



Hungarian Holocaust in Vojvodina

by Teleki Julia

On January 23, 1945, the Hungarians of Csurog were chased out of their homes. Most of the men had been taken away in the autumn of 1944 and executed. In the morning hours, armed Serb partisans broke into Hungarian homes, gave the inhabitants five minutes to pack and, if they resisted, they helped them with the butts of their guns. Around 10:00 AM the market-place was filled with frightened and dejected Hungarians. They stood there in the cold, sobbing and awaiting their fate. The Serb passers-by, who were their neighbors, spat on them and shouted: "Put them to death!"

Around 4:00 PM the frozen Hungarians were made to walk in the direction of the village of Járek. Families with small children were put onto cattle-wagons. The rest had to walk in the knee-deep snow in a temperature of -20 degrees Celsius. The older people and the children were crying and moaning. The tears froze on their faces. The first victim was a newborn who froze in her mother's arms.

They went through the village of Zsablya, where the Hungarian villagers gave pillows to the prisoners and looked at them with tears in their eyes, not guessing that, a week later, the same fate would befall them. The prisoners arrived at the concentration camp during the night. Twenty to twenty-five people were put into a room with straw on the ground, full of lice. A week later, the Hungarians of Zsablya arrived and, in the spring, the Hungarians of Mozsor. What a merciless fate awaited the prisoners in this concentration camp! They were starved, tortured and humiliated. Corn and corn-cobs were ground together and given to the prisoners to eat without salt. Many of them became sick and died, especially the children.

The corpses were thrown into the German crypt until it was filled. Then the rest were thrown on the ground and covered with lime. Some victims were still alive. After a merciless five months the survivors were taken to Gajdobra. Finally in the middle of September, 1945, the gate of the camp was opened and the humiliated, tortured, emaciated Hungarians, stripped of all their human rights, stood in the open gate with torn clothes and were given papers which stated that they could go anywhere except Csurog, Zsablya and Mozsor. This decision was made by the leader of the Vajdaság House of Representatives on the suggestion of the Serbian Ministry of the Interior. The paper contained a reference number, official stamp and signature. In this way the Hungarians of Csurog, Zsablya and Mozsor became homeless. Is this not a war-crime? Does the whole world forget about us?

In February, 1946, the decision which was made earlier was put into effect, declaring the collective guilt of the Hungarians, and all this was made legal with documents stamped with a seal. Since that time Serbs have been living in our houses, Serbs have been plowing our lands. They took everything from us. They took a part of our life. We have continued to wear the label of war criminal, although we did nothing to deserve it.

It is finally time that, in the interest and the hope of achieving peaceful co-existence, we be acquitted of the accusation of collective guilt. It is time for the innocent Hungarians to have their name cleared and their good reputation restored.

The territory which is now called Vajdaság is presently composed of three parts – Bánát, the western section of Temes Bánság, and Bácska/Szerémség. This was the southern part of the thousand year-old Historical Hungary. This is the territory which Hungarians call Délvidék (southern land) and even today 350,000 Hungarians are living there, who were

assigned in 1920 to the country of the Southern Slavs, called Yugoslavia. Today, the state of Yugoslavia is legally non-existent. The Hungarians living here, in spite of the bloody wars of the 1990's, have remained on their ancient land. They are demanding personal, cultural and territorial autonomy. They would like to continue to keep their own community in the multi-national Vajdaság. They are actively looking for a solution to their unsettled situation.

Julia Teleki, Hungarian inhabitant of Serbia

Translated by László Botos

(Translator's note: The Corfu Agreement, creating Yugoslavia, which the Serb government effected on July 27, 1917, supposedly states that the southern Slav minorities desired to join with Serbia. Henri Pozzi says: „This is a barefaced lie and one of the greatest frauds of the age.” (Pozzi, Henri: Századunk bűnösei, Budapest 1936, 1996. p. 232)

Pozzi brings to the attention of the official politicians and historians that: „it was not the leaders of the Monarchy's so-called 'suppressed southern Slav minorities' who negotiated this unification but it was three individuals, Wickham Steed, the foreign correspondent for *The Times*, Seton Watson, the leader of the Slav propaganda in London and Doctor Trumbic, the former mayor of the Dalmatian city of Zára.” (Pozzi, p. 228)

The three individuals, who made the Corfu Agreement, did not represent the people and offended the people's right to self determination when they appointed themselves to make the agreement. With this act, five million Austro-Hungarian, Slovene and Croatian Catholics were placed into servitude.