

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE
CONCERNING THE VIENNA AWARD

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760F.62/419

The Minister in Hungary (Montgomery) to the Secretary of State¹

No. 1084

Budapest, June 2, 1938

(Received June 14.)

Sir: I have the honor to inform the Department that in a conversation with Dr. Tibor Eckhardt a few nights ago I told him that I was giving considerable thought as to

(1) whether there is any agreement between the Hungarian Government and the German Government with regard to Czechoslovakia,

(2) whether Hungary will attempt to send its Army into Slovakia should the Germans enter Bohemia,

and that although Mr. de Kánya had repeatedly given me assurances, I still wondered whether there was not some secret understanding, the knowledge of which was being withheld from me. I thereupon asked Dr. Eckhardt frankly if he would tell me the real truth. Dr. Eckhardt assured me that there was no secret understanding of any kind, that he had discussed this question with the Regent, Prime Minister Imrédy, and Foreign Minister de Kánya and that it was the agreed policy that Hungary would remain completely neutral in the event of a war and would take no action towards Czechoslovakia that would disturb the peace of Europe. Dr. Eckhardt further told me that this policy was based upon the following three points:

¹*U. S. Foreign Relations 1938, I 55-56*

(1) Yugoslavia and Rumania are bound under the Little Entente agreement to aid Czechoslovakia in case of attack by Hungary, and Yugoslavia in particular is not averse to taking over some Hungarian territory should the occasion therefor arise.

(2) Hungary cannot afford to go into any war and desires to remain neutral. To act in conjunction with Germany would make her an ally of that country, which would be extremely dangerous, and if war resulted Hungary would be dragged into it.

(3) In case of the breaking up of Czechoslovakia, Slovakia would naturally return to Hungary. Poland desires a common frontier with Hungary and would use every influence to that end. If Hungary does not disturb the peace of Europe her chances of getting back some of its lost provinces are better than if she involved herself at the start.

A few days after my conversation with Dr. Eckhardt a member of the staff of the Legation called on Baron Apor and questioned him on the same subjects and he, like de Kánya, denied that there is any agreement between the Hungarian and German Governments, stating that "the moment Hungary made any agreement with any large power, from that day on Hungary would be dominated by that power," and then added most emphatically, "No, Hungary must make no agreements, we must play a lone hand."

I am convinced that the above represents the present policy of the Hungarian Government and that unless pressure of public opinion forces it to do otherwise, or there should be some change in the Government, it will not take any hasty or ill considered action.

Respectfully yours,

John I. Montgomery

2

Joint Communiqué Concerning the Bled Agreement Between the Little Entente and Hungary, August, 23, 1938.¹

The negotiations which have been in progress since last year between Hungary on the one hand and Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia on the other, and which were inspired by the common desire to rid their mutual relations of everything which could impede the development of good neighbourliness between Hungary and these three States, have resulted in provisional agreements. These agreements include the recognition by the three States of the Little Entente of Hungary's equality of rights as regards armament, as well as the mutual renunciation of

¹Doc. Int. Affairs 1938, I, 284

any recourse to force between Hungary and the States of the Little Entente.

During the conversations which preceded this agreement, all questions the solution of which might favourably affect relations between the Danube States were discussed in detail and in a friendly spirit. It has been intended to issue declarations embodying the views of the above mentioned countries on these questions. It was not, however, possible to draw up these declarations in final form. It is hoped that when these difficulties have been overcome, the negotiations will be successfully concluded, and that the completed agreements and the above-mentioned declarations will be published simultaneously.

3.

F18-371-374

Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat.¹

Secret

On Board "Patria," August 23, 1938

While the Führer and the Hungarian Regent discussed political matters on the morning of August 23, the Hungarian Ministers Imrédy and Kánya were closeted with Herr von Ribbentrop. Herr von Weizsäcker was also present during this conversation. M. Kánya brought forward two subjects:

- (1) The Hungarian negotiations with the Little Entente and
- (2) The Czech problem.

Kánya's observations on point (1), negotiations with the Little Entente, were mainly historical and produced actually nothing new. In any case, they were insufficient to justify any addition to the closing communiqué, which Kánya laid on the table. This communiqué is due to be issued today by the conference of the Little Entente. It appears that Baron Apor, in Budapest, and Bessenyi, Minister in Belgrade, have agreed to it. The question whether it was opportune was therefore really out of date. Nevertheless, one must go more deeply into it to bring out the German point of view.

Herr von Ribbentrop explained how, in his opinion, the renunciation of the use of force, which is to be proclaimed afresh, would not have the desired political effect, namely, that of protecting Hungary from Yugoslavia, particularly in the event of a Hungarian-Czech crisis. On the

¹German Documents, II, 609 ff

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¹*German Documents, II, 609 ff*

contrary, Hungary was blocking the road to intervention in Czechoslovakia and making it more difficult morally for the Yugoslavs to leave their Czech allies in the lurch. The impartial reader will say to himself that Hungary is moving away from the German-Czech political conflict and, in effect, renouncing revision, since he who does not assist departs with empty hands.

Kánya's arguments against this were unconvincing. They all touched on point 2, namely Hungary's attitude in the event of a German-Czech conflict.

Herr von Ribbentrop asked the Hungarians how they would act if the Führer put into effect his decision of replying by the use of force to any new Czech provocation. The Hungarians hedged on two points: Yugoslavia must remain neutral if Hungary were to march northward and, eventually, to the east. Moreover, Hungarian re-armament had only just started and would require another year or two to complete.

To this Herr von Ribbentrop remarked to the Hungarians that the Yugoslavs would take care not to walk into the pincers of the Axis Powers. Rumania, too, would certainly not move on her own. England and France would likewise remain quiescent. England would not lightly risk the loss of the Empire, for she appreciates our newly recovered strength. It is not possible, however, to say anything definite in advance concerning the exact time of the event we are considering, since this depends on Czech provocation. Herr von Ribbentrop repeated that those who desired revision must seize opportunity by the forelock and themselves take an active part. Thus the Hungarian reply still remained subject to conditions.

As to Herr von Ribbentrop's question, what object the desired conversations between the General Staffs supposed to have, little emerged save the Hungarian wish for a kind of mutual military inventory and preparatory stocktaking for the Czech conflict. No definite political basis for this — the exact moment for Hungarian intervention — was agreed.

Meanwhile, Horthy had expressed himself to the Führer in more definite language. While not keeping silent on his misgivings as to the British attitude, he nevertheless made it clear that Hungary intended to co-operate. The Hungarian Ministers were and still remain more skeptical, for they realize more strongly the direct danger to Hungary's unprotected flanks.

M. Imrédy had an interview with the Führer in the afternoon and was most relieved when the Führer stated to him that, in this particular case, he required nothing of Hungary. He himself did not know the precise moment. He who wanted to sit at table must at least help in the kitchen. If Hungary desired General Staff conversations, he had no objections.

The Hungarian point of view can quite well be summarized today as follows: (a) Hungary is glad at not having to expect from us demands in the form of an ultimatum, and (b) Hungary is convinced that she will not be able to intervene until some 14 days after the out-break of war.

Weizsäcker

4.

F18/369-370

Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)¹

Berlin, August 25, 1938

Today the Reich Minister had a further conversation with M. Kánya, at the latter's request. The Reich Minister pointed out to M. Kánya the jubilation of the Czech, French, and British press over the Bled communiqué and repeated that this event, especially at the present moment, was regarded abroad as a rift in German-Hungarian friendship and as a renunciation by Hungary of her revisionist aims. M. Kánya again put forward the already well known points of view on the legal situation and on the questionable value of the so called preliminary agreements between Hungary and the Little Entente, and in particular tried once more to prove that the intensified Hungarian demands on Czechoslovakia for protection of the minorities ensure that the agreement will never be fulfilled. And even if it were fulfilled, said M. Kánya, it would never be kept by the other side, and so Hungary would be freed from the observance of her guarantee not to use force. M. Kánya is expecting more detailed information from Budapest as to how far they have actually got with the initialing of the treaties, and will inform the Reich Minister on this. The Reich Minister and M. Kánya agreed that a great deal depended on the treatment of the Bled Communiqué in the Hungarian press during the coming weeks.

With reference to Hungary's willingness to take an active part in the event of a German-Czech conflict, it is known that M. Kánya said a few days ago that an interval of one to two years was necessary in order to develop Hungary's fighting forces sufficiently. In today's conversation, M. Kánya amended this remark by saying that Hungary's military strength had in fact improved. By October 1 this year their armament would be so far advanced as to enable them to take part.

Weizsäcker

¹German Documents, II, 623-624

**Conversation of the Polish Ambassador in Berlin, Józef Lipski,
with General Field Marshal Göring¹**

August 24, 1938

(*excerpts*)

Strictly Confidential

(. . .)

Göring remarked that he had not yet had an occasion to talk with Regent Horthy and his staff, who will only arrive in Berlin this afternoon. He wanted to stress that the German government exerted pressure on Budapest to conduct negotiations so as to avoid collective obligations with the states of the Little Entente but to enter into agreement separately with Belgrade and Bucharest, omitting Prague. Göring remarked that Stoyadinovich followed the line of these suggestions at the Bled conference (if I understood correctly). Thus, in Göring's opinion, Hungary would be free to act, as he put it, in the last stage, its action anticipated to follow only a few days after that of the Germans. Göring described Hungary's stand as somewhat soft (*flau*).

(. . .)

Returning to the Czech problem, Göring cited the British opinion that in a matter of time everything could be settled. He does not share that opinion. He cannot conceive how the Czechs could agree to any concessions, since their state is composed of so many nationalities. For instance, if in order to make things even with Poland they would grant it all concessions, then similar concessions would have to be made to all other minorities. Therefore, the situation is at an impasse.

Following your instructions, I replied to these declarations that we also do not believe the present Czech creation can exist any longer. Nor do we see any change in Czech policy. I added that of late efforts have been made to draw us into anti-German deals but that the Polish government rejected these offers categorically. I ascertained that international propaganda presents German policy as pushing ever new claims and provoking conflicts. Poland, I added, does not believe this. Here Göring reacted very strongly, saying that indeed propaganda imputes to Germany intentions of new territorial demands . . .

I returned to the Hungarian problem. I stressed Polish-Hungarian friendship, describing Hungary as an element of stabilization in the Danubian basin. Referring to the expression Göring used earlier—that

¹Waclaw Jedrzejewicz (ed.), *Diplomat in Berlin 1933-1939 Papers and Memoirs of Józef Lipski, Ambassador of Poland* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 382-86. Hereafter cited as *Lipski Papers*.

the Hungarians are a bit *flau*—I came out with the question whether, in his opinion, they are mature enough for independent action. I remarked that the untimely death of Gömbös² was a heavy loss of Hungary. Göring confirmed my opinion, as well as my judgement that still not enough understanding might be observed in Hungarian statesmen on nationality problems (*völkisch*).

In discussion on this item, important opinions of Göring are worth noting. First of all, he remarked that Germany has no precise understanding on this matter with Hungary, nor does it have any with Poland. On the other hand, Germany is aware of Hungary's interests in Czechoslovakia, and the same relates to Poland. The Germans envisaged that, in case Germany undertook any action, Hungary would join. Germany is taking on itself the task of restraining Belgrade from acting against Hungary. It expects that Warsaw would act along the same lines toward Bucharest in order to prevent any action. It would be most embarrassing if Hungary did not make a move, since Czech forces could then retreat to Slovakia. Evidently, Germany would not demand military assistance from Budapest or Warsaw, if only for the reason that this would look derisory in view of Germany's predominance over Czechoslovakia. But Germany understands that under such circumstances Poland would occupy the region of interest to it. In practice it might occur that Polish and German units would meet somewhere.

In connection with these deliberations of Göring, I stressed that Poland is closely united with Slovakia, owing to links of race and language. The ties are even closer since we have no claims to Slovakia. I observed that the evolution of the Slovak nation had progressed rapidly, especially in the last years, and I said that it is imperative that Slovakia be granted autonomy from either one side or the other—from the Czechs or the Hungarians.

Göring eagerly confirmed that this is a necessity. He added that Germany is fortunately in such a position that these matters are of no concern to it. On the other hand, there is the question of relations between Warsaw and Budapest, and Poland's good influence on Hungary. In his opinion Hungary should grant the autonomy which was refused by Czechoslovakia.

With regard to Sub-Carpathian Russia I observed, following instructions, that it is a place where international intrigues abound, adding that this land was taken away from Hungary solely for the purpose of giving Czechoslovakia access to Russia . . .

Józef Lipski

²Julius Gömbös, the Hungarian prime minister, died on October 6, 1935.

1863/423026

Unsigned Foreign Ministry Minute for the Foreign Minister¹
 Berlin, September 26, 1938

(Pol. IV 6621)

The Rumanian Minister in Rome has given, in the name of his Government, the following secret information to the Italian Foreign Minister:

(1) Rumania is being subjected to very heavy pressure to allow transit rights to Soviet troops in the event of German attack on Czechoslovakia. Rumania has emphatically refused to grant this request.

(2) Rumania fully appreciates Hungary's hopes of regaining the areas which once were hers and now belong to Prague. In the name of his Government, the Rumanian Minister requested the Italian Government to exert their influence in Budapest so as to prevent any impulsive action which might make the international situation more difficult for Rumania, especially with respect to the treaties of the Little Entente. Lastly, Rumania pointed out that her attitude would have to be reconsidered if Hungary increased her demands to include areas which did not contain Hungarian populations.

Minister Ciano replied to M. Zamfirescu that the alliances of the Little Entente must be considered as dissolved, in view of the substantial changes in the status of one of the signatories. The Italian Foreign Minister also inquired what attitude Rumania would adopt in the event of a Polish-Soviet conflict. The Rumanian Minister answered that without doubt Rumania would take the side of Warsaw and that, in any case, the alliance with Poland would have precedence over any obligation to Prague.

¹German Documents, II. 936. This minute was initialed by Weizsäcker, who forwarded it to Ribbentrop.

7.

**Conversations of the Polish Ambassador Józef Lipski
 at Nuremberg, September 7-12, 1938¹**

Strictly Confidential

(Excerpts)

¹Lipski Papers, pp. 393-97, excerpts. Lipski was at Nuremberg with other members of the diplomatic corps to attend the annual convention of the National Socialist Party. This provided him with an opportunity for conversations with high German officials.

I. With Field Marshal Göring on September 9, 1938

(...)

(4) **Czechoslovakia.** Göring declared that the Karlsbad points request, among other things, dissolution by Czechoslovakia of the pact with Russia. Göring does not believe in the possibility of an agreement with Czechoslovakia. If the Czech government were to make an agreement, it would do so with the intention of breaking it. Even if Beneš were to accept its conditions, military elements would come out against it. From Göring's words it was clear that he is convinced that the necessity will arise to act by force. Göring shared the Ambassador's opinion that international armed conflict should be avoided. Göring thinks the problem should be placed on the League's agenda in order to define the aggressor. The Germans, though not members of the League, will be able to prove that they were not the aggressors. Before a decision is taken by the League, action in the field might already be finished. In Göring's opinion, France is simply looking for an honorable way out. England also is not willing to go to war and is exerting really strong pressure on Prague.

(...)

(6) **Rumania.** The Ambassador raised the question of the Havas Agency communiqué about the alleged Rumanian-Soviet agreement for Russian transit through Rumania. He pointed to the *démenti* issued by Bucharest. Göring questioned in detail the internal Rumanian situation, the King's role, his internal political plans, and, finally, the position of the new Rumanian envoy in Berlin, Djuvara.

(7) **Russia.** Göring stressed that in the future the real Russian attack against Germany could not be directed through Rumania or the Baltic states but only via Poland. Göring remarked that in case of a Polish-Russian conflict the Reich would come to Poland's assistance. A discussion followed about the situation in Russia and the strength of Russian armed forces.

(8) **Hungary.** Göring revealed a number of confidential bits of information from his conversations with Horthy (the first point, not mentioned here, was told to the Ambassador for his information under a word-of-honor plea for secrecy). Göring declared quite openly to the Hungarian side that under no circumstances would Germany act as intermediary in matters of interest to Hungary and Poland. The Hungarian government should settle these matters directly with Warsaw. Göring acted in this way in order to deprive Budapest of any illusion in this respect. Göring also pointed out to Horthy the necessity of granting broad autonomy to Slovakia. He did this in consequence of his last conversation with the Ambassador. Horthy was not too eloquent on this

point. Göring was under the impression that, in spite of Hungarian statements that in case Czechoslovakia were attacked by another state no Hungarian government could maintain itself in power unless it decided to act, Hungary would probably go into action very late.

(9) Horthy allegedly told the Chancellor that it would take England ten years to forgive Hungary if it attacked Czechoslovakia today. Hitler, upset by such a naive concept, replied that if this action took place in five years, when England would be armed to the teeth, it would be even less ready to forgive. Göring confirmed that territorial matters between Hungary and Poland are of no concern to Germany. The Germans are not prepared to pull chestnuts out of the fire for the Hungarians.

(. . .)

III. With Minister Ribbentrop on September 10, 1938

(. . .)

(3) **Czechoslovakia.** Ribbentrop: We strive for a solution by agreement. Beneš, as yet, has not granted any adequate concession. Misgivings as to Beneš' frankness. Remark that the Chancellor would never allow the provocation of May 21 to recur again. In such circumstances the Chancellor would definitely act by force, ignoring international repercussions, since then Germany's honor would be at stake.

Ribbentrop called attention to the anomaly of the signing of the Franco-Czech agreement at a moment when Germany was weak. The agreement was to serve the Czechs as an instrument to exert pressure on the Germans. In Ribbentrop's opinion, Great Britain would not budge on the Sudetenland case. France would encounter unyielding resistance with regard to armed intervention. Germany is now stronger than ever. The Ambassador declared it to be most important that the problem be solved locally to avoid international conflict. Ribbentrop replied that evidently no government would lightheartedly jump into an international brawl. Ribbentrop questioned our position on the Czechoslovak problem. The Ambassador replied that we are interested in a certain region. He stressed the necessity of autonomy for Slovakia. He pointed to the pro-Russian policy permanently pursued by Czechoslovakia, displayed in the geographical composition of the Czechoslovak state at the Peace Conference. In the course of further deliberations on this issue, when the Hungarian question was raised the conversation had to be interrupted.

(. . .)

Józef Lipski

Letter of Regent Miklós Horthy to Adolf Hitler Concerning the Settlement of the Czechoslovak Problem¹

(no date)

Herr Führer and Chancellor of the Reich,

According to news reported mainly in the British press during the last few days there is an intention solving the Czechoslovak question in a way that the regions of Czechoslovakia inhabited by a German population would be separated with or without a plebiscite and transferred to the German Reich. In all other respects everything would remain as it is.

I believe it is unnecessary to point out that a settlement of this sort would fall short of a final solution of the Czech problem. This settlement could be imagined only in a way that all minorities settled in Czechoslovakian territory would be granted equal rights, i.e. that all nationalities of Czechoslovakia would be accorded the right to decide by way of a plebiscite on the sovereignty of the territories inhabited by them. Obviously, neither the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia, nor the Hungarian government could agree to a discrimination detrimental to our compatriots, and for this there is certainly full understanding on the part of the German government.

We are convinced that our opinion in this respect is in full harmony with that of the German Government, viz that peace in Central Europe cannot be assured unless the Czechoslovak problem has been resolved definitively and radically.

In view of the extreme urgency of the Czechoslovak question, I have considered it necessary to call the attention of Your Excellency to this circumstance in the firm hope that as a token of the warm and friendly relations between our countries, I may reckon with the full support of Your Excellency in this grave hour.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the expression of my particular esteem.

(Typed draft in German, unsigned.)

¹Horthy, Miklós, nagybányai: *The Confidential Papers of Admiral Horthy* (Miklós Szalay and László Szücs, compilers). Budapest: Corvina Press, 1965, pp. 101-102. The compilers refer to this as "a letter on a joint action against Czechoslovakia," even though the text makes no reference to action planned. The date of the posting of the letter has been tentatively established as September 17, 1938.

1863/423027-28

**The Hungarian Legation in Germany
to the German Foreign Ministry¹**

MEMORANDUM

Berlin, September 28, 1938

(Pol. IV 6811)

Stoyadinovich expressed to Kánya his fear that, in the light of his information, the Hungarian Government had designs on the Slovak and Ruthenian areas besides the purely Hungarian areas. At the same time he stated that:

(1) if the Hungarian Government would give a satisfactory declaration regarding the security of Yugoslavia,

(2) if Hungary would state which areas of Slovakia we claim, he would be prepared, provided our claims did not extend to Slovak and Ruthenian areas, to attempt mediation in Prague, so that Prague should return to Hungary the Hungarian-inhabited areas.

From this it can be seen that Stoyadinovich would be ready to accept, or that he is reconciled to, the re-assimilation of the Hungarian areas, but does not want a further strengthening of Hungary. He is apparently afraid that if the Ruthenes and Slovaks declared in favor of Hungary, and Hungary were thus strengthened, this might eventually become dangerous for Yugoslavia.

M. Kánya would be grateful if, in the interest of Hungary, Germany could, without mentioning the above information, but in the course of normal conversations, state in Belgrade that the Hungarian point of view, which aims at:

(a) the return of the Hungarian-inhabited areas,

(b) the practical realization of the right of self-determination for the Ruthenians and Slovaks, did not imply an aggressive attitude toward Yugoslavia, and that, in view of present-day circumstances, this would be the only correct solution.

¹*German Documents*, II 992. The document bears the comment (in Weizsäcker's handwriting): "Handed to me today by the Hungarian Minister," and instructions for the interested Missions to be circularized

Annex to the Munich Agreement¹

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government have entered into the above agreement on the basis that they stand by the offer, contained in paragraph 6 of the Anglo-French proposals of the 19th September, relating to an international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czechoslovak State against unprovoked aggression.

When the question of the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia has been settled, Germany and Italy for their part will give a guarantee to Czechoslovakia.

Munich, September 29, 1938.

Adolf Hitler

Neville Chamberlain

Edouard Daladier

Benito Mussolini

¹*International Legislation*, VIII 134.

11

Declaration Attached to the Munich Agreement¹

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 three 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.

Munich, September 29, 1938.

Adolf Hitler

Neville Chamberlain

Edouard Daladier

Benito Mussolini

¹*International Legislation*, VIII 135

140/75826

The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry¹

Telegram

No. 129 of October 13. Budapest, October 13, 1938—10:56 p.m.

Received October 14—3:20 a.m.

With reference to telephone message today to Under State Secretary Woermann.

Prime Minister informed me that his predecessor, Darányi, had been instructed to clear away certain misunderstandings which appeared to have arisen between Germany and Hungary and to clarify the views of both parties

The attitude of the German press toward the creation of a common frontier between Poland and Hungary in Carpatho-Ukraine had caused astonishment here. The idea suggested in the French press of Hungarian participation in any formation of a Polish-Rumanian bloc against Germany was absurd as the Carpathians form a natural barrier only against the east. With the reincorporation of Carpatho Ukraine, Hungary would prolong the Rumanian front against Bolshevism and form a strong bulwark against it on the Carpathian passes.

The events of recent months caused the Hungarian Government to feel itself bound more firmly than ever to the Berlin-Rome Axis and it was prepared to affirm this on paper. The question of the Pressburg bridgehead is not to be raised by Darányi.

*Erdmannsdorf*¹*German Documents*, IV 66.

140/75801

The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry¹

Telegram

Urgent Budapest, October 13, 1938—10:56 p.m.

No. 132 of October 13 Received October 14—1:40 a.m.

Prime Minister informed me that if the Czechoslovaks, whose counterproposal of this morning was completely unsatisfactory, did not change their attitude, the Hungarian Government would order mobiliza-

¹*German Documents*, IV, 67

tion within 24 hours, presumably without making its intermediate demand announced in yesterday's telegraphic report.² This would result in the doubling of the present strength of the army. This measure did not mean war but was necessary because Czech demobilization had not yet taken place. Hungary was ready to march if we gave our consent. Unrest in the Hungarian area of Czechoslovakia was constantly increasing.

The Foreign Minister's Chief de Cabinet has just stated that negotiations in Komárom had been broken off. The Hungarian Government will appeal to the four Great Powers and inform them of the course of the negotiations.

*Erdmannsdorf*²The telegram reported that the Hungarians intended first to demand that the Czechs demobilize on their frontier by a certain date; in the absence of a favorable reply, they would themselves mobilize.**Draft Declaration Signed by Regent Miklós Horthy on the Interruption of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian Negotiations¹**

October 13, 1938

The resolution passed in the four-power conference in Munich on September 29th decreed that if the problem of Polish and Hungarian minorities could not be settled by an agreement of the governments interested within three months, this would devolve upon another conference of the chiefs of the governments present in Munich. Obviously the conference had in mind a solution by which the territories inhabited by Poles and Hungarians would be handed over to Poland and Hungary, respectively. This was the underlying principle of the negotiations to be started between the two countries.

No sooner was Hungary advised of the resolutions than its government immediately applied to the Czechoslovak government proposing to take up negotiations without delay, and on October 3rd, forwarded a note suggesting that the negotiations be opened on October 6th. Simultaneously, a few appropriate demands were put forward to guarantee that negotiations would be continued in earnest. In response to this action the Czechoslovak government in principle replied in the affirmative, yet actually it used delaying tactics, until finally on October 9th the negotiations were opened.

Before negotiations started, the Czechoslovak government on several occasions had expressed to the Hungarian representative, and then also publicly, through broadcasts, the press, etc., that they do not want

¹Horthy, *Confidential Papers*, pp. 105-107.

national minorities to remain within their frontiers in the course of the reconstruction of their country, but would be prepared to cede these minorities and the territories inhabited by them.

This meant that there was agreement on principle between the great powers, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. This agreement in principle could be construed in no other way than the territories inhabited by a Magyar majority would be ceded to Hungary. At determining these territories, obviously the start would have to be made from the further principle, which had been applied to the Sudeten country, that the conditions of twenty years before, i.e. the data of the latest census before that date could be accepted as a basis. This thesis holds to an even greater extent as regards the Hungarians, the question involving a territory which before was part of Hungary, yet, as has been explicitly shown by the Munich resolutions, was detached from her wrongfully by denying the Wilsonian principles. Obviously, at the settlement the changes that have occurred in the composition of the population, being based on unlawfulness and injustice, cannot be taken into consideration, and consequently the conditions before the commitment of unlawfulness and injustice have to be reverted to.

Despite this, in the opening negotiations on October 9th, the Czechoslovak government adopted an attitude on the ceding of these territories, which cannot be justified, and which shows that the Czechoslovak government want to evade the assertion of the principle of cessation of territories, and betrays their intention to hold dominion over foreign nationalities against the latter's will.

The Czechoslovak government rely for this point of view exclusively on considerations of power, and in order to assert these considerations do not carry out the demobilization of the army as decided nominally, but using this mobilized army want to exert pressure on Hungary which has not mobilized.

The Hungarian government have done their utmost to carry through the settlement laid down in the Munich agreement by the most peaceful means, by way of negotiations continued in a friendly spirit. However, the Hungarian government feel compelled to state that neither the spirit in which negotiations have been opened, nor the Czechoslovak proposals put forward during the negotiations, nor the circumstance of maintaining the army in a mobilized state with the hope of influencing the progress of the negotiations are attitudes to be tolerated any longer without strong objections. Furthermore there is every indication that these attitudes are purposeful evasions of rightful Hungarian claims.

For this very reason the Hungarian government have decided to interrupt the negotiations, and without delay inform the four parties to the Munich agreement of the actual state of negotiations, (and in order

to ensure further negotiations being continued on an equal footing decree the general mobilization of the army.)²

Horthy

²The last passage in this typed draft, signed by Horthy, was crossed out by him in pencil. There was no general mobilization, instead, on October 17th, five age groups were called to arms. There is no proof that the declaration was ever published, and it fell on the Minister of Foreign Affairs to inform the interested powers (See below, Hungarian communication to Berlin, London, Paris, Rome and Warsaw, October 14, 1938.)

29.

Letter of Regent Miklós Horthy to Adolf Hitler on the Interruption of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian Negotiations¹

October 13, 1938

Your Excellency:

The negotiations with the Czechoslovak Republic had to be interrupted tonight. The counter-proposals of the Czechoslovak government were wholly unacceptable, inasmuch as these proposals included only a fraction of the territory inhabited by a Hungarian majority, and in addition, apart from the town of Komárom situated on the Danube, not a single one of the many Hungarian towns was included in them. These proposals were put forward after negotiations had been protracted for several days, and in addition accompanied by menacing statements over the radio which for our part we could not accept without a reply. Besides, our co-nationals living in the occupied territory are harassed, their food-stuffs and cattle are taken from them with force. For this reason I should like to inform Your Excellency without delay that in all likelihood I shall be forced to decree the mobilization of the army the more so since Czechoslovakia is still in a mobilized state.

Simultaneously, I would request Your Excellency to grant us an opportunity for a thorough and urgent discussion to make clear certain questions which are partly independent of it. I should be very grateful if Your Excellency had time to receive if possible tomorrow the former Prime Minister Darányi, who carries my instructions as representative of the government. He is ready to leave by airplane immediately . . .

(Unsigned, typed draft in German)

¹Horthy, *Confidential Papers*, pp. 107-108. A similar letter was sent to Mussolini, and subsequently Count Csáky was dispatched to Rome for an "urgent discussion."

Final Declaration of the Hungarian Delegation in Komárom¹

Ainsi que nous avons eu l'honneur de déclarer à plusieurs reprises, nous sommes venus ici animés des meilleures intentions et dans la plus sincère espoir qu'il nous sera possible d'arriver rapidement à un accord qui donnera des bases solides aux relations entre nos Etats

A notre plus vif regret, cet espoir ne s'est pas réalisé

Je ne voudrais pas, à cette occasion, me référer à nouveau à certains symptômes défavorables, car nous l'avons fait plusieurs fois au cours des négociations

Je dois cependant constater et souligner que la contre-proposition tchécoslovaque concernant les nouvelles frontières qui nous a été remise ce matin est tellement différente de notre conception et que concernant les bases du nouveau règlement les thèses représentées par les deux Délégations sont séparées d'un abîme sur lequel, selon notre conviction, il est impossible de jeter un pont par les présentes négociations

Pour ces motifs, le Gouvernement Royal de Hongrie a décidé de considérer ces négociations, en ce qui le concerne, comme terminées et de demander le règlement urgent de ses revendications territoriales vis-à-vis la Tchécoslovaquie, des quatre grandes puissances signataires du Protocole de Munich.

¹Ádám, *A müncheni egyezmény*, p. 772. The declaration was read by Foreign Minister Kánya in Hungarian, and handed to the Czechoslovak delegation in French

140/75824

The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry¹

Telegram

Immediate Budapest, October 14, 1938—5:25 a.m.

No. 133 of October 14 Received October 14—9:15 a.m.

Count Csáky informed me at 3 a.m. that the Council of Ministers had just passed a resolution to call up five more classes by individual orders but to refrain from making a public announcement of this partial mobilization until the attitude of the German and Italian Governments was known.

Ex-Prime Minister Darányi is flying to Munich at 9 a.m. today and Count Csáky to Rome in order to ascertain this.

Erdmannsdorf

¹German Documents, IV 67-68

Mr. Newton (Prague) to Viscount Halifax¹

Prague, October 15, 1938, 2:15 a.m.

My telegrams Nos. 959 and 962.

I was received this evening by Dr. Krno, Political Director at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who had returned this morning from Komárno.

He left with me statement of Czechoslovak case of which following is a translation:

"Czechoslovak delegation had come to Komárno with firm desire to reach lasting, fair, and rapid settlement.

(1) They had agreed to open negotiations not later than ten days after Munich Agreement though it had contemplated a delay of three months;

(2) To show their readiness to make territorial sacrifices they had agreed on first day of negotiations to symbolic cession of Sahý and station of Nové Mesto;

(3) They had proposed a frontier involving cession of about 400,000 persons including 330,000 Hungarians and leaving approximately the same number of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia as Slovaks and Ruthenes in Hungary;

(4) They had emphasized that even this proposal was not final and that they wished to continue discussions on basis of mutual concessions.

The attitude of the Hungarian delegation had on the other hand been as follows:

(1) They had submitted proposal, which would not only have deprived Slovakia of nearly all her important towns and vital lines of communication but have involved cession of about 510,000 Slovaks and Ruthenes (apart from 300,000 already in Hungary) leaving only about 20,000 Hungarians in Czechoslovakia;

(2) They had refused to put forward second proposal despite earnest request of Czechoslovak delegation;

(3) They had abruptly broken off negotiations only a few days after their opening."

In further conversation Dr. Krno emphasized that figures which Hungarian delegation had produced were entirely different from Czech figures based on the same 1910 census. He added that Austrians had had similar experience of unreliability of Hungarian figures in dispute over Burgenland. Good commentary on Hungarian figures was fact that

¹British Documents, III. 184-186

Dr. Tiso, head of Czechoslovak delegation appeared . . .² as a Hungarian.

Dr. Krno made further point that Hungarians had demanded amongst other things plebiscite for Slovaks and Ruthenes, a matter which was no concern of theirs.

His personal feeling was that Hungarians had received encouragement from Italy.

Somewhat surprisingly he did not in speaking to me challenge the main principle of Hungarian argument that 1910 census should be used as basis. Its acceptance by the Powers would nevertheless ripen by international agreement the points [sic ?fruits], subsequently surrendered, of 50 years of a Magyarisation policy which has been generally condemned (see Macartney's "Hungary and her Neighbours", page 2).

Repeated to Berlin, Budapest, Rome, Warsaw, Bucharest and Belgrade.

²A word appears to have been omitted here.

32.

**Conversation of the Polish Ambassador Józef Lipski
with Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs von Ribbentrop
at Berchtesgaden on October 24, 1938¹**

(Excerpts)

Polish Embassy in Berlin
Strictly Confidential

(. . .)

II. Hungary's Revindications

Herr von Ribbentrop exposed at length his personal objections to the Hungarian way of behavior. He recalled that during Horthy's visit the Chancellor quite frankly told the Regent that he had decided to act on the problem of the Sudetenland, and he advised the Hungarians to be ready for any eventuality. During this visit, to the utter surprise of the German government, Kánya showed Ribbentrop a communiqué from Bled,² which evidently made the worst possible impression in Berlin. The Hungarian side, during this visit, constantly warned against war entanglements, owing to the Anglo-French stand. It came to Ribbentrop's knowledge that upon their return to Budapest the rumor was spread there that he was conducting a madman's policy. Ribbentrop's resentment centered mainly on Kánya.

He further mentioned that on the eve of the Godesberg Conference the Chancellor invited Imrédy to Berchtesgaden and gave him detailed

¹Lipski Papers, pp. 453-58.

²See Document No. 2, above.

information on the situation. On Imrédy's request, the Chancellor firmly supported Hungarian claims at the conference in Munich. Hungarians knew all about this, but not a single word of thanks followed, since they considered that German efforts were self-explanatory.

Next, von Ribbentrop discussed the Problem of the German government's mediation. In the conversations with Darányi at Berchtesgaden the Hungarian ethnographic line was discussed. It was established that Bratislava would remain outside the line and that Nitra would be subject to a plebiscite; Koszyce (Košice) would remain within the Hungarian line, while Užhorod and Munkacz (Mukačevo) would fall beyond the line (as far as I could understand, they were to be subject to a plebiscite).

Ribbentrop used his influence on Chvalkovský to accept such a Hungarian line and discussed it also with the Slovaks and representatives of Carpathian Ruthenia.

The Slovaks were hurt by the Koszyce question; the representative of Carpathian Ruthenia was rather pleased that Užhorod and Munkacz had been left outside the line of claims.

Ribbentrop emphasized here that he did not take any sides and was acting merely as a mediator.

When the results of these conversations were communicated to Budapest by Erdmannsdorf, the Hungarian government bluntly rejected the proposal, in spite of Darányi's earlier approval. Under these circumstances the German government withdrew from mediation and washed its hands of the matter. The Italian side, informed about this, is allegedly also discouraged to some extent by the Hungarian methods.

Ribbentrop is of the opinion that, as matters stand, talks will continue for the time being between Budapest and Prague.

Asked about arbitration, he replied that at present he does not think arbitration could take place; besides, he raises the following objections:

1) Whether, with two other signatories of the Munich Agreement, arbitration with the participation of Germany and Italy would be possible.

2) In case of arbitration, its execution should be guaranteed. Here a military engagement would possibly be needed.

For my part, in accordance with my instruction, I only stated that, in case Germany and Italy agree on arbitration, Poland would join it also.

In my discussion with Ribbentrop I laid special detailed emphasis on our stand regarding the Polish-Hungarian frontier and Carpathian Ruthenia. I am not repeating my arguments here. I think that Ribbentrop was impressed by the Ukrainian argument contained in your instructions. In conclusion he said he would still reconsider this matter in the light of my deliberations. He asked whether we had territorial claims to Ruthenia; I replied that we did not, that we limited ourselves to support of Hungarian claims to that country.

Ribbentrop pointed here to difficulties created by Rumania's attitude, stressing the Reich's desire to maintain good relations with that country. He was also informed that Rumania does not insist on a territorial revision in Carpathian Ruthenia to its advantage.

(. . .)

VI. Polish Matters

Ribbentrop stressed that in conversations with him the Chancellor kept returning to his idea of finding a solution to the Jewish problem through an organization for the purpose of emigration. We had an exhaustive talk on this subject. Ribbentrop interrogated me at length on the Jewish situation in Poland.

Speaking about our action with regard to Teschen,³ Ribbentrop remarked that the Chancellor repeated again and again to the circle of his collaborators his appreciation for our determined move, stating: "The Poles are tough guys. Pilsudski would be proud of them."

Józef Lipski

³Immediately after the Munich Agreement, Poland presented an ultimatum to Prague and occupied the Teschen territory

33.

Viscount Halifax to the Earl of Perth (Rome)¹

No. 476 Telegraphic (C 12924-2319-12)

Foreign Office, October 26, 1938. 9:20 p.m.

Berlin telegram No. 632.1.

Czechoslovak Minister informed me this morning on instructions that his Government regarded as quite unacceptable the Hungarian demand for plebiscites in the disputed districts on the basis of the 1910 census. On the other hand, the Czechoslovak Government would be in favour of arbitration by Germany and Italy. In response to an enquiry, M. Masaryk later ascertained from Prague that his Government were opposed to Poland being included among the arbitrators and thought that if Poland were included, Rumania should be included also. M. Masaryk said that the Czechoslovak Government would have to reply today to the Hungarian demand, and before doing so wished to have the views of His Majesty's Government on their attitude.

In reply the Czechoslovak Minister was informed this afternoon that His Majesty's Government saw no objection to the settlement of the Czech-Hungarian question by means of arbitration by Germany and

¹British standpoint of October 26, 1938, concerning the settlement of the Hungarian Czechoslovak question by arbitration. *British Documents*, III. 202.

Italy, if the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments agree to settle their differences this way. It was added that if the two parties to the dispute preferred to refer the matter to the four Munich powers, His Majesty's Government would be ready to join in any discussions.

If the views of the Italian Ambassador, reported in Berlin telegram under reference, represent those of his Government, it seems that the Italian Government would prefer that Great Britain and France, as signatories of the Munich Agreement, should participate in any arbitration. If this is indeed the attitude of the Italian Government, it is no doubt occasioned by their desire to obtain support against Germany, who is believed to oppose the acquisition of Ruthenia by Hungary. Herr von Ribbentrop may of course settle the whole question when he arrives in Rome tomorrow, but it may be of value to the Italian Government to have an indication of our views on this question before the German Minister for Foreign Affairs arrives.

I should therefore be glad if you would seek an early interview with the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and inform him that while it is difficult for us to adjudicate between the line claimed by the Hungarians and that offered by the Czechs, and to decide whether or not the 1910 census offers a fair basis, His Majesty's Government are, in principle, in favour of the return to Hungary of those districts in which the population is predominantly Hungarian, subject possibly to certain modifications that may be desirable for economic reasons, e.g., Bratislava. The holding of plebiscites in those regions where the races are so ethnographically entangled and where there is a difference of opinion regarding the figures to be taken as a basis for the voting would, however, in the view of His Majesty's Government be extremely difficult, especially at such short notice as the Hungarian Government propose (before November 30.)

His Majesty's Government would, therefore, be happy to see the Czechs and Hungarians agree to settle their differences by reference to arbitration by the Italian and German Governments. If, however, it were deemed preferable or necessary that the question 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.

An expression of the views of His Majesty's Government on the above lines might, I feel, be welcome to Signor Mussolini as an indication that they are anxious to co-operate with him in the discussion of European questions. You will, of course, appreciate that His Majesty's Government do not wish to give the impression of trying to profit by any Italo-German disagreement over the future of Ruthenia.

Repeated to Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade and Paris No. 404.

**British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain
to Regent Miklós Horthy¹**

London, October 28, 1938

Dear Admiral Horthy:

I was very pleased to receive by the hand of Sir Thomas Moore the letter which Your Highness wrote to me on the 8th October, appealing for my support for your country's claims and referring to a conversation you had held with my brother.

I should like first of all to assure Your Highness that neither His Majesty's Government, nor myself are disinterested in the negotiations which your Government have been carrying on with the Czechoslovak Government for the purpose of adjusting the existing political frontier so as to bring it into closer harmony with the ethnic situation in that area. If we have abstained from intervention and comment upon the merits of the intricate problems which have been under discussion, it has not been from any indifference to the importance of the issues at stake. On the contrary it is our sincere desire that this opportunity should be taken to reach a settlement, inspired by good will and based on the rights and interests of all concerned, such as will lessen racial grievances and lay the foundations for a lasting and fruitful collaboration between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. As Your Highness may have seen Lord Halifax made it clear in a speech at Edinburgh on October 24th that His Majesty's Government recognise that Hungary has had legitimate claims and hope that means can be found, in peaceful negotiation, to give effect to them. I enclose the relevant extract.

I appreciate that difficulties have already arisen and may still arise during these negotiations but it has been and still is our hope that the two Governments most directly concerned may be able, with good will, patience, and moderation on both sides to reach a direct agreement.

Finally, I should like to say that, if at any time you feel that my good offices could be of service, I shall of course be very glad to do what lies in my power to help, in concert with the other parties to the Munich agreement, in reaching a solution of Hungary's claims such as will form the basis of an equitable settlement.

Yours sincerely,
Neville Chamberlain

¹Horthy, *Confidential Papers*, pp. 109-11. The first and the last sentences of the letter were written by Chamberlain himself in ink.

ATTACHMENT

**Passage Relating to the Czechoslovak-Hungarian Negotiations
of the Speech of Lord Halifax at Edinburgh, October 24, 1938**

The Hungarian Government are now in negotiation with the Czechoslovak Government, and we hope that they may reach an equitable solution, which will remove or lessen racial grievances. We recognise that Hungary has had legitimate claims, and we trust that means may be found to meet them.

There is no ideal solution of such problems, and there must always be minorities left on one side of the line or the other. But if the two parties can negotiate in a spirit of good will, and in the desire to find a remedy for clear grievances, we hope it may be possible for them to agree also on safeguards for minorities that will minimize injustice, and make more easy in future friendly cooperation between them.

35.

Note of the German Government to the Hungarian Government¹

Budapest, Okt. 30, 1938.

Die Deutsche Regierung ist im Einvernehmen mit der Kgl. Italienischen Regierung bereit, dem Ersuchen der Kgl. Ungarischen Regierung bezüglich der Regelung des Problems der ungarischen Minderheiten in der Tschechoslowakei unter der Bedingung nachzukommen, dass die Kgl. Ungarische Regierung die bindende Erklärung abgibt, dass die Entscheidungen des durch Deutschland und Italien zu fällenden Schiedsspruchs als endgültige Regelung angenommen und gemäss den festzusetzten den Bestimmungen vorbehaltlos und unverzüglich durchgeführt werden.

Bejahendenfalls sind der deutsche und der kgl. italienische Aussenminister bereit, am 2. November d.J. in Wien zusammenzutreffen und namens ihrer Regierungen den Schiedsspruch zu fällen.

(unsigned)

¹Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történettudományi Intézete, *Diplomáciai iratok Magyarország külpolitikájához 1936-1945* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1962-), Vol. II, pp. 879-80. Hereafter cited as *Diplomáciai iratok*. Translated, the text reads: "The German Government, in accord with the Royal Italian Government, is ready to settle the problem of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia as requested by the Royal Hungarian Government, on the condition that the Hungarian Government issue a binding declaration that the judgment arrived at by Germany and Italy will be accepted as final arbitration and that it will be carried out without reservation and without delay. In case of affirmation the German and the Royal Italian Foreign Ministers are ready to meet in Vienna on November 2 of the current year and bring about an arbitration in the name of their Governments."—The note was handed to Foreign Minister Kánya by the German Ambassador in Hungary, Erdmannsdorff.

Note of the Italian Government to the Hungarian Government¹

Budapest, Okt. 30, 1938.

L'Italie et l'Allemagne sont prêtes à accepter la demande d'arbitrage présentée par les Gouvernements de Budapest et de Prague à la condition que ledits Gouvernements déclarent officiellement que les décisions de l'arbitrage formulées par l'Italie et par l'Allemagne seront acceptées par les deux Gouvernements comme règlement définitif et exécutées en conformité de ce qui aura été décidé sans aucune réserve ou retard.

(unsigned)

¹*Diplomáciai iratok*, II, 880. This note was handed to Foreign Minister Kánya by the Italian Ambassador in Hungary, Vinci

Documents on the Vienna Award¹

MEMORANDUM ON THE CONFERENCE OF THE FOUR
FOREIGN MINISTERS IN THE BELVEDERE PALACE
ON NOVEMBER 2, 1938. FROM 12 NOON TO 2 P.M.

Present:

German Delegation

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop
Under State Secretary Woermann
Counselor of Legation Altenburg
Minister Schmidt
Counselor of Legation Kordt
Czechoslovak Delegation
Foreign Minister Chvalkovský
Minister Krno²

Italian Delegation

Foreign Minister Count Ciano
Ambassador Attolico
Minister Count Magistrati
Hungarian Delegation
Foreign Minister Kánya
Count Teleki, Minister of
Education

The Reich Foreign Minister opened the meeting with the following remarks:

"YOUR EXCELLENCIES, GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to welcome you in Vienna in the name of the Reich Government. I welcome especially my friend Count Ciano, Foreign Minister of Fascist Italy, as well as the Foreign Ministers of the Kingdom of Hungary and of Czechoslovakia.

¹*German Documents*, IV, 118-127.

"The Kingdom of Hungary and Czechoslovakia have appealed to Germany and Italy to arbitrate on the frontier delimitation between their two countries.

"The Reich Government and the Royal Italian Government have responded to this appeal, and the Italian Foreign Minister and I have come here today to make this decision. I regard it as being of particular symbolic significance that Italy and Germany can devote themselves to this great and responsible task in this very house of Prince Eugene of Savoy. Two hundred years ago this prince of Italian blood, German statesman and general, once before brought freedom, peace and justice to peoples in southeastern Europe.

"Our task today is to determine the final frontier between Hungary and Czechoslovakia on an ethnographic basis and to find a solution of the questions connected with this. The arbitral award made by us is binding and final and is recognized in advance by Hungary and Czechoslovakia as the final settlement.

"The essential points of the views of both Governments are already known to us from previous negotiations. Nevertheless, I think it would serve a useful purpose if the representatives of both Governments briefly summarized their views on the question and stated their reasons, so that all arguments may be carefully considered again before the award is made.

"Before asking the representatives of the two Governments to speak, I first call on His Excellency the Italian Foreign Minister to address you." Thereupon Count Ciano said as follows:

"YOUR EXCELLENCIES, GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to bid you welcome in the name of the Fascist Government.

"I wish to express to my friend Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister, my sincere thanks for the cordial reception accorded to me here in Vienna, in the house of Prince Eugene, who, as the Reich Foreign Minister has said, brought freedom, peace, and justice to the peoples of southeastern Europe 200 years ago.

"And thus in accepting the role of arbiters at the request of the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments, the Rome-Berlin Axis has set itself the aim of adding a further important contribution to the many efforts already made for peace and reconstruction in Europe.

"I feel sure that our efforts will be crowned with success, and that from the meeting in Vienna there will arise a new order and a new era in central Europe, based on that international justice which we have always striven for and desired."

The Reich Foreign Minister then called upon M. Kánya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, to speak.

M. Kánya began by expressing the thanks of the Hungarian Government to the German and Fascist Governments for their readiness to arbitrate in the territorial questions still outstanding between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He intended to be brief, as all the facts were already in possession of the two Governments. Count Teleki, the Hungarian Minister of Education, would undertake to supplement his statements from the geographical and ethnographical angles. The Hungarian Government had endeavored to reach a friendly solution of the points at issue with Czechoslovakia by negotiation on the lines of the Munich Agreement of the four Great Powers. The Hungarian Government hoped that a settlement of this kind would also lead, above all, to an improvement of Hungarian-Czechoslovak relations. By preserving peace the Munich Agreement had rendered Europe a tremendous service. It had also contained the basis for a solution of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question. It was true, the agreement had provided that the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question was to be settled within three months. To him this seemed a very long time, for it was a matter of importance to find a speedy solution. For this reason the Hungarian Government too had appealed to the German and Italian Governments to arbitrate and he was glad that this proposal had also been accepted by the Prague Government. Hungary had tried to reach direct agreement at first with the Czechoslovak Government at Komorn on October 9 to 13. When the negotiations were broken off, the Czechoslovak Government had made a further proposal, but great differences had still remained. For these disputed points, Hungary had proposed a decision by a court of arbitration or by a plebiscite. Hungary looked forward with a clear conscience to the arbitral award of the two powers and was convinced that the two Great Powers would give a just verdict, satisfactory to both parties.

Count Teleki, Minister of Education then stated that the Hungarian proposals were based upon purely ethnographic principles. The relevant facts were known and he had no need to go into details. The Munich Agreement had established two principles for the solution of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question: first, the majority principle and second, the ruling that the year 1918 was to be the basis for counting the population, i.e. the last census prior to that date. It was a simple matter to draw a frontier on the basis of these principles. However the delineation of the frontier on purely ethnographic principles presented great difficulties at two points, first with regard to a rather large area around the town of Neutra, inhabited by a Hungarian majority and situated outside the actual ethnic frontier, and also with regard to the areas east of Kaschau. The Hungarian Government had proposed a special solution for these areas. It was also difficult to apply the ethnographic principle to the town

of Pressburg. The difficulty here was that no one ethnic group possessed the absolute majority. Therefore the 50-percent principle was of no use here. It was true, however, that in 1911 there had been a relative Hungarian majority. It must also be taken into account that for centuries during the Turkish regime Pressburg had been the Hungarian capital; on the other hand, he admitted that the Slovaks must have access to the Danube. In conclusion, he would like to refer to several towns from Neutra to Munkacs which were close to the language frontier and which in 1918 had been 80-90 percent Hungarian but were later denationalized. Hungary therefore raised a claim to these towns on the ground of both ancient and recent rights.

Thereupon the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister spoke as follows:

"In the name of the Czechoslovak Government and at the same time in my own name I thank Your Excellency for the kind words which you have just addressed to me.

"In the person of Your Excellency and of His Excellency Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, I greet the representatives of those two Great Powers, who for 2 years have been showing the rest of the world the true and the shortest way to a new and better foreign policy.

"The fact that the two Foreign Ministers have accepted the role of arbiters in the question of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is a fresh proof of the firm and solid resolution of the policy pursued by Berlin and Rome to contribute to the pacification of an important part of central Europe by as speedy and just decision as possible.

"We have come to Vienna with complete confidence in the objectivity of the Great Powers toward us.

"On the occasion of the dinner given in Berlin on September 28, 1937, in honor of His Excellency the Head of the Italian Government, His Excellency the Reich Chancellor said that the cooperation of Germany and Italy not only served the common interest of the two Great Powers but in actual fact served the aim of speedy and general understanding among the nations of Europe.

"His Excellency the Duce answered on that occasion that Germany and Italy were prepared to work together with all other peoples of good will.

"I take advantage of this very opportunity to state solemnly here that the Slovak, Ruthenian, and Czech peoples desired to demonstrate just this good will by addressing Your Excellencies' Governments the request which will be the subject of your decision today.

"If we demand respect and full consideration for our own claims, it is with the intention of applying the same standards to the Hungarian people, too. With all our hearts we hope that your award today in this

historic palace with its symbolic name will lay the firm foundations from which we will be able to face the future with complete confidence.

"May you by your award make it possible for us to return home from Vienna conscious that as a result of your award we may let bygones be bygones in our common relations with our neighbor Hungary, and may this meeting in the Belvedere become a historic act which will open up for the two neighboring peoples a new, bright, and wide outlook into the future which, with God's help, may be a better one.

"With your consent, Minister Krno will answer Count Teleki's statements and briefly put before you the Czechoslovak point of view."

Minister Krno then made the following statement:

"The Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, which introduced a new era in central Europe and particularly in the history of my country, specified a period of 3 months for the settlement by direct negotiations of the question of the Hungarian and Polish minorities in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak Government honestly endeavored to carry out faithfully this point of the Munich Agreement also. As early as October 9, that is, 10 days after the Munich meeting, it took part in the negotiations in Komorn and tried to reach a settlement. It was and still is prepared to accept the nationality principle as the basis of the new frontier delimitation.

"At Komorn, however, the Hungarian delegation submitted a proposal which in Czechoslovakia's view could not form a basis for national justice. The Result of this proposal would have been to replace the present Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia (approximately 700,000) by a new and almost as numerous Slav (Slovak and Ruthenian) minority in Hungary.

"The negotiations in Komorn were then declared by the Hungarian delegation to be at an end.

"On October 22 my government handed over in Budapest a new proposal offering to resume direct negotiations at once on this general basis. The Hungarian Government did not see its way to accept this offer.

"Thereupon the Hungarian Government made a counterproposal to solve the question by means of a plebiscite or arbitration. Fully relying on the sense of justice of the German and Italian Governments, the Czechoslovak Government accepted this proposal. In the negotiations with Hungary, the Czechoslovak Government upheld the view that a solution must be found by which Hungary would receive a number of Slovaks and Ruthenians equal to the number of Hungarians who would remain in the Czechoslovak state. On the basis of Czechoslovak statistics for 1930, however, the Hungarian proposals would have left only 110,000 Magyars in Czechoslovakia, compared with over 200,000 Slovaks and Ruthenians who would have fallen to Hungary. It was

moreover to be remembered that two or three times hundred thousand Slovaks already were living in Hungary as a minority. The starting point for solution of the question must be the compact ethnic area (*Volksboden*). The Hungarian side has stated that the Munich principles must be applied uniformly, but in actual fact, conditions in Bohemia and Moravia could not be compared with those in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine.² In Bohemia and Moravia the ethnic frontier had been unchanged for a long time, and consequently Germany had been able to claim that, in the areas to be ceded, an ancient German cultural area was involved. Teleki, the Hungarian Minister of Education, had stated that Hungary's demands were based on ancient and recent rights. He felt that he must raise objections to this claim. If the year 1910 were taken as a basis, there perhaps existed Hungarian majorities in many places, but if one went back only 20 to 30 years and took the census of 1880, quite different results were obtained. In 1910 for example, Kaschau had had a small Hungarian majority, but in 1880 the town had been predominantly Slovak. Thus his view that Hungary could demand these towns on the ground of ancient and recent rights was not quite correct for, if one ignores the last 30 years, the Slovak side could demand with equal justice that the 1880 figures should be taken into consideration. Even in 1910 Kaschau had been a Hungarian-language enclave in a compact Slovak ethnic area."

Kánya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, replied to this that in his opinion the Czechoslovak Government was adhering too strictly to the Munich Agreement, which had provided a period of 3 months for the solution of these questions. The Munich Agreement had only this one fault, namely, that the period of 3 months was too long, for, if the question were allowed to drag on for so long, a peaceful solution would no longer be possible. From his own experience he could say that tension in Hungary during the last few weeks had reached an unbearable pitch, and reports in his possession from Czechoslovakia gave the same picture. In all probability matters would have come to an armed conflict, and the Hungarian Government had therefore appealed to Germany and Italy to arbitrate.

Count Teleki, the Minister of Education, stated that the principles established by Minister Krno would create entirely new problems. Hungary had been aiming at a territorial solution. Poland had done the same. In addition, Hungarian claims were made on a historical basis. The proposal made at Komorn by the Czechoslovak Government to add to Hungary a number of Slovaks equal to the number of Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia, in order to establish a balance, could

²Ruthenia

not be recognized. For one thing it must be taken into consideration that in a very short space of time this balance might again be disturbed by emigration or an important increase of population. In the long run, the application of this principle was not calculated to establish friendly relations, and therefore at Komorn this principle had been described by Hungary as one of mutual hostages. For the rest, Hungary recognized the principle of the compact ethnic area. However, at two points, i.e. at Neutra and Kaschau, the great change in nationalities (Volkstum) in the course of time must be recognized. It had been pointed out by the Czechoslovak side that between 1880 and 1911 these towns had been Magyarized. But if one went further back, it was seen that until 1880 there had been a Slovakization, and in earlier years, as shown, for example, by the statistics of 1720, this had been an old Hungarian ethnic and settlement area. The grandfathers of the inhabitants now described as Slovaks had still been, for the most part, Hungarians, as could be seen today to some extent from their names. It was true that Neutra and Kaschau were language enclaves if the 50-percent principle was taken as a basis. However he wished to point out that Kaschau, for example, was separated from the compact Hungarian ethnic area by a few small communities inhabited by Magyars to a maximum of 45 percent and an average of 37.8 percent.

Foreign Minister Chvalkovský stated that he fully agreed with Foreign Minister Kánya's view regarding the necessity of a speedy solution. He asked, however, that the views of Tiso, the Slovak Prime Minister, and Volosin, the Ukrainian Prime Minister, on Count Teleki's statements should first be heard. Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop said that they had met to find a solution for a Slovak-Hungarian question. The views of both Governments had been expressed by their Foreign Ministers. He could therefore see no point in hearing the views of a number of additional experts on the subject, for as such he must regard Tiso and Volosin, especially as the problem itself was sufficiently familiar to both arbiters. He therefore did not think that the circle of participants in today's conference should be enlarged.

He would take the liberty of saying the following on the subject of Foreign Minister Kánya's remarks that too long a period had been fixed by the Munich Agreement; it was a result of the cooperation of the German and Italian Governments with the two other Powers at Munich that the question of the Hungarian minority had been brought near to solution at all. Moreover, the two Governments had stated their willingness to undertake the role of arbiter in this question so that it might be brought to a peaceful and speedy solution. He had noted with interest the statements of the Czechoslovak and Hungarian delegations. The preparatory talks for the arbitral award could thus be regarded as ended. The prob-

lem has been expounded with sufficient clarity. As for MM. Tiso and Volosin, they would have an opportunity for unofficial talks with the two arbiters in the course of the lunch to which both of them had also been invited.

After lunch, the Italian and German delegations would then enter into consultations on the award to be made, which would probably be completed late in the afternoon. He would then ask the Hungarian and Czechoslovak delegates to attend a final meeting in the Belvedere Palace.

Foreign Minister Count Ciano expressed agreement with this proposal. Foreign Minister Chvalkovský then asked to be allowed to speak again. In view of the thoroughness which he had learned in German schools, he asked if he might point out the following: MM. Tiso and Volosin could not be described as experts. The Slovak Prime Minister had been the leader of the Slovak delegation which had up to now negotiated with the Hungarians. M. Volosin was Prime Minister of the Ukraine. He therefore asked that in any minutes of the meeting to be drawn up the two gentlemen should not be referred to as experts. Reich Minister von Ribbentrop and Foreign Minister Count Ciano expressed their agreement.

Thereupon the meeting adjourned.

E. Kordt

II.

MEMORANDUM ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ARBITRAL AWARD IN THE PRESENCE OF THE FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS ON NOVEMBER 2, 1938, AT 7 P.M.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop opened the meeting by stating that the German and Italian Governments had now completed their task of arbitrating in the question of the cession of Czechoslovak territory to Hungary. The task of the arbiters had been extremely difficult. But on the basis of the ethnographic principle a decision had been reached, which, if correctly carried out, would bring a lasting and just solution of the questions outstanding between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Count Ciano corroborated this statement on behalf of the Italian Government. He said that the arbitration by the German and Italian Governments had again revealed the solidarity of the Axis. He, too, wished to stress the difficulty of the task undertaken by the two Governments and to call attention to the efforts of both to find a lasting and just solution of the problem, designed to introduce a new era and to lay the foundations for friendly and good neighborly relations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Then followed the reading and afterward the signing of the arbitral award and accompanying protocol. Thereupon Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop declared the meeting closed.

E. Kordt

III.

Vienna, November 2, 1938

Pol. IV 7958.

ARBITRAL AWARD

In virtue of a request from the Royal Hungarian Government and the Czechoslovak Government to the German and Royal Italian Governments to settle by award the questions pending between them relating to territories to be ceded to Hungary, as well as in the virtue of notes thereupon exchanged on October 30, 1938, between the Governments concerned, the German Foreign Minister, Herr Joachim Von Ribbentrop, and the Foreign Minister of His Majesty the King of Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia, Count Galeazzo Ciano, have met this day in Vienna, and, after further discussion with the Royal Hungarian Foreign Minister, M. Kálmán Kánya, and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Dr. František Chvalkovský, have promulgated the following award:

1. The areas to be ceded to Hungary by Czechoslovakia are marked on the annexed map.³ Demarkation of the frontier on the spot is delegated to a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission.

2. The evacuation by Czechoslovakia of the areas to be ceded and their occupation by Hungary begins on November 5, 1938, and is to be completed by November 10, 1938. The detailed stages of the evacuation and occupation, as well as other procedures connected therewith, are to be settled at once by a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission.

3. The Czechoslovak Government will insure that the territories to be ceded are left in an orderly condition at the time of evacuation.

4. Special questions arising out of the cession of territory, in particular questions relating to nationality and option, are to be regulated by a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission.

5. Likewise, special measures for the protection of persons of the Magyar nationality remaining in Czechoslovak territory and of persons not of the Magyar race in the ceded territories are to be agreed upon by a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission. This commission will take special care that the Magyar ethnic group (*Volksgruppe*) in Pressburg be accorded the same status as other ethnic groups there.

³The map attached to this Appendix is not identical to that mentioned in the document.

6. Insofar as disadvantages and difficulties in the sphere of economic or (railway) traffic may be caused by the cession of territory to Hungary for the area remaining to Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian Government will, in agreement with the Czechoslovak Government, do its utmost to remove these disadvantages and difficulties.

7. In the event of difficulties or doubts arising from the implementation of this award, the Royal Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments will settle the matter directly between themselves. Should they, however, fail to reach agreement on any question, this question will then be submitted to the German and Italian Governments for final decision.

Joachim von Ribbentrop

Galeazzo Ciano

IV

The general course of the new frontier between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Republic of Czechoslovakia as determined in the award made by the German Foreign Minister and the Royal Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs on November 2, 1938, is as follows:

Starting from the old frontier south of Pressburg, the new frontier runs north of the Pressburg-Neuhäusl railway line, turns in a northeasterly direction to the northwest of Neuhäusl, and is continued north of Vráble direct to the Lewenz-Altsohl railway line. The towns of Neuhäusl and Lewenz revert to Hungary. To the east of Lewenz the frontier runs diagonally through the Eipel territory some 30 kilometers north of the old frontier. Its further course is directly to the north of the towns Lutschenetz and Gross-Steffelsdorf, which also revert to Hungary. The frontier then turns to the northeast, taking in the town of Jolschva, and in the neighborhood of Rosenau extends direct to the German-settlement area of the Unterzips. It then turns north, includes Kaschau in Hungarian territory, and follows a southeasterly course to a point some 30 kilometers north of the railway junction of Sátoraljaujhely on the former Hungarian frontier. It then proceeds due east to a point directly north of Ungvár, which is assigned to Hungary. The frontier then takes a sharp turn to the southeast. Its further course passes close to the north of Munkatsch. Continuing in a southeasterly direction, the new frontier links up with the old frontier northeast of the Rumanian-frontier railway station of Halmei.

Of the disputed towns, therefore, Pressburg itself, the capital of Slovakia, the old cathedral town of Neutra, and the town of Sevljusch in the Carpatho-Ukraine, with its surrounding villages, remain within the Czechoslovak republic. The towns of Neuhäusl, Lewenz, Lutschenetz, Kaschau, Užhorod, and Munkatsch were adjudged to the Kingdom of Hungary.

The new ruling returns the whole area of compact Hungarian settlement to the Kingdom of Hungary. At points where circumstances did not allow an exact determination of the frontier on ethnic lines (*Volksmässige Grenzziehung*), the interests of both sides were carefully weighed.

38.

**Protocol concerning the Arbitral Award Establishing the
Czechoslovak-Hungarian boundary.**

Signed at Vienna, Nov. 2, 1938.

(Entered into force same day. Not registered with the Secretariat of the League of Nations.)¹

In pursuance of the request made by the Royal Hungarian and the Czechoslovak Governments to the German and the Royal Italian Governments to settle by arbitration the outstanding question of the areas to be ceded to Hungary, and in pursuance of the notes exchanged on the subject between the Governments concerned on October 30th, 1938, the German Reich-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of His Majesty the King of Italy and Emperor of Ethiopia, Count Galeazzo Ciano, have today met at the Belvedere Castle of Vienna and given the desired arbitral award in the names of their Governments.

For this purpose they have invited to Vienna the Royal Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Koloman von Kánya, and the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Franz Chvalkovský, in order to give them an opportunity in the first place again to explain the point of view of their Governments.

This arbitral award, together with the map mentioned in paragraph 1, has been handed to the Royal Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs. They have taken cognizance of it and have again confirmed, on behalf of their Governments, the statement which they made on October 30th, 1938, that they accept the arbitral award as a final settlement and that they undertake to carry it out unconditionally and without delay.

Done in the German and Italian languages in quadruplicate.

Vienna, November 2nd, 1938.

v. Ribbentrop *Count Ciano* *v. Kánya* *Chvalkovský*

¹Hudson, *International Legislation*, VIII. 201.