understanding of the societies, governments, and politics of East Central Europe, most of whose peoples are now members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

Our methodology takes into account that in the last three decades the study of war and national defense systems has moved away from narrow concern with battles, campaigns, and leaders and has come to concern itself with the evolution of the entire society. In fact, the interdependence of changes in society and changes in warfare, and the proposition that military institutions closely reflect the character of the society of which they are a part have come to be accepted by historians, political scientists, sociologists, philosophers, and other students of war and national defense. Recognition of this fact constitutes one of the keystones of our approach to the subject. The present volume concentrates on interethnic relations, and the Czechoslovak government’s policies toward the minorities as related to their concept of national defense.

Works in Western languages adequately cover the diplomatic, political, intellectual, social, and economic histories of these peoples and this area. In contrast, few substantial studies of their national defense systems have yet appeared in Western languages. Similarly, though some substantial, comprehensive accounts of the nonmilitary aspects of the history of the whole region have been published in the West, nothing has yet appeared in any Western language about the national defense systems of the area as a whole. Nor is there any study of the mutual effects of the concepts and practices of national defense in East Central Europe. Thus, this comprehensive study on War and Society in East Central Europe is a pioneering work.

The present volume investigates the plight of the Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia, as a multinational state, was established as one of the consequences of the First World War. The Czechoslovak effort during and after World War I to transform their state into a Slavic nation state negatively affected the fate of the minorities of Czechoslovakia. The study of Dr. Kálmán Janics thus exposes a problem which is deeply rooted in the effects of both world wars, thus the book is a welcome addition to our series.

Kálmán Janics, the author of the book, is a medical doctor and a sociologist. He is one of the few Hungarians of the older generation with a higher education who survived the calculated expulsion of the intelligentsia, first the general target of persecution of the Hungarian minority in postwar Czechoslovakia. Well known, both at home and abroad, as a Hungarian writer on minority problems, Dr. Janics has recently been forced into retirement as a physician. He lives in his hometown, in one of Slovakia’s still predominantly Hungarian regions.

Gyula Illyés, author of the introductory essay on Hungarian minorities in general, is an internationally known Hungarian poet and writer. At the age of 79, he is the grand old man of contemporary Hungarian literature. Although recipient of several official prizes, the Communist authorities suppressed Mr. Illyés’s recently published book of essays because of his outspoken views on the Hungarian minorities. Of Calvinist peasant origins, he is regarded today as the voice of Hungarian national conscience, both in Hungary and by Hungarians everywhere.
If the world at large is hardly aware of Hungarian minority problems, all the greater is the Hungarian interest in them. Evidence of that is the extraordinary success of Dr. Janics's book, both among the million or so Hungarians living all over the world and among the fourteen million or so Hungarians in the Danube region. The latter know of it mostly by hearsay only, or from foreign broadcasts, since the book is banned in Hungary and in the surrounding Communist countries with Hungarian populations. It was published in Munich under the auspices of the Hungarian Protestant Free University in Europe with headquarters in Bern, Switzerland.

The success of Dr. Janics's book among Hungarians is easy to understand. It speaks out on an issue which lies heavily on the Hungarian mind but cannot be freely discussed in public back home. Although the Hungarian minority survived the postwar Czechoslovak assault, its survival is a precarious one. And the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia is just one of several. The largest Hungarian minority is in Romania; two smaller ones are in Yugoslavia and in the Soviet Ukraine. Altogether over three million Hungarians, one in every four, are exposed to the vicissitudes of minority existence today. Concern for their survival is aggravated by the Hungarian Government's apparent indifference toward them. The Communist regime regards the concern for the Hungarian minorities as a relic of bourgeois nationalism, which was discredited by the Horthy era's revisionist policy. Furthermore, according to the Communist theory of "common fatherland," the Hungarian minorities are well taken care of in the neighboring Communist countries since they are governed in the spirit of "proletarian internationalism." However, the truth of the matter is that, despite "international" Communist Party demonstrations, national tolerance in the Danube region does not seem to flourish at all under Communist internationalism.

Understanding the Hungarian interest in Dr. Janics's book may be why should it be published in an English version?

The significance of Dr. Janics's book is that it speaks of a universal phenomenon: man's inhumanity to man under the dehumanizing influence of nationalist frenzy. Moreover, what is specifically noteworthy in this particular case is that it happened in a country with a democratic reputation. Furthermore—and this may reflect on the state of the Western democratic world itself—the brutalities committed in postwar Czechoslovakia against the national minorities did not seem to harm at all the country's democratic prestige. The story of Czechoslovak policy to liquidate the country's Hungarian minority has never been told in any appreciable detail, which is another reason why this book deserves international attention beyond the Hungarian language barrier. Its topic has so far been subject to that "ugly silence" the British writer Nikolai Tolstoy spoke recently of in his book on the forcible repatriation of Soviet citizens by the West (Victories of Yalta; in American edition, The Secret Betrayal) at the end of World War II.

The historical setting of Dr. Janics's topic briefly stated is this: During World War II, taking advantage of the West's feeling of shame over Munich, and of the worldwide indignation over Hitler's cruelties, Edward Benet, President-exile of Czechoslovakia, launched a positive campaign that advocated the expulsion of the German population from Czechoslovakia. Soon he advanced a general theory, flamboyant but successful, that national minorities are the cause of war and a threat to peace. Thus, in order to make Czechoslovakia into a homogeneous Slav nation-state, the Hungarian minority too has been declared guilty of treason and dangerous to both the security of Czechoslovakia and to European peace. An "ugly silence" of a special kind was necessary to make Dr. Benet's wartime anti-minority theory stick. Above all, silence had to be maintained about the clearly visible fact that the Slovaks themselves—from whose half of Czechoslovakia the Hungarians were to be expelled—had betrayed the Czechoslovak State and gained, for the first time in their history, separate national statehood with Hitler's help.

Hitler's absence notwithstanding, it was quite extraordinary that Dr. Benet should embrace the idea of an ethnically pure Slav state. Czechoslovakia after all had been founded following World War I, with Western democratic assistance, as a multinational state with the expressed promise to become—in Benet's own words—"a sort of Switzerland," a fair replacement, that is, of the defunct Habsburg Empire. Why things did not work out according to Czech plans and promises, has skillfully been obfuscated by Czech propaganda. Dr. Janics reveals a few points concerning this matter, worthy of Western attention. Mr. Illyés elaborates the theme on a universal level. His joint message is: peace cannot be built on falsehood and injustice.

Despite blatant historical inconsistencies in his revised statemaking ideas, Benet was singularly successful during World War II in getting Allied
approval of his plans for expelling the Germans from Czechoslovakia. He was less successful, however, in adding the Hungarians to his list of national minorities deserving liquidation. It is to the credit of the United States that, by opposing Benes and his Soviet Russian allies, the total expulsion of the Hungarian minority did not materialize. With Soviet support, Benes did everything he could think of (and he was quite resourceful) to overcome or circumvent American opposition. His tactics, as well as the horrors the Hungarian minority went through while Benes's campaign was censoring against them, is told with impressive documentation (mainly from Czechoslovak sources) by Dr. Janics's book.

Since Dr. Janics's narrative ends with the Communist coup of 1948, marking the "end of the nightmare," a note is in order to clarify the Soviet role in Benes's policy against the Hungarian minority. Credit should not be denied to the Communists for ending the indiscriminate persecution of the Hungarians in postwar Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, not unlike everywhere else in the Soviet orbit of power, in Czechoslovakia too, Communist policy had been utterly cynical, serving no other purpose but to facilitate Soviet postwar conquest. After some hesitation, Stalin during the war approved Benes's plan to expel the Hungarians, and the Communists took the lead in the postwar persecutions of the national minorities in Czechoslovakia. This ensured Benes's continuous praise of Soviet policy, then playing into the Soviets' hands during the critical postwar years—not unlike during the war, when Benes kept assuring the Western democracies of Stalin's good intentions. When, in 1948, Czechoslovakia's term came to be transformed into a "people's democracy," as the last one in a series, the Communists switched sides. They restored to the Hungarians their citizenship rights and denounced their postwar persecution as the work of "bourgeois nationalists." This is the technique of "ugly silence," Soviet style.

I should reveal at this point that, although I am far removed geographically, the minority affairs of the Danube region are very close to my heart. I grew up in Czechoslovakia as a minority Hungarian. In fact, had good fortune not lifted me out of my place of birth, I would have shared the misfortunes my fellow Hungarians have suffered in Czechoslovakia. I would have hardly escaped the charges of "traitor," and other indignities for belonging to a "fascist nation" as the haughty Slovaks—sitting among the victors, thanks to the Czechs—started calling the defeated Hungarians...
of Benes's vindictive campaign against Czechoslovakia's Hungarian minority. And specifically, because it is so insistently buried in that "ugly silence," I would like to call attention to what Dr. Janics says about the tragic fate of Janos Esterhazy, representative of the Hungarian minority in the National Assembly of the Slovak State during World War II. Esterhazy's lonely vote in 1942 against the Slovak law authorizing the deportation of Jews is of particular interest, not merely as a measure of Esterhazy's personal morality and political courage, but also for reasons related to the principal moral and political issues discussed in this book.

The Allied backing Benes received in his campaign against Czechoslovakia's national minorities was due mainly to world-wide indignation aroused by Hitler's inhumanities against the Jews—not against the Slovaks. That the Slovaks, by demanding expulsion of the Hungarian minority from Slovakia, should claim benefits indirectly derived from Hitler's persecution of the Jews is truly the outrageous irony of the tragedy of which Dr. Janics is giving a potential yet balanced account.

Janics and Illyes, authors of the Hungarian original, have expressed the wish that their book should be published in "world languages." Their book, however, is so specifically Hungarian as to make translation not merely difficult but impossible. A straight translation into English had been made and proved unfit for publication. An adaptation, which is different in form yet identical in substance with the original, seemed to be the only solution. Such a radical operation entailed of course not merely stylistic changes but a rewriting and rearrangement on a scale which resulted in a book with its own character. Changes of sequences have been made, passages have been omitted and added. To indicate the many changes that were made in the English version would be technically impossible. I did it only in two instances: In Chapters 4 and 5, in sections on the Potsdam conference and the Paris peace conference. I added material there and expressed opinions which are my own. Otherwise, I have altered phrasings throughout the book, and made many minor and major adjustments, but never tinkered with underlying views I had no reason to do so. I identify myself entirely with the authors of the Hungarian original, with their views, with their concerns. As author of the English version I had only one aim: To communicate the subject matter in English as effectively as the original succeeded in doing in Hungarian.

It was one thing to wish that the Hungarian original should be published in a "world language" and another to make the wish come true. Credit for the latter is due to Professor Bela Kirdy, Director of the Brooklyn College Studies on Society in Change. Also, acknowledgements are due to the Hungarian-Americans (their wish is to remain anonymous) whose contributions made the publication in the Brooklyn College Series possible. In 1956, very young, they fought in the Hungarian Revolution. They lost their country's bid for freedom, but not their interest in the cause of freedom—not their concern for the least free among their compatriots today: the over three million minority Hungarians living in the countries of Hungary's neighbors.

The preparation for publication of this English version owes a great debt to Mrs. Dorothy Meyerson, Editorial Assistant of the Brooklyn College Studies on Society in Change. Her efficiency is unsurpassed as her good humor—a delightful combination. Also, I wish to express my coming the often awesome-looking barriers between two such different English translation (in manuscript); his work was helpful to me in overcoming the often awesome-looking barriers between two such different languages as English and Hungarian. However, I alone bear responsibility for the text of the English version. And I ought to stress emphatically—that the authors of the Hungarian original are accused of "collaboration with foreign enemy"—that neither Dr. Janics, living in Slovakia, nor Mr. Illyes, living in Hungary have collaborated with me. Without their knowledge or consent, by preparing an English version, I alone collaborated with them. I did it with the conviction that such an odd collaboration is a duty rather than a crime, for it upholds the indivisibility of the Republic of Letters in a politically divided world.