions is made on the following lines:

Out of the total State contribution at disposal, the sums are first fixed which are to be allotted to the individual provinces according to population. In each province the sum total of allocations to the various provincial child relief centres are fixed on a nationality scale. The provincial centres submit their schemes of distribution to the district relief societies to the Ministry of Social Welfare. In Bohemia these bodies are: for Czech children the Provincial Centre for Child Relief at Prague, and for German children the 'Deutsche Landeskommission für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge' at Liberec. The Ministry fully respects the proposals of these two provincial centres as a rule, making changes only in quite exceptional cases and for the most essential reasons, and doing so as a rule in accord

with the provincial centres. In addition to the State contribution, the district child relief societies secure as already stated for the purpose of carrying out their scheme of feeding the children, further means from the local authorities, the parish, district and other public charities. The provincial centres in drafting their schemes for the distribution of the State contribution take regard of course to these means received from local sources, the amount of which they can estimate approximately on the basis of the experience of the past few years.

If the Czech Provincial centre fixes a relatively larger allocation from the State contributions for the Czech district child relief societies in districts with a majority of German population this is entirely comprehensible, for the great majority of Czech child relief societies do not receive any support at all from the German parish and district authorities (only one or two German districts and parishes give contributions to the Czech district child relief societies, and then only in proportion to the nationality scale of population in parish or district), and as the Czech population in districts where both languages are spoken belong for the most part to the socially weaker classes (they are mainly textile hands, glassmakers and miners) and the district child relief societies have no opportunity of securing such funds from public charity—mainly collections among the local

authorities—as have the German institutions. The Czech children in these districts certainly suffer equally with the German children, and need the like help.

The German provincial child relief centres act on the same lines: they fix a relatively higher contribution for those German child relief societies that function in regions with a Czech majority population, and on the other hand they allot smaller sums to those German child relief societies that secure considerable contributions from parish and district authorities and that have an opportunity also of getting considerable contributions in industrial districts from well-to-do private persons.

The allotment for reasons given above of relatively larger contributions for the Czech district child relief societies in areas with mixed population does not in any way mean that the German district child relief societies go short to that extent: it only means that there is less to distribute for the Czech children in districts with a majority of Czech population.

An important criterion, of course, is also the question of how great is the number of children (Czech and German) in the individual districts who need relief. For instance in Německé Jablonné und Ústěk, two places specially referred to in the interpellation, the German Provincial Centre itself proposed such a small allocation in

view of the very small number of children in need of relief. The German district child relief society at Německé Jablonné fed only 130 children, that at Ústěk only 27.

The feeding scheme for children in Bohemia worked out in fact as follows:

Czech district child relief societies received in all from the State	Kč 1,025,500.—
Secured of themselves from the local authorities, etc. . .	<u>Kč 2,696,604.15</u>
thus having at disposal a total of	Kč 3,722,104.15
German district child relief societies received from the State	Kč 512,600.—
Secured of themselves from the local authorities, etc. . .	<u>Kč 2,635,772.15</u>
thus having at disposal a total of	Kč 3,148,372.15

From this it is clear that the State contribution was distributed between the Czech and the German provincial centres strictly according to the nationality proportion of 2:1, and that the total result of the feeding scheme on the financial side

was far more favourable to the German population than to the Czech population.

In so far as concerns in particular the districts with the apparently most striking anomalies (Teplice-Šanov, Děčín, Hanšpach, Rumburk, Varnsdorf, Německé Jablonné, Hostinné, Cvikov, Jablonec n. N., Ústěck) let us take a look at the exact figures relating to the Czech district relief societies and the German district relief societies, and the data showing the amount contributed by the State, by the local factors, what was the total outlay on the feeding scheme, and how many children were fed.

The State feeding scheme for children in the Winter of 1935-36 shows the following figures for the districts just mentioned: (See on the page 66.)

In the districts indicated the feeding scheme for Czech children was carried out by the district relief societies at a total outlay of Kč 147,599 for 1,909 children, or Kč 37.70 per capita. The German district relief societies expended on this scheme a total of Kč 650,075 for 10,827 children, or Kč 60 per German child.

In an entirely just distribution of subventions for the feeding scheme for children carried out according to the nationality scale it is precisely—contrary to the tendentious assertion in the interpellation—the Czech children who come off relatively worst, for in the German districts they

Court District	Czech District Relief				German District Relief			
	Funds State contribution	Funds Local contribution	Total Outlay	No. of Children	Funds State contribution	Funds Local contribution	Total Outlay	No. of Children
Teplice-Šanov	Kč 12,700	Kč 39,484	Kč 52,184	1,702	Kč 21,000	Kč 354,865	Kč 375,865	4,336
Děčín	5,800	3,746	9,546	349	6,100	70,813	76,913	1,735
Hanšpach	7,300	6,188	13,488	233	4,400	18,687	23,087	741
Rumburk	2,000	3,268	5,268	115	2,800	13,620	16,420	377
Varnsdorf	3,900	7,493	11,393	178	6,500	46,492	52,992	811
Něm. Jablonné	1,300	3,463	4,763	69	600	2,993	3,593	130
Hostinné	2,500	903	3,403	138	1,500	4,008	5,508	310
Cvikov	4,900	217	5,117	148	4,528	32,267	36,795	776
Jablonec n. N.	17,600	19,638	37,238	819	12,000	45,919	57,919	1,584
Ústěck	4,400	800	5,200	158	200	783	983	27
	62,400	85,199	147,599	3,909	59,628	590,447	650,075	10,827

do not get that ample support from the local factors as is given to the German relief societies.

The interpellation of the Club of Sudete German deputies speaks at the close of other relief schemes and not merely of the scheme for the feeding of children. In the newspaper 'Zeit' of the 2nd December last the complaints and criticisms of the auxiliary relief schemes culminate in the words: 'Die Hilfsaktionen staatlicher Stellen für das hungernde Sudetendeutschtum kämen einer Farce gleich.' (The relief schemes conducted by the State authorities for the starving Sudete Germans are pretty much a farce.)

Permit me emphatically to give a denial to this assertion and, on the basis of the figures I am about to quote, to show that the Czechoslovak Government acts justly in the conduct of its various relief schemes, and that, as a survey of the various schemes shows, pays due regard to the great distress that exists in districts where there is much unemployment, and for preference assists the districts gravely affected.

Let me first call attention to the Ghent system. Here we are concerned with the so-called Státe contribution to unemployment pay. From the year 1930 to 1935 the trades unions organised in the Czechoslovak (national) Federations received a total of Kč 958,976,752. It is necessary to add that the largest of these federations—the

Czechoslovak Trades Union Federation—has among its membership 14% of Germans, so that in reality the proportion is all the more favourable for the German nationality.

As against the Kč 958,976,752 paid to the Czechoslovak federations a sum of Kč 704,940,948 was paid to the German trades union federations (Zentralgewerkschaftskommission des deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes, Reichsvereinigung der deutschen Gewerkschaften, Verband deutscher Gewerkschaften, Verband der christlichen Gewerkschaften, and the German organisations not affiliated to a federation).

Alongside the purely Czechoslovak and purely German organisations there are mixed organisations whose members are affiliated to the International Trades Union and the former Red trades unions. Payments to these in the last six years have totalled Kč 135,073,293.

On comparing the figures just cited we see that a bigger quota falls to citizens of German nationality than is their due on the ground of their proportion to the entire population.

It is necessary to devote special attention to all the other relief schemes which I will treat in survey from 1930 to 1935 on the basis of nationality. In doing so I will include as predominantly German all the districts in which, at the 1930 census, there was a population of more than 50% Ger-

man. In Bohemia these are the districts of Aš, Broumov, Děčín, Dubá, Duchcov, Falknov n. O., Frýdlant, Cheb, Chomutov, Jablonec, Německé Jablonné, Jáchymov, Kadaň, Kaplice, Kraslice, Český Krumlov, Mariánské Lázně, Liberec, Česká Lípa, Litoměřice, Locket, Most, Nýdek, Planá, Podbořany, Přísečnice, Rumburk, Stříbro, Šluknov, Tachov, Teplá, Teplice-Šanov, Trutnov, Horšův Týn, Ústí n. L., Varnsdorf, Karlovy Vary, Vrchlabí, Žatec and Žlutice. In Moravia they are: Bruntál, Frývaldov, Krnov, Mikulov, Moravský Beroun, Moravská Třebová, Rýmařov, Šternberk, Šumperk and Znojmo.

At the census of 1930 the percentage of German population in Bohemia was 32.38%, and in Moravia-Silesia 22.85% of the total population.

A survey of the various relief schemes in the years 1930 to 1935 shows the following figures:

Schemes for Providing Food, Christmas Gifts and Potatoes:

Expenditure in districts predominantly German	Kč 520,729,280
Expenditure in Czech districts	Kč 507,702,670

Distribution of Milk:

In districts predominantly	
German	55,215,265 half-litres
In Czech districts	59,777,270 half-litres

*Contributions in kind: rye, sugar, pearl barley,
rye coffee, fats, flour:*

In districts predominantly Ger- man	375,215 quintals
In Czech districts	399,464 quintals

Distribution of Coal:

In districts predominantly Ger- man	301,750 quintals
In Czech districts	368,600 quintals

Distribution of Bread:

In districts predominantly Ger- man	1,379,050 loaves
In Czech districts	1,355,760 loaves

Distribution of Potatoes:

In districts predominantly Ger- man	135,600 quintals
In Czech districts	142,400 quintals

From this survey it is plain that regard has been paid in just measure to the districts particularly affected by the crisis. In 50 districts with a majority population of Germans the State expenditure on food, Christmas gifts, potatoes and on special contributions to the distressed areas has been Kč 13,000,000 more than the expenditure in 103 Czech districts many of which are also suffering severely from unemployment.

Particular attention has been directed in the press also to the scheme of aid and protection for young unemployed persons. This scheme is conducted in the Winter months and enables young unemployed persons in some centres at least to be placed in protective homes. In this matter too a section of the German press has made complaints of an alleged oppression of the German population, while direct complaints have also come in. These, too, are unjust reproaches, for even in this matter attention has been devoted to the gravely distressed areas which have been given precedence to others. The welfare scheme for unemployed young persons is in the hands of the provincial child relief centres supported by the Ministry of Social Welfare. In the years 1935 and 1936 winter refuges to the number of 27 for Czech young people and 22 for young Germans were established in Bohemia, while in Moravia-Silesia the numbers were 24 and 16 respectively. In the present year (1936) 24 Czech and 22 German existed in Bohemia, and 26 Czech and 17 German in Moravia-Silesia. A proportionately larger number of refuges are thus available for German young people than for Czech young people. The special conditions of distress prevailing in certain districts with predominantly German population have been duly considered.

Productive welfare effort among the unemployed is likewise carried out with every regard

to the German areas as distressed areas, no difference in this connection is made between the suffering of the Czechs and Germans, and every properly documented request for such productive relief for the unemployed is always attended to at once by the Ministry of Social Welfare acting in concert with the Ministry of Finance. Although hundreds of applications have been made, no complaints have up to now been made about this category of welfare.

From all the data given applying to the scheme of feeding of children which was the subject of the interpellation, to the Ghent system and to all the other schemes of assistance, it is plain that the Czechoslovak Government acts justly in all its schemes of aid for the distressed and pays special attention to the areas most gravely affected. The decisive matter is of course the number of unemployed in each district. It is necessary to add that it is not only districts with predominantly German population that have been hit by the crisis but also a while series of Czech, Slovak and other districts, that, for example, there is great distress in the Plzeň, Skuteč, Hlinec, Semily districts, in certain areas of Moravia and Slovakia and in the Verchovina, the highlands of Carpathian Ruthenia. In the districts with a predominant German population the present crisis weighs heavily upon Czech workers settled there

in minority numbers, especially glassworkers, textile hands and miners. This is a fact which is frequently forgotten when the North of Bohemia and Moravia is quoted as a region exclusively German.

I can assure the House that the Czechoslovak Government devotes the greatest possible attention to all the affected areas, and especially to the menaced young generation there, whether it be a matter of the glassworkers or factory hands of North Bohemia or of the gravely distressed areas in the East of Bohemia, in Moravia, Slovakia or Carpathian Ruthenia.

Our main endeavour is to provide work, normal and properly paid work. If it is impossible to find work for those who through no fault of their own are unemployed, it is essential to give them assistance. Within the scope of its competence the Ministry of Social Welfare sees to that, and devotes close attention to all ills and appeals. It grieves when it is unable to meet all the cases that deserve help.

The grave economic situation in North Bohemia is caused—and only an ill-willed person can refuse to admit it—first and foremost by the familiar and serious crisis in the glass, textile and porcelain trades in that highly industrialised region. It is for that reason that despite various indefatigable efforts to bring about a recovery

as in other districts of the Republic where there is no glass or textile industry, there has so far been no such recovery as elsewhere."

Speech of M. JAROMÍR NEČAS, Minister of Social Welfare, in the Senate on Thursday, the 17th of December 1936.

"It is necessary to emphasize the fact that all the relief and feeding schemes together call for an outlay of about Kč 750,000,000, and that therefore the feeding of the children represents but a fraction—about 1/250th—of all relief schemes. All the State schemes—the feeding of the children, distribution of Christmas gifts, of milk, distribution in kind, distribution of coal, of bread, of potatoes, and the scheme of refuges for unemployed young people—are carried out according to the social needs and the number of unemployed in the individual districts. That has now been confirmed in the Senate even by a distribution of diagrams by the member who spoke for the Sudete German Party, and thus, despite the demur put forward on principle by that speaker the correctness and justice observed in these big schemes has been confirmed. That is a most important matter.

As regards the scheme of feeding for children which is especially the subject of the interpella-

tion, and which, as I have said, represents but a fraction of the relief schemes as a whole, it is essential to judge of it from a general standpoint. State aid for needy children is by no means concentrated merely in the feeding scheme named in the interpellation but is included in all the other schemes of relief, in the distribution of milk, of bread, of Christmas gifts, in the support given to the unemployed, in ration cards, etc.

But even if we take the feeding scheme by itself it is obvious that no injustice is done to the German population. Nor is the assertion true that the Czech population in those German districts is composed only of public servants with steady pay. On the contrary the Czechs there are for the most part workers—textile hands, glassworkers and miners who are the greatest sufferers under the crisis. In so far as public servants of Czech nationality are domiciled there their means, as is well known, are not such as to enable them to contribute to the district child relief schemes in the same measure as the local factors among the Germans. If, as I have shown, precisely in those 10 districts that figure in the diagrams of the Sudete German Party as distributed in the Senate a sum of Kč 60 is spent on each German child and a sum of Kč 37.70 on each Czech child out of the State and local contributions, would it be just for the Czech child relief centres to propose for those districts

a State contribution of such character that the proportion for Czech children would be still less? The diagram distributed in the Senate concerning the feeding scheme in the 10 districts is not an absolute guide to the real situation as it only shows a small sector and that from one angle only.

In judging of this feeding scheme, so far as the State participates in it, it is impossible to treat it from the angle of individual, haphazard districts, but it must be regarded from the angle of the entire area for which State assistance is given. It is best then to consider it from the angle of the provinces. Data concerning Bohemia I have already placed before the Chamber of Deputies and it is unnecessary to add anything to them.

In Moravia the Czech district child relief societies fed 70,398 children, and the German societies 15,147 children. The subvention of the Ministry of Social Welfare for the Czech district child relief societies was Kč 461,400 and for the German child relief Kč 115,300. From local sources the Czech district relief societies secured Kč 1,416,396, and the German relief societies Kč 294,563, so that the whole scheme was carried out at an outlay of Kč 1,877,796 in the case of the Czech district relief societies, and of Kč 409,863 in the case of the German district relief

societies. The expenditure per child in the case of the Czech relief was Kč 26.67, and in the case of the German relief Kč 27.05. Of the State contribution the share of each child under the Czech relief was Kč 6.55, the share of each child under German relief Kč 7.61, while of the monies provided locally Kč 20.12 was expended per child by the Czech district relief societies and Kč 19.44 by the German societies. Of the total expenditure by the Czech district child relief societies the amount spent per head of population was Kč 0.84, and of the expenditure by the German societies Kč 0.75 per head of population. Of the State contribution the Czech district relief societies spent Kč 0.20 per head of population and the German societies Kč 0.21 per head of population. Of the local contributions the Czech district relief societies spent Kč 0.64 and the German Kč 0.54 per head of population.

In Silesia the Czech district child relief societies fed 18,091 children, and the German relief societies 10,971. The subvention given by the Ministry of Social Welfare to the Czech district relief societies was Kč 87,600, and that for the German child relief societies Kč 87,600. From the local authorities, etc., the Czech district relief societies secured Kč 157,200, and the German societies Kč 189,318, so that the whole scheme was carried out at an outlay of Kč 244,800 by the Czech district relief societies, and of Kč 276,918

by the German district relief societies. The expenditure per child in the case of the Czech district relief societies was Kč 13.53, and in the case of the German societies Kč 25.24. Of the State contribution the share of each child under the Czech relief was Kč 4.85, and under the German relief Kč 7.98. Of the monies provided locally Kč 8.68 was expended per child by the Czech district relief societies, and Kč 17.26 by the German societies. Of the total expenditure by the Czech district child relief societies the amount spent per head of population was Kč 0.65, and that by the German societies Kč 1.08. Of the State contribution the Czech district relief societies spent Kč 0.23 per head of population and the German societies Kč 0.34. Of the local contributions the Czech district relief societies spent Kč 0.42 and the German societies Kč 0.74 per head of population.

From these figures it is clear that there is no disproportion between the Czech and German population, and that the distribution is made fairly according the measure of poverty and distress.

I am convinced that those who put the interpellation would better serve the German people and the State if they joined with us in seeking ways and means of accelerating and expanding the gradual improvement that is taking place in the economic sphere. They would find plenty of

suitable suggestions for numerous German manufacturers and German towns as to how, with the aid of the State and the Government, a gradual approach could be made to a general and complete revival in the industrial areas of North Bohemia and North Moravia, and to securing work for thousands of German and Czech workers in those areas. Untruthful reports to the effect that our Germans are being oppressed—and the one-sided and tendentious character of those reports could be easily discovered by those who spread them if they showed only a little good will—naturally evoke an echo in circles in the neighbouring Reich that are unacquainted with the conditions here, and frustrate the sincere endeavours of our Government to make the German minority in our State a bridge between Czechoslovakia and the German Empire. Moreover, untrue assertions about oppression of the German minority in respect of social welfare matters, sow bitterness in the hearts and minds of those who suffer from unemployment, make a good understanding between the Czech and German nationalities in our State all the more difficult, and thus hinder and postpone that economic recovery and that consolidation of the State which is a primary condition for relieving the distress of all those who in those areas are afflicted through being unable to find work.

I close by stating that the Czechoslovak Government bears in mind, in fairness and justice, and irrespective of nationality, all persons who are in distress, and at the same time endeavours to carry out every serious suggestion for economic recovery. This is a work in which all those of our citizens who are inspired by good will could lend a hand."

