

BUKAWINA JEWS LEADERS IN JEWISH PARTY POLITICS OF RUMANIA.

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Our Vienna Correspondent.

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That the Bukawinian Jews who have already had great experience in the political field while their province was part of the old Austria-Hungary should lead their Rumanian co-religionists, but recently emancipated and still inexperienced in political activity is hardly surprisng.

The Bukawna Jews have been political pioneers in an even larger sense. It has been pointed out in a previous article that much of the antagonism and hatred of the Jews in Central Europe, particularly in Austria-Hungary, was the direct effect of their stupid political affiliations which made them the political tools of the larger nationalistic groups, to be used in the suppression of the smaller groups. To the credit of Bukawinian Jews let it be said that they were the first to recognize that only by forming a political party of their own to act as an independent political unit may the Jews avoid dangerous entanglements and cease to be the scapegoat of the other nationalistic groups. Only after tasting the bitter fruits of their foolish harvest, have the Jews of the other territories of Central Europe learned to profit by their example. All of them have now adopted the Jewish political program.

In the first Rumanian elections after the annexation of Bukawina and before the Peace Treaty with Rumania was ratified, the Jews of that province declined to participate. Great effort was exerted by the Rumanian government to induce all sections of the enlarged country to take part in the elections in order to manifest their affiliation with the new "fatherland." Of small numbers—102,000 according to 1910 census—but with great experience, the politically conscious and mature Bukawinian Jews stuck to their resolution that as long as the status of their province was not definitely decided, and while the Rumanian government failed to show by act and deed that it was going to fulfill its promises of equality to the Jews, they would not participate in the elections. The government, anxious to prove to the nations of the entente that the Jews of Bukawina were on Rumania's side, put out a certain lumber merchant, William Hecht of Czernowitz, as a candidate for the Senate. He was elected by a marginal majority, but the Bukawinian Jews never recognized him as their representative and denied that he had a right to speak in the name of the Jewish people. As fate would have it, Mr. Hecht died soon after his election, and his place in the Senate was made vacant. This time it was felt in governmental circles, that the whole of Bukawinian Jewry must be interested in the election of Hecht's successor who should actually represent it in the Senate.

Meanwhile, the whole Parliament was dispelled because of internal political dissension, and now all the citizens of greater Rumania are called upon to participate in a general election to both the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. And the Jews also, whose political rights have in the main already been recognized, for the first time in the history of Rumania are to express their will in the administration of their country. "Green" in the political field, the newcomers have turned to their veteran Bukawinia co-

religionists for leadership and inspiration. Their election platform, altho in certain points seeking to satisfy the particular needs of the Jews of Bukawina, still is sufficiently extensive in its scope to express the wishes of all the Jews of the country.

First and foremost in the platform of the Jewish Deputies, the Jewish National Party of Bukawina has put out the demand for a full Jewish Emancipation.

The present emancipation of the Jews is based merely upon a decree of the Government and has still to be enacted into constitutional law by the new Parliament. It rests with the Jewish Deputies to see that the tragic experience with the famous seventh paragraph of the Treaty of Berlin is not repeated. No Jewish Deputy should therefore consider himself the representative of his district only, but as the leader and defender of the Jewish people as a whole. He should above all else seek to avoid all the pitfalls and loopholes which may be put into the phrasing of the law, and must insist upon a clear, definite expression of the rights of the Jews to complete political, social and cultural freedom.

These are the demands in general. What are their specific demands? First, that the Government should support Jewish institutions to the same degree that it supports the institutions of the other national groups. It should subsidize Jewish kindergartens, grammar and intermediate schools, normal schools for teachers, and establish chairs of Jewish history—Jewish science, and of the Hebrew language, in the universities attended by large numbers of Jews.

Second, since in the old Rumania no legally recognized Jewish organization existed, national popular councils should be established in all the Jewish communities, at the head of them to be the Jewish National Assembly.

Third, in order to avoid dissension between the various nationalities living in the state, and also to assure the smaller national groups, the so-called "national minorities" a just representation in the legislative bodies, special electoral colleges should be established for all the various nationalities, including the Jewish. These new bodies should send their representatives to both houses of Parliament.

Fourth, all Jewish holidays and the Sabbath should be recognized as days of rest in the Jewish schools.

Last, the Government should before all the world recognize the authority of the Jewish Deputies' Club as the definite and legitimate organization of the Jewish members of Parliament and as the true exponent of the will of the Jewish people of Rumania.

So much for the exclusively Jewish planks of the platform. It goes further and expresses the organized opinion of Bukawinian Jewry upon general subjects such as the world peace, social order, the League of Nations, questions which concern all the people of Rumania regardless of nationality.

To materialize this program the Jewish National Party of Bukawina nominated the following candidates:

For the Chamber of Deputies: the former Deputy of the Austrian Parliament and the Bukawina Landtag, Dr. Streicher, and the well known Zionist, Dr. Joseph Bierer.

For the Senate: the head of the Bukawina Zionist Organization, Dr. Meyer Ebner.

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