

THE SLOVAKS AND THEIR PRESS IN POLAND

Lubica zum Felde

This study deals with the problems of the Slovaks in the area of the northern Zips (Spiš) and Arwa (Orava) — territories along the northern border of Slovakia which are today part of Poland.

The first section is an introduction to the historical development of the northern Spiš and Orava since the First World War. There has been no detailed history of this area thus far. The northern Spiš and Orava were for decades disputed between Czechoslovakia and Poland. The quarrel over this area began after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, when, during negotiations between Poland and the newly created ČSR over the course of the boundary in July 1919, the Polish side laid its first official claim to the territory. The author elucidates the origin of the Polish claims and describes the situation in the area from the end of the First World War up to the present. This section ends with the creation of the first joint organization of the Czechoslovak minority in Poland, the "Cultural and Social Society of the Czechs and Slovaks in Poland," in March 1957.

The next two sections deal with the founding of the periodical *Život* [Life], a social and cultural monthly for the Czechoslovak minority in Poland, and with the significance and prime tasks of the press of a national minority in general and the special status of *Život* among the minority periodicals in particular. The main theme is dealt with in the fourth and fifth sections: on the basis of an analysis of *Život*, the author shows the most important problems with which the Czechoslovak minority in Poland was confronted daily — equality of the Czechoslovak minority with their Polish compatriots, schools, culture, and mass education. The study concludes with an overall appraisal of the periodical *Život*.