

## Had a plebiscite been held...

"HUNGARY AND THE PRESENT CRISIS" was the title of an interesting lecture delivered towards the close of 1938, by Mr. C. A. Macartney in the Royal Institute of International Affairs. In the course of his lecture Mr. Macartney gave a detailed account of the new situation created in the Danube Valley by the Munich Agreement.

**SPEAKING OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY** in Czecho-Slovakia which had been restored to Hungary, he said that their return to the mother-country was in every way right and just. Had a plebiscite been held, the result would have been the same, since the Hungarians in Czecho-Slovakia decidedly wished to belong to Hungary.

**OF THE SLOVAKS** he declared that, had a plebiscite been held in 1919, it was very doubtful whether they would have broken away from Hungary, the more so since the regions inhabited by them belong from an economic point of view to Hungary and not to Bohemia. The arrangements made in 1919 had from more than one point of view devolved much suffering on the Slovak people. This was particularly noticeable in the field of economy, for the powerful Czech

industries had completely checked the industrial development of the Slovak areas.

**THE RUTHENIANS** — said Mr. Macartney — were neither Czechs nor Slovaks, and were too few to form an independent nation; therefore they would have to belong to another country. At the time of the Peace Treaties in 1919 Ruthenia was attached to Czecho-Slovakia for strategic reasons, in order that it might be a corridor between the latter and Rumania, or rather a connecting link with Russia. But Eastern Galicia fell into the hands of Poland, and this deprived the corridor of any value so far as relations with Russia were concerned, for it made any immediate links with the Soviet impossible. In any case it would be difficult to suppose that larger bodies of troops could be sent at short notice over such rough country. For this reason, in Mr. Macartney's opinion, Ruthenia at present is more of a danger than an asset to the Czecho-Slovak State.

Mr. Macartney regards Ruthenia as a complementary part, economically speaking, of the Great Plain of Hungary, which has great need of the timber produced on the Ruthenian mountains. An

exchange of commodities would be greatly facilitated by the circumstance that all Ruthenia's rivers and valleys debouch on the Great Plain.

**HUNGARY HAD ASKED THAT A PLEBISCITE SHOULD BE HELD IN** Ruthenia. Mr. Macartney holds that this request was perfectly fair and just, but he does not consider the territory suitable for a plebiscite. In his opinion the economic points of view should be taken into consideration and the Ruthenian areas immediately restored to Hungary. That solution would meet the wishes of the Ruthenian people and be in keeping with their interests.

**THE GERMANS LIVING IN SLOVAKIA** — the so-called "Zipsern" — had always clung to Hungary and would like to belong to that country now.

**MR. MACARTNEY ADVISES YUGOSLAVIA** to make territorial concessions to Hungary. Rumania, he said, would have to make considerable concessions in the field of minority rights to the Hungarians in that country.