

GERMAN POLICY AND THE FIRST VIENNA AWARD

by

Denny E. Eastman

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1 9 6 4

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at The University of Arizona and is deposited in The University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this thesis are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the head of the major department or the Dean of the Graduate College when in their judgment the proposed use of the material is in the interests of scholarship. In all other instances, however, permission must be obtained from the author.

SIGNED: Denny E. Eastman

APPROVAL BY THESIS DIRECTOR

This thesis has been approved on the date shown below:

James Donohoe
James Donohoe
Associate Professor of History

12 February 1964
Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
SECTION	
I. THE SITUATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AFTER THE MUNICH AGREEMENT	5
II. THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT TOWARD CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY	25
III. THE NATURE OF THE HUNGARIAN CLAIMS	55
IV. CZECHOSLOVAK-HUNGARIAN NEGOTIATIONS	69
V. THE VIENNA AWARD AND COUNT CIANO	84
BIBLIOGRAPHY	102

ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the negotiations preceding the first Vienna Award of November 2, 1938. Its purpose is to investigate the attitudes of the Czechoslovak, Hungarian, German, and Italian Governments concerning the Hungarian demands for territory in Czechoslovakia. Special emphasis has been given to the attitude of the German Government with regard to the Hungarian claims.

In addition, this thesis contains a section which is devoted to analyzing the basis of the Hungarian claims on Czechoslovak territory, and another section which describes the political situation in Slovakia and Ruthenia during the period between the Munich Agreement and the first Vienna Award.

The author of this thesis has concluded that, in October and November 1938, the German Government wished to prevent a common Polish-Hungarian frontier. Because of this policy, which came about largely through pressure of the German army leaders, the Berlin Government tended to support Czechoslovakia in its resistance to the demands of Hungary. The Hungarians, therefore, sought the support of Italy. By the terms of the Vienna Award, Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, succeeded in achieving a more

favorable settlement for Hungary than was desired by Germany. However, the German Government was successful in preventing a common Polish-Hungarian frontier.

INTRODUCTION

By the treaties which were signed in the suburbs of Paris in 1919 and 1920, the First World War was ended, and the map of Europe was changed. However, the statesmen who formulated these treaties only succeeded in exchanging one set of problems for another.

An example of this is found in the case of Czechoslovakia. Of a population of approximately 13,600,000 people who resided in that State, only 6,500,000 were Czechs. The rest of the population, which was actually in a majority, was composed of Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, Ruthenians, and Poles. All of these groups were more or less resentful of Czech rule.

This created a situation similar to that which had formerly existed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Not only were the subject nationalities dissatisfied, but neighboring States were awaiting an opportunity to free their "blood-brothers" from Czechoslovak rule.

These conditions led eventually to the partition of Czechoslovakia, which took place from September 1938 to March 1939. There were actually two partitions of this State; the first partition occurred from September to November 1938, and the second took place in March 1939.

After Germany acquired the Sudeten territories by the Munich Agreement, Poland and Hungary pressed their demands on Czechoslovakia. The Polish claims were settled by direct negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Poland during October and November 1938. Hungary's ethnographic claims were settled by the first Vienna Award of November 2, 1938. The first partition of Czechoslovakia was based primarily on ethnographic lines, and it left a rump Czechoslovak State composed primarily of Czechs, Slovaks, and Ruthenes.

The second partition came about as a result of quarrels between the Czechs and the Slovaks, which Germany was able to use to her own advantage. After Czech-Slovak relations had been strained to the breaking point, Slovakia declared her independence. This was followed by the German annexation of Bohemia-Moravia, and the Hungarian annexation of Ruthenia.

The subject of this thesis will be a detailed analysis of the events leading up to the first Vienna Award, in which the Magyar-inhabited parts of Slovakia and Ruthenia were restored to Hungary. Special emphasis will be placed on the policy of the German Government with regard to Hungary's demands. The German attitude to Hungary's historical claims and to her ethnic claims will be discussed and reasons for Germany's attitude will be given.

The reason for the arbitration will also be subjected to scrutiny, and the question of why the Hungarian claims were not settled through a four-Power conference, as the German claims were, or through direct negotiations, as was the case with the Polish demands, will be investigated.

In this thesis, which will be primarily concerned with the period of time between the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938 and the first Vienna Award of November 2, 1938, place names will be spelled according to the usage prevailing in that particular time sequence. Thus, names of cities in southern Slovakia and Ruthenia which have Slavic, Magyar, and German names, will be referred to by their Slavic names, even in the case of communities which were returned to Hungary by the first Vienna Award. Occasionally, however, for purposes of identification, I shall indicate in parantheses the Magyar or German name of a community.

Communities outside of Slovakia and Ruthenia which are referred to in this thesis (e.g., Rome, Prague) will be spelled according to the method prevailing in the English language.

Between September 29, 1938, and November 2, 1938, Czechoslovakia was officially spelled without a hyphen (although later in November 1938, the official spelling was

changed to "Czecho-Slovakia"). Therefore, in this thesis, I will use the non-hyphenated form in spelling Czechoslovakia.

A possible exception to the above rules, however, will be made in the case of direct quotations. In such instances, I intend to use the form of spelling contained in the articles from which I will be quoting. Furthermore, in titles referred to in the footnotes and bibliography of this thesis, I intend to use the form of spelling contained in the works that will be mentioned.

SECTION I

THE SITUATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AFTER THE MUNICH AGREEMENT

The Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, which brought despair to the Czechs, brought new hope to the minority groups residing within the Czechoslovak State who felt themselves oppressed by Czech domination. During October 1938, these minority groups were to demand a greater degree of autonomy or, in some cases, outright separation from Czechoslovakia.

This was especially true in the case of Slovakia. Among the inhabitants of this province, dissatisfaction with Czech rule manifested itself in three ways: the desire to return to Hungary, the desire for an autonomous Slovakia within the framework of the Czechoslovak State, and the desire for an independent Slovakia which would be completely free from either Hungarian or Czech control.

Pro-Hungarian sentiment was strong in southern Slovakia and in southern Ruthenia, because of the large number of Magyars (Hungarians) residing in those areas. The Czechoslovak-Hungarian frontier, which had been created by the Treaty of Trianon, deviated from a strictly ethnic boundary, and in fact had been based primarily on

strategic considerations, so as to give the inhabitants of Czechoslovakia access to the Danube Valley. The result was that the frontier, from an ethnographic standpoint, was clearly unfavorable to Hungary. Some 700,000 Magyars and Hungarian Jews in Slovakia, plus another 200,000 in Ruthenia, were left on the Czechoslovak side of the border.¹ Some of the areas assigned to Czechoslovakia, such as the Grosse Schuett Island in the Danube, were purely Magyar in 1919 and were still overwhelmingly Magyar by the late 1930's.² These Magyars never became reconciled to their lot, and they entertained the hope of freeing themselves from Czechoslovak rule.³

In addition to the Magyars, the Hungarian cause also had a certain amount of support among other minority

¹Veronica M. Toynbee (ed.), Survey of International Affairs, 1938 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), Volume III, p. 69. These figures are apparently according to the Czechoslovak census of 1921, which was based on nationality. This census listed 634,827 Magyars and 70,522 Jews in Slovakia. According to the Hungarian census of 1910, which was based on language, there were 893,586 Magyars in Slovakia alone. Some of these Magyars, however, were undoubtedly Slovaks who had become Magyarized. See Carlile A. Macartney, Hungary and Her Successors: 1919-1937 (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 78.

²Macartney, op. cit., p. 198.

³Victor L. Albjerg and Marguerite Hall Albjerg, Europe from 1914 to the Present (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951), p. 351.

groups in Slovakia. There is a strong possibility that most of the Jews in Southern Slovakia (but not necessarily in the whole of Slovakia) wanted to return to Hungary, as many of them had become Magyarized. Moreover, in the Hungarian census of 1910 (which was based on language), Jews were not listed as a separate nationality, and many of them undoubtedly registered themselves as Magyars.¹ In October 1938, the Slovak leaders were fearful that in a plebiscite the Jews would vote for Hungary,² and Dr. František Chvalkovsky, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, was also apprehensive about this possibility.³

Many of the Germans in Slovakia also favored a return to Hungary, although this desire was not unanimous among the German element of that province. Slovak officials, in appealing to the German Government for support against the Hungarian claims, insisted that the Germans in Slovakia did not want to be under Hungarian

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 105.

²United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), Series D, Volume IV, pp. 82, 88-89, 110. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/IV.

³Ibid., p. 72.

rule, but preferred to remain in Slovakia.¹ Hitler apparently believed this to be true.² Nevertheless, it is probable that half of the Germans in Slovakia desired a return of that province to Hungary.³ In particular, the older generation of Germans in Bratislava and other cities of southern Slovakia tended to be especially strongly Magyarophile.⁴

At the Munich Conference it was recognized that the injustice which had been done to the Magyar minorities by the Treaty of Trianon would have to be rectified. Therefore, an "Additional Declaration" to the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, stated that:

The Heads of the Governments of the four Powers declare that the problems of the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia, if not settled within 3 months by agreement between the respective Governments, shall form the subject of another meeting of the Heads of the Governments of the four Powers here present.⁵

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 83.

²On October 14, 1938, Hitler told Kálmán Darányi, the Hungarian statesman, that in a plebiscite the Germans would vote against Hungary, as they had no desire to live under Hungarian rule. Ibid., pp. 75-76.

³Macartney, op. cit., p. 188.

⁴Ibid., p. 186.

⁵United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), Series D, Volume II, p. 1016. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/II.

This declaration inspired Hungary to demand the cession of the Magyar-inhabited parts of Slovakia and Ruthenia. The culmination of Hungary's efforts was the first Vienna Award of November 2, 1938.¹

Although the southern fringe of Slovakia was inhabited primarily by Magyars, Slovaks comprised the major ethnic group in most of the other areas of this province. Pro-Hungarian activity was confined to a small fraction of the Slovaks, the vast majority of whom had no desire to return to Hungarian rule.² However, they were by no means content with being ruled by the Czechs. In fact, the Slovak problem was to prove in the long run to be an even bigger headache for Prague than the question of the Magyar minorities. The failure on the part of Prague to deal successfully with Slovak discontent was to be one of the reasons for the downfall of the Czechoslovak State in March 1939.

Friction between the Czechs and Slovaks dated back almost from the start of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Slovaks had entered into a common State with the Czechs on

¹In this thesis, the term "Vienna Award" will refer to the first Vienna Award only. The second Vienna Award, under which parts of Rumania were transferred to Hungary and Bulgaria, lies outside the scope of this thesis.

²Macartney, op. cit., p. 188.

the understanding that they would have local autonomy. On May 30, 1918, Tomáš Masaryk, who subsequently became president of Czechoslovakia, made an agreement with Slovak organizations in the United States, promising that the Slovaks would have their own administration within the Czechoslovak State.¹ The Slovaks were given further assurances by another Czech politician, Dr. Eduard Beneš. On May 20, 1919, at the Paris Peace Conference, Dr. Beneš declared that

it is the intention of the Czechoslovak Government to create the organisation of the State by accepting as a basis of natural rights the principles applied in the constitution of the Swiss Republic, that is, to make of the Czechoslovak Republic a sort of Switzerland, taking into consideration, of course, the special conditions in Bohemia.²

Ironically, if the Czech leaders had actually proceeded to grant autonomy to the various ethnic groups of the Republic on the lines of the Swiss Confederation, the partition of Czechoslovakia which began at Munich would probably have been averted.³

¹This was known as the Pittsburgh Agreement. For its full text, see Joseph M. Kirschbaum, Slovakia: Nation at the Crossroads of Central Europe (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, Publishers, Inc., 1960), p. 236.

²David Lloyd-George, Memoirs of the Peace Conference (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), p. 608.

³Ibid., p. 619.

The Slovaks, however, soon found that they had only exchanged Hungarian masters for Czech ones. Instead of granting autonomy to the various national groups within Czechoslovakia, the Prague Government embarked upon a policy of tough centralism.¹ The central Government did not even recognize the Slovaks as a minority group, but tried to lump Czechs and Slovaks together as "Czechoslovaks." Thus the Slovaks soon found themselves in the position of a "minority within the majority."² Actually, the Czechs and the Slovaks are two distinct peoples, each with its own language, history, culture, traditions, and national aims.³

There were several reasons why the Slovaks objected to being ruled by the Czechs. For one thing, the Slovaks are for the most part deeply religious and devout Roman Catholics, whereas the Czechs tend to be free-thinkers.⁴ Slovak autonomist Catholics particularly resented Czech radical teachers who hurt their religious feelings in Slovak schools and in public life.⁵

¹Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 60.

²Kurt Glaser, Czecho-Slovakia: A Critical History (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1961), pp. 5-6.

³Ibid., p. 5.

⁴William Henry Chamberlin, The World's Iron Age (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 190.

⁵Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 60.

Another complaint which the Slovaks had was that of economic exploitation. The Hungarian regime which governed Slovakia before 1918 had deliberately fostered Slovak industry as part of its program of national autarky.¹ However, after Slovakia had been incorporated into the Czechoslovak State, Slovak industry found it hard to compete with the great and long-established Bohemian and Silesian concerns. Consequently, the richer firms bought up, or obtained control through holding banks over most of the Slovak establishments. The latter were thus left at the mercy of their owners in Bohemia and Moravia, who worked them or shut them down as they pleased. It is probable that nearly one-third of all the Slovak industries disappeared in this way during the immediate post-World War I period.²

In their demands for autonomy, the Slovaks appealed to the Pittsburgh Agreement, which Masaryk himself had signed in 1918. They were to get no relief from this quarter, however. After Masaryk had consolidated his control over the Slovak people, he repudiated this agreement, declaring that he had made it "in order to appease

¹Macartney, op. cit., p. 128.

²Ibid., p. 130.

a small Slovak faction which was dreaming of God knows what sort of independence for Slovakia."¹

The officials of the Slovak People's Party, which advocated autonomy for Slovakia, were subject to persecution and at times even to imprisonment. The leader of the Slovak People's Party, Monsignor Andrej Hlinka, had to face this ordeal for six months in 1919-1920.

As a champion of the Slovak cause, Monsignor Hlinka had been active in fighting for Slovak autonomy and in resisting the excessive Magyarization policies of the Hungarian regime which had governed Slovakia prior to 1918, and he supported the Czechoslovak solution at the close of the First World War.² Nevertheless, he demanded autonomy for the Slovaks, and in September 1919 he went to Paris to plead the Slovak cause before the Peace Conference. He intended to request an international guarantee of self-determination for Slovakia within the framework of the Czechoslovak State. However, he was deported by the French authorities at the instigation of the Czechoslovak delegation, and upon his arrival in Czechoslovakia, he was thrown in prison.³ He remained imprisoned until April

¹Tomaš G. Masaryk, The Making of a State (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1927), p. 220.

²Macartney, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

³Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 97.

1920, when the Czechoslovak authorities were forced to release him because of his election to the Czechoslovak Parliament.¹

A similar case involved another Slovak autonomist leader, Dr. Vojtech Tuka. In December 1928 Dr. Tuka had been accused of high treason on behalf of Hungary.² However, he was not arrested until January 3, 1929. He therefore had prior warning of his arrest, and could have fled the country if he had chosen to do so. Nevertheless, he refused to heed suggestions that he take flight, saying that he preferred to establish his innocence by bringing the matter before a court.³ Upon being arrested, he was imprisoned and treated like a common criminal, although his status as a political prisoner was supposed to have entitled him to freedom on bail while awaiting trial.⁴

The trial itself was conducted in a rather unsavory atmosphere.⁵ The prosecution had planned to use, as one of its most important witnesses, a prisoner named Anton Mras, who had signed, while in prison, a statement of his alleged

¹Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 97.

²The New York Times, December 23, 1928, Section III, p. 7.

³The New York Times, January 5, 1929, p. 5.

⁴The New York Times, January 18, 1929, p. 5.

⁵The New York Times, October 6, 1929, p. 22. Cf. Glaser, op. cit., p. 33 and Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 107.

activities which implicated Dr. Tuka. However, Mras repudiated this statement while on the witness stand, claiming that he had been bribed to testify against Dr. Tuka, and threatened with death if he refused to do so. He also begged the court not to send him back to prison, as he feared for his life as a result of having repudiated his earlier statement. The court, however, refused to accede to his request, and handed him over to the military authorities.¹

Even with the aid of such techniques, the prosecution failed to obtain any conclusive evidence of Dr. Tuka's guilt.² Nevertheless, he was "found guilty" of high treason on behalf of Hungary, and sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. Although he was freed after nine years, many people felt that he should never have been imprisoned at all, as it is extremely doubtful if he was "guilty" of anything more serious than working for Slovak autonomy.³

There were other instances of harassment of Slovak autonomists by Czech authorities. For example, in 1933,

¹The New York Times, August 2, 1929, p. 6.

²Kirschbaum, op. cit., pp. 106-107. Cf. Glaser, op. cit., p. 33.

³William L. Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1960), p. 359.

after 100,000 Slovaks had demonstrated for autonomy at Nitra, the newspaper of the Slovak People's Party was seized, and its editor put on trial.¹

Such behavior on the part of the Czech authorities did not succeed in winning the Slovaks over to Czech domination. It has been estimated that by 1937, the year before the Sudeten crisis broke out, approximately two-thirds of the younger generation of Slovaks favored autonomy.²

The Slovak People's Party was led, throughout most of this difficult period, by Monsignor Hlinka. After his death on August 16, 1938, he was succeeded by his close associate, Monsignor Jozef Tiso, who was determined to secure the opportunity to obtain self-government for his people.³

The Munich Agreement made no mention of the Slovaks. Nevertheless, by weakening the position of the Prague Government, this Agreement made it possible for the Slovaks to realize their demands for autonomy which had been denied to them for twenty years. On October 3, 1938,

¹Glaser, op. cit., p. 33.

²Macartney, op. cit., p. 146.

³Glaser, op. cit., p. 42.

Mátuš Černák, a young Slovak statesman who held a cabinet post in the central Government served President Beneš a face-to-face ultimatum: either Slovak autonomy would be granted within twenty-four hours, or he would resign and all the Slovak deputies would leave the Parliament.¹

Černák resigned the following day, but before anything else could happen, Beneš himself resigned on October 5, 1938, leaving Premier Jan Syrový as interim president until the parliament could elect a successor. The Slovaks, thus finding the central Government in utter confusion, decided to take matters into their own hands. On October 6, 1938, representatives of all Slovak political parties, except the Communists and the Social Democrats, met at Žilina and signed the Žilina Manifesto or, as it is sometimes known, the Žilina Agreement.²

This Agreement was divided into two sections. Section I provided that the Slovak leaders would try to induce the Czechoslovak National Assembly to pass a constitutional amendment granting the Slovaks an autonomous government by October 28, 1938, at the very latest. Under Section II, it was agreed that even before such a law was officially enacted by the National Assembly, an autonomous

¹Glaser, op. cit., p. 43.

²Ibid.

Slovak Government should be set up, and therefore the Czechoslovak President was requested to appoint Monsignor Tiso as head of this Government.¹

The Prague Government thought it advisable to consent to the terms of the Žilina Manifesto, and acting President Jan Syrový appointed Dr. Tiso to head the Slovak Cabinet. The Slovak autonomous Government, therefore, came into being in early October 1938, even though the constitutional law formalizing this autonomy was not actually passed by the Czechoslovak Parliament until November 19, 1938.²

The Slovak Government which was thus established in October 1938 in no way exceeded the framework of the Pittsburgh Agreement or the promises of Dr. Beneš at the Peace Conference when he promised "to organize the State by accepting as the basis of natural rights the principles applied in the constitution of the Swiss Republic, that is, to make of the Czecho-Slovak Republic a second Switzerland."³ The fact that the Slovaks, in October 1938, agreed to an autonomous solution, seems to have been due to the efforts of the more moderate Slovak leaders, such as Dr. Jozef Tiso and Karol Sidor, both of whom were among the

¹For the full text of the Žilina Agreement, see Kirschbaum, op. cit., pp. 242-243.

²Glaser, op. cit., p. 43.

³Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 105.

signers of the Žilina Manifesto.¹ Both of these men were content to have Slovakia remain an autonomous state within a federal Czechoslovakia as long as such a solution was possible.²

However, by 1938, many Slovaks were no longer satisfied with autonomy, but demanded complete independence from the Prague regime. Although the separatists had no independent party organization, many of them were active in the Slovak People's Party. One of the leaders of the Slovak separatist movement was Dr. Ferdinand Durčanský, who became the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior in the autonomous Slovak Government. Another prominent Slovak separatist was Dr. Vojtech Tuka, who was released from prison in October 1938.³ Dr. Tuka, however, held no position in the Slovak Government at that time, although he was a very popular figure in Slovakia, owing to his imprisonment at the hands of the Czechs.⁴

Thus, in October 1938, the question of a completely independent Slovakia was in dispute among the Slovak statesmen themselves. This is illustrated by the record

¹Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 243.

²Glaser, op. cit., p. 44.

³Ibid.

⁴Kirschbaum, op. cit., p. 118.

of a conference which took place in Munich on October 19, 1938. Dr. Tiso and Dr. Durčansky had gone to that city in order to plead for German support in the negotiations with Hungary. During their visit, the German Foreign Minister asked the Slovak statesmen what they thought of the development of their relations with Prague. The German document relating to this interview records Monsignor Tiso as having "elaborated at length his aim of an autonomous Slovakia collaborating with an autonomous Carpatho-Ukraine under Prague." Dr. Durčansky, on the other hand, "seemed to be striving rather for the complete independence of Slovakia, perhaps in union with Carpatho-Ukraine."¹

This document refutes the charge that Dr. Tiso was deliberately conspiring with Germany and Hungary against the Czechoslovak Republic, even though he was executed in 1947 after having been "found guilty" of this charge.² Not only was Dr. Tiso satisfied with an autonomous Slovakia in a Czechoslovak State, but, in October 1938 he approached the German Government precisely in order to obtain support against the demands of Hungary. Since Great Britain and France had, at Munich, largely withdrawn from Central European affairs, and since Italy was, to a great extent,

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 92.

²The New York Times, April 16, 1947, p. 17.

supporting the Hungarian cause, Monsignor Tiso, as the Premier of the autonomous Slovak Government, considered it his patriotic duty to seek any means possible to keep Hungarian acquisitions at a bare minimum.¹

It is true, however, that certain separatist Slovaks, such as Dr. Durčansky, were trying to break the ties which bound Slovakia to Prague and were seeking German support for this. Shortly before the visit of Monsignor Tiso and Dr. Durčansky to Munich, the latter had made a separate trip to Germany, where he had a conversation with Field Marshal Hermann Goering. At this meeting, the Slovak Minister told his host that the Slovaks wanted full independence and close ties with Germany.² However, it would be grossly unfair to accuse Dr. Durčansky and his

¹Kirschbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 114. One of the reasons why the Slovaks sought active support from the German Government against the claims of Hungary was because they feared that Prague would not support their cause sufficiently. In a conference with Field Marshal Hermann Goering, Dr. Durčansky stated that the Czechs were more compliant toward Hungary than the Slovaks. See DGFP, D/IV, p. 83. There may have been some justification for this fear. On October 14, 1938, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky told von Ribbentrop that he "was in favor of satisfying the Hungarian demands to the fullest extent possible, especially as Czechoslovakia attached great importance to the guaranteeing of her frontiers by Germany. It would, however, be extremely difficult to induce the Slovaks to be accommodating, as Prague's influence on them was after all limited." See DGFP, D/IV, p. 78.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 82.

followers of trying to make Slovakia a part of Germany. Dr. Durčanský, who was probably acting in what he sincerely believed to be the best interests of Slovakia, envisaged the creation of an independent Slovak State, which would then enter into friendly relations with Germany on the basis of two sovereign States. Furthermore, he was certainly not working in the interests of Hungary. In fact, at his meeting with Goering, he was as critical of the Hungarians as he was of the Czechs.¹

There was probably more support for the Hungarian cause among the Ruthenes than among the Slovaks, although it cannot be definitely ascertained whether or not the majority of Ruthenes would have voted for Hungary if a plebiscite had been held to decide the matter. Although there was no strong pro-Hungarian movement among the Ruthenes, there was a great deal of friendliness and even attachment to Hungary among that ethnic group, and the Czechs themselves were afraid that in a plebiscite, the majority of Ruthenes would vote for a return to Hungary.²

An autonomous Government was set up in Ruthenia (also known as Carpatho-Ukraine) on October 12, 1938, with

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 82-83.

²Macartney, op. cit., pp. 242-243.

Andrej Brody as Premier.¹ The immediate problem faced by the Ruthene Government was the question of the Hungarian claims, as the southern strip of Ruthenia was inhabited primarily by Magyars and, moreover, Hungary hoped to obtain the whole province on historical grounds.

Brody opposed the division of Ruthenia between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. He suggested that a plebiscite be held throughout the whole of Ruthenia, on the basis of which the entire province would go to either Hungary or Czechoslovakia.² The other members of the Ruthenian Government rejected this suggestion. They preferred, instead, the partition of Ruthenia, under which the Magyar-inhabited areas would be transferred to Hungary and the non-Magyar areas would remain in Czechoslovakia.³

The central Government at Prague, fearful of the results of a plebiscite in Ruthenia, likewise opposed Brody's plan. Consequently, on October 26, 1938, he was forced by the Prague regime to resign his position as Premier of Ruthenia.⁴ On the following day, he was arrested and imprisoned on charges of having accepted

¹The New York Times, October 13, 1938, p. 6.

²The New York Times, October 27, 1938, p. 19.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

money from Hungarian interests to work for a plebiscite in that province.¹ He was succeeded by Monsignor Augustin Vološin.²

¹The New York Times, October 28, 1938, p. 16.

²S. Harrison Thomson, Czechoslovakia in European History (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953), p. 402.

SECTION II

THE ATTITUDE OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT TOWARD CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY

As we have seen in the preceding section, the Munich Agreement made possible a reconstruction of the Czechoslovak State by arranging for a solution of the problem of the Hungarian and Polish minorities. We have also seen that the Slovaks and Ruthenians took advantage of this Agreement to achieve autonomy, although some Slovak statesmen considered even autonomy insufficient, and demanded a completely independent Slovak State.

The official policy of the German Government which prevailed in October and November 1938, with regard to both the Hungarian claims and the question of Slovak autonomy, was largely influenced by the German army leaders. On October 5, 1938, the Supreme Command of the army addressed a statement to the German Foreign Ministry. This statement gave the views of the army leaders on both of these questions.

The German military officials were motivated by (1) the desire for access to the southeast, (2) the fear of a bloc of neutral States, led by Poland and Hungary, which might prevent such access, and (3) the belief that

Czechoslovakia could be made into a useful satellite of Germany. Consequently, the statement which was addressed to the German Foreign Ministry stated: "The creation of a compact bloc of succession states on Germany's eastern frontier, with lines of communication to southeast Europe, will not be to our interest." Therefore, the German army leaders believed that "for military reasons a common Hungarian-Polish frontier was undesirable."¹ This meant that the German military officials were opposed to the reincorporation of Slovakia and Ruthenia into Hungary, although the possibility of Hungarian annexation of the Magyar-inhabited parts of those two provinces was left open. With regard to the Slovak question, the military leaders expressed themselves as follows:

It is assumed that in the future the "Czech and Slovak" Rump State will of necessity depend to a considerable extent on Germany. The conditions for this are now present, especially as in Czechoslovakia strong feeling prevails against Britain and France, by whom she feels betrayed. Moreover, a strong tendency is certainly developing toward dissolving the relationship of the Czechs to the U.S.S.R. at the earliest possible moment.

Consequently, it is in our military interest that Slovakia should not be separated from the Czechoslovak union, but should remain with Czechoslovakia under strong German influence.²

¹United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), Series D, Volume IV, p. 40. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/IV.

²Ibid.

On October 7, 1938, Dr. Ernst Woermann, who was the Director of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry, submitted a memorandum on the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukrainian (Ruthenian) questions. With regard to Slovakia, he noted four possible solutions. They were (1) an independent Slovakia, (2) an autonomous Slovakia within the Czechoslovak State, (3) an autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Hungary, "which might later develop from alliance into incorporation," and (4) an autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Poland.¹

Dr. Woermann rejected the idea of an autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Hungary, noting that "Germany has no interest in this solution."² He believed that an autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Poland would be even worse, as the addition of Slovakia to the Polish economic sphere "might put considerable difficulties in the way of German economic aspirations toward the southeast."³

With regard to the Carpatho-Ukraine, Dr. Woermann wrote:

Orientation of the autonomous Ukraine to Hungary is to be definitely rejected. This solution is desired by Hungary as well as by Poland. A common Polish-Hungarian frontier

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 46.

²Ibid., p. 47.

³Ibid.

would thereby be created which would facilitate the formation of an anti-German bloc. From the military point of view the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht is also opposed to this common Polish-Hungarian frontier.¹

Having rejected a Hungarian or Polish solution for Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine, Dr. Woermann dealt with the relationship of those two provinces to Prague. He recommended that the German Government support either an independent Slovakia or the Czechoslovak solution, but he was undecided as to which of these two courses would be more desirable for Germany.² However, he seemed to have a slight preference for the Czechoslovak solution. He believed that an autonomous Slovakia within the Czechoslovak State

. . . even presents certain advantages compared with an independent Slovakia. This presupposes that the future Czecho-Slovakia will have a strong leaning toward Germany in political and economic matters, and evidence of a readiness for this is now apparent . . . From the point of view of foreign policy the solution of a Slovakia united with Czechia is the easiest of achievement.³

For the Carpatho-Ukraine, Dr. Woermann also suggested two alternatives. Although he believed that an independent Carpatho-Ukraine without support from outside would scarcely be viable, he recognized that such a State

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 48.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 47.

might serve as the nucleus for a greater Ukraine under German auspices. The alternative solution was a Carpatho-Ukraine joined with either Czechoslovakia or Slovakia.¹

Dr. Woermann's memorandum was presented to Hitler for consideration. The latter stated that the German Government supported an autonomous Slovakia under the Prague regime. This solution had, by this time, already been achieved by the Žilina Agreement, and it met with Hitler's satisfaction.²

On the other hand, Hitler hoped that eventually the Carpatho-Ukraine would be detached from Czechoslovakia. He expressed the viewpoint that "what would appeal to us most would be an autonomous Ruthenian area with orientation toward Prague, which of course would only be a temporary solution until the final separation." On the other hand, he thought "it best that Germany should interfere as little as possible in this question," as he believed that the situation would automatically develop along lines favorable to Germany.³ Hitler's aim was the eventual creation of a Ukrainian Piedmont, which could serve as a corridor to Rumania and the U.S.S.R., and which could also serve as a

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 47-48.

²Ibid., p. 49.

³Ibid.

motherland for discontented Ukrainians in these countries and in Poland.¹

A diplomatic circular which was sent on October 10, 1938, to leading German diplomatic missions throughout the world, explained Germany's policy relating to various aspects of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian question. The circular stated that Germany supported Hungarian demands for the Magyar territory in Czechoslovakia adjacent to the Hungarian border, and would leave settlement of details to direct negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In the Slovak question, the German Government sympathized with the Žilina resolutions, which demanded autonomy within the Czechoslovak State. Reserve was to be maintained in the Carpatho-Ukraine question. The circular stated that Germany did not support a common Polish-Hungarian frontier, "though outwardly we do not issue anti-Hungarian or anti-Polish slogans."²

Certain Nazi officials would have preferred an independent Slovakia. Among them was Field Marshal Hermann Goering, who had a conference with Dr. Durčansky, the Slovak separatist, in October 1938. At this meeting,

¹This was one of the alternative solutions for the Carpatho-Ukraine mentioned in Dr. Woermann's memorandum. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 47-48. Cf. Josef Hanč, Tornado Across Eastern Europe: The Path of Nazi Destruction from Poland to Greece (New York: The Greystone Press, 1942), p. 197.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 52.

Goering expressed the view that "efforts of the Slovaks for independence should be suitably supported."¹ On November 11, 1938, he had another conference with Dr. Durčansky, in which the former again indicated that he favored the eventual establishment of an independent Slovakia.²

Nevertheless, this opinion was not supported by the German Foreign Ministry or by Hitler in October and November 1938. Shortly after the meeting which took place in October between Goering and Dr. Durčansky, Dr. Woermann wrote a letter to the German Consul at Bratislava. The contents of this letter indicate that Dr. Woermann was aware of Goering's attitude. Yet he wrote:

At present Germany's official objective continues to be Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, with strong autonomy and orientation toward Prague, while it remains to be seen whether Slovak desires will one day develop from autonomy to independence as a state.³

After Goering's meeting with Dr. Durčansky, which took place on November 11, 1938, the former was rebuked by Hitler for his stand in favor of Slovak independence. On November 17, 1938, he was informed that

. . . at the moment political negotiations with the Slovaks were not opportune. The

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 83.

²Ibid., p. 142.

³Ibid., p. 83.

Fuehrer had decided that at present the question of the separation of the Slovaks should not be touched upon, either in a positive or in a negative sense.¹

Thus, in October and November 1938 the German Government was not actively encouraging the Slovak separatists. In fact, the German Government was supporting the Czechoslovak solution at the same time that many Slovaks were seeking separation from Prague.² By February 1939, however, German policy on this subject had changed, and on February 12, 1939, Hitler told Dr. Tuka, the Slovak statesman, that "it would be a comfort" to him to know that Slovakia was independent.³

The attitude of the German Government toward the Hungarian claims on Czechoslovak territory was determined primarily by several factors. First, and probably most important of these was the desire for access to southeastern Europe. Hitler, as he indicated in Mein Kampf, had been thinking in terms of expansion in eastern Europe long before he seized power in Germany.⁴ A related factor was the fear that a common Polish-Hungarian frontier

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 151.

²Joseph M. Kirschbaum, Slovakia: Nation at the Crossroads of Central Europe (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, Publishers, Inc., 1960), p. 113.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 213.

⁴Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1939), pp. 933-967.

would prevent such access.¹ It was also believed that a satellite Czechoslovakia could be used by Germany in creating a pathway to southeastern Europe through Ruthenia.²

Hitler's anti-Hungarian attitude must also be taken into consideration. Hitler was extremely disappointed with Hungary because of her failure to give what the former considered to be sufficient support during the Sudeten crisis. He was angry, for example, over the Bled Agreement, which provided for the mutual renunciation of the use of force between Hungary and the States of the Little Entente. This agreement, which had been signed on August 23, 1938, when Regent Horthy was in Germany, was regarded by Hitler as a stab in the back.³

On September 20, 1938, Hitler had told Dr. Béla Imrédy, the Prime Minister of Hungary, and Kálmán Kánya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, that he intended to solve the Czech problem within a very short time, and suggested

¹Franz Borkenau, The New German Empire (New York: The Viking Press, 1939), p. 118.

²Bernard Newman, The New Europe (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943), p. 453. Cf. Hanč, op. cit., pp. 196-197.

³DGFP, D/IV, pp. 519-520.

that Hungary join in.¹ Nevertheless, the Hungarians were not anxious to join Hitler's proposed action of aggression, much to the latter's disgust. Hitler later (on January 12, 1939) told Count István Csáky, the Hungarian statesman, that if the Hungarians had cooperated at the right time, "he could have laughed in Chamberlain's face."² Therefore, Hitler had no desire to sacrifice or to put in jeopardy the interests of Germany for "friends who would leave her in the lurch at the critical moment."³

The Hungarians were aware of the fact that German support for their cause was only lukewarm. On October 14, 1938, Count István Csáky told Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, that Germany was encouraging Prague in its resistance to the Hungarian demands. He also stated that Czechoslovakia was a German protectorate, which Berlin intended to use in order to increase pressure on Rumania and on Hungary herself.⁴ In making this

¹For a record of Hitler's conversation with Imrédy and Kánya on September 20, 1938, see United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), Series D, Volume II, pp. 863-865. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/II.

²United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953), Series D, Volume V, p. 363. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/V.

³Ibid., p. 362.

⁴Galeazzo Ciano, 1937-1938 Diario, trans. Andreas Mayor (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1952), p. 177.

statement, Count Csáky was probably expressing the feelings of many Hungarians.

By October 10, 1938, with the diplomatic circular which was sent to the leading German diplomatic missions abroad, the basic German policy regarding the Hungarian claims had been settled. It was expressed in one sentence: "We support Hungarian demands for the adjacent Magyar territory and leave settlement of details to direct negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia."¹ In practice, however, it is now evident that German policy, starting from October 10, 1938, and continuing almost to the Vienna Award of November 2, 1938, took on two definite characteristics.

The first of these was the desire for non-involvement. The German Government did not wish to antagonize either Hungary or Czechoslovakia by actively championing one of these States against the other. For this reason the German Government was not only willing to "leave settlement of details to direct negotiations," but it went out of its way to oppose the convocation of a conference of the Munich Powers. Germany was likewise opposed to Axis arbitration. The German Government was, however, willing to mediate between Hungary and

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 52.

Czechoslovakia, and mediation was attempted by German officials, although it ultimately proved unsuccessful.

A second characteristic of German policy was the desire to preserve as much territory for Czechoslovakia as possible without antagonizing Hungary. Germany was willing to allow Hungary to recover a certain amount of territory at the expense of Czechoslovakia. Indeed, Germany could scarcely oppose Hungary's designs on the Magyar-inhabited territory, since her own claims to the Sudetenland had been based on the same principle. However, the German Government, in mediating between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, tended to show partiality toward the former State with regard to certain important areas. The reason why German mediation efforts eventually failed was that Germany tried to preserve certain major cities for Czechoslovakia, to which the Hungarian Government would not relinquish its claim. In this respect, Germany was much less favorable than Italy to the Hungarian claims.

On October 14, 1938, Adolf Hitler and his Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, held a conference with František Chvalkovsky, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister. Hitler stated that it would be more desirable for Czechoslovakia to reach a direct understanding with Hungary than to submit the issue to the four Munich Powers. He suggested that the areas with a definite

Magyar majority should go to Hungary, and that plebiscites should be arranged in the doubtful areas.¹

Later that day, Hitler and von Ribbentrop had another conference, this time with the Hungarian statesman, Kálmán Darányi. At this interview, Hitler was extremely rude, and he showed his intense dislike of Hungary by stating his grievances against that State in a very insulting manner.² When Darányi, no doubt somewhat unnerved by this unpleasant reception, begged Hitler for support, the latter grudgingly promised that if the matter did come before a conference, he would support the Hungarians. He insisted, however, that such support would be useless, because the French and British would support Czechoslovakia to the uttermost, and if he and Mussolini supported Hungary to the uttermost, the conference would result in a deadlock.³ Hitler and von Ribbentrop then gave Darányi the same advice that they had given to Chvalkovsky earlier that day: that the problem should be settled by direct Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations, and that a plebiscite should be held for areas of mixed ethnic composition.⁴ Hitler then instructed von Ribbentrop to

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 71.

²Ibid., pp. 73-74.

³Ibid., p. 74.

⁴Ibid., pp. 74-75.

talk with the Czechs, in order to ascertain what possibilities could be expected from them, and asked Darányi to find out the minimum demands of the Hungarian Government.¹

Following this conversation, Darányi contacted Béla Imrédy, the Hungarian Prime Minister, by telephone. He then reported to von Ribbentrop that Hungary was willing to make a few concessions. The question of the future ownership of Bratislava was to be left in abeyance for the time being, and Hungary was also willing to permit the holding of plebiscites in certain mixed areas that she had formerly demanded outright. On the other hand Darányi insisted that Hungary would like to obtain Košice, as well as the area west of that city.²

Later that evening, von Ribbentrop had another conference with Chvalkovsky. Von Ribbentrop complained that a proposal, which had been made the previous day by a Czechoslovak delegation at Komárno, was completely unsatisfactory to Hungary, and that the German Government shared the Hungarian point of view. He urged Chvalkovsky to speedily resume negotiations on a better basis.³

Von Ribbentrop indicated what he considered to be a fair frontier delimitation. This proposal left open,

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 76.

²Ibid., p. 77.

³Ibid., pp. 77-78.

not only the question of Bratislava, to which Darányi had agreed, but also that of Košice, which the latter had demanded for Hungary. Furthermore, according to von Ribbentrop's proposal, Užhorod and Mukačevo would remain on the Czechoslovak side of the line.¹ The German Foreign Minister argued in favor of this solution, insisting that these were minimum demands.² Actually, these were far less than the minimum demands of Hungary, which had no intention of relinquishing its claim to Košice, Užhorod, or Mukačevo.

Meanwhile, Count István Csáky, who was at this time the Chef de Cabinet to the Hungarian Foreign Minister, had been sent to Rome, where he met with a much more pleasant reception than had Darányi. Count Csáky requested that a conference of the four Munich Powers be called in order to settle the question of the Hungarian claims. Mussolini approved of a four-Power conference, and suggested that it take place within the next few days at either Venice or Brioni. Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, communicated to the Italian Ambassadors in London, Paris, and Berlin, and instructed them to inform the respective Governments with which they were accredited

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 77.

²Ibid., p. 78.

of Italy's request that a four-Power conference be convened.¹

The German Government immediately took action to prevent the convocation of a conference of the four Munich Powers. Bernardo Attolico, the Italian Ambassador to Germany, telephoned the Italian Foreign Ministry to say that Germany did not approve of the suggestion for a conference.² That night, von Ribbentrop himself telephoned Count Ciano and insisted that the proposal for a conference be abandoned.³

However, the Hungarians withdrew their request for a conference because of Germany's opposition. After having been informed of this by Count Csáky, Ciano announced that Italian support for a conference had been abandoned, and that the Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations would be conducted through other channels.⁴

Thus, Hitler had successfully induced Hungary to abandon her plans for a conference and, on October 18, 1938, he was able to boast of this to André François-

¹Ciano, op. cit., p. 177. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 68-69. Also cf. Veronica M. Toynbee (ed.), Survey of International Affairs, 1938 (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), Volume III, pp. 87-88.

²Toynbee, op. cit., p. 88.

³Ciano, op. cit., pp. 177-178.

⁴Ibid., p. 178. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 78-79.

Poncet, who was the French Ambassador to Germany. On this occasion, Hitler stated that at such a conference, the French and the English would have defended the Czechs, whereas Germany and Italy would have been obliged to support the Hungarians. He expressed the fear that the deadlock caused by such a conference would have resulted in war, and he claimed that, by averting such a danger, he rendered a service to Europe.¹

On October 17, 1938, Doeme Sztójay, the Hungarian Minister to Germany, delivered a memorandum, which explained the position of the Hungarian Government, to the German Foreign Ministry. The Hungarian Government believed direct negotiations with Czechoslovakia to be useless, as they would only postpone the final solution. Therefore, Hungary wanted the Prague Government to make one final proposal which would either be accepted or rejected by Budapest. In the latter case, Hungary intended to appeal

¹French Government, The French Yellow Book: Diplomatic Documents: 1938-1939 (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, Inc., 1940), pp. 24-25. In reality, Hitler was probably concerned, not so much with the peace of Europe, but what he considered to be the interests of Germany. He did not want to be forced into a situation, such as a four-Power conference, where he might have felt obliged, against his own will and against Germany's best interests, to support the cause of Hungary at the cost of an open break with Great Britain and France. Having already secured (except for minor frontier rectifications) its ethnic claim on Czechoslovak territory in the Sudetenland, the German Government had no desire to jeopardize its gains.

to the German and Italian Governments, in order to request mediation or arbitration.¹

Meanwhile, Chvalkovsky informed the German Chargé d'Affaires in Prague that Monsignor Jozef Tiso, the Slovak Prime Minister, Dr. Ferdinand Durčansky, the Minister of the Interior in the Slovak Government, and Edmund Bačinsky, one of the ministers in the Carpatho-Ukraine Government, wished to be received by von Ribbentrop before submitting new proposals to Hungary.² Von Ribbentrop agreed to receive these Ministers only on condition that the proposed line which he had discussed with Chvalkovsky on October 14 be made the basis of negotiations.³ Chvalkovsky agreed to this, and suggested that the five cities of Bratislava, Nitra, Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo be made the subject of discussion. This was agreeable to the German Foreign Minister, who made an appointment with the Slovak and Ruthenian statesmen for the afternoon of October 19, 1938.⁴

At the conference with the Slovak Ministers, which took place in Munich, von Ribbentrop described the line he had suggested as a compromise proposal, explaining that Hitler had instructed him to act as mediator on this basis.

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 80.

²Ibid., p. 81.

³Ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁴Ibid., pp. 85-86.

He insisted that the area which was to be ceded to the Hungarians would have to be evacuated so that it could be occupied by Hungary.¹

Dr. Tiso pleaded for the retention of Bratislava and Košice in Slovakia. He stated that Bratislava was a vital issue for Slovakia, as the timber industry depended on it as its only access to the Danube. He also complained that the loss of Košice would deprive Slovakia of any rail connection with her eastern districts and with Carpatho-Ukraine, as the most important railway connections passed through that city. He admitted, however, that in a plebiscite held on the basis of the 1910 census (i.e., the last census before the dismemberment of Hungary) that city would be lost to Slovakia.²

Although von Ribbentrop expressed misgivings as to whether the Hungarians would be willing to relinquish their claim on Košice, he was basically sympathetic to the Slovak point of view, stating that, in his opinion, Košice "was indeed a central point for Slovakia, and the Hungarians must leave it to the Slovaks." He instructed Otto von Erdmannsdorff, the German Minister to Hungary, who was present at this meeting, to urge the Hungarians to

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 88.

²Ibid., pp. 88-89.

renounce their claims to Bratislava, Nitra, Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo.¹ By so doing, he showed a definite partiality to Czechoslovakia, as these five cities had proven to be the main stumbling-block to a settlement by direct Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations. It is interesting to note in this connection that von Ribbentrop abandoned his earlier suggestion for a plebiscite in the disputed areas, after Monsignor Tiso had told him that the Slovak Government was opposed to a plebiscite, and that if a plebiscite were held on the basis of the 1910 census, Košice would be lost to Slovakia.²

In return for this diplomatic support, von Ribbentrop insisted that the Hungarians be allowed to occupy within eight days, the territory to be ceded to them according to his proposed frontier line. He also expressed the hope that negotiations would be resumed in one or two days through diplomatic channels. The Slovaks, thankful that so much seemed saved for Slovakia and Ruthenia, expressed their agreement with these ideas.³

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 89.

²Ibid., p. 89. Before this conversation, Hitler and von Ribbentrop had favored plebiscites in areas of mixed ethnic composition, and had recommended this solution to Chvalkovsky and Darányi. Ibid., pp. 71, 74-75.

³Ibid., p. 89.

On October 20, 1938, von Erdmannsdorff informed Kálmán Kánya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, that the autonomous Slovak and Carpatho-Ukrainian Governments had accepted the frontier line proposed by von Ribbentrop, and had agreed to Hungarian occupation, by October 26, 1938, of the territory up to that line. Von Erdmannsdorff urged Hungary to accept von Ribbentrop's proposed frontier line, which would have left Bratislava, Nitra, Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo in Czechoslovakia.¹

The Hungarians were indignant. Kánya informed von Erdmannsdorff that there could be no possibility of the acceptance of this proposal by the Hungarian Government. Count Paul Teleki, the Minister of Education who was called in as an expert on nationality questions, stated that the Hungarian Government would have to insist on a plebiscite in the frontier areas with a mixed population, and that if its claim to Bratislava were abandoned, it would have to insist on obtaining Košice and at least either Užhorod or Mukačevo. Von Erdmannsdorff, as instructed, insisted that if von Ribbentrop's proposal were not accepted, it would be the end of German mediation.²

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 94.

²Ibid.

On October 21, 1938, Sztójay presented two memoranda to Ernst, Baron von Weizsaecker, who held the position of Secretary of State in the German Foreign Ministry. The first memorandum politely but firmly rejected the proposal submitted by von Erdmannsdorff, explaining that while the Hungarian Government was willing to make concessions with regard to Bratislava and Nitra, it could not surrender its claim to Košice, Užhorod, or Mukačevo. The memorandum concluded with the statement that further negotiations on the basis of the recent Czech proposal would have little prospect of success.¹

In the second memorandum, Sztójay inquired as to whether Germany would be willing to undertake the role of arbiter in conjunction with Italy. He explained that the situation was so critical and the experience gained in direct negotiations with the Slovaks so bad that there was no conceivable way out other than an appeal to the Axis Powers for arbitration.² Von Weizsaecker replied by saying that he was not in a position to judge whether Germany and Italy would be willing to assume the role of arbiters, but that the German view so far had been that Prague and Budapest should make one more effort to negotiate between themselves.³

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 96.

²Ibid., pp. 95-96.

³Ibid.

The German Foreign Ministry now began to back down on the subject of Košice, while at the same time it increased its pressure to induce Hungary to abandon her claim to Užhorod and Mukačevo. Von Weizsaecker told Sztójay that von Ribbentrop sympathized with the Hungarian claim on Košice, but that he had been unsuccessful in inducing the Slovaks to renounce it.¹ On October 25, 1938, von Ribbentrop instructed the German Minister to Hungary to inform Darányi that he supported the Hungarian position regarding Košice.²

On October 21, 1938, Woermann sent a telegram to von Erdmannsdorff, instructing him that in future conversations regarding the Czechoslovak-Hungarian controversy, he was to claim that the solution discussed on October 19 between von Ribbentrop and the Slovak statesmen was "based on the Darányi line, which, as you know, does not include the various towns situated to the north of the line."³ This statement implied that when Darányi was in Munich on October 14, he had agreed to leave Užhorod and Mukačevo in Czechoslovakia. Darányi vehemently denied this, claiming that he could not have done such a thing,

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 95.

²Ibid., p. 111.

³Ibid., p. 97.

as he had not been in any way empowered to do so.¹ Nevertheless, for the next several days, letters were exchanged on the subject between Budapest and Berlin. Von Ribbentrop continued to insist that Darányi had agreed to relinquish Hungary's claim to Užhorod and Mukačevo, and Darányi continued to deny that he had made such an agreement.²

Von Erdmannsdorff, who had been present at the meeting on October 14, 1938, and who had taken down the minutes of that meeting, indicated that Darányi's version of what took place was the correct one. On October 22, 1938, he wrote a confidential letter to Woermann, in which he stated that von Ribbentrop was in error, and that Darányi had not agreed to renounce the Hungarian claim on Užhorod and Mukačevo.³ Furthermore, in the minutes of the meeting which took place on the evening of October 14, there is no indication that Darányi agreed to leave Užhorod and Mukačevo in Czechoslovakia.⁴ In the light of these facts, it seems probable that (1) either von Ribbentrop had, on October 14, mistakenly believed that Darányi had renounced the Hungarian claim to those two cities, or (2)

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 101-102.

²Ibid., p. 111.

³Ibid., pp. 100-102.

⁴Ibid., p. 77.

that he was lying in an attempt to put pressure on Hungary to leave those two cities in Czechoslovakia. In any event, Hungary refused to be high-pressured in this matter, and the Budapest Government sought the help of Italy in order to achieve her claim to Užhorod and Mukačevo.

Simultaneously with a campaign to influence the Hungarian Government to renounce its claim on Užhorod and Mukačevo, Berlin tried to exert pressure on both Czechoslovakia and Hungary to resume direct negotiations. On October 22, 1938, von Erdmannsdorff, acting on instructions from the German Foreign Minister, handed Kánya an aide-mémoire stating that, as the Hungarian Government had declared the German mediation proposal as unacceptable, the German Government regarded direct mediation as being at an end.¹ On the previous day, the German Charge d'Affaires in Prague had been instructed to inform Chvalkovsky that Germany expected the Czechoslovak Government to communicate its proposals to Hungary "as the Czechoslovak Government's views on the Slovak proposals must be clearly stated."² On October 22, 1938, Czechoslovakia made an offer to Hungary, which was based on the

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 104.

²Ibid., p. 96.

line von Ribbentrop had discussed with the Slovak Ministers on October 19.¹

The German Foreign Ministry was pleased with this development. In a memorandum which was written on October 22, 1938, von Weizsaecker recommended that pressure be put on the Hungarian Government to accept the Czech proposal as a basis of negotiations. He did not believe that Hungary and Czechoslovakia would reach agreement, but he believed that a discussion based on the Czechoslovak proposal would be useful in establishing the points on which there was agreement and those on which there were differences of opinion.²

Von Weizsaecker was opposed to German-Italian arbitration. He believed that it might lead to difficulties contrary to the Munich decisions³ and that if Hungary were dissatisfied, she might attribute the responsibility chiefly to Germany. On the other hand, he saw no objection to German-Italian mediation. Therefore, he suggested that Germany and Italy, with the possible inclusion of Poland, could make joint proposals to both Hungary and

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 97.

²DGFP, D/IV, pp. 102-103.

³Von Weizsaecker was probably referring to the discussions held at Munich between von Ribbentrop and the Slovak Ministers on October 19, 1938.

Czechoslovakia if a common basis could be established by the two latter Powers. If these proposals were rejected, further procedure would not have to be considered.

Surprisingly enough, in view of the earlier German attitude, he felt that another possible solution would be a second four-Power conference, although even in this case he thought that it would be advantageous if the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments were first to establish their points of difference.¹

Von Ribbentrop also felt that arbitration would be even worse than a four-Power conference. He feared that an arbitral award would end by satisfying neither Hungary nor Czechoslovakia, and would compel the Axis Powers to resort to force in order to put their decisions into effect.² Even on October 24, 1938, after the Czechoslovak proposal of October 22 had been rejected by Hungary, von Ribbentrop stated that he was opposed to German-Italian arbitration.³

On October 21, 1938, the Hungarian Minister to Italy had suggested that the delimitation of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian frontier west of Košice be

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 103.

²Ciano, op. cit., p. 181.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 109.

arbitrated by Germany and Italy, and that the frontier in the Košice district and the areas east of that city be arbitrated by Germany, Italy, and Poland.¹ On October 22, 1938, von Weizsaecker wrote in a memorandum that the inclusion of Poland as an arbiter would represent a great gesture to that country, and that the possibility of obtaining compensations from her, with regard to Danzig or Memel should be examined. He noted, however, that in the course of such negotiations, the German Government would have to reconcile itself to the establishment of a common Polish-Hungarian frontier on the Carpathian front.²

Nevertheless, von Ribbentrop was willing to make a deal with Poland, even at the cost of having to allow a common Polish-Hungarian frontier to be established. On October 24, 1938, the Polish Ambassador to Germany, Josef Lipski, informed von Ribbentrop that the Polish Government desired the return of the Carpatho-Ukraine to Hungary. The German Foreign Minister in turn mentioned the desire of his Government that Danzig return to the Reich and that Germany be allowed to build an extra-territorial road and railway across the Polish Corridor. Lipski raised objections to this proposal. Therefore, when he mentioned that

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 97-98. Cf. Ciano, op. cit., p. 180.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 103.

Poland would be willing to participate in an arbitral decision, von Ribbentrop was somewhat evasive.¹ Later that day, however, von Ribbentrop informed Lipski that if the Polish Government would agree to the return of Danzig to the Reich and would grant permission for an extra-territorial road and railway across the Polish Corridor, Germany would be willing to settle the Carpatho-Ukraine problem in accordance with Polish desires. Lipski replied that his only task was to inform the German Government of the Polish views regarding the Carpatho-Ukraine.²

Within the next few days, the German Government was under increased pressure to arbitrate the Czechoslovak-Hungarian dispute. On October 25, 1938, Monsignor Tiso wrote to von Ribbentrop, explaining that both the Hungarian Government and the autonomous Slovak Government had agreed to ask Germany and Italy to act as arbiters.³ The Czechoslovak Government was likewise in favor of arbitration, as direct negotiations had by this time completely failed.

¹DGFP, D/V, pp. 104-107.

²Republic of Poland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, The Polish White Book: Official Documents Concerning Polish-German and Polish-Soviet Relations, 1933-1939 (London: Hutchinson and Company, Ltd., not dated), pp. 47-48. Cf. Lewis B. Namier, Diplomatic Prelude: 1938-1939 (London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1948), p. 40.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 110.

On October 28, 1938, the Hungarian Government requested that Germany arbitrate the outstanding disagreements on the Hungarian-Slovak frontier.¹ The German Government received a similar request from Czechoslovakia on the following day.² By that time, the German Government had changed its attitude regarding arbitration, as the result of Italian pressure.³

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 113.

²Ibid., p. 115.

³For information as to the role of Italy in persuading the German Government to consent to Axis arbitration, see Section V of this thesis.

SECTION III

THE NATURE OF THE HUNGARIAN CLAIMS

The Hungarian claims on Czechoslovak territory dated from the Treaty of Trianon. By this Treaty, Slovakia and Ruthenia were officially detached from Hungary and made a part of Czechoslovakia. Therefore, Hungary had a historical claim to those two provinces. Moreover, the southern strip of Slovakia and Ruthenia was populated primarily by Magyars, so that Hungary's claim to those areas was based on ethnic grounds as well.

The Hungarian demands, with regard to Czechoslovakia, aimed at (1) the return of the areas inhabited by Magyars, and (2) "the practical realization of the right of self-determination" for Slovaks and Ruthenians.¹ The Hungarian Government hoped that in the non-Magyar parts of Slovakia and Ruthenia, plebiscites would be held in order that the inhabitants of those areas could themselves decide whether or not they wished to return to Hungary.

Hungarian acquisition of Ruthenia was favored, not only by Hungary, but by Poland as well. Poland desired to

¹United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), Series D, Volume II, p. 992. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/II.

induce the Hungarian Government to exercise moderation in the Slovak question and to take the offensive in the Ruthenian question.¹ Poland desired the re-annexation of Ruthenia by Hungary in order (1) to remove a center of Ukrainian nationalism which might have caused discord among Poland's Ukrainian population, (2) to provide a barrier against Communist agitation, and (3) to serve as a possible barrier against Germany.²

The common Polish-Hungarian frontier was not achieved until March 1939. Although it was unsuccessful in halting German aggression, it nevertheless proved to be of great value to the Poles. After the invasion of Poland in September 1939, over 100,000 Polish soldiers managed to escape the Nazi and Soviet armies by crossing the frontier into Hungarian territory. Most of these Polish soldiers subsequently joined the Allied armies and thus helped to contribute to eventual Allied victory.³

¹United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953), Series D, Volume V, p. 105. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/V.

²Great Britain, Foreign Office, Documents on British Foreign Policy: 1919-1939 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950), Third Series, Volume III, p. 181. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser. Vol. III.

³John Flournoy Montgomery, Hungary: The Unwilling Satellite (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1947), p. 123.

It is extremely unlikely that the Slovaks would have voted in favor of a return to Hungary in the event of a plebiscite,¹ but there seems to be a possibility that the Ruthenians might have done so.² In any event, the Prague Government was afraid to trust to the results of a plebiscite. When Andrej Brody, the Prime Minister of Ruthenia, advocated this solution, he was arrested on charges of working in behalf of Hungarian interests.³

Brody had disapproved of the suggestion to divide Ruthenia between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He advocated that a plebiscite be held throughout the whole of Ruthenia which would determine the fate of the entire province.⁴ The Czechoslovak Government opposed this solution,⁵ although there were 319,361 Ruthenes and only 169,434 Magyars in Ruthenia, even according to the Hungarian census of 1910.⁶ Since the Czechoslovak Government refused to permit the holding of a plebiscite, even under

¹Carlile A. Macartney, Hungary and Her Successors: 1919-1937 (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 188.

²Ibid., pp. 242-243.

³The New York Times, October 28, 1938, p. 16.

⁴The New York Times, October 27, 1938, p. 19.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Macartney, op. cit., p. 203.

conditions where the Ruthenes outnumbered the Magyars, it seems logical to assume that a large proportion of Ruthenes had pro-Hungarian sympathies.

It could, of course, be argued that if a plebiscite were held in an undivided Ruthenia, the Magyars would vote together with the pro-Hungarian Ruthenians, and that by opposing such a solution, the Prague Government was defending the interests of those Ruthenes who desired to remain in Czechoslovakia. This may have been one of the motives behind the policy of the Czechoslovak Government, as it would be incorrect to assume that all Ruthenes desired to return to Hungary. The members of the autonomous Ruthenian Government, which was set up in October 1938, were opposed to Hungary (with the exception of Brody, who was forced to resign his post on October 26). One of the members of the Ruthenian Government, Edmund Bačinsky, even accompanied the Slovak Ministers to Munich on October 19 to request the support of the German Government against Hungary.¹ It is extremely doubtful that the Ruthenian Government could have existed without a certain amount of popular support.

¹United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), Series D, Volume IV, pp. 86-92. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/IV.

On the other hand, the fact that the Hungarians were striving for a plebiscite in Ruthenia and that the Czechoslovak Government was strongly opposed to this solution, would seem to indicate that the Hungarian cause had considerable support among the Ruthenes themselves, and may have even been supported by the majority of the Ruthenian population. On October 24, 1938, the Hungarian Government transmitted a proposal to Czechoslovakia which included, among other things, the suggestion that a plebiscite be held in the purely Slovak areas of Slovakia, and another plebiscite in the purely Ruthene areas of Ruthenia, in order that the local inhabitants could determine whether or not they wished to return to Hungary.¹ This solution, however, was opposed by the Czechoslovak Government.² If such plebiscites had actually been held on the basis of the Hungarian proposal, and if the results in both Slovakia and Ruthenia had been unfavorable to Hungary, the consequence would have been a severe blow to Hungarian revisionist propaganda. If one assumes that the vast majority of the Ruthenes were opposed to a return to Hungary, the question thereupon arises: Why did the Czechoslovak Government not allow a

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 109. Cf. Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 198.

²Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 209. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, p. 112.

plebiscite to be held in Ruthenia, and thus taken advantage of the opportunity to weaken Hungarian prestige? Furthermore, it is doubtful that the Hungarians would have been willing to expose themselves to such a risk if they had not been convinced that a majority of the Ruthenes desired to return to Hungary.

Regardless of whether or not one sympathizes with the Hungarian claim to the non-Magyar portions of Ruthenia, it must be admitted that with regard to the Magyar-inhabited areas of southern Slovakia and Ruthenia, Hungary had been dealt a clear injustice. At the Peace Conference of 1920, the Hungarian delegation had requested that plebiscites be held in the areas about to be taken from Hungary, in order that the people residing therein could freely determine whether they wished to be separated from Hungary or not.¹ This reasonable request was not granted, and by the Treaty of Trianon, not only were non-Magyars detached from Hungary, but many Magyars as well, were forced to live under Czechoslovak rule.² The Hungarians could logically argue that if the Allied Powers had really been interested in "self-determination of peoples" they would have permitted plebiscites in the areas involved.

¹Dominic G. Kosáry, A History of Hungary (Cleveland, Ohio: The Benjamin Franklin Bibliophile Society, 1941), p. 402.

²Ibid., p. 410.

It is interesting to note that even Czechoslovakia's partners in the Little Entente recognized the justice of Hungary's ethnographic claims. Even though both Rumania and Yugoslavia had, like Czechoslovakia, acquired territory at Hungary's expense, they both realized that Hungary was justified in demanding the Magyar-inhabited parts of Czechoslovakia, although they were opposed to any annexation of territory by Hungary beyond the limits of the ethnographic line.¹

The Vienna Award of November 2, 1938, resulted in the transfer of certain parts of Slovakia and Ruthenia from Czechoslovakia to Hungary. In that portion of Ruthenia which was returned to Hungary by this Award, the Magyars formed nearly half the population and by far the largest ethnic group even according to the Czechoslovak census of 1930. The remainder of the population was divided between Czechs and Slovaks, Ruthenes, Jews, Germans, a tiny fraction of other ethnic groups, plus a certain number of people who were listed as "aliens." However, most of the Jews had, in fact, been Magyarized and a large number of the "aliens" were also Magyars who had not succeeded in establishing Czechoslovak nationality. If we therefore add to the total of Magyars, the Jews and

¹DGFP, D/II, pp. 936, 992.

a considerable proportion of the "aliens," the Magyars appear as about two-thirds of the population. The Vienna Award, in regard to Ruthenia, appears to have been genuinely ethnic.¹

In that part of Slovakia that was returned to Hungary by the Vienna Award, the ratio of Magyars to non-Magyars was even greater. This area had been populated according to the 1910 census, by 636,246 Magyars and only 83,061 Slovaks.² Even according to the Czechoslovak census of 1930, the Magyars outnumbered the non-Magyars in that part of Slovakia that was returned to Hungary by the Vienna arbitration. At the 1930 census, there were 511,959 Magyars and 272,388 "Czechoslovaks" in this part of Slovakia.³

After the southern part of Slovakia had been awarded to Hungary, a new census was taken, which showed that area to have a population of 727,297 Magyars and 121,890 Slovaks.⁴ Thus, by either the Hungarian censuses of 1910 and 1938 or by the Czechoslovak census of 1930, that section of Slovakia can be said to have been predominantly

¹Veronica M. Toynbee (ed.), Survey of International Affairs, 1938 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), Volume III, pp. 129-130.

²Ibid., p. 105.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

inhabited by Magyars. Moreover, the ethnic lines that were deduced from the censuses of 1910 and 1938 ran very close together and well to the north of the Trianon frontier.¹

The Vienna Award was based on the 1910 census. Since the proportion of Magyars was higher in that census than in the Czechoslovak census of 1930, this factor created a slight advantage in favor of Hungary.² Nevertheless, the determination of the new Czechoslovak-Hungarian boundary on the basis of the 1910 census could be justified on the following grounds.

In the first place, the 1910 census was the last census before the collapse of Austria-Hungary, which occurred in 1918.³ It could be argued that areas with a predominantly Magyar population should never have been separated from Hungary in the first place, and that the only way to rectify this injustice would be to draw the new boundary according to the conditions of 1918.

During its twenty-year rule of the territory which was returned to Hungary by the Vienna Award, the

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 106.

²Bernard Newman, The New Europe (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943), p. 453.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 120.

Czechoslovak Government deliberately fostered colonization of the Magyar-inhabited parts of Czechoslovakia by Czech and Slovak settlers under the land reform program. This was a second reason why Hungary was justified in demanding a settlement on the basis of the 1910 census. The purpose of this colonization had been to destroy the unity of the Magyar territory and to stake out an ethnographical claim against frontier revision.¹ For example, on the island of Csallóköz (Grosse Schuett), which had been entirely Magyar in 1919, only 6,617 hectares were allotted to the local Magyar population, while 31,673 hectares were granted to Czech and Slovak settlers brought in from remote districts. Though these settlers formed only four per cent of the population of Csallóköz, they received eighteen per cent of the land.² The existence of these Czech and Slovak colonies was then used by the Czechs as an argument against restoring the Csallóköz to Hungary.³

This abuse of the land reform program was, of course, not confined to the Csallóköz area alone. Of the 170,000 hectares of land distributed under the agrarian

¹Macartney, op. cit., p. 174.

²Stephen D. Kertesz, Diplomacy in a Whirlpool: Hungary Between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953), p. 232.

³Macartney, op. cit., p. 174.

reform measures in those sections of Slovakia which had been inhabited entirely by Magyars in 1918, approximately 130,000 hectares were granted to Czech and Slovak settlers.¹

There are several reasons why the proportion of Magyars was higher in the Hungarian censuses of 1910 and 1938 than in the Czechoslovak census of 1930. One reason is that the Czechoslovak land reform program, as has been described above, resulted in the immigration of many Czech and Slovak settlers into what had formerly been purely Magyar areas. A second reason is that after the Vienna Award, Czech and Slovak troops and officials departed from that part of Slovakia which was awarded to Hungary and were replaced by Magyar troops and officials. This swelled the Magyar population, while it simultaneously reduced the Slovak population, and practically eliminated the Czechs from that area. The same thing had happened in 1920, only in reverse order.² Still a third reason is that along the line of the ethnic frontier, intermarriage and bilingualism had produced a considerable indeterminate population, who, either from opportunism or from genuine vagueness about their nationality or language, may have

¹Kertesz, op. cit., p. 232.

²Toynbee, op. cit., p. 106.

declared themselves Magyars in 1910 and 1938 and as Slovaks in 1930.¹

A fourth reason for the differences between the Hungarian and Czechoslovak censuses is that different methods were used in arriving at the census figures. The Hungarian censuses of 1910 and 1938 were based on language; the Czechoslovak census of 1930 was based on nationality. In that part of Slovakia which was returned to Hungary by the Vienna Award, the 1930 census had listed, separately from the Magyars and "Czechoslovaks," 26,157 Jews and over 26,000 "aliens." In the Hungarian censuses, Jews were not listed as a separate nationality, and many of them undoubtedly registered themselves as Magyars. As in Ruthenia, the "aliens" were mostly people who had not yet succeeded in establishing Czechoslovak nationality. But many of these "aliens" were actually Magyars, and appeared as such in 1938.²

However, it should be remembered that even according to the 1930 census figures, the Magyars outnumbered the Slovaks in that part of Slovakia which was returned to Hungary at Vienna.³ Furthermore, many of

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 106.

²Ibid., pp. 105-106.

³Ibid., p. 105.

the Germans who resided in this part of Slovakia favored the Hungarian cause.¹

Nevertheless, the establishment of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian border according to ethnographic principles was difficult because along the ethnic frontier there were certain areas of mixed population, which were neither entirely Slovak or Ruthene, nor entirely Magyar. This difficulty was recognized by the arbiters themselves, who stated that "at points where circumstances did not allow an exact determination of the frontier on ethnographic lines [Volksmaessige Grenzziehung], the interests of both sides were carefully weighed."²

Hungary would have been willing to abide by the results of a plebiscite in any areas where there was doubt concerning the predominant ethnic composition. On October 24, 1938, the Hungarian Government suggested that the disputed areas be divided into eight sectors, in each of which plebiscites would be held. This Hungarian proposal also insisted that if Czechoslovakia did not accept the proposal for a plebiscite, a decision should

¹Macartney, op. cit., p. 186.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 127.

be reached through German-Italian arbitration.¹ The Czechoslovak Government, unwilling to trust to the results of a plebiscite, chose the second alternative.² The autonomous Slovak Government was also opposed to a plebiscite in the disputed areas.³

Since the territory which was returned to Hungary by the Vienna Award was predominantly Magyar even according to the Czechoslovak census of 1930, and since it was the Czechs and Slovaks rather than the Hungarians who refused to allow plebiscites to be held, Hungary was justified in reclaiming the territory that was assigned to her at Vienna. As John Flournoy Montgomery, who was the American Minister to Hungary at that time, subsequently pointed out, the Hungarians could claim that their action was in keeping with the Munich decisions, that Czechoslovakia had been compelled to disgorge what never should have become hers, and that Hungary, in these circumstances, could not refrain from taking back property previously stolen from her.⁴

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 108-109. Cf. Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 198.

²Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 209. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 112-113.

³DGFP, D/IV, pp. 89, 110.

⁴Montgomery, Hungary: The Unwilling Satellite, p. 121.

SECTION IV

CZECHOSLOVAK-HUNGARIAN NEGOTIATIONS

In the period between the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, and the Vienna Award of November 2, 1938, there were two attempts to solve the problem of the Hungarian claims by direct Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations. The first attempt took place between October 9 and October 13, 1938. Negotiations were conducted, on the Czechoslovak side, by the representatives of the autonomous Slovak and Ruthenian Governments.

After the failure of these negotiations, there was an interlude during which Germany tried to act as mediator, in talks with Czech, Slovak, Ruthenian, and Hungarian statesmen.¹ Then, starting from October 22, 1938, another attempt was made to solve the dispute by direct negotiations between the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments. These, too, were destined to end in failure.

On October 2, 1938, the Hungarian Minister in Prague, János Wettstein, delivered a note to the

¹United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), Series D, Volume IV, pp. 69-78, 86-92. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/IV.

Czechoslovak Foreign Minister. The contents of this note read as follows:

As the Munich decisions have created a new situation, my Government invites the Czechoslovak Government to enter at once into direct negotiations for the purpose of giving effect to the right of self-determination of nationalities on full terms of equality with the right of the Sudeten Germans.

The speediest execution of these negotiations and, as far as is possible, their conclusion on the basis of mutual agreement is in the interest not only of the good relations of both countries but of the whole of Europe. The Royal Hungarian Government therefore requests Your Excellency to inform it with all speed when and where the Czechoslovak Government desires to open the negotiations in question.¹

At 9 p.m. on the evening of October 3, 1938, the Hungarian Minister to Czechoslovakia delivered another note to the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister. This note demanded that "in order to create a peaceful atmosphere" the following measures were to be taken without delay:

- (1) Hungarian political prisoners were to be set free at once.
- (2) Soldiers of Hungarian nationality were to be demobilized at once and allowed to return home.
- (3) A detachment was to be formed under joint command for protection of life, for mediation, and for maintenance of local order.

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 16-17.

(4) As a gesture symbolic of cession of territory, two or three Czechoslovak frontier towns were to be handed over to Hungary and occupied by Hungarian troops.

(5) The Hungarian Government proposed that negotiations begin in the border town of Komárno at 4 p.m. on October 6, 1938.¹

Wettstein requested an answer to these demands by October 4, 1938.² When an answer had not been received by October 5, he delivered another note to the Czechoslovak Foreign Office. In this note, the Hungarian Government demanded an answer from Czechoslovakia and also made an energetic protest against alleged persecution of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia "whereby good Czechoslovak-Hungarian relations would be endangered and prejudiced for the future." By the very nature of things, the note continued, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were in a state of excitement and, being aware of the Munich decisions, were awaiting their application with extreme anxiety. These conditions made it imperative that the necessary awards be implemented as soon as possible.³

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 25-26.

²Ibid., p. 26.

³Ibid., p. 36.

Meanwhile, the head of the European section of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry told a member of the German Legation that Point 1 of the immediate measures demanded by Hungary (that Hungarian political prisoners be set free immediately) had already been fulfilled by the Czechoslovak Government.¹ With regard to Point 2 (the demand that soldiers of Hungarian nationality be demobilized and allowed to return home), the Czechoslovak Government claimed that this demand could not be carried out at once, as the interpretation of Hungarian nationality could not be established forthwith. The Czechoslovak official claimed that the Hungarian Legation itself was not clear about the type of measures demanded in Point 3 (the demand for a detachment under joint command for the maintenance of local order). He also alleged that Hungarian detachments had penetrated Czechoslovak soil at Rimavska Sobota (Gross-Steffelsdorf), and he insisted that while this situation continued, there could be no question of symbolic cession of territory (Point 4). In addition, he continued, the reconstruction of the Czechoslovak Government, which was going on at that time, had made impossible a complete

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 36. Actually, Hungarian political prisoners were not freed until October 8, 1938. See Veronica M. Toynbee (ed.), Survey of International Affairs, 1938 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), Volume III, p. 85. Cf. The New York Times, October 10, 1938, p. 7.

answer to the Hungarian note within the time requested. He stated that the Prague Government envisaged October 15, 1938, as the date for the opening of negotiations.¹

The Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations were finally set for October 9, 1938.² On that evening, negotiations began at the border town of Komárno (Komárom). The Hungarian delegation was led by Foreign Minister Kálmán Kánya and Count Paul Teleki, the Hungarian Minister of Education. In view of the fact that the Hungarian demands embraced parts of Slovakia and Ruthenia, the negotiations on the Czechoslovak side were conducted by the Slovaks and Ruthenes themselves. Monsignor Jozef Tiso, head of the recently created autonomous Slovak Government, was the leader of the Slovak delegation, while Párkányi, a Ruthenian Minister, represented his ethnic group. Meanwhile, the Slovaks agreed to a token occupation by Hungarian forces at two frontier points. These were the town of Sahy (Ipolyság) and the railway station of Nové Mesto (Sátoraljaújhely).³

The Hungarians demanded the cession of an area of 14,150 square kilometers, which, according to the 1910

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 36-37.

²Ibid., p. 26.

³Toynbee, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

census had contained 1,090,000 inhabitants, mostly Magyars and Hungarian Jews. The Hungarians contended that any change in the ethnic composition of the population which had occurred since the cession of the territory to Czechoslovakia in 1920 was purely artificial.¹

The line which the Hungarians demanded would have restored to Hungary the formerly Magyar-inhabited towns of Nitra (Nyitra), Košice (Kassa), Užhorod (Ungvár), and Mukačevo (Munkács), as well as Bratislava, where no single ethnic group had been in a majority in 1910. The Hungarians also asked for plebiscites in the rest of Slovakia and Ruthenia. Almost no progress was made in coming to an agreement, and on October 11, 1938, negotiations were interrupted in order that both delegations could consult their Governments.²

The negotiations at Komárno were resumed on October 13, 1938. In response to the Hungarian demand for the Magyar-inhabited territory, the Czechoslovak delegation offered no territory whatsoever, but only autonomy for the Magyar minority in Czechoslovakia. This offer was immediately rejected by Kánya, who said that he had come to negotiate, not to joke.³ The Czechoslovak delegation

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 85.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

then agreed to cede the Grosse Schuett area which contained 1,840 square miles and 105,000 inhabitants, almost all Magyars. This offer was rejected as inadequate. Then, the Czechoslovak delegation offered an area of 5,400 square kilometers with a population of 350,000 (according to Czech estimates the population had risen to about 400,000, of whom about 330,000 were Magyars).¹ Nevertheless, proof that this offer was still grossly inadequate is shown by the fact that even according to the Czechoslovak census of 1930, there were 571,988 Magyars in Slovakia plus another 109,472 in Ruthenia.² Even the German Government, which was basically favorable to Czechoslovakia in its dispute with Hungary, considered the Czechoslovak offer of October 13 to be unsatisfactory.³ The American Minister to Hungary subsequently described the Czechoslovak offer as amounting to nothing but "a small frontier strip."⁴

Count Teleki rejected the Czechoslovak proposals, which he declared had been based on economic, rather than

¹Toynbee, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

²Carlile A. Macartney, Hungary and Her Successors: 1919-1937 (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 188, 203.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 77.

⁴John Flournoy Montgomery, Hungary: The Unwilling Satellite (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1947), p. 120.

ethnographic considerations. He said that the experience of the past twenty years showed that only a settlement based on ethnic lines would prove lasting, while ways and means could always be found, if there was goodwill, to solve problems of trade and traffic. As the respective proposals were too widely divergent to hold out the possibility of agreement, the Hungarian delegation, on the evening of October 13, 1938, declared that it considered the conference closed, and that Hungary would appeal to the four Powers that had signed the Munich Agreement.¹

Meanwhile, border tensions continued. On the evening of October 13, 1938, following the failure of negotiations, Czechoslovakia rushed additional military reinforcements to her troops on the Czechoslovak-Hungarian border.² That evening, Kánya complained that the Czechoslovak Government had concentrated its troops on the Hungarian frontier. The Slovak Government, for its part, made a bellicose declaration over the Bratislava radio which contained the phrases: "The Hungarians believe that we have disbanded our army. They are sorely mistaken. Our army stands, fully ready, with tanks and aircraft."³ In reply, the Hungarian Government decided,

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 86.

²The New York Times, October 14, 1938, p. 16.

³Toynbee, op. cit., p. 86.

early on the morning of October 14, to call up five additional classes of reservists.¹

Within the next few days, the situation deteriorated still further. On October 16, 1938, the Czechoslovak Government extended martial law over the Magyar-inhabited parts of Czechoslovakia, and pro-Hungarian demonstrations among the residents of those areas were dispersed by Czechoslovak troops.² Hungary answered by mobilizing six additional classes of reservists which, when combined with Hungarian troops already mobilized, approximated full mobilization.³

In order to break this deadlock, the Hungarian Government, on October 17, 1938, suggested that Czechoslovakia should make one final proposal to Hungary. If this proposal were rejected, Hungary intended to ask for either mediation or arbitration of the Axis Powers.⁴ In a conference which the German Foreign Minister held on October 19 with officials of the autonomous Slovak and Ruthenian Governments, a compromise proposal was prepared,⁵ which

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 67-68.

²Ibid., p. 80. Cf. The New York Times, October 18, 1938, p. 2.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 79.

⁴Ibid., p. 80.

⁵Ibid., pp. 86-92.

the German Minister to Hungary offered to the Hungarian Government on the following day.¹ However, this proposal, which would have left Bratislava, Nitra, Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo in Czechoslovakia, was unacceptable to Hungary.² On October 21, the Hungarian Government offered to relinquish its claim on Bratislava and Nitra, but it continued to demand the cession of Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo.³

On October 22, 1938, the Czechoslovak Government, under pressure from Germany,⁴ made a proposal to the Hungarian Government for a basis of resumed negotiations. Czechoslovakia offered to cede an area of 11,300 square miles with a population of 740,000. This proposal was based on the line which von Ribbentrop had discussed with the Slovaks, and would have meant the return to Hungary of the indisputably Magyar-inhabited lowlands, but would have left the disputed cities at the mouths of the northern valleys to Czechoslovakia.⁵

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 94.

²Ibid., pp. 94-95. For a more detailed account of German mediation attempts between October 17 and October 20, 1938, see Section II of this thesis.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 96.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Toynbee, op. cit., p. 97.

On October 24, 1938, the Hungarian Government, finding the Czechoslovak offer of October 22 unacceptable, made a counterproposal to Czechoslovakia. This counterproposal suggested that the areas which had been offered to Hungary by the Czechoslovak Government on October 22, 1938, were to be considered as indisputably Magyar and were to be surrendered for Hungarian occupation "within three days from October 27."¹ The areas north of the ethnic line, according to the census of 1910, were to be considered as indisputably Slovak or Ruthene. A plebiscite under international control was to be held in the Slovak area and a similar plebiscite in the Ruthene area, so that the inhabitants residing therein might freely decide their political allegiance.²

According to this Hungarian proposal, the strip lying between the indisputably Hungarian areas and the indisputably Slovak and Ruthene areas was to be considered as disputed. This disputed area (which included the cities of Nitra, Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo) was to be divided into eight sectors, in each of which plebiscites

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 108.

²Ibid., p. 109. Cf. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Documents on British Foreign Policy: 1919-1939 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950), Third Series, Volume III, p. 198. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III.

were to be carried out under international control by November 30, 1938. All those who had lived in the disputed areas on October 28, 1918, or who were born there before that date, were to be entitled to vote. On the other hand, the city of Bratislava was to be treated as an object of special negotiations, since no ethnic group in that city had an absolute majority in 1918.¹

Finally, the Budapest Government insisted that if Czechoslovakia were unwilling to accept this proposal for a plebiscite, the whole question of the disputed areas, as well as the question of plebiscites in the Slovak and Ruthene areas, was to be submitted to arbitration; in the western area, such arbitration would be by Germany and Italy; in the eastern area, by Germany, Italy, and Poland. The Hungarian Government agreed to accept the award in advance and expected the same from the Czechoslovak Government. A reply to the Hungarian counterproposal was expected within 48 hours.²

The Hungarian proposal for a plebiscite met with no favor either from the Slovak Government in Bratislava³

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 108. Cf. Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 198.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 109. Cf. Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 198.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 110.

or from the Czechoslovak Government in Prague. On October 26, 1938, Wettstein was informed that the Czechoslovak Government had agreed to submit the problem of the Magyar minorities in Czechoslovakia to the arbitration of Germany and Italy as signatory Powers of the Munich Agreement. On the other hand, the Czechoslovak Government refused to agree to either a plebiscite for or arbitration of the strictly Slovak and Ruthene areas, insisting that, as Points 1 and 2 of the additional protocol of the Munich Agreement referred only to Hungarian and Polish minorities, problems involving other ethnic groups would have to remain outside the scope of the negotiations. The note suggested that the arbitral award should fix the procedure and time limits for the evacuation by Czechoslovak troops and authorities of the area to be ceded and for the occupation of this area by Hungarian troops and authorities. The Czechoslovak Government requested that the inclusion of other arbiters should be left to Germany and Italy to decide, but it believed that if Poland was to be included, Rumania should be included, also.¹

The Hungarian answer was sent to Prague on October 27, 1938. With regard to the earlier Hungarian proposal

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 112-113. Cf. Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 209.

for plebiscites in the Slovak and Ruthene areas, it admitted that the Munich Agreement had only mentioned German, Hungarian, and Polish minorities, but it placed on record the Hungarian viewpoint that the chief aim of this Agreement had been self-determination for all nationalities. It also insisted that the territory which had been offered to Hungary by the Czechoslovak Government through its proposal of October 22, should be handed over to Hungary immediately, and that only the area in dispute should be subject to arbitration. Furthermore, the Hungarian note stated that if Germany declined to accept the role of arbiter, Hungary would call a four-Power conference in order to settle the dispute with Czechoslovakia.¹

The Prague Government delivered its reply on October 28, 1938. It rejected Hungary's plea to hand over immediately the territory recognized as predominantly Magyar, and insisted that the arbitral award should apply to this area as well as to the territory that had a mixed population. It urged that the arbiters themselves should fix the modalities for evacuation of the areas to be ceded and for the occupation of these areas by the Hungarians.

¹Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser. Vol. III, pp. 209-210. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 113-114; Toynbee, op. cit., p. 99.

The Czechoslovak note also suggested that both Prague and Budapest should officially request the German and Italian Governments to undertake the role of arbiters.¹ Both Germany and Italy had received such requests from the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments by October 29, 1938.²

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 114. Cf. Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, pp. 210-211.

²Doc. Brit. For. Policy, 3rd ser., Vol. III, p. 211. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 113, 115.

SECTION V

THE VIENNA AWARD AND COUNT CIANO

The Italian Government, like the German Government, was opposed to the absorption of the non-Magyar areas of Slovakia into Hungary. Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, realized that Germany, Rumania, and Yugoslavia would oppose such a solution. Furthermore, he was aware of the fact that the Slovaks themselves were opposed to union with Hungary, and that there was "no point in wiping out one injustice in order to commit another."¹

At first, Italy supported the Polish-Hungarian plan to achieve a joint frontier by the Hungarian acquisition of Ruthenia.² However, on October 15, 1938, Mussolini withdrew his support for a common Polish-Hungarian frontier because of German opposition to this project.³ Thus, Italy

¹Galeazzo Ciano, 1937-1938 Diario, trans. Andreas Mayor (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1952), pp. 172, 175. Cf. United States Department of State, Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), Series D, Volume IV, p. 30. Hereafter this volume will be referred to as DGFP, D/IV.

²Ciano, op. cit., p. 175.

³Ibid., p. 178.

supported Hungary's ethnographic claims, but not her historical claims. This was also the attitude of the German Government, and superficially it would seem that the German and Italian attitudes were in agreement on the subject of the Hungarian claims.

Actually, this agreement was more apparent than real. The Italian Government had the notion of building up Hungary as a counterweight to Germany,¹ and therefore it placed a much broader interpretation on what Hungary was entitled to claim on ethnic grounds than did its Axis partner. Furthermore, whereas the German Government was reluctant to give Hungary its open support, either through a four-Power conference or through arbitration, Italy gave active support in order that the Czechoslovak-Hungarian frontier could be corrected according to ethnographic principles. Not only was Hungary's acquisition of Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo due to Italian support, but the Vienna Award itself came about only through Italian pressure brought to bear on a reluctant Germany.

The suggestion that a decision be reached through German-Italian arbitration originally came from Mussolini.² On October 14, 1938, in a conference with the Hungarian

¹Alan J. P. Taylor, The Origins of the Second World War (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961), p. 194.

²Ciano, op. cit., p. 187.

statesman, Count István Csáky, the Italian Foreign Minister mentioned Axis arbitration as a possible solution in the event of a failure of direct negotiations. Count Csáky expressed himself as being in favor of an arbitral award.¹ On October 17, 1938, the Hungarian Government suggested that Czechoslovakia make one final proposal, and that if this proposal proved unacceptable to Budapest, the matter should be referred to the Axis Powers for mediation or arbitration.²

On the evening of October 19, 1938, following his talk with the Slovak and Ruthenian representatives, von Ribbentrop telephoned Count Ciano and informed him of the proposal which the Slovak and Ruthenian Ministers had agreed upon.³ Following this conversation, the German Foreign Minister was under the impression that his Italian counterpart had expressed agreement with the result of the talks, while reserving Mussolini's approval.⁴

Actually, Count Ciano sensed that the plan was unfavorable to Hungary.⁵ As a favor to Germany, he

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 79.

²Ibid., p. 80. Cf. Ciano, op. cit., p. 179.

³Ciano, op. cit., p. 180.

⁴DGFP, D/IV, p. 93.

⁵Ciano, op. cit., p. 180.

instructed the Italian Minister in Budapest to inform the Hungarian Government that the Italian Government associated itself with the actions of Germany, and regarded the solution reached at Munich by von Ribbentrop and the Slovak Ministers as a reasonable one.¹ However, he expressed his true feelings about the matter when he told the Hungarian Minister to Italy, Baron Frigyes Villani: "If you accept the plan, which may be called a German plan, good-- we are satisfied. If not, let us know what we can do for you."²

By the afternoon of October 20, 1938, von Ribbentrop had not heard from Mussolini, so he assumed that Italy would raise no objections to the proposal which he and the Slovaks had agreed upon. Accordingly, Hans Georg von Mackensen, the German Ambassador to Italy, was instructed by telephone to visit Count Ciano and explain the whole matter to him in detail. He was also instructed to ask Ciano to exert Italian influence on Hungary in order to induce Budapest to accept the frontier which had been proposed by von Ribbentrop and the Slovaks as "a reasonable solution."³

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 98.

²Ciano, op. cit., p. 180.

³DGFP, D/IV, p. 93.

Von Mackensen replied that, as Mussolini had left Rome on October 19, 1938, his silence should not be taken as implying complete agreement with von Ribbentrop's proposal. He indicated, however, that an opportunity would occur in his conversation with Count Ciano to determine Mussolini's attitude.¹

The Hungarian Government rejected the German-Slovak proposal,² and on October 21, 1938, Baron Villani explained to Count Ciano the position of the Hungarian Government. He stated that, while Hungary was prepared to compromise over Bratislava and Nitra, she insisted on obtaining the towns in the eastern area, especially Košice. Villani proposed German-Italian arbitration for the western area and German-Italian-Polish arbitration for the eastern area (starting with Košice and extending eastward from that city). Ciano telephoned Mussolini, and the latter agreed to arbitration, but advised "feeling the pulse of Germany" before the sending of an invitation to Poland.³

Later that day, von Mackensen visited Count Ciano in order to request Italian support for the frontier line

¹DGFP, D/IV, pp. 93-94.

²Ibid., pp. 94-95.

³Ciano, op. cit., p. 180. Cf. DGFP, D/IV, pp. 97-98.

which had been discussed on October 19, 1938 by von Ribbentrop and the Slovak Ministers. Ciano cut short any further explanation of the "von Ribbentrop line" by informing the German Ambassador of the Hungarian suggestion for arbitration which Villani had made that morning. Ciano explained that he favored the proposal, but that the final decision lay in the hands of the German Government.¹ From von Mackensen's attitude during this conversation, Count Ciano came to the conclusion that the Germans were clearly acting on behalf of Prague.²

During the next few days, Count Ciano endeavored (1) to secure a decision in the Czechoslovak-Hungarian dispute through Axis arbitration, and (2) to see that Hungary's minimum demands (which included the three cities of Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo) were granted. Owing to his persistence, he was eventually to achieve both of these objectives.

This achievement, however, proved to be a difficult task, owing to the opposition of Germany. For example, on October 22, 1938, von Ribbentrop telephoned Count Ciano in order to protest against the proposal for German-Italian arbitration. He expressed the fear that an arbitral

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 98.

²Ciano, op. cit., p. 181.

decision would end by satisfying neither Hungary nor Czechoslovakia, and would compel the Axis Powers to resort to force in order to put their decisions into effect. Von Ribbentrop also expressed his exasperation over the Hungarian refusal of a line which he insisted had been approved by Darányi and Imrédy. Now, perhaps in desperation, he reverted to the idea of a four-Power conference, claiming that this might be preferred by Czechoslovakia.¹ Count Ciano, who believed that von Ribbentrop "intends to protect Czechoslovakia as far as he can and sacrifice the ambitions, even the legitimate ambitions of Hungary,"² pointedly reminded him that the idea of a four-Power conference, which had been discussed a few days earlier, had been "discarded because of opposition for which we [the Italian Government] were not responsible."³ He also told the German Foreign Minister that the latter's fears concerning an arbitral decision could be ruled out, as arbitration implied the previous consent of both parties to accept its results.⁴

¹Veronica M. Toynbee (ed.), Survey of International Affairs, 1938 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), Volume III, p. 97. Cf. Ciano, op. cit., p. 181.

²Ciano, op. cit., p. 181.

³Toynbee, op. cit., p. 97.

⁴Ciano, op. cit., p. 181.

Von Ribbentrop was not yet convinced. On the evening of October 23, 1938, he again telephoned Count Ciano to say that Hitler had endorsed his opposition to Axis arbitration, and that he therefore proposed sending "an identical message to the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments inviting them to resume negotiations." If direct negotiations should fail, however, Hitler was in favor of a four-Power conference, but composed of Foreign Ministers only, in a northern Italian city. Von Ribbentrop also announced that he intended to come to Rome in a few days in order to convey a personal message from Hitler to Mussolini.¹

On October 24, 1938, von Ribbentrop stated that he was opposed to German-Italian arbitration, but that he intended to get in touch with the Italian Government again before making a final decision.² He was soon to have an opportunity to do this, as he visited Rome from October 27 to October 29, 1938. Although he had come in order to discuss the possibility of a military alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan, the subject of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian dispute also arose. Count Ciano, in a conversation with von Ribbentrop on October 27, 1938, argued in

¹Toynbee, op. cit., p. 98.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 109.

favor of German-Italian arbitration, claiming that "it sets the seal upon the fact that all Franco-British influence has collapsed for ever in Danubian and Balkan Europe."¹

A second conversation between the two Foreign Ministers took place on the following day. Count Ciano told his guest that the British Ambassador to Italy had delivered a note on October 27, 1938, which stated that Great Britain was in favor of German-Italian arbitration of the Slovak problem and only envisaged fresh action by the Munich Powers in the event of German-Italian efforts not meeting with success.² He then used the same arguments that he had expressed the night before, claiming that the great advantage of German-Italian arbitration would be its psychological effect on the Balkan countries.

¹Ciano, op. cit., p. 185.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 519. In the British note to which Count Ciano referred, Viscount Halifax, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, stated that his Government would "be happy to see the Czechs and Hungarians agree to settle their differences by reference to arbitration by the Italian and German Governments," but that if it "were deemed preferable or necessary that the questions in dispute between the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments should be referred to the four Munich Powers, His Majesty's Government would be ready to take their part in trying to bring about an agreed settlement." See Great Britain, Foreign Office, Documents on British Foreign Policy: 1919-1939 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950), Third Series, Volume III, p. 198.

He insisted that it would be clearly demonstrated that Great Britain and France had finally vanished from the Balkan scene, and the wind would be taken out of the sails of those circles in Yugoslavia and other countries who still looked to France and Great Britain.¹

Von Ribbentrop claimed that Hitler had been reserved regarding the idea of arbitration for several reasons. Among these were the conclusion by Hungary of the Bled Agreement with the Little Entente States (which Germany regarded as a stab in the back) at the very time of Horthy's visit to Germany, the fact that the Hungarians had refrained from energetic measures during the Sudeten crisis, and discrepancies between the demands which had allegedly been put forward by Darányi on the occasion of his visit to Munich and the requests with which Hungary had approached Italy. Nevertheless, von Ribbentrop admitted that he recognized the psychological advantage that a German-Italian arbitral award would have for the Axis in the Balkan countries, and he promised to discuss the matter with Hitler once again. Several details of frontier demarcation were then discussed, and it was suggested that the two Foreign Ministers should meet again the following week in order to make an arbitral award.²

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 519.

²Ibid., pp. 519-520.

On October 29, 1938, von Ribbentrop and Count Ciano had another discussion concerning the Axis arbitration, and it was decided that this would take place in Vienna.¹

By October 30, 1938, von Ribbentrop, who had been converted to the idea of Axis arbitration by Count Ciano, had likewise succeeded in convincing Hitler of the desirability of this solution. Accordingly, on that date, the German Government informed both Prague and Budapest that it was willing to undertake the role of arbiter in conjunction with Italy, providing that both Czechoslovakia and Hungary would give a binding declaration that the arbitral decisions "shall be accepted as the final settlement and shall be carried out without reservation or delay in accordance with the conditions to be laid down."² Both the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments agreed to this.³ It was therefore agreed that von Ribbentrop and Count Ciano would meet at Vienna on November 2, 1938, for the purpose of arbitrating the dispute between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The German Government decided not to include Poland in the arbitration proceedings, and therefore the Czechoslovak suggestion to include Rumania also lapsed.⁴

¹Ciano, op. cit., p. 187.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 115.

³Ibid., p. 117.

⁴Ibid.

On October 28, 1938, Count Ciano informed von Ribbentrop that Mussolini favored a compromise solution, by which, of the five towns demanded by Hungary, Bratislava and Nitra would remain in Czechoslovakia, while Košice, Užhorod, and Mukáčevo would be allotted to Hungary.¹ However, the German Foreign Minister expressed his misgivings about allowing Hungary to claim the three latter cities.² In his diary for October 28, Ciano wrote:

Ribbentrop now speaks with hostility, not only about the Magyar leaders, but about the whole people. An ugly sign. Very ugly. But perhaps instructive. After fostering the friendship and the illusions of the Hungarians for twenty years, they abandon them and even oppose them, when to help them means making a small sacrifice. I have fought very strenuously. If the arbitration takes place, I think it will succeed in snatching the three eastern towns from the Germans. But it will be a very hard struggle.³

And on October 29, he wrote that von Ribbentrop "defended the Czech cause sword in hand and contested the Hungarian claims of territory with the same zeal with which the Germans made claims from Prague at Munich." He then

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 519. These were actually the minimum demands of Hungary. The Hungarian Government insisted on the cession of the three latter cities, but was willing to make concessions regarding Bratislava and Nitra. Ibid., p. 96. Cf. Ciano, op. cit., p. 180.

²DGFP, D/IV, p. 520.

³Ciano, op. cit., p. 186.

commented: "However, I get the impression that, if we insist, we shall have our own way over the three eastern towns."¹

Count Ciano's persistence appeared to be rewarded when, on the evening of October 30, 1938, von Mackensen informed him that von Ribbentrop had decided to yield to the Italian viewpoint regarding Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo.² However, when Ciano arrived at Vienna, he discovered that the attitude of the German Government was still hostile to Hungary. Shortly after his arrival, he had a conversation with Field Marshal Hermann Goering, in which the latter denounced the Hungarians and accused them of being in league with the western democracies.³ This was followed by a conference with von Ribbentrop, in which the German Foreign Minister made one final effort to save Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo for Czechoslovakia. Von Ribbentrop pleaded that, at the very least, Mukačevo should remain in Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, Count Ciano continued to insist that all three communities should be returned to Hungary.⁴

¹Ciano, op. cit., p. 187.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 188.

⁴Ibid., pp. 188-189.

The conference which was convened in order to determine the new course of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian frontier took place at the Belvedere Palace in Vienna on November 2, 1938. After a few introductory remarks by von Ribbentrop and Count Ciano, the members of the Czechoslovak and Hungarian delegations were allowed to present their sides of the dispute. The Czechoslovak delegation consisted of Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky and Minister Krno. Foreign Minister Kánya, and Count Teleki, the Hungarian Minister of Education, comprised the Hungarian delegation.¹

The terms of the award, which were announced at 7 o'clock that evening,² provided that the evacuation by Czechoslovakia of the areas to be ceded was to take place from November 5 to November 10, 1938. The Czechoslovak Government was to ensure that these territories were left in an orderly condition at the time of evacuation.³

The terms of the Vienna Award also provided that the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments should do their utmost to remove any disadvantages and difficulties which the new frontiers might cause in the spheres of economics.

¹For the arguments of the members of both the Czechoslovak and Hungarian delegations, see DGFP, D/IV, pp. 119-124.

²Ibid., p. 125.

³Ibid., p. 126.

or railway traffic to the area remaining in Czechoslovakia. In cases of doubts or difficulties arising from the implementation of the Award, the matter was to be settled directly between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. However, it was provided that if those Governments failed to reach a decision on any question, the problem was to be referred to Germany and Italy for final decision.¹

Of the disputed towns, Bratislava, Nitra, and Sevljusch remained in Czechoslovakia, while Neuhaeusl, Lewenz, Lutschenetz, Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo were awarded to Hungary.² The dispute centered around the three latter cities. Because it granted these communities to Hungary, the Vienna Award conformed to the wishes of the Hungarians and Italians, rather than to those of the Germans and Czechoslovaks, as the German Government would have preferred to leave Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo in Czechoslovakia. As Count Ciano had enthusiastically supported the Hungarian claim to these three cities, the outcome of the Vienna Award was a victory for him and represented a triumph for Italian, rather than German, diplomacy.

For the Czechs, the Vienna Award was a diplomatic defeat. In fact, the entire sequence of events following

¹DGFP, D/IV, p. 126.

²Ibid., p. 127.

the Munich Agreement proved tragic for the Czechs. The conflicts between the various ethnic groups within the Czechoslovak Republic remained unresolved, and in March 1939 Germany succeeded in taking advantage of these difficulties for the purpose of annexing Bohemia and Moravia, and bringing about an end to Czech independence.

The Vienna Award also proved a source of disappointment to the Slovaks, who had to surrender control of a great deal of territory that they had hoped to retain. However, as the territory which was transferred to Hungary was predominantly inhabited by Magyars, the loss was not as severe as it otherwise would have been. Moreover, in spite of the loss of the Magyar-inhabited lowlands, Slovakia benefited a great deal by the chain of events which followed the Munich Agreement. By the time of the Vienna Award, the Slovaks had already achieved autonomy and, within a few months, they were to attain complete independence.

The primary beneficiaries of the Vienna Award were, of course, the Hungarians, as they were the recipients of a sizeable amount of territory, which included the important cities of Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo. Although Hungary's desire for the acquisition of Ruthenia was frustrated for the time being, that province finally came under Hungarian control in March 1939.

As we have seen, the German Government tried to retain Košice, Užhorod, and Mukačevo for Czechoslovakia, but failed in this attempt. However, in spite of this setback, the Vienna Award was not a diplomatic defeat for the German Government, as the latter had been successful in preventing the establishment of a common Polish-Hungarian frontier. In fact, the Vienna Award was a victory for German military policy, as the military leaders were adamant in their opposition to a common frontier between Poland and Hungary. Although the German documents are not entirely clear on this subject, it may be ascertained from subsequent events that the attitude of the German Government to such a frontier resulted from the apprehensions of the German army regarding this possibility, and that the communication sent by the army leaders to the Foreign Ministry on October 5, 1938, was the decisive factor in determining the German attitude to the Hungarian claims on Czechoslovak territory.

Nevertheless, the solution reached at Vienna was not destined to endure. In March 1939, Hungary succeeded in annexing Ruthenia, thus creating the common Polish-Hungarian frontier, which was desired by both Warsaw and Budapest. However, by the German annexation of Bohemia and Moravia, and by the increase of German influence in

Slovakia after the latter nation achieved its independence, the Berlin Government was able to retain enough hegemony over that general area to compensate itself for its loss of influence in Ruthenia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Published Documents

- Curtis, Monica (ed.). Documents on International Affairs: 1938. Volume II. London: Oxford University Press, 1943.
- French Government. The French Yellow Book: Diplomatic Documents (1938-1939). New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1940.
- German Foreign Office. Documents on the Events Preceding the Outbreak of the War. New York: German Library of Information, 1940. This is also known as The German White Book.
- Great Britain, Foreign Office. Documents on British Foreign Policy: 1919-1939. Third Series, Volume III. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950.
- Hohlfeld, Johannes (ed.). Dokumente der Deutschen Politik und Geschichte von 1848 bis zur Gegenwart. Volume IV. Berlin: Dokumenten-Verlag Dr. Herbert Wendler & Co., not dated.
- Poland, Republic of, Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Official Documents Concerning Polish-German and Polish-Soviet Relations: 1933-1939. London: Hutchinson & Co. (Publishers) Ltd., not dated. This is also known as The Polish White Book.
- United States Department of State. Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Volume II. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949.
- United States Department of State. Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Volume IV. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951.

United States Department of State. Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Volume V. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953.

Published Speeches

Hitler, Adolf. My New Order. Edited by Raoul de Roussy de Sales. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941.

Published Diaries and Memoirs

Ciano, Galeazzo. 1937-1938 Diario. Translated by Andreas Mayor. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1952.

Gafencu, Grigore. The Last Days of Europe. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1948.

Schmidt, Paul Otto. Hitler's Interpreter. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Newspapers

The New York Times.

The Times (London).

Books and Pamphlets

Albjerg, Victor L., and Albjerg, Marguerite Hall. Europe from 1914 to the Present. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951.

Benns, F. Lee. Europe Since 1914 in its World Setting. New York: F.S. Crofts & Co., 1941.

Borkenau, Franz. The New German Empire. New York: The Viking Press, 1939.

- Buell, Raymond Leslie. Poland: Key to Europe. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1939.
- Bullock, Alan. Hitler: A Study in Tyranny. New York: Harper and Brothers, not dated.
- Chamberlin, William Henry. The World's Iron Age. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941.
- Churchill, Winston. The Gathering Storm. Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1948.
- Dill, Marshall. Germany: A Modern History. Ann Arbor, Mich.: The University of Michigan Press, 1961.
- Ebenstein, William. The Nazi State. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1943.
- Freund, Michael. Deutsche Geschichte. Guetersloh: Bertelsmann Verlag, 1960.
- Glaser, Kurt. Czecho-Slovakia: A Critical History. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1961.
- Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940.
- Hanč, Josef. Tornado Across Eastern Europe: The Path of Nazi Destruction from Poland to Greece. New York: The Greystone Press, Inc., 1942.
- Jacoby, Gerhard. Racial State: The German Nationalities Policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia. New York: Antin Press, Inc., 1944.
- Kertesz, Stephen D. Diplomacy in a Whirlpool: Hungary Between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953.
- Kertesz, Stephen D. The Fate of East Central Europe: Hopes and Failures of American Foreign Policy. South Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956.
- Kirschbaum, Joseph M. Slovakia: Nation at the Crossroads of Central Europe. New York: Robert Speller & Sons, Publishers, Inc., 1960.

- Kosáry, Dominic G. A History of Hungary. Cleveland, Ohio: The Benjamin Franklin Bibliophile Society, 1941.
- Lemkin, Raphael. Axis Rule in Occupied Europe. Concord, New Hampshire: Rumford Press, 1944.
- Lettrich, Jozef. History of Modern Slovakia. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1955.
- Macartney, Carlile A. Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and its Consequences, 1919-1937. London: Oxford University Press, 1937.
- Macartney, Carlile A. Problems of the Danube Basin. London: Cambridge University Press, 1942.
- Miller, Francis Trevelyan. History of World War II. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1945.
- Montgomery, John Flournoy. Hungary: The Unwilling Satellite. New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1947.
- Namier, Lewis B. Diplomatic Prelude: 1938-1939. London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1948.
- Newman, Bernard. The New Europe. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943.
- Rouček, Joseph S., et. al. Central Eastern Europe: Crucible of World Wars. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1946.
- Santoro, Cesare. Hitler Germany as Seen by a Foreigner. Berlin: Internationaler Verlag, 1939.
- Shirer, William L. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1960.
- Taylor, Alan John P. The Origins of the Second World War. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961.
- Taylor, Telford. Sword and Swastika: Generals and Nazis in the Third Reich. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1952.
- Thomson, S. Harrison. Czechoslovakia in European History. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1943.

Toynbee, Veronica (ed.). Survey of International Affairs: 1938. Volume III. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.

Wiskemann, Elizabeth. Germany's Eastern Neighbours: Problems Relating to the Oder-Neisse Line and the Czech Frontier Regions. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.

Wiskemann, Elizabeth. Prologue to War. New York: Oxford University Press, 1940.

Yeats-Brown, Francis. European Jungle. Philadelphia: Macrae-Smith Company, 1939.

Periodical Literature

Frend, W. H. C. "Hitler and His Foreign Ministry, 1937-1939," History, XLIII (June, 1957), pp. 118-130.

Hanč, Josef. "The Last Mile of Appeasement: A Glance at Eastern Europe in the Light of Events Leading from Munich to Prague," Journal of Central European Affairs, (April, 1941), pp. 5-17.

Katona, George M. "Hungary in the German Orbit," Foreign Affairs, XVII (April, 1939), pp. 599-610.

Taylor, Paul B. "Germany's Expansion in Eastern Europe," Foreign Policy Reports, XV (May 15, 1939), pp. 50-60.

Winch, Michael. "The New Slovakia," Contemporary Review, CLV (February 1939), pp. 199-204.