

To the American Nation

REAL FACTS ABOUT HUNGARY

The Hungarian situation has reached a stage of such acuteness that the Peace Conference and the home governments of the principal allies as well are greatly disturbed. Ultimatums hurriedly telegraphed to Rumania demanding a modification of the severe terms imposed on the Hungarians have proved futile.

Because of the obdurate attitude of the Rumanians the transportation system of central Europe has been upset, making it impossible to forward supplies to the starving populations.

Mr. Balfour, the Foreign Secretary of England, in the strongest possible terms condemned the Rumanian invasion of Hungary's capital and according to cable dispatches the Peace Conference unanimously demanded the withdrawal of the Rumanian troops from Budapest and did not recognize Rumania's ultimatum to Hungary.

And now that it has been so fatefully demonstrated that an ally of the Allies may commit deeds that are wrong the "American Committee for the Relief of Hungary" would like to state a few facts which will show that the demands of Hungary's neighbors for territory are wrong, as well, and while based upon racial grounds, are clearly imperialistic.

The American people had so little opportunity to hear Hungary's side of the story that this information should be welcomed by every fair-minded citizen of this country.

To begin with, thousand year old Hungary has been in the course of its history a great power for good. The constitution of Hungary is as old as its history. Next to the English, the Hungarian constitution is the oldest in Europe. Then it must be remembered that Hungary has always been the classical land of religious liberty. As far back as 1554 the Transylvanian Diet at Torda enacted the legal equality of all denominations then known there. That Hungary for a century and a half has been fighting the Turks and preventing them from extending their rule over Western Europe is a known historical fact. Hungarian music, Hungarian literature and art as well as Hungarian scholarship have contributed to a large extent to the World's knowledge, enjoyment and enlightenment. Hungarian culture has an individuality all its own. Shall it cease now, shall Hungary be dismembered, vivisected, annihilated?

The neighboring nations want to dismember Hungary on racial grounds, but what are the facts?

Thousand year old Hungary does not possess any provinces conquered by the sword. Her frontiers have not changed for ten centuries. The country is inhabited by the Hungarians or Magyars, who established themselves there in the 9th century, and by other races which immigrated there in later times. Most of the Germans immigrated as colonists. In the Eleventh century the ancestors of the Slovaks of today were admitted from the upper valleys of the Morava, Odera and Vistula. In the 14th century Ruthenians made a habit of crossing the mountains in the Northeast to pasture their cattle in those tracts of Hungary. In the middle of the 13th century the Hungarians permitted Rumanian shepherds from Wallachia and Bulgaria to settle in the Southern parts of Hungary. The number of the Rumanians and Servians increased when many thousands of those races came

to Hungary in order to find there an asylum where they would be safe from Turkish rule. The Hungarians welcomed them and made them feel at home in their country.

It is therefore an outstanding historical fact that those parts of Hungary which today are inhabited by various nationalities did not belong originally to those races, but have been populated by the ancestors of the Slovaks, Ruthenians, Rumanians, Servians and Germans through immigration.

The other outstanding fact is that not only has Hungary within her present limits been a political unit for more than a thousand years, but her territory is perhaps the finest natural geographic unity in Europe, as a glimpse at the map will show. Economically her parts are interdependent, northern Hungary having iron, wood, water-power; central and western Hungary having wheat, corn, pasture grounds; southeastern Hungary (Transylvania) coal, salt, oil and natural gas. Each section apparently is—economically speaking—a cripple; together they constitute a fine, self-supporting organism. Belonging to the same river system, they communicate easily with each other. History has been the interpreter of nature, when she created and preserved the political union of Hungary's present territory.

Life and time mingled the various races in Hungary incessantly. Other minglings were accentuated during the 18th century, and as one finds there now side by side Protestant, Catholic, Jew and Orthodox, similarly there are in Hungary in the same region members of five or six nationalities. If we except Central Hungary, which is wholly Magyar (85%), and northern Hungary, which is indeed almost entirely Slovak (76%), the races are so intermingled that you cannot cut out an unbroken territory from any of them. Every such attempt creates new mixed territories with no clear racial majority in them.

A fair solution of the problem in Hungary, therefore, must be one which conciliates the laws of geography and political economy and the deep rooted result of history with the just demand of race.

Of course imperialism manufactures its own apparently just reasons to explain its unprincipled pretensions. Hungary's neighbors claim that the nationalities in Hungary have been oppressed. There is no space available to refute here this accusation. But what sort of an oppression could it have been that made it possible for all these races to increase in numbers, to keep their language and national individuality during seven or eight centuries? Does this fact not show rather that Magyar rule was not only not oppressive, but on the contrary liberal and generous? Other countries in Europe have during the past centuries forced their population of many races to melt together and become one nation. Hungary permitted all of its inhabitants to keep their nationality, asking them only to be good Hungarian citizens.

And the majority of these nationalities, the Slovaks, the Rumanians and the Serbs, do not want to cease to be Hungarian. It is the land hunger of the neighboring nations, their imperialism, which urges not only the dismemberment of Hungary, but demands territories where the Magyar race is in majority on the ground that some of their own nationality live there, thereby intending to subject millions of Hungarians to foreign rule.

Now, Hungary's problem, if a lasting peace is intended, can be solved only in accordance with the principle of national self-determination. It would violate this principle to permit that territories should be shifted from one state into another without the consent of the people who live upon those territories.

Indeed the dismemberment of Hungary would be as great an injustice as that of Poland was, and would be a cause of economic troubles and never ceasing hostilities. It would create a Magyar irredentism much worse than any irredentism known heretofore, because the oppression and subjugation of the Magyar people would take place at the very time when justice to the nationalities has been recognized as a fundamental principle of world politics.

We respectfully appeal therefore to the President of the United States, to the United States Senate, to the House of Representatives and to the American Nation for justice to Hungary.

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