

## A Discussion Between the German Foreign Office and the Hungarian Ambassador About the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem in Hungary, October 1942

Berlin, October 6, 1942

ST. S. D.-Nr. 6932

(Under secretary of State D Nr. 6932)

Foreign Office

Pol. IV 3050

Received October 9, 1942

### Notes on Discussion

On the occasion of his visit on October 2, I had informed the Hungarian Ambassador that I should like to discuss with him once again the problem of dealing with the Hungarian Jews in the occupied territories, in Germany and in Hungary proper, whereupon Mr. Sztojay paid me a visit yesterday. I referred to my conversation I had with him on August 11, the record of which is attached to this statement once more, and advised him of the following:

Represented again on October

Office: Pol IV P1

Illegible various signatures and initials

To be presented through the State Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

1). Hungarian Jews in the occupied territories.

In order to provide security for the German troops in the occupied territories we could not afford to exempt Jews of any nationality from the measures decreed by the military commanders or Reich Commissioners (introduction of the yellow star, internment and subsequent evacuation).

Therefore we had recently contacted all governments concerned, the Hungarian Government as well, requesting approval of the measures decreed

against the Jews up to December 31, 1942, or that they should deprive the Jews of their citizenship up to the said date. Otherwise the evacuation of all Jews would be started after December 31, 1942.

We would be willing to enter into negotiations with regard to the question of dealing with the property of the Hungarian Jews in the occupied territories, and we would agree to a participation of the Hungarian Government as a trustee in the matter of legal measures pertaining to property settlement, if an application on the part of the Hungarian Government were submitted accordingly.

Ambassador Sztojaj inquired whether the same measures had also been taken with regard to the Italian Jews in the occupied territories: this I affirmed, adding that for the above mentioned reasons any exemptions could no longer be permitted. Mr. Sztojaj noted and was of the opinion that under these circumstances his government would not raise any objections, that it probably would only ask the return of few Jews to Hungary, apart from this however, it would definitely request to participate as a trustee in legal measures taken with regard to property settlement. Approval would be given to evacuation of the greater part of the Hungarian Jews from occupied territories "since Hungary naturally does not intend to lag behind the other countries.

2). Hungarian Jews in Germany.

I have informed Mr. Sztojaj that the time has now come to include the Hungarian Jews (identification marks and subsequent evacuation), that it really could not be tolerated any longer that for well known reasons we evacuate all German Jews as well as the foreign Jews from Germany and only the Hungarian Jews are left behind who, appealing to their Hungarian citizenship, display an increasingly provocative attitude. We intended to contact his government to this effect, requesting them to approve this measure, or to take the Jews back to Hungary until December 31, 1942. With regard to the property settlement we propose to apply the territorial principle, in other words we retain the property of the Hungarian Jews in Germany while Hungary retains the property of the former German Jews no living in Hungary.

Negotiations on this matter however, are to be conducted with the Hungarian Government separately, exactly as was done with the other countries.

Mr. Sztojaj immediately brought up the question of dealing with the Italian Jews, when upon I replied that negotiations on that matter would be conducted with Italy in the same sense. Mr. Sztojaj was of the opinion that his government would not raise any difficulties with regard to this point either, if the Italian Government would give its approval in the same manner with regard to the Italian Jews. The Hungarian Government considers it important that, as far as the Jewish question is concerned, Hungary would in each case be treated according to the principle of the most favored group.

3). Treatment of the Jewish question in Hungary.

I have thoroughly explained to Mr. Sztojaj the reasons which induce us to request the Hungarian Government to take the initiative in pushing the settlement of the Jewish question in Hungary and bring it to a conclusion as soon as possible. The following measures appeared to us desirable:

- Continuous legislation aiming at the elimination of all Jews from the cultural and economic life,
- marking of the Jews,
- Evacuation to the east

In agreement with us and with the final aim of a complete settlement of the Jewish question in Hungary, arrangements with us regarding the property settlement of the former German and Hungarian Jews with the aim that this property in each case will be collected by the state within the sovereign territory of which it is located (territorial principle).

Mr. Sztojaj again brought up the question whether we intended to take the same steps with the Italian Government, this I affirmed. He furthermore asked me whether my statements presented to him, were to be considered an official offer on the part of the German Government to the Hungarian Government; this I answered in the negative with regard to points 2 and 3. I replied that we would take this step through the Ambassador V. Jagow whereupon Mr. Sztojaj asked me to present our suggestions or requests prior to October 18 if

possible, since he would be present in Budapest at that time and intended to discuss the whole matter thoroughly with the Prime Minister and if necessary with the Regent also.

He stated that he had frequently discussed this matter in particular with the Regent, and that we could be absolutely assured that it was indeed the Regent who, in view of his experience with Bela Kun in 1919, would show the greatest understanding for our requests. Hungary had to suffer especially severely under the Jews, unfortunately it was a fact that the Jews, owing to the neighborhood of Galicia, had settled in Hungary in especially large numbers and to a great extent had taken influential positions in all important branches of the economy. For that reason it was not simple to proceed with the final solution of this problem and to carry it out speedily. The question would be to eliminate about 800,000 to 900,000 Jews from all branches of the economy, and that of course would take a certain amount of time. He knew from his discussions in the past that the Prime Minister was particularly interested in the question as to whether a continued existence in the east would be made possible for the Jews after their evacuation. There were many rumors in this connection which he personally of course would not believe, however these rumors disturbed Prime Minister Kallay somewhat. He would not want to be accused of having exposed the Hungarian Jews to misery or worse after their evacuation.

My answer stating that all evacuated Jews, including obviously the Hungarian Jews too, would first be used in the East for road construction and would later be settled in a Jewish reserve, reassured him visibly and he was of the opinion that this information would have an especially comforting and encouraging effect on the Prime Minister. Apart from this, I reminded Mr. Sztojay of the statements regarding the Jewish question made by Prime Minister Kallay in his first speech before the Parliament. These statements had proved that Prime Minister Kallay showed a special understanding of the solution of the Jewish question in our sense, and apparently was willing to solve this problem for Hungary as soon as possible. When leaving, Mr. Sztojay declared with special emphasis that he is extremely happy about our suggestions, for he had seen, not only in Hungary but above all in Germany

too, what a devastating and disintegrating influence the Jews had had everywhere.

I ask the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs for authorization to forward the directives, set for the under 2) and 3) to the Ambassador V. Jagow.

I consider it of primary importance that we induce the Italian Government to bring about a final solution of the Jewish question too on its part. It would be appropriate if this matter were personally discussed by the Reich Foreign Minister and Count Ciano.

I shall submit in the course of the next few days a note concerning the position of the Jewish question in Italy and the pertinent suggestions or requests to be presented by us to the Italian Government.

Signed: Luther

Copy to:

Undersecretary of State Pol

Director Ha Pol

Pol IV

D III

**Source: Yad Vashem Archives NG 1800, N11\553\E**