

Eight

Czech and Slovak political elite

Those who formulated national demands, expressed what they regarded as (...) the interests of all the members of the "nation".

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Before we start on the analysis, the question of *agency* must be addressed. The objective of this chapter is to present the men who formulated national demands on behalf of the Slovak (or to a far lesser extent the Czech) nation, and those who formulated the government nationality policy. Nearly all the individuals in question were men, and they belonged to a political and/or intellectual elite. I begin with an overview of the political system of the First Republic, including an outline of the Constitution and the election system. Then I will present the major Czechoslovak parties, the government coalitions, and two extra-Parliamentary groups (the Pětka and the Hrad circle). Finally, the political elite of the First Republic will be described in terms of socio-economic status, age cohort and gender.

Practical *nationality policy* was the domain of the various ministers and the Cabinet as a whole. This means that the parties of the government coalitions had a more direct influence on its formulation than the opposition. A limited number of people (92 to be exact) were involved in the governments of the First Republic. An even more limited number held ministerial posts that were of any importance for the formulation and execution of the nationality policy, and the lives of these are generally well documented. For the most part, Slovak *national demands* were articulated in the Parliament by opposition parties. In addition, national demands were of course voiced through various other channels, notably the press and public rallies.

If we turn to the symbolic aspect of the struggle, we may note that *Official Czechoslovakism* was articulated not only by members of the government, but also by members of the coalition partners in the Parliament, by governmental agencies like the Bureau of Statistics, and in the education system. Masaryk and the independence movement abroad played an important part in its initial formulation. Likewise, arguments for a separate Slovak nation were presented by politicians as well as intellectuals, journalists and writers. Those who participated in the identity struggle or contributed to Czechoslovakism were a more amorphous group, consisting of scholars and textbook authors in addition to politicians, which means that a systematic presentation is difficult. The main emphasis of this chapter will be on the political elite: the Parliamentarians and Cabinet members.

¹ (... ti, kdo formulovali národní požadavky, vyjadřovali v nich to, co považovali [...] za zájem všech příslušníků skupiny "národ".) M. Hroch: *V národním zájmu* (1996b:3).

A constitutional democracy

Czechoslovakia was from the beginning a democracy, although the national minorities were not represented in the Parliament until after the first election in 1920. The provisional constitution of November 13th, 1918, promulgated by the Czechoslovak National Committee, established a 256-member national assembly as the supreme political organ.² Of the 254 seats that were filled, 213 represented Czech parties – of these 54 were former *Reichsrat* deputies. The remainder were appointed according to a key based on the showing in the last election to the *Reichsrat*. Since Juriga was the only Slovak in the Hungarian Parliament, the rest of the Slovak Club had to be co-opted – or rather hand-picked by Vavro Šrobár. Five of the 41 were former Hungarian deputies: Juriga, Metód Bella, Pavel Blaho, Milan Hodža, and Milan Ivanka. The Slovaks were numerically under-represented from the outset, but this was in part rectified by the appointment of 14 more Slovaks according to a law of March 11th, 1919.

This Revolutionary Parliament consisting only of Czechs and Slovaks provided the future framework for the Czechoslovak state though the constitution of February 29th, 1920. The Constitution stated that the Czechoslovak state was to be a democratic republic, the head of which should be an elected president (§ 2), elected for a seven-year term. The territory of the republic should form a united and indivisible unit, and the borders might be altered only by constitutional law (§3). Legislative power was placed in the hands of a Parliament consisting of a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate, located in Prague (§6). At the same time, the former Moravian and Bohemian Diets were abolished (§ 7). This also meant that the political system that was established was centralized to Prague.

The Senate had 150 members and the Chamber of Deputies 300, elected for eight- and six-year terms, respectively. Since the president made use of the right given to him (§31) to dissolve the Parliament, the election periods were actually shorter. All citizens, male and female, were eligible to vote, above the age of 21 for the Chamber of Deputies (*sněmovna*) and above the age of 26 for the Senate. Deputies and senators were to be elected according to a general, equal, direct, and secret ballot, on the basis of proportional representation.

Section V in the Constitution established full civil rights, including personal freedom and freedom of property, freedom of the press and the right of free assembly and association, right of petition, postal inviolability, liberty of instruction and conscience and liberty of expression for all residents of the republic (§ 106–125). The Constitution also had a special section VI devoted to the protection of national, religious and racial minorities, according to which all citizens of the Czechoslovak republic were equal before the law and enjoyed equal civic and political rights regardless of race, language or religion (§ 128).³

² See Zákon ze dne 13. listopadu 1918 o prozatímní ústavě in *Sbírka zákonů a nařízení státu československého* (1918).

³ The Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic exists in an English version published by the Czechoslovak Government Information Service (1944). Another English version may be found in Joseph A. Mikuš: *Slovakia. A political and constitutional history (with documents)* (1995:170-198). Otherwise, see Zákon číslo 121. ze dne 29. února 1920, kterým se uvozuje ústavní listina československé republiky, in *Sbírka zákonů a nařízení státu československého* (1920).

A separate language act in pursuance of § 129 was included in the Constitutional charter, stating in the first article that "the Czechoslovak language shall be the state, official language of the Republic." Finally, a separate act establishing 22 counties (župy) was debated and adopted on the same day as the Constitution. These counties were to replace the old historical lands (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia) and the existing counties in Slovakia. Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia to the east became a separate county. The Constitution thus not only provided the democratic framework within which national demands could be raised, it also had a direct bearing on Czecho-Slovak relations within the political and cultural dimensions. Combined with the county act, the Constitution regulated the distribution of decision-making power between central and regional levels, and combined with the special Language Act it regulated the language rights of the various national groups in the state. I will return to the parliamentary debate over these aspects of the Constitution in Chapters Eleven and Thirteen.

Before we turn to the Czechoslovak party system, which was a central part of the above mentioned framework, a few words about the proportional election system are in order. For the elections, the country was divided into 23 election districts (Chamber of Deputies) and 13 election districts (the Senate). Voters could not influence the ranking of the candidates set up by the parties (the system of "obligatory candidate lists"). Mandates were distributed in three rounds according to a proportional formula (the Hare method), which ensured a certain over-representation of the large parties. Since Czechoslovak parties dominated among the larger parties, they were slightly over-represented. In 1920, for example, Czechoslovak parties got 68.6 percent of the vote and 70.8 percent of the mandates in the Chamber of Deputies.⁴

Eight major Czechoslovak political parties

Due to the diverging political conditions in the two parts of Austria-Hungary, the party systems of the Czechs and Slovaks differed considerably. Under Austrian Constitutionalism, a differentiated political system had developed in the Czech lands, whereas Slovak political development had been held back by the Magyarization policy of the Hungarian government, including their policy of election fraud and intimidation (see Chapter Five). The Slovak National Party was thus the only Slovak party.

After 1918, Czech parties extended their party organizations and changed their names to "Czechoslovak" in order to incorporate the Slovak electorate. In terms of support and membership, however, the parties became Czecho-Slovak to varying degrees. The parties that could appeal to hitherto non-organized Slovak political currents (the Agrarians and the Social Democrats) received the strongest Slovak support. Otherwise, the party system of the first Czechoslovak republic was organized along national lines, meaning that the national minorities had their own parties. The one major exception to this was the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which organized Communists of all national backgrounds.

⁴ See *Volby do národního shromáždění v dubnu roku 1920* (1922:19).

In the first election to the Chamber of Deputies in 1920, 22 parties presented candidates, and half were Czechoslovak. In the second election in 1925, the number had increased to 29 (12 Czechoslovak). Then the number was reduced to 19 parties in 1929, (10 Czechoslovak), and finally to 16 (11 Czechoslovak) in 1935. The number of parties running for the Senate was lower, especially in the first two elections – 17 in 1920, 23 in 1925, 18 in 1929, and 15 in 1935. Because of this fragmented party system, no single party dominated Czechoslovak politics during the First Republic. The normal was one of broad coalition governments, first of Czechoslovak parties only, later also including the so-called activist German parties. Magyar parties were never represented in the government, neither were the Communists.

Of the Czechoslovak parties, there were eight (including the Communist Party) parties of any stature, i.e. parties that polled well enough to be represented in both chambers and/or were part of the coalition governments that were so typical of the inter-war period.

The largest party in terms of mandates in the *Reichsrat* and thus in the Revolutionary Parliament from 1918 was the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party, reorganized as the Republican Party of the Czechoslovak Countryside in 1919. After the fusion with the Slovak Agrarian Party in 1922, the party took the official name the Republican Agrarian and Smallholders' Party, but it was generally referred to as the Agrarian Party (Agr.). It was the strongest party in all elections but the first; it took part in all governments, and held the post of Prime Minister in all governments but one from 1922–38. Relatively speaking, it actually polled better in Slovakia than in the Czech lands. (See table 2.) The chairmen of the party were Antonín Švehla (1919–33) and Rudolf Beran (1933–38). The first and only Slovak prime minister, Milan Hodža (1935–38) came from this party. He was one of the most influential Slovak politicians, and the longest-serving Slovak minister.

The largest party in terms of votes in the last *Reichsrat* election was the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, and this party also won the election of 1920 as the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Workers' Party (ČSD). The left wing, led by Bohumír Šmeral, formed the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in 1921, thereby weakening the party permanently, especially in Slovakia. The Social Democrats participated in most governments during the First Republic, apart from the period 1926–29. Chairmen were Antonín Němec (to 1924), and Antonín Hampl (1924–38). Two of the most profiled Slovak politicians of the Czechoslovakist brand, Ivan Dérer and Ivan Markovič, were elected on this party's ballot.

The Communist Party (KSČ) became the second largest party in the elections of 1925, outdone only by the Agrarians. After the Moscow faction gained the upper hand in 1929, it lost quite a few members and supporters, but remained among the three or four strongest parties in the following elections. After the party had been founded, a number of persons served as chairman and/or general secretary, including Bohumil Jílek (general secretary 1921–22, 1925–29), Antonín Zápotocký (general secretary 1923–25), Alois Muna (chairman 1923–24), Josef Haken (chairman 1925–27). After 1929 the party was firmly in the hands of Klement Gottwald and the pro-Bolshevik faction. The party was in permanent opposition, and had no political power. The policy towards the national question varied over time.

Table 2. Election results for Czechoslovak parties, 1920–35⁵

Year	Agr.		ČSD	ČSL	ČS	ČND ⁶	ČSŽ	HSL'S ⁷	KSC						
Bohemia															
1920	424,236	19.0	762,092	34.2	191,844	8.6	381,367	17.1	298,054	13.4	80,757	3.6	–	–	–
1925	488,267	23.4	386,440	18.6	296,756	14.2	435,761	20.9	213,843	10.3	194,162	9.3	–	–	468,593
1929	524,578	22.9	535,358	23.4	255,877	11.2	535,740	23.4	200,995	8.8	176,188	7.7	962	0.0	398,260
1935	541,578	–	549,578	–	255,395	–	494,478	–	325,916	–	274,673	–	–	–	384,756
Moravia															
1920	179,382	17.8	318,087	31.6	272,495	27.1	89,890	8.9	89,498	8.9	42,056	4.2	–	–	–
1925	199,721	19.2	166,145	16.0	368,905	35.4	120,909	11.6	42,730	4.1	80,320	7.7	–	–	191,851
1929	224,522	19.4	269,674	23.3	321,936	27.8	177,595	15.4	56,198	4.9	77,539	6.7	20,406	1.8	162,136
1935	287,567	–	269,089	–	315,567	–	198,197	–	77,995	–	122,703	–	28,588	–	174,574
Slovakia															
1920	242,045	23.8	510,341	50.2	–	–	29,564	2.9	–	–	–	–	235,389	23.1	–
1925	248,034	26.4	60,636	6.5	18,036	1.9	36,909	3.9	24,954	2.7	11,576	1.2	489,111	52.1	198,111
1929	278,979	28.2	135,506	13.7	36,548	3.7	43,968	4.4	53,745	5.4	30,134	3.0	403,683	40.8	152,242
1935	286,739	–	184,389	–	37,515	–	51,924	–	25,490	–	41,996	–	489,641	–	210,765
Total ⁸															
1920	845,663 (40)	19.9	1,590,520 (74)	37.4	699,728 (33)	16.4	500,821 (24)	11.8	387,552 (19)	9.1	122,813 (6)	2.9	–	–	–
1925	970,940 (45)	23.4	631,403 (29)	15.2	691,095 (31)	16.7	609,153 (28)	14.7	284,601 (13)	6.9	286,058 (13)	6.9	489,111 (23)	11.8	934,223 (41)
1929	1,105,498 (46)	24.0	963,462 (39)	20.9	623,340 (25)	13.5	767,328 (32)	16.7	359,547 (15)	7.8	291,209 (12)	6.3	425,051 (19)	9.2	753,444 (30)
1935	1,176,628 (45)	–	1,032,773 (38)	–	615,804 (22)	–	755,872 (28)	–	458,351 (17)	–	448,049 (17)	–	564,273 (22)	–	849,495 (30)

Sources: *Statistická příručka republiky Československa* (1925: pp. 344 ff., 1928: pp. 254 ff., 1932: pp. 401 ff.), *Volby do národního shromáždění v dubnu roku 1920* (1922:70), *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v listopadu 1925* (1926:19), *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v říjnu 1929* (1930:9, 21), *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v květnu 1935* (1936:9, 20).

⁵ Results for the Chamber of Deputies, in absolute numbers, percentage of Czechoslovak votes, and total number of mandates (in parenthesis). The Communist Party is not included in the percentage of Czechoslovak votes. Such figures are entirely lacking for 1935. Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia is included in the total.

⁶ The election results for 1935 are those of the National Unity (*Národní sjednocení*).

⁷ The 1935 results are those of the Autonomist bloc (*Autonomistický blok*).

⁸ The Czechoslovak and Slovak Agrarian parties, then not yet united, are counted together in the 1920 total. The Czechoslovak People's Party and the Slovak People's Party ran together in 1920. The total includes both parties. In addition, *Socialistická strana čsl. lidu pracujícího* (a socialist party) got 58,580 votes and three mandates in 1920, *Liga proti vázaným kandidátním listinám* (a non-socialist party) got 70,857 votes and three mandates in 1929, and *Národní obec fašistická* (a fascist party) got 167,433 votes and six mandates in 1935.

The Czechoslovak People's Party (ČSL), founded in 1919, took up the heritage of the pre-war Catholic parties. In the first election, it collaborated with the Slovak People's Party; later it ran independently in Slovakia, but never gained any real foothold there. It was consistently strongest in Moravia, where it was the largest party in three of four elections. Jan Šrámek, a Moravian, was chairman of the party (1919–38), and also represented the party in all governments from 1922 to 1938. The only Slovak of any prominence was Martin Mičura, who was the sole Slovak deputy (1925–38), and chairman of the Slovak branch from 1925.

The Czech National Social Party was renamed the Czechoslovak Socialist Party (ČS) at the end of the war, and became the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party in 1926 (not to be confused with German National Socialism, or Nazism). In addition to the former Czech National Social Party, the larger part of the Progressive Party (Masaryk's old party) joined, as did a group of Czech anarchists led by Bohumil Vrbenský. The party participated in most governments during the First Republic. Václav Jaroslav Klobučák was the chairman throughout this period (1918–38). Edvard Beneš was a member from 1923 to 1935, although he gave up his mandate on Masaryk's advice in order to be able to continue as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the non-socialist coalition in 1926–29.⁹ The party never gained any large following in Slovakia, but was represented in the Chamber of Deputies by the Slovaks Igor Hrušovský (1919–36) and Emil Boleslav Lukáč (1936–39), and the Czech Vladimír Polívka (1929–38). In the Senate the Czech Albert Milota (1929–38) represented Slovakia.

The Czechoslovak National Democratic Party (ČND), founded in 1919, was formed from the remnants of the Old Czech and Young Czech Party, the Constitutional Progressive Party, the Moravian Populist Party and the smaller part of the Progressive Party. It had the first prime minister, Karel Kramář, who also served as chairman of the party (1918–35). The party enjoyed an influence that by far exceeded its size, and was represented in all governments from 1922–1934. Milan Ivanka (1925–34) was the Slovak deputy of the party, but he left when the National Democrats, the National League and the National Front united in the National Unity in 1934. Kramář continued as chairman until his death in 1937. In 1937 the National League went independent again, and the rest of the National Unity reorganized as the Czechoslovak National Democrats and joined the government in March 1938.

The Czechoslovak Small Traders' Party (ČSŽ), founded in 1919, had a rather weak start, but had by the election of 1925 reached the size of the National Democrats, although it never equaled that party in influence. It was represented in the government coalition in the periods 1925–32 and again in 1935–38, always in positions related to economic affairs (public works, railways, industry and trade). Chairmen were František Horák (to 1930) and Josef Václav Najman (from 1930). From Slovakia the party was represented in the Chamber of Deputies by Ján Líška (1929–38) and in the Senate by Bohuš Kianička (1925–38).

⁹ See Masaryk's letter to Beneš in Jaroslav Pecháček: *Masaryk – Beneš – Hrad* (1996:39).

The Slovak National Party (SNS) was the only properly organized Slovak party before the war, but within this party several currents had developed in opposition to the conservative leadership in Martin. The two most important were the Hlasist faction and a Catholic wing. Some of the former helped establish the National Republican Peasant's Party in 1919 (Milan Hodža, Pavel Blaho, Vavro Šrobár). Before the election of 1920 it was re-united with the Slovak National Party in the Slovak National and Peasant's Party. After a split in 1921, the agrarian wing joined the Czech agrarians in the Republican Agrarian and Smallholders' Party.

The Slovak National Party was reduced almost to oblivion in the First Republic, and managed to get into the Parliament only in collaboration with other parties. In the 1929 election the party collaborated with the Czechoslovak National Democrats, and, as a result, its chairman Martin Rázus was elected deputy. In 1935 the party joined the Autonomist bloc, and Rázus was re-elected. The Slovak National Party organized the small autonomist wing among the Protestants. Chairmen were Matúš Dula (1914–21), Emil Stodola (1921–22), G.A. Bežo (1922–25), Jur Janoška (1925–29), Martin Rázus (1929–37) and Ján Pauliny-Tóth (1937–38).

The Catholic wing of the national movement (Andrej Hlinka, Ferdinand Juriga) formed the Slovak People's Party in 1913, but the party did not have its own program until after the war. Technically, it broke off from the Hungarian Catholic People's Party (*Néppárt*). The Slovak People's Party (of Hlinka from 1925, HSL'S) was the largest party in Slovakia in three of four elections. Only in the first election (1920) when it ran together with the Czechoslovak People's Party, was it outdone by two other parties, the Social Democrats and the Agrarian Party. A member of the party was called a "ľudák" (after *ľudová strana*) and the plural "ľudáci" referred to the party as a whole. I have Anglicized it to *ľudáks*.

The party was an exclusively Slovak phenomenon; in Bohemia it ran only once, in 1929, with disastrous results (962 votes!), in Moravia it ran in the last two elections. In 1929, it cooperated with Antonín Čuřík, a sworn enemy of Šrámek, who gained a mandate in Moravia with ľudák help. In the 1935 election, the ľudáks collaborated with the Slovak National Party and the Polish and Ruthenian nationalists in the Autonomist bloc. The party was constantly in opposition, apart from a brief period (1927–29). Andrej Hlinka was party chairman from its founding in 1913 until his death in 1938, when he was succeeded by Jozef Tiso.

Andrej Hlinka, Jozef Buday, Štefan Onderčo and Jozef Sivák were members of the Slovak Club in the Revolutionary Parliament and remained influential. Ferdinand Juriga and Florián Tománek played important roles until their exclusion in 1929 because of disloyalty in the aftermath of the Tuka trial.¹⁰ Among the older generation of ľudáks were also Jozef Tiso, Marek Gažík, Ignác Grebáč-Orlov, Anton Hancko, Ľudovít Labaj, Štefan Polyak – and Pavol Macháček, who belonged to the Juriga wing. Many of the older generation were clergymen: Hlinka, Juriga, Tománek, Macháček, Buday, Tiso, Onderčo, Šalát and Grebáč-Orlov.

¹⁰ Vojtech Tuka was a Magyarone who represented the Slovak People's Party in the Parliament (1925-29). He was prosecuted for espionage for Hungary, and was sentenced to 15 years in prison. See also Chapter Thirteen.

The young Slovak intelligentsia who joined the party in the 1930s was more secular and nationalist oriented. A radical group formed around the journal *Nástup*, including Alexandr (Šaňo) Mach, and the Ďurčanský brothers (Ján and Ferdinand), who flirted with fascism and were not averse to anti-democratic measures in the struggle for Slovak national rights. Two moderate men of the young generation were, however, more prominent: Karol Sidor, Hlinka's protégé and editor-in-chief of *Slovák* from 1931, and the secretary-general Martin Sokol (1927–38).

Although the young made inroads in the Ľudák press (including *Slovák*) and the party organization, the older, more moderate generation remained firmly in control of the parliamentary club, and thus stayed in power. And despite various faction struggles, the Slovak People's Party stands out as the main carrier of Slovak national demands throughout the entire First Republic. The Ľudáks claimed to speak not only on behalf of their voters, but on behalf of the entire Slovak nation, as the only "all-national party, embracing all strands of the nation".¹¹ This claim was of course disputed by the other parties. Being in permanent opposition to the government coalition (apart from the brief period from 1927 to 1929), the Ľudáks had very little leverage on their own. This did not stop them from complaining of the wrongs being done to the Slovaks in a long series of interpellations in the Parliament.

In terms of political ideology, the Czechoslovak Social Democrats¹² and the Czechoslovak National Socialists were on the socialist side of the spectrum. The latter was more nationally oriented (Czech), and organized the lower middle class. The Agrarian Party was a classical peasants' party with a pragmatic outlook, concerned with the interests of the farmers and the countryside. Two parties may be termed bourgeois or liberal – the Czechoslovak National Democrats and the Czechoslovak Small Trader's Party, the former representing tradesmen, merchants and a considerable number of public officials and employees, the latter representing the middle classes. Apart from the National Socialists, the National Democrats were the most Czech oriented – many would say Czech nationalist – of the parties. Finally, the Czechoslovak and the Slovak People's Parties may be termed Catholic Conservative parties, while the Slovak National Party was a bourgeois-conservative party.

The main divide between the Slovak National Party and the Slovak People's Party was, as mentioned, confession. In national terms, the difference between their programs was not very large. The parties often took joint action when Slovak interests were at stake, and sometimes even with members of the government parties.¹³

¹¹ (Ľudová strana čo všenárodná strana zahrňuje v sebe všetky vrstvy národa). Tiso in *Slovák týždenník* no. 3a, 20.1.1924:1.

¹² The Slovak Social Democratic current was organized as a part of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party before the war, and did not organize independently during the First Republic.

¹³ On Czech and Slovak parties, see e.g. J. Chmelař: *Political parties in Czechoslovakia* (1926), C. Hoch: *Political parties in Czechoslovakia* (1936), E. Lipták (ed): *Politické strany na Slovensku 1860-1989* (1992), J. Felak: "At the price of the republic". *Hlinka's Slovak People's Party 1929-38* (1994), F. Klátil: *Republika nad stranami. O vzniku a vývoji Československé strany národně socialistické (1897-1948)* (1992:pp. 125 ff.). Short entries on parties and persons may be found in J. Tomeš: *Slovník k politickým dějinám Československa* (1994), *Kto bol kto za I. ČSR* (1993), *Slovakia and the Slovaks. A concise encyclopedia* (1994), *Kdo byl kdo v našich dějinách ve 20. století* (1994), O. Krejčí: *Knihy o volbách* (1994).

Slovak political representation

Before turning to the Czechoslovak governments, let us look at what consequences the shared party system had for Slovak representation in the Parliament. Official figures distinguishing between Czechs and Slovak deputies only existed for the period 1925–29,¹⁴ and the other sources I found were contradictory. I thus ended up going through the index of the stenographic notes of the Parliament proceedings, meticulously counting those who spoke Slovak. The result of this time-consuming operation (given below) was a lower number of Slovaks than given in any of the sources, including the official parliamentary source.¹⁵

Table 3: National distribution of mandates, Chamber of Deputies

Nationality	census data		1920		1925		1929		1935	
	1921	1930	deputies	percent	Deputies	percent	deputies	percent	deputies	percent
"Czechoslovak"	65.5	66.9	202	68.7	207	69.0	208	69.3	210	70.0
– Czech	50.8	51.1	160	54.4	161	53.7	165	55.0	167	55.7
– Slovak	14.7	15.8	42	14.3	46	15.3	43	14.3	43	14.3
German	23.3	22.3	73	24.8	75	25.0	73	24.3	71	23.6
Magyar	5.6	4.8	9	3.1	10	3.3	8	2.6	11	3.7
Other	5.6	6.0	10	3.4	8	2.6	11	3.7	8	2.6
Total	100	100	294	100	300	100	300	100	300	100

Sources: Oskar Krejčí: *Kniha o volbách* (1994:137), except the division between Czech and Slovak deputies, which is my own compilations, based on *Index k těsnopiseckým zprávám o schůzích Poslanecké sněmovny Národního shromáždění republiky československé, I–IV volební období* (1927, 1929, 1935, 1950). Census data are from *Scítání lidu v republice československé ze dne 15. února 1921*, Díl I (1924:60), and *Scítání lidu v republice československé ze dne 1. prosince 1930*, Díl I (1934:46, 47).

While the Slovaks were generally under-represented, the Czechs were over-represented during the entire First Republic. There are two main reasons for the low number of Slovak deputies. First, while the mandates were geographically distributed in round one, the whole country was one election district in round two and three. It was thus possible to transfer votes from one election district or region in order to get a mandate in another election district or region, which worked against Slovakia. The second and most important reason was that several of the deputies of Czechoslovak parties representing Slovakia proved to be Czechs or even Magyars, while no Slovak represented Bohemia or Moravia.

¹⁴ See *Národní shromáždění republiky československé v prvním desetiletí* (1928:1104).

¹⁵ The discrepancy between my figure and the official figure for 1925 (46 compared to 47) may be due to the fact that I have counted the Communist István (Štefan) Major as a Magyar, because he spoke Magyar in the Parliament. He spoke Slovak in the next period and may thus be an example of a Slovak Magyarone with changing allegiance. The over-representation of the Germans and the under-representation of the rest of the minorities in the Parliament can mostly be attributed to the fact that the election system favored large parties.

The table below shows the number of Slovak deputies representing Czechoslovak parties, their share of the deputies, and the share of the votes obtained by those parties in Slovakia. If the major Czechoslovak parties deprived the Slovaks of mandates in round two and three, the percentage in column 3 should be higher than the percentage in column 2. The discrepancy between column 2 and 3 is largest for socialist parties.

Table 4: Slovak deputies in relation to votes cast in Slovakia

(See legend below)	1920 ¹⁶			1925			1929 ¹⁷			1936 ¹⁸		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Slovak People's Party	12	100	100	23	100	100	18	94.7	95.0	20	90.9	86.8
Agrarian Party	12	30.0	28.6	12	26.7	25.5	12	26.1	25.2	10	22.2	24.4
Czechosl. Social Democrats	17	23.0	32.0	2	6.9	9.6	4	10.3	14.1	5	13.6	17.8
Czechosl. People's Party	–	–	–	1	3.2	2.6	1	4.0	5.9	1	4.5	6.1
Czechosl. national Socialists	1	4.2	5.9	1	3.6	6.1	1	3.1	5.7	1	3.6	6.9
Czechosl. national Democrats	–	–	–	1	7.7	8.8	2	13.3	14.9	0	0	5.6
Czechosl. Small Traders	–	–	–	0	0	4.0	1	8.3	10.3	1	5.9	9.3
Communist Party	–	–	–	6	14.6	21.2	4	13.3	20.2	5	16.6	24.8
Slovak total	42	21.1	24.2	46	20.6	22.2	43	19.7	21.2	43	19.6	22.5

Legend: 1. Number of Slovak deputies. 2. Slovak deputies in percentage of the total number of deputies for the party. 3. Slovakia's percentage of the total number of votes cast for the party.

Sources: My own compilations based on the total number of mandates and votes cast in Table 2, *Volby do národního shromáždění v dubnu roku 1920* (1922:70), *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v listopadu 1925* (1926:19), *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v říjnu 1929* (1930:21), *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v květnu 1935* (1936:20), and the same sources as mentioned in Table 3.

The problem with using votes cast for the parties in Slovakia as a basis of comparison is that these figures may include voters of other nationalities. This is especially a problem in the case of the Communist Party, which was an explicitly multi-national party. In 1925, 22 of the 41 Communist deputies in Czechoslovakia as a whole were Czechs, six were Slovaks, three were Magyars (including Major), seven were Germans, two were Ruthenians and there was one Pole. In 1929, there were seventeen Czechs, four Slovaks (including Major), two Magyars, six Germans and one Pole. In 1935, there were sixteen Czechs, five Slovaks, one Magyar, five Germans, two Ruthenians and one Pole.¹⁹ Considering the multinational character of the party, it is not surprising that Slovak representation does not equal Slovakia's share of the votes cast.

¹⁶ There were a total of 48 deputies elected from Slovakia on the ballot of Czechoslovak parties. 23 represented the Czechoslovak Social Democrats, but among these only 17 were Slovaks, while there were one Magyar (Géza Borovszky) and five Czechs (Václav Barták, Jiří Krejčí, Josef Kříž, Anna Sychravová and Heřman Tausík).

¹⁷ The National Democrats and the Slovak National party got a mandate each by collaborating in 1929. In addition to one Slovak deputy, the Czechoslovak National Socialists were represented from Slovakia by the Czech Vladimír Polívka.

¹⁸ The *řudák* figure includes Martin Rázus (SNS). The Czechoslovak Social democrats had 6 deputies – one was Magyar (Ignác Schulcz). The Agrarian Party had 12 deputies; one was Czech (Petr Židovský) and one Magyar (Štefan Csomor).

¹⁹ The figures are my own compilation based on language as recorded in the Parliamentary proceedings.

The same applies to the Social Democrats in 1920, where 6 of the 23 deputies elected from Slovakia were either Czech (5) or Magyar (1), leaving only 17 Slovaks. In 1925 and 1929 only Slovak Social Democrats were elected from Slovakia, and the deprivation is thus real, especially in 1929. In 1935, one Magyar was elected in addition to the five Slovaks.

Another problem case is the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party. Its Slovak division was founded by Czechs, its membership basis was Czech,²⁰ and it is likely that many of its voters in Slovakia were Czech, as well, considering that the party was always represented from the westernmost election districts, Trnava and Nové Zámky.²¹ Also in this case, the table shows that the Slovaks were under-represented compared to Slovakia's share of the votes cast. The reason why is that a Czech (Vladimír Polívka) is not included among the Slovak deputies in the table. If he had been, the Slovaks would have been over-represented. Finally, the reason for the under-representation of Slovak Agrarians in 1935 is that two of the twelve deputies from Slovakia were Czech or Magyar. Otherwise, the Agrarians gave the Slovaks more deputies than they were entitled to in three of four periods, and in the case of some of the other parties, one deputy more would often mean over-representation of the Slovaks.

There is no doubt that there were fewer Slovak deputies than there could have been because of the shared party system. Another matter is to what extent they were free to promote Slovak interests. While ensuring a more proportional representation, the second and third rounds also implied an element of indirect election, because the ranking of the candidates during these rounds was determined by the party leadership.²² This enhanced the power of that leadership and strengthened party discipline. More than a third of the mandates were in fact distributed in the second and third rounds. Once in office, deputies and senators were kept under tight rein by a system that allowed parties to deprive non-conforming party members of their mandates. This may have restricted the ability of Slovak members of the Czechoslovak parties to further Slovak interests in disagreement with their own parties.

Czechoslovak governments

In the twenty-year period the First Republic existed, there were seventeen governments, which means that on average the governments lasted a little over one year. Of these, all but two were composed of politicians, the remaining two being caretaker governments led by Jan Černý, in 1920 and 1926. The first of these caretaker governments lasted for a year, the second only seven months. These frequent changes of government during the first Czechoslovak republic leave an initial impression of low political stability.

²⁰ See Lubomír Lipták (ed.): *Politické strany na Slovensku 1860-1989* (1992:147), Lubica Kázmerová: Československá strana národnosocialistická na Slovensku v rokoch 1919-1929, in: *Historický časopis* 1 (1993:50-59).

²¹ According to Carol Skalnik Leff, the National Socialists never gained a foothold outside the resident Czech communities. See Leff: *National conflict in Czechoslovakia* (1988:57).

²² For details of the election system of the First Republic, see Oskar Krejčí: *Knih o volbách* (1994: pp. 134 ff., 319).

Two facts speak against this impression, however. First, the turnover of people did not correspond to the turnover of governments. A total of 92 persons (all men) participated in governments in the period, which means that each was on average a member of a little over three governments, lasting a little under four years. The impression of stability is strengthened if we take into consideration that 20 of the 92 were ministers for five years or more and seven were ministers for ten years or more. Moreover, 63 of the 92 were also members of Parliament, and the parliamentarians were over-represented among the longest-serving ministers.

Edvard Beneš had the record: he held the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs in all fifteen governments from 1918 to 1935, when he was elected president. Jan Šrámek, came out second, serving as minister in twelve governments for a total term of sixteen years and five months. Milan Hodža, the longest-serving Slovak, was a minister in eleven governments, for a total term of twelve years and ten months, the last three years as prime minister. The longest serving German was Franz Spina, member of nine governments, totaling eleven years and nine months. Of the 29 who were not members of Parliament, only seven served for two years or more, while sixteen were members of the caretaker governments of Jan Černý only, and held office for one year or less. The longest serving non-parliamentarians were Jan Černý and Jozef Kállay, with respectively seven years and five years. In view of this overall continuity of persons, the picture is rather one of stability than of flux. (See also Appendix B_I and B_{II}.)

Second, the various coalition governments were composed of very much the same Czechoslovak parties. Broad coalitions of bourgeois and socialist parties (and after 1926 the activist German parties) were the rule. The two Tusar cabinets (the red-green coalition, 1919–20) and the third Švehla cabinet and the first Udržal cabinet (the green-black or bourgeois coalition, 1926–29) provide the exceptions. Otherwise, the five major parties that gave name to the *Pětka* (group of five) were part of most governments. The original *Pětka* was composed of Antonín Švehla (Agrarians), leader of the group, Alois Rašín (National Democrats), Rudolf Bechyně (Social Democrats), Jiří Stříbrný (National Socialists) and Jan Šrámek (Czechoslovak People's Party). This extra-parliamentary group was formed during the first caretaker cabinet of Jan Černý in 1920, and was formally dissolved in 1926. It functioned as a coordinating organ between the caretaker government and the Parliament. According to Ferdinand Peroutka, the *Pětka* was the real government at the time.

After the demise of the Černý government, the *Pětka* continued to form broad compromises between the coalition partners on important issues. The *Pětka* was severely criticized because of its unconstitutional status and its secretive working style. According to Peroutka, the political leadership it provided was sorely needed; helping the Czechoslovak parties overcome their tradition of opposition against the government. Also attributed to the *Pětka* are the solid restraint displayed by the parties, the durability of the regime and the cultivating of the art of coalition compromise which characterized the first Czechoslovak republic.²³ All the members of the original *Pětka* became ministers in the first Švehla government.

²³ (*Pětka* vládla, úřednický kabinet administroval). Ferdinand Peroutka: *Budování státu IV* (1991:1386, 1391, 1393).

Of the largest parties, the Agrarian party were represented in all political governments, and the Social Democrats and the National Socialists in all but the third Švehla cabinet and the first Udržal cabinet. The Czechoslovak People's Party was represented in all governments but the two Tusar cabinets, as were the National Democrats, but they went into opposition in 1934, after forming the *National Unity*. The Small Traders' Party was represented more unevenly. German activist parties after 1926 included a Social Democratic party, a Christian-Democratic and an Agrarian party, which was represented in all governments from 1926-1938.

There were clear fiefdoms in the government, including the staff of the bureaucracy. The office of Prime Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior were Agrarian fiefs, the National Democrats often had the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry and Commerce, while the Socialist parties shared among themselves the posts of Minister of Social Affairs, Post and Telegraph, and most of the time Education, Supply, and Railways.

Slovaks in government

Throughout the period, a clear majority of the ministers were Czech. There were never more than three Slovaks at a time, and never more than three Germans (see table 5). Before the Germans started to participate in coalitions in 1926, the Slovaks were over-represented in four governments compared to their share of the total population, but not compared to their share of the Czech and Slovak population. The only time the Slovaks were represented according to their share of the Czech and Slovak population was during the two cabinets where Hlinka's Slovak People's Party took part (Švehla III and Udržal I – two years, nine months). The Slovaks were under-represented compared to their share of the population in all governments after 1929, and even more so than in the Chamber of Deputies. This probably simply reflects the fact that the Czechoslovak, centralist coalition parties had their strongholds in the Czech lands, while the opposition parties were stronger in Slovakia.

Apart from Milan R. Štefánik, who never took up any cabinet position, 13 Slovaks served as ministers. Five were Agrarians (Hodža, Slávik, Šrobár, Houdek, Štefánek), two were Social democrats (Dérer, Markovič), three represented the Slovak People's Party (Tiso, Gažík, Labaj), and the remaining three served as "non-political" ministers (Kállay, Mičura, Fajnor). Mičura later became a deputy of the Czechoslovak People's Party (1925–38), Fajnor became chairman of the Czechoslovak National Democrats in Slovakia in 1922, while Kállay was chairman of the Slovak branch of the Agrarian Party in 1937–38.²⁴ The Slovak ministers were thus mainly Agrarians or Social Democrats. Two names stand out in terms of the total length of service: The Agrarian Milan Hodža (thirteen years, two months) and the Social Democrat Ivan Dérer (nine years, eleven months). Among the "non-political", Jozef Kállay served longest (four years and three months).

²⁴ See Lipták (1992:189, 195), *Slovenský biografický slovník* (1986).

Table 5: Slovaks in Czechoslovak governments 1918–38

Government	Slovak ministers	Duration		Czechs		Slovaks		Germans	
		Y.	M.	absolute	percent	absolute	percent	absolute	percent
1. Kramář	Šrobár, Štefánik		8	15	88.2	2	11.8	–	–
2. Tusar I	Šrobár, Hodža, Houdek ²⁵		10	14	87.5	2 (3)	12.5	–	–
3. Tusar II	Šrobár, Dérer, Markovič		4	14	82.4	3	17.6	–	–
4. Černý I	Mičura, Fajnor	1	0	14	87.5	2	12.5	–	–
5. Beneš	Mičura, Šrobár, Dérer	1	0	12	80.0	3	20.0	–	–
6. Švehla I	Markovič, Kállay, Hodža	3	2	14	82.4	3	17.6	–	–
7. Švehla II	Kállay, Hodža, Dérer		3	14	82.4	3	17.6	–	–
8. Černý II	Kállay, Slávik		7	11	84.6	2	15.4	–	–
9. Švehla III	Hodža, Kállay, Gažík, Tiso ²⁶	2	3	11	68.7	3 (2)	18.8	2	12.5
10. Udržal I	Gažík, Labaj, Tiso, Hodža, Štefánek ²⁷		10	10	66.7	3	20.0	2	13.3
11. Udržal II	Dérer, Slávik	2	10	12	75.0	2	12.5	2	12.5
12. Malypetr	Dérer, Hodža	1	3	11	73.3	2	13.3	2	13.3
13. Malypetr	Dérer, Hodža	1	4	11	73.3	2	13.3	2	13.3
14. Malypetr	Dérer, Hodža		5	12	75.0	2	12.5	2	12.5
15. Hodža	Dérer, Hodža		1	12	75.0	2	12.5	2	12.5
16. Hodža ²⁸	Dérer, Hodža	1	7	13	76.4	2	11.8	2	11.8
17. Hodža ²⁹	Dérer, Hodža	1	2	13	76.4	2	11.8	2 (0)	11.8

Sources: *Národní shromáždění republiky československé* (1928; 1938).

What these had in common (except for the Ľudáks), was that they subscribed to some sort of Czechoslovakism. Almost all had some link either to *Hlas* (Voice) or *Prúdy* (Streams), the pre-war Slovak journals advocating Czechoslovak unity. Six of the ministers were former Hlasists: Šrobár (one of the first editors), M.R. Štefánik, Houdek, Hodža, Fajnor and Štefánek. Three were former contributors to *Prúdy*: Markovič (one of the first editors), Dérer and Slávik.³⁰ Both journals were under the ideological influence of Masaryk. Houdek was also a friend of Masaryk's son Herbert. A majority of the Slovak ministers had received some or all of their education outside Hungary: Štefánik, Houdek and Šrobár in Prague, Mičura in Berlin and Cluj, Štefánek in Vienna, Hodža in Budapest and Vienna, Slávik in Budapest, Berlin and Paris, and Fajnor in Berlin and Budapest. A majority of the Slovak ministers were Protestants; apart from the Ľudáks, Mičura and Šrobár (!) were the only known Catholics.

²⁵ Hodža from Dec. 6th, 1919, Houdek to April 1st, 1920. They were thus three for four months.

²⁶ Kállay was Minister for Slovakia until Gažík and Tiso entered the government January 1st, 1927.

²⁷ The Ľudáks left the government on October 8th, 1929. Labaj took over for Gažík on February 2nd, 1929. Štefánek took over for Hodža on February 20th, 1929.

²⁸ The Czechs became 13 after Kamil Krofta replaced Hodža as minister of foreign affairs on February 29th, 1936.

²⁹ The two German members of the last Hodža government quit during the spring of 1938. Franz Spina was not replaced, while Ludwig Czech was replaced, first by Dérer, who doubled, then by František Ježek, a prior minister without portfolio.

³⁰ Štefánek lists the main contributors to *Hlas* and *Prúdy* in his book *Masaryk a Slovensko* (1931:31). He also mentions the Slovak National socialist deputy Igor Hrušovský as one of the Hlasists, and the Slovak Agrarian deputy Ján Halla as a member of the *Prúdy* circle. See also *Slovakia and the Slovaks* (1994).

The single most important ministry from a national point of view was the Ministry of Education, but also the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Unification of Legislation, and until 1928, the Plenipotentiary Ministry for Slovakia were important from a national point of view. Five of eleven Ministers of Education were Slovaks, seven of eight Ministers of Unification of Legislation were Slovaks, as were all Ministers of Slovakia. Slovaks were also well represented among the Ministers of Justice, Health and Agriculture.

On the other hand, not a single Slovak was Minister of Industry and Commerce, Public Works, Post and Telegraph, Railways, Social Affairs, or Finance. This means that the economic interests of Slovakia were not taken care of in terms of representation, while the Slovaks were fairly well represented in the ministries that may be deemed important from a national, cultural point of view. Taken together, the Slovaks serving as Ministers of Education served nearly half the period, but it is worth noting that they were all Czechoslovakists, as were indeed all the Czechs who held that position. The Ľudáks served (in the nationally less important positions) as Minister of Health (Tiso) and Minister of Unification of Legislation (Gažík, Labaj).

Masaryk and the "Hrad" faction

Finally, special mention should be made of the so-called *Hrad* faction, named after the castle where the Czechoslovak president resided. The term referred to an influential circle around Masaryk and Beneš, which included leading politicians from the National Socialist and Social Democratic parties, persons associated with the national gymnastics organization (*Sokol*), the organization of former legionaries (*Československá obec legionářská*), as well as some writers and intellectuals. Among the latter was Kamil Krofta, a professor of history who succeeded Beneš as Minister of Foreign Affairs. But there were also some politicians representing other parties, especially Agrarians (including former Hlasists like Vavro Šrobár and Anton Štefánek, and František Udržal) and some National Democrats. Masaryk denied that any such Hrad group existed,³¹ although he admitted having close contacts with the Prime Minister (Švehla), the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Beneš) and Defense (Udržal).

It has been suggested that Beneš was the driving force in the Hrad circle; but, from Masaryk's letters to Beneš, Jaroslav Pecháček judges that Masaryk was the real leader.³² Ideologically the *Hrad* faction adhered to Masaryk's humanism and democratic ideals; its foreign-policy orientation was towards the Allies, especially France; and it emphasized the role of the independence movement abroad in the establishment of a Czechoslovak republic.³³ Among the strongest opponents of the Hrad faction were some of the central figures in the home front, such as Karel Kramář and Jiří Stříbrný.³⁴

³¹ (neexistuje žádný "Hrad"). See T.G. Masaryk: *Cesta demokracie III* (1994:268) – a collection of Masaryk's texts.

³² See Pecháček: *Masaryk – Beneš – Hrad* (1996:16).

³³ Olivová: *Československé dějiny 1914–39*, Díl I (1993:91-92), Tomeš (1994), *Dějiny země koruny české*, Díl II (1993).

³⁴ See e.g. Jiří Stříbrný: *T.G.M. a 28. říjen* (1938).

A political and educational elite

Initially, I mentioned that the individuals who formulated the national demands on behalf of the Slovak and a nationality policy on behalf of the government belonged to a political and/or intellectual elite. The members of government stand out in both respects. Of the 92 individuals who were ministers at some point, 58 had the title "Doctor". A further eight were "engineers", two were generals. The remaining 24 are listed without any title.³⁵ Even though the title "Doctor" may cover a variety of specialties (Ph.D., Doctor of Law, Medicine etc), we may safely assume that it indicates a fairly high level of education.

Of the 24 without any title, nine belonged to the Agrarians, six to the Social Democrats and three to the National Socialists. Ten were journalists or editors, four were peasants, one was a landowner, two were workers, three were civil servants, one was an economist, one was a party secretary and one was a high school teacher. I have not been able to identify the occupational status of Leopold Průša, Minister of Supply under Černý in 1920–21. We can at least include the journalists and the high school teacher among the intelligentsia, and probably also the civil servants. In any case members of academia predominated among the ministers, while the two major classes of the population, workers and peasants, were hardly represented at all. The most relevant post from a national point of view is the Ministry of Education and Enlightenment. All the ministers either held an academic degree or were editors.

If we turn to the social composition of the Czechoslovak parties represented in the Parliament, the picture becomes a little more nuanced, but workers and peasants were still under-represented compared to their share of the population. (See Table 6.)

The largest group was civil servants and clerical workers, numbering almost a third of the Chamber of Deputies in all election periods, and a little less in the Senate. What we may loosely term the "intelligentsia" came out second, numbering roughly between 20 and 25 percent. This category includes teachers at all levels, also professors at institutions of higher learning and universities, in addition to editors and writers. The latter were the most numerous in this group. If we include lawyers and doctors (the majority here were lawyers), among the intelligentsia, this group also comprises around a third altogether.

The peasants only followed in third place, and never exceeded 20.5 percent in either chamber. Around half of the peasants represented the Agrarian Party. Likewise the workers never exceeded 10 percent, and a great majority of them were Communists. The business community (including large landowners) was substantially better represented in the Senate than in the Chamber of Deputies. The Czechoslovak Small Traders' Party had the narrowest profile in terms of social composition, mostly sending merchants to the Parliament, yet it never made up as much as half of the businessman category. Finally, clergymen were mainly represented in the parliamentary clubs of the Catholic parties (the Czechoslovak People's Party and Hlinka's Slovak People's Party) and to a lesser extent in the Agrarian Party.

³⁵ V. K. Barvínek: *Dvacet let Československa. Politický a hospodářský přehled 1. republiky* (1938). See also Appendix B1.

Table 6: Social composition of Czech and Slovak parties, 1920-35

Party:	Legend: 1. 1920 2. 1925 3. 1929 4. 1935	Workers				Peasants				Intelligentsia (teachers, professors, editors, writers)				Lawyers & doctors				Clergy				Civil servants & clerical workers (private and public)				Businessmen (trade, industry, construction, estate owners)			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
		Czechoslovak Agrarian Party	Deputies Senators	-	-	-	-	21	21	19	20	7	5	5	5	7	4	2	2	-	1	1	-	3	11	14	13	4	4
Czechoslovak Social Democrats	Deputies Senators	7	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	20	13	13	14	4	3	8	5	-	-	-	-	23	10	19	15	-	1	-	-
Czechoslovak National Socialists	Deputies Senators	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	9	8	8	7	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	15	19	17	2	2	3	2
Czechoslovak People's Party	Deputies Senators	-	-	-	2	8	11	6	7	3	5	6	5	2	2	2	1	2	3	3	-	4	7	6	3	2	3	2	4
Czechoslovak National Democrats	Deputies Senators	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	8	1	6	5	-	1	1	3	-	-	1	-	9	9	4	7	3	2	2	2
Czechoslovak Small Traders' Party	Deputies Senators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	4	10	9	14
Hlinka's Slovak People's Party	Deputies Senators	-	1	-	-	1	3	2	4	1	5	3	4	3	4	3	2	5	8	5	4	1	2	5	7	-	-	2	1
Communist Party of Czechoslovakia	Deputies Senators	3	14	18	12	1	2	3	1	7	12	4	8	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	13	10	5	8	2	-	-	-
Total: ¹	Deputies Senators	10	17	21	18	34	38	32	34	56	50	47	50	18	16	16	14	7	12	10	4	69	66	73	71	17	22	23	28

Sources: V. Zaděra: *Politické strany v národním shromáždění* (1930: 65–70); *Volby do národní shromáždění. Historický přehled výsledků voleb za období 1920–1935* (1990).

¹ In addition, there were 5 deputies who did not belong to any parliamentary club in 1920 (2 peasants, 2 businessmen, 1 lawyer), 1 in 1925 (peasant) and 3 in 1929 (1 peasant, two intelligentsia). Two senators were without club in 1920 (1 peasant, 1 businessman) and 1 in 1929 (businessman). There were also 3 housewives in the Chamber of deputies in 1925, (2 Communists and 1 National Socialist). Both sources give information for the years 1920, 1925, and 1929. They are mostly in agreement, the main exception being variations regarding the Communist Party in the Chamber of Deputies in all three years. I have chosen to trust the figures given by the older of the two sources in these cases (Zaděra). The 1935 figures are all from *Volby do národní shromáždění*.

Perhaps most surprising is the social profile of the Czechoslovak Social Democrats. The number of workers was low, while a great majority of its deputies and senators were members of the intelligentsia, or they were lawyers or civil servants/clerical workers. Apart from the few workers which the party admittedly had among its ranks, its social profile was strikingly similar to that of the National Socialists and the National Democrats, who also recruited mainly among civil servants, clerical workers and the intelligentsia.

The Slovak People's Party would appear to be the party with the most even social composition, apart from the many clergymen who represented it in the Chamber of Deputies, especially in the period 1925–29. In view of the social composition of the Slovak population, however (around 60 percent were employed in agriculture in 1921), the peasants were greatly under-represented, not to mention the workers. A closer look reveals that a great majority also of the *ľudáks* had higher education.

If we compare the social composition of the elected Parliaments with the Revolutionary Parliament, we find that the latter has an even clearer elite character. Only 14.4 percent of the deputies were workers or peasants, while 12.5 percent were lawyers, 26.8 percent belonged to the intelligentsia (writers, teachers, professors), another 26.8 percent were civil servants and clerical workers, 5.8 percent were clergymen, while the business community accounted for 9.3 percent. 28 percent of the deputies had a Doctor's degree. The heavy representation of lawyers in the Revolutionary Parliament was in line with traditional Czech representation patterns.³⁶

Table 7: Age cohorts in the Parliament, 1925–38

Legend: 1=1925, 2=1929 3=1935	1900–05	1890–99			1880–89			1870–79			1860–69			1850–59			Total
	1935	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	
Deputies	44	29	54	101	149	144	114	97	84	35	23	18	6	1	0	0	300
Senators	–	–	–	–	1	30	74	96	83	64	43	32	10	10	5	2	150
Total	44	29	54	101	150	174	188	193	167	99	66	50	16	11	5	2	450

Source: My compilations based on *V. Záděra: Politické strany v národním shromáždění* (1930:114–125), and *Národní shromáždění republiky československé* (1928: pp. 1299 ff.; 1938: pp. 983 ff.).

Finally, a few words on the composition of the Parliament in terms of age and gender are in order. I have unfortunately not been able to compile information for the first election period. The minimum age requirement for election to the Chamber of Deputies was 30; to the Senate, 45 years of age. Table 7 shows that the age cohorts born between 1870 and 1889 (who were thus between 30 and 50 years of age in 1918) dominated Czechoslovak politics throughout the period. This can easily be seen by comparing column 1 (the 1925 election) with column 3 (the 1935 election) for consecutive cohorts.

³⁶ See e.g. tables in Jiří Kořalka: *Češi v habsburské říši a v Evropě 1815-1914* (1996:107–108). See also Appendix F.

Ten female deputies were elected in the 1925 and 1929 elections; seven were Czech and three German. In 1935, nine women were elected – eight Czech and one German. There were four female senators in 1925, three in 1929, and five in 1935 – all Czech. The total number of women thus never exceeded fourteen (3.1 percent). Most of the women represented Socialist or Communist Parties: all but two in 1925 and 1929, and all but three in 1935. The exceptions belonged to the German National Party, the Agrarians and the National Democrats/National Unity. Not a single Slovak woman was elected. Apart from the National socialist Františka Zemínová, the women did not play any important part in the debates over national questions in the Parliament.

Strictly speaking, none of the parties can be said to have been representative of the population in terms of social composition.

Concluding remarks

As noted in the beginning of this chapter, nationality policy, whether a response to national demands or government-initiated, was in practice the domain of the various ministers and the Cabinet as a whole. The parties represented in the government coalition of course had influence on the formulation of this policy, as did the *Pětka* and the *Hrad* faction. The nationality policy as a whole was probably in most cases the outcome of compromises within the government coalition, although there were times when individual members of the government had considerable personal influence (e.g. Dérer and Hodža). One party or movement stands out as the main carrier of Slovak national demands during the entire First Republic: The (Hlinka's) Slovak People's Party, although the Slovak National Party did play a part when Rázus was represented in the Parliament.

No explicit presentation has been given of that wider, more amorphous group who contributed to the formulation of Official Czechoslovakism as a national ideology, and who defended Slovak national individuality. I have found it more practical to present individuals in the context their contributions occur; biographic data may also be found in Appendix C_I and C_{II}. As a whole, this group was perhaps less of a political elite, and more of an intellectual elite. The majority of those who were not politicians were scholars (or writers), and many were politicians *and* scholars. Among the scholar-politicians, in addition to Tomáš G. Masaryk and Edvard Beneš, we find Kamil Krofta, professor of history, Anton Štefánek, professor of sociology, and Josef Šusta, professor of history and author of history textbooks for secondary school. We will become more acquainted with these people in the next two chapters.