

Foreword

Three weeks after Pearl Harbor, on December 28, 1941, President Roosevelt approved the Department of State's setting up the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy. Its task, as its name suggests, was to work out the policies that would guide the U.S. in the postwar task of negotiating peace. Officially, the Committee continued to function until the summer of 1943; in fact, however, it carried on its work until the end of the war, though under other names. In about three years, the Advisory Committee and its successors wrote thousands of reports and situation analyses, which served as the basis of presentations heard and discussed by hundreds of committees and sub-committees.

The accumulated material, reports of fact-finding missions, analyses, presentations, minutes and recommendations, altogether about thirty-five running meters of documents, was deposited in the National Archives by the State Department in 1970. The collection, which came to two hundred and eighty boxes, was catalogued as the Notter File, and made available to researchers in 1974. It is difficult to overestimate the value of the collection to anyone interested in the personalities who shaped U.S. foreign policy during the war and in the immediate postwar period, to whoever wants to understand the concerns of these people, and the way their minds worked. It is indicative of the thoroughness of the material that there are close to eight hundred pages dealing with Hungary alone. As for its documentary value, we might note that in the early '80's, Japanese researchers had copies made of most of the material dealing with Japan. The purpose of this volume is to present the various points of view that emerged in the course of the Advisory Committee's discussions of the future of Hungary and its place in the proposed "Mid-European Union" and to give an idea of its recommendations. About a third of the relevant documents have been included, those deemed to be most significant, and those most conducive to the reader's drawing his own conclusions about the nature of the postwar Hungary envisioned by U.S. foreign policy makers.

The material I selected during the time spent at the National Archives in the first half of 1991. I first called attention to this extraordinary collection at lectures held at the Kossuth House in Washington, D.C., at Montclair State College, and at Rutgers University, the meeting place of the Hungarian Alumni Association. Subsequently, brief interviews on the subject were aired on Hungarian Radio and on Hungarian Television, and an article in the November 1991 issue of *Valóság* followed. This, however, is the first time that the documents themselves are published.

The documents contained in the volume are grouped thematically into four units. Part One deals with plans for the "Mid European Union." Part Two with Hungary's proposed frontiers; and Part Three with what would be a desirable form of postwar government in Hungary. Part Four contains the recommendations actually submitted to the Secretary of State and the President.

Following the convention of source publications, we are publishing the documents *verbatim et literatim*, correcting only the obvious typing errors. For the sessions of the Territorial Subcommittee, we have not only the minutes of each of the meetings, but also the "Summaries and Recommendations" prepared in connection with the major issues discussed. In view of the importance of these issues, we shall publish both types of documents, separated by asterisks, as they relate to a particular question. In cases where the minutes of a certain meeting deal with issues unrelated either to Hungary or Eastern Europe, we shall publish only the part of the document that applies. That the document is fragmentary shall be indicated both in its title, and by the use of omission marks [...] within the text itself. Certain of the documents have notes; these shall be included at the end of the document, numbered with Arabic numerals as in the original. My own editorial notes shall be distinguished by asterisks, and the notes themselves be given as footnotes. Some of the records refer to documents or maps not included in the volume. Most of the former can be found in the National Archives, but not so all the maps. Of the tentative maps drawn up for the Advisory Committee, we have included the five that are the most informative, and the best visual aids to understanding the documents themselves. Three further maps, specifically drawn for this volume, have also been included: one a regional map of historical Hungary; one showing the borders recommended by the U.S. delegation to the 1919 peace talks; and one showing the territorial revisions of the years 1938 to 1941. There is an index to facilitate cross reference to personal and geographic names, and an introduction to advise the reader on the composition of the Advisory

Committee, on the background of the issues discussed, and on why it was that the events of 1945 to 1947 could thwart the American plans for a postwar settlement.

I am only too aware of the fact that what this volume is about is not "history" in the sense that the Crusades or other politically indifferent facts accomplish of even the more recent past are history. Its links to the present are obvious; some of the documents could have been written today. This, however, is no reason for not making these documents public. History is something that we must learn to live with — we Hungarians, as well as our neighbors. The historian's only task is to discover the evidence for how things were, and to make it available to all. If, in the process, certain sore points are touched upon, that is not his fault, but the work of history. Though the converse is just as true: it's his work, but the fault of history.

I. R.