

a documentary article

Keeping an Eye on Hungarians in Wartime America:

The Spencer Taggart Memorandum (Part I)

N. F. Dreisziger ed.

Introduction

Spying on foreign nationals, especially enemy aliens, is a practice that all nations involved in the wars of the twentieth century have followed. The United States was no exception, even though in the America of the Second World War period paranoia about potential "fifth columnists" was directed at such groups only as the Japanese Americans, and to a lesser extent, the German Americans.¹ Other "enemy alien" groups, and even Italians, were on the whole not treated with suspicion, and were not singled out for wholesale incarceration or severe loss of civic freedoms. In this respect Hungarian Americans, and even recent Hungarian arrivals from Europe, were particularly lucky. Even though their mother country had declared war on the United States soon after Pearl Harbor in December of 1941,² Washington did not respond with an American declaration of war until the summer of the following year. Furthermore, the treatment of Hungarian nationals living in the United States, not to mention naturalized Hungarian Americans, remained lenient throughout the war. Nevertheless, Hungarians — and, especially, émigré Hungarians and their organizations — would be watched by the agencies of the American government, both those that had existed even before the war and those that were created, precisely for this purpose, after America's involvement in the conflict.

America did possess an apparatus for observing the activities of alien nationals in its territory before the Second World War. The personnel of the European Section of the State Department was involved in such endeavour as were some individuals working for various branches of the

Justice Department. Their work was unsystematic, uncoordinated and underfunded. The matter did not have a high priority in a country that was isolationist in its foreign policies and, for the time being, cared little about the comings and goings of newcomers after they had arrived in the US. As war came to America, and as the conflict kept widening in Europe and in South East Asia, it became obvious to the Roosevelt administration that the existing apparatus of intelligence gathering was insufficient and that new agencies, in fact a centralised agency, had to be established in Washington to handle the collection and analysis of intelligence, the dissemination of propaganda, and related activities, both abroad and in the United States. The result was, after a painful process of bureaucratic experimentation, the establishment of the Office of Strategic Services or OSS, and within that agency, of the Foreign Nationalities Branch, which was tasked with keeping an eye on émigré groups, especially emigres from Axis countries, in the United States as well as throughout the Americas.³

The origins of the OSS go back to the summer of 1940 when, after the defeat of France by Hitler's *Wehrmacht*, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) dispatched an acquaintance of his, William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan, to England to study the British wartime intelligence establishment. A distinguished veteran of World War I and prominent New York lawyer, Donovan completed his mission in July of 1940, during the early phase of the Battle of Britain.

In the winter of 1940-41, Roosevelt sent Donovan on another fact-finding mission, this time to some of the countries of the Mediterranean. One of his tasks was to study Nazi propaganda and infiltration methods in this part of the world. On his return, he and Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, began discussions with FDR. In these, Donovan emphasized the need to counter Nazi psychological warfare by effective measures. Later he made similar recommendations to a cabinet committee in which he stressed the need for a powerful agency to handle intelligence, counter-intelligence, and psychological warfare. The result was the establishment, in July of 1941, of the office of the Coordinator of [Strategic] Information, the COI. Donovan became its "Coordinator". COI was financed by secret funds available to the President, and Donovan reported directly to FDR.

Being an organization designed for wartime in a country that was officially still neutral, the COI got off to a slow start. It began with a small staff but kept acquiring additional branches, divisions within the

branches, and sections within the divisions. One branch that was established was the Research and Analysis Branch which became staffed by scholars recruited from the civilian world. Late in 1941 the establishment of a "Foreign Nationalities Branch" (FNB) was suggested, evidently by Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles. It was to recruit intelligence on — and from — foreign exiles and émigré groups in the United States. Jealousy between some State Department officials (who believed this work should belong to their Department) and the COI-NFB's successor, the OSS' NFB, would be a periodic problem throughout the war period.⁴

To help to plan and run the COI's Foreign Nationalities Branch, Donovan recruited John C. Wiley, a former diplomat with service in the Baltic countries. He in turn secured the services of DeWitt C. Poole, another American ex-diplomat. Together they, in consultation with the other agencies concerned, drafted the NFB's "charter," which was officially accepted by FDR at the end of 1941. Wiley became the Branch's director, while Poole became the actual supervisor of its activities. The two of them cultivated contacts with prominent exiles resident in the US, as well as maintained liaison with other government bureaus and agencies. Poole, in particular, kept in touch with Assistant Undersecretary of State Adolf Berle and regularly attended the meetings of an Interdepartmental Committee on Foreign Nationalities Problems.

The FNB became staffed by a team of experts in command of various foreign languages. They maintained contacts with certain exiles and monitored the foreign-language press in the United States. Some of these functions were undertaken by volunteers, mostly academics at American institutions of higher learning. There were also special consultants gathering specific types of information emanating from behind enemy lines. By March of 1942, information gathered and processed by the Branch began flowing to various other wartime agencies, as well as to the Department of State and Department of Justice. By the time of the dissolution of the COI in June of 1942, the Branch had 35 full-time employees and some 50 volunteers and it had produced reports on 30 nationality groups. In May of 1942 alone, its staff had conducted interviews with 344 persons.⁵

In July of 1942, FDR decided to replace the COI with another agency and Office of Strategic Services was born. By mid-December of the same year the new agency was operating under a "definitive charter" and with an increased budget. The availability of more money resulted in the creation of new branches and divisions, and a rapid expansion of the

staff. At the apex of the new organization stood the Director, below him the Assistant Director who supervised the work of several Deputy Directors. One of these was the Deputy Director of Intelligence under whom originally there were two branches, Research and Analysis and Foreign Nationalities (the FNB). Later, other branches were added.⁶

When the COI was reorganized as the OSS, suggestions were made for the attaching of the former's Foreign Nationalities Branch to the State Department. After some debate, it was decided that FNB personnel would have more freedom to engage in unorthodox means of obtaining intelligence as members of the OSS than as State Department personnel, and the Branch was assigned to the OSS.⁷ Possible overlaps of functions with the State Department and other agencies in Washington, were soon resolved. The Branch was given a larger budget and DeWitt Poole became its director. By early 1943 the number of people employed full-time by the Branch had reached about fifty, with some hundred others working as part-time volunteers.⁸

The FNB' staff and volunteers used various open and covert means to collect information relating to the activities of European exile groups in the United States and elsewhere in the New World. Intelligence the FNB was not in position to obtain through its staff, such as information from postal intercepts, was acquired from other US and Allied agencies involved in surveillance. The information obtained was "analyzed and processed" and was subsequently disseminated throughout the appropriate departments and agencies in Washington — and, on occasion, even beyond: in London and Ottawa. Such dissemination most often took the form of "Reports," "Bulletins," and "Specials," in descending order of significance. The FNB also produced "Handbooks," fairly massive volumes which contained general information on immigrant and exile groups in the United States.⁹

Among the groups monitored by the FNB was the Hungarian-American. Of special interest to the Branch's staff were recent emigres from Hungary and especially, their organizations. The great many reports that FNB — and other organs of the US government — produced on Hungarian Americans, recent Hungarian arrivals, and their organizations, were supplemented by reports that had been submitted to the OSS and other agencies by Hungarian emigres anxious to make Washington officials familiar with their point of view. These official and unofficial documents have never been collected and published. A few, selected rather randomly, have been printed, in our journal throughout the 1990s.¹⁰

It is not the aim of this "documentary article" to publish all or even a substantial sampling of this documentation. This article will feature only one wartime American document that dealt with Hungarian-American organisations (and their leaders). In fact, it will reproduce only about half of this memorandum since printing all of its 110 pages cannot be done because of the limitations of space in our journal. The part reproduced deals with the American Hungarian Federation and the World Federation of Hungarians, and the relationship between the two. Those interested in the whole of this document can order it photocopied or microfilmed by the National Archives of the United States. If possible, a further instalment of the "Taggart Memorandum," Part II, dealing with the Movement for an Independent Hungary and including the document's appendices, will be published in the 2004 or 2005 volume of our journal.

This particular document did not, in fact, originate with the FNB of the OSS, but with wartime Washington's Justice Department. This fact underlines the circumstance that several agencies were involved in the gathering of intelligence in Washington during the war, and much work was done outside of the agency, the OSS, that was supposed to be the focal point of such activities. Indeed, the Justice Department, along with the Federal Bureau of Intelligence which it included (whose roots went back all the way to 1908), was particularly well equipped to spy on alien residents of the United States. In fact, the FBI regularly reported on the activities of Hungarian-American organizations and prominent Hungarian nationals in the country.¹¹

Not much is known about the origins of this document or, as a matter of fact, its author. The letter that accompanied the memorandum when a copy of it was sent to the State Department is dated 16 December 1943, was signed by James R. Sharp, "Chief, Foreign Agents Registration Section, War Division." In this letter Taggart is identified as one of the analysts "on the staff of this Section." Sharp added that he believed the report was "very excellently done" and "was prepared for our assistance in connection with matters arising under the Foreign Agents Registration Act."¹² Taggart later joined the OSS's FNB. Many of the Branch's 1944 reports are addressed to Poole and "S. L. Taggart."¹³

In editing the Taggart Memorandum for the purposes of this volume some liberties were taken and a few unconventional practices were introduced. Since the memorandum has a two-tier system of footnoting (it uses both footnotes and endnotes), it was deemed unwise to introduce further notes, not even editorial notes. Instead, editorial expla-

nations are sometimes added in much smaller print. Original spellings (the omission of diacritical marks on Hungarian names, for example) are left as they existed in the original. Terms underlined (newspaper titles, etc.) in the original, however, have been italicized in this printed version. Text omitted by Taggart is indicated as "... or "...", text I deleted is shown as "[...]" or "[...]" (three dots stand for a part of a sentence missing, four dots mean a whole sentence or more). Additional biographical and other data is rarely introduced in view of the fair amount of information provided by Taggart in his memorandum — and its notes. Those who wish further details on the individuals or events that are mentioned, can look for these in various scholarly publications on the subject.¹⁴

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

Research grants that supported my work on this and related subjects included a Senior Fellowship in Canadian Ethnic Studies from Canada's Multiculturalism Directorate, at least two Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada grants, and several Arts Research Program (ARP) grants from Canada's Department of National Defence. For these I am grateful.

¹ For literature concerning the treatment of Japanese Americans during the war see Peter Irons, *Justice at War: The Story of the Japanese American Internment Cases* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Page Smith, *Democracy on Trial: The Japanese American Evacuation and Relocation in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995); Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps* (New York, 1976); Robert Shaffer, "Opposition to Internment: Defending Japanese American Rights During World War II," *The Historian*, 61 (spring, 1999): 597-619; and Mikiso Hane, "Wartime Internment," *Journal of American History*, 77, 2 (Sept. 1990): 569-75. On German Americans, see Timothy J. Holian, *The German-Americans and World War II: An Ethnic Experience* (New York, etc.: Peter Lang, 1996); also, some information can be gleaned from several of the papers published in Hans L. Trefousse, ed., *Germany and America: Essays on Problems of International Relations and Immigration* (New York: Brooklyn College Press/Columbia University Press, 1980). For the general context of the wartime treatment of enemy aliens in the U.S. see John W. Jeffries, *Wartime America: The World War II Home Front* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), especially chapter 6 (pp. 120-44);

Richard Polenberg, *America at War: The Home Front, 1914-1945* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968); as well as several other works listed in the bibliography of Jeffries' book (pp. 206f).

² On the subject of Hungary's declaration of war on the United States, which came just after the declaration of war on Hungary by the members of the British Commonwealth, see my papers "Hungary Enters the War, March-December, 1941," and "Was László Bárdossy a War Criminal?" in *Hungary in the Age of Total War, 1938-1948*, ed. N. F. Dreisziger (New York: East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, 1998), 61-69 and 311-20 respectively; also, in the same volume: Pál Pritz, "László Bárdossy Before the People's Tribunal, 1945," 287-310. See also the concluding parts of Tibor Frank's "Treaty Revision and doublespeak: Hungarian neutrality, 1939-1941," in *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerent during the Second World War*, ed. Neville Wylie (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002): 150-173;

³ The paragraphs that follow are based mainly on Kermit Roosevelt, ed., *War Report of the OSS* (New York: Walker & Co., 1976), 63-67 and 198-202. For a brief overview see Barry M. Katz, *Foreign Intelligence: Research and Analysis in the Office of Strategic Services, 1942-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 1-4.

⁴ Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: O.S.S. and the Origins of the C.I.A.* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), especially pp. 101-33, and 212-15 *in passim*.

⁵ *War Report of the OSS*, 63-67.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 97-123 *in passim*.

⁷ *Ibid.* Adolf Berle of the State Department explained at the time that his department's interest in foreign nationality groups "was limited primarily to following the operations of foreign government in exile attempting to operate on United States soil or free movements attempting to be governments." Memorandum, [Berle] to [Secretary of State Cordell Hull], 18 June 1942, Adolf Berle Papers (reel 4). The Berle Papers on microfilm are available in the Massey Library of the Royal Military College of Canada.

⁸ The latter were scattered at some twenty American institutions of higher learning and were directed from Princeton University. The FNB's main branches were in New York and Washington, but by 1943 there were field representatives functioning in Pittsburgh and San Francisco. *War Report of the OSS*, pp. 198-199. Students of wartime Canada might be interested to know that, at about the same time, the NFB's Canadian equivalent, the Nationalities Branch of the Department of National War Services, had a full-time staff of three, two of whom were often absent because of chronic illness. On the origins of the NB see my paper, "The Rise of a Bureaucracy for Multiculturalism: The Origins of the Nationalities Branch, 1939-41," in *On Guard for Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945*, ed. Norman Hillmer, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr

Luciuk (Ottawa: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War and the Canadian Government Publishing Centre, 1988), 1-29.

⁹ *War Report of the OSS*, 199-201. As the war began to come to its conclusion in the spring and summer of 1945, the Branch's budget, staff and activities were gradually reduced. Soon after the war's end, its remaining staff was transferred to the State Department.

¹⁰ See especially the following papers and documentary articles of mine: "Oscar Jaszi and the 'Hungarian Problem': Activities and Writings during World War II," in the special volume (Vol. XVIII, Nos. 1-2): *Oscar Jaszi: Visionary, Reformer and Political Activist*, ed. N. F. Dreisziger and A. Ludanyi (Toronto: HSR, 1991): 59-91; and "Emigre Artists and Wartime Politics: The Hungarian-American Council for Democracy, 1943-45," in the special volume (Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2): *Hungarian Artists in the Americas*, ed. Oliver Botar (Toronto: HSR, 1994): 43-75. The Jaszi memorandum printed in my 1991 documentary article was re-printed under the title "Oscar Jaszi's 'Hungarian Problem' (1944)," in *Hungary in the Age of Total War, 1938-1948*, ed. N. F. Dreisziger (New York: East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, 1998), 357-66.

¹¹ Copies of some of these reports, obtained from the FBI records in the National Archives of the United States, are in my possession. Still another wartime American agency that produced intelligence reports on émigré organizations in the United States, was the Office of Censorship. One document produced by this agency is reproduced in the appendix to my paper "Émigré Artists," cited above, see pp. 61-75.

¹² James R. Sharp to Cavendish Cannon of the State Department, 16 December 1943. Records of the U.S. Department of State, 864.01 B 11/73. National Archives of the United States, Washington, D.C. I am indebted to the staff of the National Archives for having the Spencer Taggart memorandum declassified, following my request, on 21 Sept. 1972.

¹³ A Foreign Nationalities Branch memorandum, dated 15 June 1943, identifies him as being with the Special War Policies Unit, Department of Justice (OSS-FNB Records INT-9CZ-484). Many documents in the records of the FNB for 1944 and 1945 are directed to the attention of Taggart and/or DeWitt C. Poole. Evidently by then Taggart had joined the FNB. The records of the FNB are available on microfiche. One set of these is in the Massey Library of the Royal Military College of Canada. As a Mormon missionary, Taggart had lived in Czechoslovakia from 1931 to 1934, a fact which helps to account for what many readers of his document might consider his pro-Czech sympathies. His experiences as a missionary are told in his *Becoming a Missionary (1931-1934)*, manuscript, Merrill Library, Utah State University.

¹⁴ Some of my own relevant publications are mentioned in the above notes. On the subject of the Movement for an Independent Hungary and its leader Tibor Eckhardt, see also my article "'Bridges to the West': The Horthy Regime's

Reinsurance Policies in 1941," in *War and Society*, 7, 1 (May 1989): 1–23. A more recent work on this subject is Katalin Kádár Lynn, "Eckhardt Tibor és a Szabad Magyarországért Mozgalom [Tibor Eckhardt and the Movement for an Independent Hungary]," in *Tanulmányok a XIX–XX. századi történelemből* [Studies from the History of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries] (Budapest: ELTE BTK, 2001), 195–210; while the subject of the Hungarian-American left during the war is treated in Zoltán Fejős, "Harc a háború ellen és az új Magyarországért" [Struggle against the war and for the new Hungary], *Medvetánc* [Bear-dance] (Jan. 1988): 282–332. Further, readers will find information on all these and related subjects in Béla Várdy's book (reviewed in this volume): *Magyarok az Újvilágban: Az észak-amerikai magyarság rendhagyó története* [Hungarians in the New World: the irregular history of the Hungarians of North America] (Budapest: A Magyar Nyelv és Kultúra Nemzetközi Társasága, 2000), 369–86; and, to a lesser extent, in Julianna Puskás's *Ties that Bind, Ties that Divide: One Hundred Years of Hungarian Experience in the United States*, transl. Zora Ludwig (New York and London: Holmes & Meier, Ellis Island series, 2000), chapter 24, "World War II" (pp. 249–56).

Appendix:

The Spencer Taggart Memorandum

PART I

The American Hungarian Federation and the World Federation of Hungarians

[The document starts here. It is stamped with the date: Dec. 8, 1943]

ACTIVITIES OF HUNGARIAN NATIONALISTS

IN THE UNITED STATES:

AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FEDERATION

WORLD FEDERATION OF HUNGARIANS

MOVEMENT FOR INDEPENDENT HUNGARY

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MEMORANDUM

Re: Activities of Hungarian Nationalists in the United States:

American Hungarian Federation
World Federation of Hungarians
Movement for Independent Hungary

[Note: This memorandum is a survey of the activities of Hungarian nationalists in the United States since 1938, with specific emphasis upon the work of the American Hungarian Federation in cooperation with World Federation of Hungarians and the Movement for Independent Hungary. No attempt is made here to discuss any other phases of the work of the American Hungarian Federation such as the activities of the various fraternal and independent societies and religious organizations affiliated in it].

Introduction:
The American Hungarian Community

It has been estimated that there are approximately six hundred thousand persons of Hungarian descent living in the United States. The influx of Hungarian immigration has taken place almost wholly since 1890. Stemming from peasant environment most of these immigrants settled in the mining and steel towns of West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Pennsylvania and later in the automobile centers of Michigan. The largest center of American Hungarians numbering approximately 50,000 is to be found in Cleveland. Other large centers are Pittsburgh, Detroit, New York, Toledo, Chicago, and Buffalo.

Within the Hungarian community in the United States, the American Hungarian Federation is the largest and most influential organization. In general, it has tended to rationalize the position of the Horthy Government and has followed a policy on the right. The most prominent

organizations on the left have been the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians (organized on September 20, 1941, a few days before the Movement for Independent Hungary) and the American Committee for a New Democratic Hungary headed by Professor Oscar Jaszi and Dr. Rustem Vambery respectively. Still farther left, consisting largely of communist elements, the newly organized Hungarian American Council for Democracy with Bela Lugosi as the president is the most prominent organization. These leftist organizations favor the political program of Count Michael Karolyi, who, as the leader of the Movement for a New Democratic Hungary with headquarters in London, advocates marked land reforms and "democratization" in post-war Hungary.

I. The American Hungarian Federation

(A) Identification

The American Hungarian Federation with national headquarters located 839 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., is a nation-wide organization with a membership of approximately ninety thousand. It is a roof organization composed of the three largest Hungarian fraternal societies in the United States: namely, the Verhovay Fraternal Insurance Association, the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America, and the American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association. In addition, the Federation claims among its membership various Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish parishes as well as independent Hungarian organizations, societies and individuals.

Although chartered in 1907 the Federation was resuscitated in 1938, after a lapse in its activities dating from World War I. At first the Federation's declared aims consisted quite largely of an Americanization program designed to assist immigrants from Hungary in making adjustments to their new environment. In foreign policy the Federation has strongly favored the revision of the Treaty of Trianon, and many in the organization regarded with approval the revision effected as a concomitant of the conquest of Europe by Nazi Germany. Although the membership as a whole appears to be favorably disposed towards Admiral Horthy (who as head of a satellite state has cooperated with the Nazi regime), this Unit has no information showing that the Federation itself ever officially supported in any way the Hitler Government. In January 1941, the Federation declared itself to be a "spokesman of the silenced Hungar-

ian people" and organized the abortive Movement for Independent Hungary of which Tibor Eckhardt became the leader. Until Eckhardt's resignation in July, 1942, this movement occupied the full attention of the Federation. Since then the Federation has remained somewhat dormant awaiting possibly a more propitious moment to resume its political activities.

The national officers of the Federation are Dr. Bela Szappanyos, national president; Dr. Tibor Kerekes, executive secretary; and Emery Kiraly, Treasurer. The Board of Directors of which John Dezso is president is composed of Rev. Ferenc Ujlaky, Monsignor Elmer Eordogh, Kalman Revesz, Stephen Gobozy, Zoltan Gombos, Paul Nadanyi, Dr. Bela Mark, John Walko, Dr. Charles Vincze, and Ignatius Lengyel. When the American Hungarian Federation was first reorganized in 1938 it was decided that the presidents of the three fraternal societies affiliated in the Federation should each in turn serve one year as president of the Board. The Board is composed of representatives of the three leading fraternal organizations as well as of the various member religious denominations including the Jewish. Gombos and Nadanyi, editors of the *Szabadsag* and the *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava* respectively, represent the daily Hungarian-language press. An appointive member of the Board represents, in addition, the various Hungarian weeklies.

(B) Leaders

Since November, 1941, DR. SZAPPANYOS, a practicing physician in Detroit, has been the national president of the American Hungarian Federation. Dr. Szappanyos came to the United States shortly after World War I. Until his election as national president of the Federation he is said to have been little known in American Hungarian circles. He is believed to exert only nominal influence upon the affairs of the American Hungarian Federation.

DR. TIBOR KEREEKES, professor of history at Georgetown University, is the executive secretary of the American Hungarian Federation. He, too, was little known in American Hungarian circles before 1938. Dr. Kerekes came originally to the United States from Hungary in 1924. He has resided in Washington, D.C. since 1927. As the executive secretary, Tibor Kerekes has been able to exert considerable influence upon the policies of the Federation. He is said to be influenced greatly, if

not dominated, by Rev. George E. Borshy-Kerekes, field secretary of the Hungarian Reformed Federation, who is an ardent Hungarian nationalist.

JOSEPH DARAGO who recently resigned as head of the Verhovay Association was president of the Board of Directors from 1939 until 1941. In 1941 Darago became president of the American branch of the newly founded Movement for Independent Hungary. Although lacking in formal education, Darago is generally thought to be an able man and has been one of the most influential persons in the affairs of the Federation. Since Darago is about 70 years of age his recent resignation as president of the Verhovay has been generally interpreted to mean that he will no longer be active or effective in Hungarian affairs.

REV. UJLAKY, president of the Hungarian Reformed Federation and JOHN DEZSO, president of the American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association, have each in turn served as president of the Board of Directors. Rev. Ujlaky is reported to be a chauvinistic Hungarian nationalist who is anxious to return to Hungary after the war to claim a pension promised to him by the Hungarian Church through Rev. Stephen Szabo, his son-in-law now in the United States.¹

MSGR. ELMER EORDOGH, a papal prelate who has lived in Toledo, Ohio about thirty years, has been one of the most influential persons in determining the policies of the American Hungarian Federation. He is an ardent Hungarian nationalist who favors cooperation with the House of Habsburgs as the proper solution to the problems of Hungary. Msgr. Eordogh is about seventy years of age and enjoys considerable prestige within Hungarian circles [...]

EMERY KIRALY is the treasurer of the American Hungarian Federation as well as of the Hungarian Reformed Federation and enjoys a good reputation for personal integrity. Kiraly is a staunch Hungarian nationalist who does not speak English although he has lived in the United States some twenty years. Unlike the other leaders of the Federation, he is not yet a citizen of the United States. A check with the Immigration and Naturalization Service showed that Kiraly had filed a petition for citizenship on March 22, 1943, in Washington, D.C., and that his case is still pending.

(C) Organizational Structure

The present By-Laws of the American Hungarian Federation were discussed and accepted at a meeting held on November 16, 1938 (acting

in accordance with the directives of the conference held on November 4, 1938, at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).* At the meeting on November 16 the By-Laws were accepted by the following: Joseph Darago on behalf of the Verhovay Fraternal Insurance Association, Rev. Ferenc Ujlaky representing the Hungarian Reformed Federation, John Dezso on behalf of the American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association, Stephen Varga representing the Rakoczi Aid Association. Monsignor Elmer Eordogh for the Catholic congregations, Rev. Gabriel Dokus for the Protestant congregations, Martin Himler as the representative of the American Hungarian Press, and George Pikay on behalf of the United Hungarian Organizations in Detroit. It should be observed, however, that the Rakoczi Aid Association at its regular quadrennial convention in 1939 voted against membership in the Federation allegedly because of the expressed political aims of the latter.

According to the By-Laws, the Federation has the following administrative bodies: the convention, the directors, the auditing committee, and the executive committee including the executive secretary.

The By-Laws provide that the directors must convoke a regular convention of the Federation every three years. Extraordinary conventions may be called by the directors at any time, providing a notice is placed in the Hungarian-language newspapers at least thirty days prior to the opening session. The convention carries out the election of the national officers of the Federation by a simple majority vote or secret ballot if requested by at least twenty delegates.

The By-Laws state that the affairs of the Federation shall be carried out by the national directors, numbering two hundred in all. The directors are chosen for a term of three years and are empowered to elect

* The first meeting of the American Hungarian Federation was held in Cleveland, Ohio on February 27, 1906. The primary aim of the new Federation was "to organize the Hungarians in America to aid their native country not only morally but financially and with deeds if necessary". The Federation also sought to safeguard the rights of Hungarian immigrants and to preserve Hungarian culture among them [Appendix II the By-Laws issued November 25, 1909, validated by the executive committee at Cleveland, Ohio, January, 1910]. The supporters of the present American Hungarian Federation point to this action as proof of the Federation's continuous history since 1906, when, as a matter of fact, the first organization became dormant after World War I. At most it can only be considered the predecessor of the present American Hungarian Federation.

the treasurer of the Federation. Should the presidency become vacant the directors are authorized to elect a successor who will preside over the Federation until the next convention.

The By-Laws assign the direction of current affairs in the American Hungarian Federation to an executive committee. The executive committee is composed of the presidents of the nation-wide fraternal organizations affiliated in the Federation as well as of representatives of the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious denominations, a representative of the Hungarian-language press, and the national president of the Federation. The office of president of the executive committee is filled by the presidents of the member nation-wide fraternal organizations each serving a term of one year. The executive secretary is employed by the executive committee to direct and oversee the activities of the central office of the Federation. The executive committee is empowered to decide what the aims and principles of the Federation shall be as well as the methods of carrying them out.

(1) The Federation as it Actually Functions

In actual practice the organization provided for in the By-Laws of the American Hungarian Federation has not been completely carried out. For example, the two hundred directors were never chosen. Their function as well as that of the executive committee has been performed by a board of directors consisting of the national president of the Federation, the president of the board, the executive secretary, and representatives of the various organizations affiliated in the Federation, usually numbering ten persons in all.

It is of interest to note, however, that at the meeting of the board of directors held in Washington, D.C., on October 19, 1943, it was decided that an executive committee should be formed to direct and oversee the activities of the Federation. This committee is composed of the national president (Dr. Szappanyos), the president of the board (John Dezso), and the executive secretary (Tibor Kerekes). The necessity for such an executive committee arose as a check upon the activities of the executive secretary who had been making many decisions on behalf of the Federation quite independently. At the same meeting, it was also proposed that an advisory board composed of one hundred and fifty members be created. The primary purpose of this body will be to strengthen the leadership of the Federation. The members of the advisory board will be

selected in this fashion: each director will submit a list of ten names from which the new executive committee will make the final selection.

(2) Aims and Purposes

According to the By-Laws of 1938 the American Hungarian Federation seeks to acquaint the Hungarian immigrant with the concept of democracy and to help him understand the background and trends of his new environment. Among its aims the Federation also seeks to acquaint the second and succeeding generations of Americans of Hungarian descent with the history of Hungary and to bring them into active participation in American Hungarian organizations. The Federation also seeks to coordinate the common aims of the various Hungarian organizations in the United States. The Federation thus attempts to provide a connecting link in American Hungarian Life with the Hungarian homeland. The By-Laws also explicitly state that it is the aim of the Federation "to counteract all attempted discriminations and falsifications directed against the Hungarian nation and the historical truths of the Hungarian race. For this reason [it is the aim of the Federation] to keep the closest kind of cultural connection with the World Federation of Hungarians". As a means of accomplishing the above aims the By-Laws provide for the establishment of an information service to provide the press in Hungary with news items. In addition an English language publication by the Federation was projected. So far as is known neither of these projects was ever carried out.

(D) Membership

The By-Laws of the American Hungarian Federation adopted in 1938 provide that all nation-wide and local Hungarian organizations, congregations of various religious denominations, grand committees, clubs and similar organizations are eligible for membership in the Federation if they will accept the Federation's aims as their own and undertake to pay into the treasury membership fees of at least one cent a month per member. Private individuals may possess one of the following classifications of membership: charter members — those who have contributed at least \$100 to the Federation, patrons — those who have given over a period of three years at least \$25 to the Federation, regular members — those who give at least \$1.00 annually to the Federation. American

Hungarian journalists, editors, and publishers are granted membership in the Federation without payment of any fee. The By-Laws also provide that only American citizens may be elected to official positions in the Federation. It should be noted, however, that this provision has not always been strictly adhered to since the present treasurer, Emery Kiraly, is not a citizen.

At the present time the most important organizations affiliated in the American Hungarian Federation are the Verhovay Fraternal Insurance Association, the Hungarian Reformed Federation, and the American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association. The Verhovay Association is the largest and most influential Hungarian fraternal organization in the United States. The total membership of the Verhovay in 1942 was 46,937 which included 33,880 adult members and 13,057 juvenile members.² In 1942 the total admitted assets of the Verhovay was approximately five million dollars. The Verhovay was founded in 1886 and at the present time maintains a home office in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The national officers (elected in September, 1943) are John Bencze, president; Kalman Revesz, secretary; John Szalancy, treasurer; and John Szabo, auditor.

The Hungarian Reformed Federation of America is the second largest nation-wide fraternal society affiliated in the American Hungarian Federation. As of December 31, 1942, the Reformed Federation had a total membership of 23,241 which included 15,513 adults and 7,728 juvenile members.³ The admitted assets of the Hungarian Reformed Federation totalled in 1942 more than one and a half million dollars. The Hungarian Reformed Federation was founded in 1896 and until 1936 maintained headquarters at Toledo, Ohio. Since that date it has maintained a home office in Washington, D.C. The officers of the Hungarian Reformed Federation are Rev. Ferencz Ujlaky, president; Emery Kiraly, treasurer; Rev. Edmund Vasvary, auditor; and Rev. George E. Borshy-Kerekes, field secretary. Recently Stephen Molnar was retired after more than forty years of service as secretary of the Reformed Federation. Pending the next national convention his duties have been assumed by the other officers of the organization.

The American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association with headquarters at Bridgeport, Connecticut, is the third important fraternal society affiliated in the American Hungarian Federation. It has a combined membership of 14,408 which is broken down into 9,475 adult and 4,953 juvenile members.⁴ The admitted assets of the Association total approximately two million dollars. The organization was founded in 1892

as the Hungarian Aid Association of America (Bridgeporti Szovetseg) and was know by that name until 1936. The national officers of the association are John Dezso, president; John Walko, secretary; Dezso Grega, treasurer.

The primary purpose of these three fraternal societies is life insurance protection to its members. The financial status of each of the three organizations is very sound and they are considered to be highly reliable. If the juvenile membership is included, the three fraternal combined have a total membership of approximately 85,000. If the membership of the various smaller organizations, and the congregations of the different religious denominations is added, the combined membership of the American Hungarian Federation would total over 90,000.

(E) Newspapers

The American Hungarian Federation has no official news organ, although the majority of Hungarian-language newspapers in the United States have served it as official channels of expression. The most important of these are the dailies *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava* and the *Szabad-sag* whose editors are Paul Nadanyi and Zoltan Gombos respectively. Both Nadanyi and Gombos are members of the Federation's board of directors. The official organs of the three fraternal societies affiliated in the Federation have also served as official news channels for the Federation's releases. In addition there is the Chain of Associated Hungarian Weeklies as well as the various independent Hungarian weeklies which have supported the Federation by publishing all of its official news releases.

The *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava* (380 Second Avenue, New York City) is the oldest and largest Hungarian-language newspaper in the United States. Founded in 1884 it has a circulation today of some 28,000 serving especially New York City and the Eastern States. The *Nepszava* has been a strong supporter of the present Administration in the prosecution of the war. Although critical at times of certain leaders of the American Hungarian Federation, it has consistently supported the Federation and the Movement for Independent Hungary. With reference to Hungary the *Nepszava* has tended to differentiate between the Hungarian people and the Horthy Government, which it has condemned as being responsible for Hungary's alignment with the Axis Powers. Yet it has not openly advocated displacement of the Horthy Regime in post-war Hungary.

The *Szabadsag* (1736 22nd St., Cleveland, Ohio) was first established in 1891 and has a circulation of approximately 26,000. At the present time the *Szabadsag* serves the area around Cleveland, Ohio (the largest Hungarian colony in the United States), and the Midwestern States. The *Szabadsag* may be characterized as being a democratic moderate nationalist daily. During the past few years it has been a consistent supporter of the Federation publishing all its releases and supporting Eckhardt in the Movement for Independent Hungary to the fullest extent.

The most important fraternal publications supporting the American Hungarian Federation are the *Verhovayak Lapja*, the official journal of the Verhovay Association, and the *Testveriseg*, the official organ of the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America. These organs are respectively published in Detroit, Michigan, and in Washington, D.C. Both have been consistent supporters of the American Hungarian Federation and the Movement for Independent Hungary having published all their official releases and pronouncements.

The chain of Associated Hungarian Weeklies is composed of eight Hungarian-language newspapers (9 until the *Himler Marton Hetilapja* ceased publication about a month ago). The chief newspaper of this group is the *Magyar Banyaszlap*, the Hungarian Miners' Journal published in Detroit, Michigan. Until his retirement in September of this year Martin Himler was the editor and publisher of *Magyar Banyaszlap*, having served in that capacity for thirty years. With the exception of the local news items the contents of the newspapers belonging to the Associated Hungarian Weeklies are identical. These newspapers have been consistent supporters of the American Hungarian Federation from the beginning of its reorganization, although during the last year they have tended to criticize the "inactivity" of the Federation as well as certain of its leaders.

The independent Hungarian Weeklies supporting the American Hungarian Federation are for the most part relatively small local sheets. Published in New York City, the *Az Ember*, the most important of the independent Weeklies, has been critical of the American Hungarian Federation. On the whole it may be characterized as being liberal in policy. Edited by Ferenc Gondor, this publication serves primarily the intelligentsia within the Hungarian community. In the beginning *Az Ember* supported the American Hungarian Federation and the Movement for Independent Hungary, as well as Tibor Eckhardt. Gondor's more re-

cent support of the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians and the Movement of Count Karolyi has gradually led him to come out openly against the American Hungarian Federation. The publication is violently anti-Horthy and Editor Gondor considers himself to be a political exile from Hungary. Most of the independent Weeklies, however, have supported the Federation by publishing its official releases, usually without editorial comment.

II. European Background of Hungarian Revisionism

(A) Historical Sketch

Perhaps the most difficult problems facing Hungary after World War I were directly related to the international situation. The Peace Treaties had made it possible for the first time in several centuries for the small peoples living between western Europe and Eurasia to be their own masters — to a degree — in their own national states. However, Hungary, as one of the defeated powers, had lost more than half of her former territory and population, and much of her political prestige and economic strength. [...] In the field of international relations, the watchword of Hungarian foreign policy became "peaceful revisionism" (of the Treaty of Trianon), which really sought the restitution of the former provinces of the "thousand year old Kingdom of St. Stephen" rather than boundary rectifications. On the other hand, the chief preoccupation of the new states (such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) was to ensure that the territorial conditions established by the Peace Treaties become safe and enduring.

The refusal of Hungary to reconcile herself to her new restricted position and the outward thrust of her revisionism against Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia were probably the most important factors leading to the creation of the Little Entente. With their combined strength these three states hoped to create a functioning international system which would gradually become the rallying point for the other small nations of Eastern Europe. The adherence of Austria and Hungary to the Little Entente was constantly thought of as the most desirable additions.

Among the opponents of the Little Entente in Germany, efforts were made to keep Austria aloof from any combination that might preclude the possibility of a future "Anschluss". There was fear in Italy lest the Little Entente should become a political substitute for the late

Habsburg Empire. The most vehement opposition, however, came from Hungary. The position of Hungary was based on the belief that the Little Entente came to life primarily as an answer to the Hungarian demand for the restoration of the ancient Hungarian state and that it actually forged a ring around Hungary.

While the Western Powers supported the Little Entente, Hungary turned to Italy for friendship. In the spring of 1927, Premier Count Stephen Bethlen concluded the Italo-Hungarian Agreement of Friendship, which in the years following became the foundation of the constantly improving Italo-Hungarian cooperation. In 1928 Mussolini turned suddenly against France and the Little Entente by announcing that it was in the interest of Italy that the Treaty of Trianon be revised. Mussolini then began a policy of supporting Hungary as a tool to prevent Central Europe from consolidating itself as an independent factor. It was on this road that he was soon to meet and subsequently be eclipsed by his Berlin partner. Hungary gradually intensified her collaboration with Italy and later with Germany primarily because these powers offered the best hope for the restoration of her former provinces. This policy led Hungary into the Axis coalition on November 20, 1940, and into war with the United States on December 13, 1941.

With reference to internal affairs, mention is merely made here that following her defeat in World War I Hungary within one year witnessed three different upheavals: the radical revolution of October, 1918, led by Count Michael Karolyi; the communist revolution of March, 1919, under the leadership of Bela Kun; and the white counter-revolution of August, 1919, which led to the regency of Nicholas Horthy on March 1st of the next year. During his regency efforts have been made to assure national unity and security and to rebuild Hungary. The governments ruling under his regency have been criticized, in general, because of their failure to institute social and political reforms.

The world economic depression intensified Hungary's difficulties and made a radical revision imperative in State policy. Realizing the decline of his popularity, Premier Bethlen tendered his resignation. In the fall of 1932, Julius Goemboes became the prime minister. In internal affairs he proposed an extensive reform program. As regards foreign policy, he continued the Italian orientation and, at the same time, concluded the Pact of 1934 with Austria. Influenced by the new political successes of the Third Reich, Goemboes simultaneously favored friendship with Nazi Germany. During the premiership of Kalman Daranyi

(October, 1936 to May, 1938) the new "Arrow Cross" (Nyilas) parties, the Hungarian equivalent of the German National Socialist Party, gained strength. The German orientation received considerable impetus in March, 1938, when Austria was joined to Germany and Hungary became a direct neighbor of the Third Reich.

During the premiership of Bela Imredy (May, 1938 until February, 1939) the Munich Conference took place. Hungary regained, by virtue of the consequent Vienna award declared by Germany and Italy, territories north of the Trianon frontier totaling approximately 4,600 square miles with a population of more than one million. In February, 1939, Count Paul Teleki, a geographer of international reputation, became the prime minister of Hungary. Teleki believed the future of Europe was closely connected with the cooperation of its different regional units. He emphasized the importance of the natural unity of the Carpathian Basin and declared that it must be guided by the "idea of Saint Stephen", that is, for peace not for war, for co-operation and not for separation – under the leadership of Hungary.

Hungarians in general saw the justification of this principle in the return of the territories north of the Trianon frontier in 1938 as well as in the re-incorporation of Carpatho-Russia in 1939, when the puppet state of Slovakia was proclaimed. Hungarians everywhere saw the renewed assertion of this principle in the return of Northern Transylvania, including the Szekely-Magyar districts, when this area was re-incorporated through the Second Vienna Award on August 30, 1940.

Suffering from political and economic dislocation after World War I, Hungary followed a policy of emphasizing the "injustices" of the Peace Treaties and the need for their revision. Eventually she looked to the Axis Powers for aid and guidance. Thus Hungary "postponed" the solution of her pressing internal problems, while exerting increasing pressure for a change in her external relationships. One of the chief means for such pressure was — as indicated in the discussion below — planned to be the propaganda utilization of Hungarians abroad.

(B) Propaganda Activities of the Hungarian Government

The propaganda activities of the Hungarian Government in the period between the World Wars emphasized primarily the "injustices" inflicted upon Hungary by the Peace Treaties and the need for their

revisions and naturally followed the lines of state policy. Several agencies and organizations arose in Hungary with this avowed purpose in mind. The Hungarian Revisionist League with Ferenc Herczeg* as president was among the first. Dedicated to the revision of the Treaty of Trianon the Revisionist League was active especially in England and the United States. The Revisionist League cooperated with and probably subsidized various organizations claiming to speak for the "oppressed" minorities of Central Europe. With headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, the Slovak Council, for example, supported the Revisionist League in its efforts to return Slovakia to Hungary.** The Slovak Council was under the leadership of Professor Francis Jehlicka, former parliamentary representative of the Slovaks in Hungary and rector of the Komensky (Comenius) University in Bratislava (Pressburg).

The World Federation of Hungarians with headquarters in Budapest was one of the most important vehicles used by the Hungarian Government to conduct its propaganda activities abroad. This organization had its counterpart in the Hungarian National Federation which sought to perform within Hungary the same functions the World Federation carried out abroad. Information available to this Unit indicates that the World Federation was a semi-official agency of the Hungarian Government, under the control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In its propaganda activities among Hungarians abroad, the World Federation apparently received extensive support from the Hungarian Cable Service

* About eighty years of age, Herczeg is recognized as probably the outstanding person in Hungarian literature today.

** The following quotation is illustrative of the propaganda line followed by the Slovak Council: "...the Slovaks are not strong enough to form an independent State of their own. It may truly be said of them, EXTRA HUNGARIAM NON EST VITA. While Czechs have managed in the past, and will manage in the future, to live without Slovakia, the Slovaks cannot live without the great Hungarian Plain. They must return to a life consecrated by the associations of centuries. Union with Hungary and a common frontier with Poland, another Catholic State with which Hungary was at peace for a thousand years, are of vital importance for the Slovak race" [Francis Jehlicka, *Father Hlinka's Struggle for Slovak Freedom*, London, 1938, p. 41].

(Magyar Tavirati Iroda), the Hungarian press, and the radio. [...]

Within the United States the propaganda activities of the Hungarian Government were obviously directed primarily towards Americans of Hungarian descent including those whose ancestral homelands were formerly a part of Hungary. Thus, the Americans of Slovak and Carpatho-Russian extraction were especially thought to be potential converts to the cause of Hungarian revisionism. The grandiose scale of official Hungarian propaganda is suggested by a document appearing to be a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Budapest by the Hungarian Consuls in New York City and in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which contains a discussion of Hungarian propaganda activities in the United States. Although undated, the text clearly indicates that the document is at least as recent as 1940. The report specifically discusses the success of Hungarian propaganda activities among the Americans of Slovak and Carpatho-Russian origin mentioning several of the agents by name.

For example, the report states that Editor Gustav Kosik was paid "about a thousand dollars a month" for the support given by the *Slovak v Amerike*, a Slovak nationalist mouthpiece published in New York City now advocating the creation of an independent Slovak State within a Central European Federation after the war. The report points out that Kosik was willing to place his newspaper at the disposal of the Hungarian Government, converting it from a semi-weekly into a daily, but that it would be necessary to increase the subsidy "by 6,000 to 9,000 dollars a year".⁵

In discussing Hungarian propaganda activities among the Carpatho-Russians in the United States, the document also specifically mentioned the work of Bela Csomor, Dr. Alexis Gerovsky, and Rev. Jozsef Olasz, identifying them as "agents" of the Hungarian Government.

III. The World Federation of Hungarians

The World Federation of Hungarians was a semi-official propaganda agency of the Hungarian Government set up primarily to bring about the restoration of the historic boundaries of pre-Trianon Hungary. In this chapter attention is focused mainly upon the efforts of the World Federation to win the support of American Hungarians for "peaceful revisionism" by working through the American Hungarian Federation. It will be shown in the discussion that certain prominent leaders of the

American Hungarian Federation participated in the organization of the World Federation and were a party to the plans to create an American Section within its framework. Pursuant to this objective they attended the Second World Congress of Hungarians held in Budapest in 1938 at which the World Federation was formally organized. The primary concern here is to determine the extent of their participation.

(A) Identification

The World Federation of Hungarians first began to take form in 1929, when the First World Congress of Hungarians was held in Budapest. At this congress not only members of the current Hungarian cabinet spoke but also representatives of the opposition such as Tibor Eckhardt.⁶ The Second World Congress held in Budapest, August 16-19, 1938, signalized the formal organization of the World Federation. Prominent Hungarian officials who had been active in the organization from the very beginning included Baron Sigmund Perenyi (first president and founder of the World Federation), Ferenc Ripka (the Lord Mayor of Budapest), Dr. Charles Nagy (director and founder of the World Federation), Tibor Tors (a former vice-president of the House of Deputies and the present leader of the World Federation), and Stephen Anta (present minister of propaganda in Hungary).

In 1936 the *Pesti Naplo*, published in Budapest, printed an interview with Baron Perenyi about the coming Second World Congress of Hungarians. Recalling the successful work of the First World Congress in 1929, the article characterized the group as follows: "The headquarters of the World Federation of Hungarians has become the center of Hungarians from abroad. All Hungarians turn here with their trouble and their difficulties. This is the organization to which they open their soul... Hungarians abroad now know that this organization is the link which binds them to the homeland".⁷

(B) Relation to the Hungarian Government

The references below indicate that the World Federation of Hungarians was a semi-official agency of the Hungarian Government, directed from the Foreign Office. The aims of the World Federation were

synchronized with those of the Hungarian Government and many important governmental officials addressed its public sessions. The official "patron" of the Federation was [...] Regent Nicholas Horthy.

Martin Himler, well-known American Hungarian newspaper publisher, in a refutation of charges that the World Federation was a Nazi propaganda organization stated: "The World Federation of Overseas Hungarians was founded by Baron Perenyi and Dr. Charles Nagy, who were under the control of Section IX of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which deals with Hungarians living in foreign countries".⁸

The work of the First World Congress of Hungarians and the plans for the organization of the World Federation, including recommendations for support by all governmental institutions, were discussed in a mimeograph report of an interpellation in the Hungarian Parliament during Budgetary Hearings for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1937-1938. At the session on May 26, 1937, the problems pertaining to propaganda among Hungarians abroad were exhaustively reviewed, with special reference to Hungarians in the United States. Mentioning the special press service [...] and the radio broadcasts, the deputy stressed the importance of the coming World Congress of Hungarians and made the following recommendations:

First, that in the future we allot much larger sums for taking care of the social and cultural matters connected with Hungarians living overseas, than we have allotted up to the present:

Second, that the government should see to it that the work of the headquarters of the World Congress of Hungarians should receive the strongest kind of support from all institutions for its work, which cannot be overestimated;

Third, [a museum showing the life of Hungarians overseas]...

Fourth, [Ministry of Interior should show all possible courtesies to those coming to Hungary for various celebrations and congresses].⁹

In an article discussing the projected Second World Congress Joseph Nagy, an official of the World Federation, referred to the support extended by members of the Hungarian Foreign Service to the Federation.¹⁰

In November, 1941, a deputy in the Hungarian Parliament, representing the pro-Nazi Arrow Cross Party, demanded that certain steps be taken to remedy the inefficiency of propaganda among Hungarians abroad. Implying that the work of the World Federation was being done

for the Foreign Ministry, Dr. Laszlo Bardossy, Hungarian prime minister and foreign minister, stated:

"The proposals which Deputy Mesko has made are unusual since they concern the organization of new offices and sections in the government and come from a member of the Opposition. However, I am in the fortunate position of being unable to meet these demands, because the sections which the honorable Deputy wishes to have organized ARE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE. An INFORMATION SECTION is already functioning in the Foreign Ministry, which has the duty of turning out propaganda for overseas use.

"There has been much criticism about the effectiveness of this propaganda. I admit that this propaganda is not what it should be in our interest. This is possible because we do not have all we want at our command... " The honorable deputy also advises the organization of a third office which would keep a record of Hungarians living abroad. I am happy to say to the honorable Deputy that our Foreign Service has been entrusted with the duty of keeping an account of all Hungarians living in their territories. It is to this work that the World Federation of Hungarians is dedicated, although perhaps not on so large a scale as we would like. However, in general, we are informed about those brothers of ours who live overseas, and about whose fate we must know. In this way we can consider them as one with us, among those who belong to us spiritually.¹¹

In connection with the information given in the paragraph above it is noteworthy that a leader of the Arrow Cross Party announced in the Hungarian Parliament the following day that his party was satisfied with the policies and information given by Prime Minister Bardossy.¹²

(C) Propaganda Themes of the Second World Congress of Hungarians

The Second World Congress of Hungarians was held in Budapest on August 16-19, 1938. According to the official minutes of the Congress a total of 806 persons from abroad were in attendance. Of this number 283 were in attendance from the United States. The next largest delegation was from Germany numbering 201. Some fifty-six organizations in the United States including fraternal, church congregations and publications, and newspapers were reported to have been represented at the congress. Among these organizations were the Verhovay Fraternal

Insurance Association, the Hungarian Reformed Federation, and the American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association, the three fraternal organizations affiliated in the American Hungarian Federation.

Officers of the Congress from the United States included the following honorary presidents: Joseph Darago, John Dezso, Monsignor Elmer Eordogh, and Rev. Ferenc Ujlaky. The executive committee of the congress included twenty members from the United States among them Rev. George Borshy-Kerekes [...] All of these Americans have been associated with the American Hungarian Federation.

Probably the most significant development at the Second World Congress was the formal organization of the World Federation of Hungarians. On August 19 John Dezso, presiding as chairman, addressed Baron Perenyi, the president-elect of the World Federation as follows: "Your Excellency: The World Congress of Hungarians yesterday concluded its activities and Hungarians assembled from all over the world organized the World Federation of Hungarians. Your Excellency has been elected unanimously and enthusiastically to the Presidency of this World Federation."¹⁴

The undying love of all Hungarians for their "motherland" as a feature of the propaganda of the Second World Congress and of the World Federation was so fundamental that it was stressed on all formal occasions. [...] Thus, immediately after the formation of the World Federation, Baron Perenyi sent expressions of the Federation's views to officials of the Hungarian Government. To Regent Horthy he sent the following telegram; "His Serene Highness, Regent Nicholas Horthy de Nagybanya, [...] "I report with homage and deepest respect that the World Federation of Hungarians has been organized, and with greatest enthusiasm is placing itself under the supreme patronage of Your Highness. Hungarians assembled from all over the world invincibly attached to the homeland, request God's abundant blessing upon the Providence - like work of your Highness,"¹⁵

The leaders of the World Federation of Hungarians justified the organization's existence by pointing out that those in whom they engendered love for the "motherland" would hasten to aid Hungary. Immediately upon accepting the office of President of the Federation, Baron Perenyi said: "It is our firm belief that we, hand in hand with our brothers abroad, can bring about Hungarian Unity. We can then serve our Hungarian homeland well, honestly, and profitably."¹⁶

At the World Congress itself and later in the publications of the Federation there were many appeals to aid the 'motherland'. At the congress, Perenyi pointed with pride to the fact that the leader of the Hungarians in Egypt, having begun a collection for, a "'Horthy aviation fund", had donated five hundred pounds sterling as the first donor. Perenyi remarked: "Since this amount was given by Hungarians from abroad, I thought it proper to announce it here as a beautiful example of willingness to sacrifice."¹⁷

In addition to stimulating the affection of Hungarian immigrants for their "motherland", the World Federation attempted to win approval of and support for the Horthy Regime. The various leaders of the Hungarians abroad who were present at the Second World Congress were presented to Regent Horthy in order to pay him their homage. He in turn graciously accepted the title of "patron" of the World Federation of Hungarians. Monsignor Elmer Eordogh, a prominent leader among American Hungarians led a delegation to the palace where he addressed Regent Horthy:

"Before we began our great work, we have come before the exalted presence of your Serene Highness to offer with deep homage, an expression of our loyalty and deepest attachment. To us Hungarians abroad the thought is very dear that the future of this mutilated and long suffering nation has been placed by God into your hands. The fact that our native country is today one of the world's most orderly countries is, and will remain, the everlasting merit of Your Serene Highness. [...] we beseech God that He keep and protect your Serene Highness not only for the sake of our native land, but for the benefit of Hungarians living abroad for long, long; time, so that you may see and glory together with us in the resurrection of our country."¹⁸

Representing the World Federation, Baron Perenyi expressed the attitude of the members towards the current government when he sent the following telegram: "To His Excellency, Vitez Bela Imredy, Prime Minister of Hungary: "Hungarians assembled from all over the world for the World Congress, before they return to their new homes, assure Your Excellency and their brethren in the homeland of their unshakeable loyalty," (Signed) baron Sigmund Perenyi."¹⁹

That these two themes—love of the motherland, and support of the Horthy Regime—would be articulated, was to be expected. Illustrative of

this action was the broadcast made in 1941 over short-wave radio by the Hungarian nationalist Ferenc Herezeg, famous publicist and writer, at the direct request of the World Federation:

"We are trying to reach the overseas Hungarians, so that we might explain to them the difficult situation in which Hungary finds herself. The fate of the nations of Europe has been intertwined because of their interests and feelings., We must explain this to those Hungarians who are still with us in spirit. We expressly call upon our nationals everywhere to counter-act the false propaganda being spread about our country by the Slavs and Roumanians, all directed against Hungary and Hungarian aims. We must not under-estimate the importance of the propaganda directed against us.... We must take part in this struggle by contributing our bit in other lands to righting the wrong impressions made against us by hostile propaganda."²⁰

The speaker at the Second World Congress also stressed the need for revisionism. Bitter complaints were constantly voiced about the injustice done to Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon. After reviewing the millennial history of Hungary, Miklos Kozma, who later became the first governor of the area acquired from Czechoslovakia, addressed the delegates to the World Congress as follows:

"In Trianon the Hungarians underwent, an historical injustice, because of which not only Central Europe, but all Europe is now desperately ill. We have borne, and will continue to bears our fate with super-human courage and intelligence, because we believe in, the conscience of nations, and knowing that with the memory of this horrible injustice to us, they will not again want to envelop Europe in flames. In Trianon, from the standpoint of justice and morality, Hungarians were treated inhumanly; from the standpoint of political practicality, they were treated in a stupid manner. Not only Hungarians, but leading statesman of Europe are now ready to acknowledge this. There are still those, however, who wish to blacken Hungary's name. All Hungarians should know about Trianon, and about Hungary's progress since Trianon."²¹

Count Paul Teleki, then Minister of Education and Religion, addressed the delegates to the World Congress on behalf of the Royal

Hungarian Government and the Hungarian State. In his speech Count Teleki referred to the coming new order: "...In this expanded world, which has nevertheless become too small and is therefore trying to find new ways of life, we are hoping to build not only a new Europe but a new world everywhere where a Hungarian may be or lives. [...]"²²

The address by Dr. Andor Lazar in the House of Deputies on August 17, concurrent with and made for the Second World Congress, stressed in less subdued terms the advent of the new order and the German orientation of Hungarian national politics:

"...The world war in the life of nations was a volcanic eruption. It destroyed empires, hurling them into strange spheres. The fog of new creation eddies in the heart of Europe... and the leaders wishing for world peace are anxiously and diligently seeking a new world picture, a way of adjustment on a firmer basis. "I must speak, of the great German Empire. This complete nation created with marvellous energy, under wise leadership, has succeeded in creating spiritual harmony among the German people uniting the people in service for the nation and in self confidence, able to fight for the respect and honor due them. To live in understanding and warm friendship with the German people, to respect the powerful neighbor, and be honored by it, to the natural road of Hungarian national politics, which is convinced that its loyalty and trust is completely reciprocated and its national strengthening is a matter of concern and interest to one which depends on it as a friend."²³

The plea to understand the needs and policies of the motherland, which runs throughout the Proceedings of the World Congress was tied to the admonition that true Hungarians must explain these policies to the world. This was stressed in one of the most important speeches at the World Congress by Dr. Julius Kornis, the president of the House of Deputies:

"... what are your duties, my brothers, [...] toward your nation, your old homeland, your race? Without denying your new land which gives you bread, which assures you a living and civil rights Love and keep alive in your souls the picture of the homeland, work and sacrifice for it, work for the spiritual unity and self-respect of Hungarians all over the world. Be loyal guardians of the Hungarianness; enlighten those among your

nation with necessary tact about the past of your nation and its present tragic circumstances. Deny the slander of our enemies cherish the language, without it the spirit of national feeling is lost. [...] Our nation was crucified because it was misunderstood. The historical role of the sons of a nation living abroad is illustrated in the organized agitation of the Czechs and the sons of Ireland. Neither Ireland nor Czechoslovakia would be represented on Europe's maps had they not been organized in the United States. This is the role of Hungarians abroad. [...] You can figure out the best methods of seeing to it that they [the people of the United States] become acquainted with justice for Hungary that their consciences should be shocked enough to urge them to action. It is these things, not facts which move men to action."²⁴

Thus, to summarize, the propaganda of the Second World Congress and the World Federation of Hungarians followed the familiar themes: (1) the love of all Hungarians for their "motherland"; (2) support for the Horthy regime; (3) the "injustices" of Trianon and the need for "peaceful revisionism"; (4) the advent of the new order; (5) and the responsibility of all Hungarians to explain these principles to the World.

(D) Activities

(1) Distribution of Printed Matter

Propaganda through the distribution of printed matter appears to have been the chief activity of the World Federation. Arrangements were made soon after the formation of the World Federation for it to use as a propaganda channel the *Magyarország*, the official organ of the Hungarian National Federation in Budapest. As a propaganda organization the Hungarian National Federation sought to perform within Hungary functions similar to those carried out by the World Federation on a world scale. It is a matter of interest that Baron Perenyi was president of both Federations.

Since the Second World Congress of Hungarians was an important landmark in the formation of the World Federation, the official Minutes of the Congress were printed in book form (containing 188 pages) and widely distributed. Within a few months after the congress some 6,000 copies of the Minutes had been sent abroad.²⁵

It is quite probable that many other types of printed matter were distributed by the World Federation. In this connection, it is noteworthy that the Central Office of the World Congress of Hungarians, the predecessor of the World Federation, had distributed before 1938 large quantities of propaganda materials. These included some 32,000 copies of printed matter in addition to sending out approximately 20,000 letters, 4,000 copies of the official minutes of the First World Congress of Hungarians held in 1929, and 10,000 copies of the book — *Do You Know What the World Owes to Hungarians?* by Dr. Andor Kun, a prominent Hungarian journalist. Copies of the book by Dr. Kun were sent largely to children of Hungarian descent abroad. In addition some 19,000 copies of Hungarian books were sent to libraries in Hungarian centers abroad.²⁶

The work of the World Federation continued even after the outbreak of the European war. In his annual report, President Perenyi stated that in 1941 one thousand books as well as a large number of phonograph records and large quantities of photographs depicting the re-occupation of certain Carpathian areas by Hungary were sent overseas.²⁷

Another important aspect of the propaganda work of the World Federation was apparently carried out in cooperation with newspapers published outside of Hungary. In his report for 1939, Baron Perenyi said: "We are continually seeking methods to supply Hungarian newspapers abroad with proper news material."²⁸

The cooperating agency with the newspapers abroad was the Hungarian Cable Service (Magyar Tavirati Iroda), a semi-official news cable service. Deputy Gyula Somogyvary while addressing the Hungarian Parliament on May 26, 1937, commented: "The proper orientation of the American Hungarian Press has been spontaneously undertaken by the Hungarian Cable Service. This service, which... is unselfish and given free, is more and more effective and proceeding in ever widening circles, although it far surpasses any function of the Hungarian Cable Service in a strict sense."²⁹ [...]

Although an agency with a history covering several decades, the Hungarian Cable Service was not developed on an international scale until it was controlled by Miklos Kozma, a close associate of Baron Perenyi and the first governor of the areas acquired from Czechoslovakia. An anniversary article about the Cable Service noted that the MTI (Magyar Tavirati Iroda) had a central editing office composed of eighty-seven members as well as 423 representatives throughout Hungary. The Cable

Service was reported, in addition, to have direct contacts with all semi-official news services of Europe and to have correspondents in all the largest cities abroad.³¹ [...]

(2) Sponsorship of Radio Programs

The dissemination of propaganda through radio programs is closely related to the distribution of printed material. It was announced at the Second World Congress in 1938 that overseas broadcasts were being carried on, and that the radio equipment was being perfected.³³ These broadcasts were widely advertised in most propaganda material sent out from Hungary.³⁴ Often, prominent nationalists were invited to speak over the World Federation hookup. The broadcasts followed the usual propaganda pattern discussed above in connection with proceedings of the Second World Congress. [...]

(3) Encouragement of Study in and Travel to Hungary

Considerable effort was expended by the World Congress and later the World Federation in an effort to facilitate travel by Hungarians abroad to the "mother country" and to encourage youths of Hungarian descent to study in Hungary.³⁶ In his formal report to the Second World Congress of Hungarians President Perenyi made the following comment: "Year after year, we are making sacrifices when we try to bring home the most eminent of the second and third generations. We made such a trip possible for this World Congress. We keep in touch constantly with those Hungarians studying here, so that they can feel our loving interest."³⁷

Rev. George Borshy Kerekes, a leading delegate from the United States, in addressing the delegates to the Second World Congress stressed what he regarded to be a matter of primary importance for Hungarians abroad: namely, how to keep the generations of Hungarian descent in America, "if possible in language but by all means in spirit and in thinking, Hungarians." [...]

According to the *Magyar Banyaszlap* (Detroit, Michigan, June, 25, 1942) scholarships were awarded to Hungarian youths by the World Federation. The World Federation had secured funds from some source apparently for this purpose. In his annual report on the work of the World Federation in 1941, Baron Perenyi announced that: "We have on hand a fund of 6209.90 Pengos to be used for rewarding deserving

young Hungarians overseas".³⁹

(4) Maintenance of Contact with Hungarians Abroad

The compilation of information concerning Hungarians abroad and the maintenance of contact with these groups was another of the major tasks undertaken by the World Federation. Joseph Nagy, the managing director of the Central Office of the World Congress of Hungarians, summarized the work of the Congress in this direction before 1938:

"The permanent headquarters... has prepared accurate statistics on Hungarians abroad, based on authentic replies to questionnaires. Dispensing with bureaucratic methods, it has helped to solve thousands of individual problems of Hungarians living abroad. To the best of its ability, it aided students from foreign countries who are studying in Hungarian universities. It established a permanent connection with Hungarian organisations abroad, and with churches and the press. Its work was well received and supported by all [...]"⁴⁰

As mentioned above, the Hungarian prime minister stated in parliament that this work had been entrusted to the World Federation and to the Foreign Service: "The honorable deputy also advised the organization of a third office which would keep a record of Hungarians living abroad. I am happy to say to the honorable deputy that our Foreign Service states has been entrusted with the duty of keeping an account of all Hungarians living in their territories. It is to this works that the World Federation of Hungarians is dedicated".⁴¹

Pursuant to its work of compiling information on Hungarians abroad World Federation compiled a map which indicated every city and region populated by Hungarians in South America. According to the *Reformatus Ujsag* (Cleveland, Ohio, March, 1938, p. 19) a similar project was under way for North America.

It appears that the World Federation became increasingly the central office for the coordination of all efforts in Hungary to influence Hungarians abroad. At the annual meeting of the World Federation in 1941, the Executive Director of the Federation announced "that it has been possible to establish the closest kind of cooperation between the religious and civic bodies in the homeland, which do work among the Hungarians living abroad."⁴² At the same meeting, President Perenyi

reported: "we have quietly and continuously gone about our duties during the past year. In spite of tremendous difficulties, the ties we have had with our overseas groups have not been severed...." [....]⁴³

(5) Fulfillment of Requests for Information

The Central Office of the World Federation apparently received a limited number of requests for information from Hungarians abroad. The bulk of these seem to have concerned such matters as the duplication of birth certificates. In 1941, some 1800 of such requests were reported to have been filled, most of them coming from the United States.⁴³

(6) Recent Activities of the World Federation of Hungarians

Due to the paucity of information only brief reference can be made to the recent activities of the World Federation of Hungarians. According to the *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava*, the Budapest radio reported in March, 1943, that Tibor Tors had been elected president of the World Federation to succeed Baron Perenyi. Tors began his career as a journalist, and at the time of his election as the leader of the World Federation was the vice-president of the House of Deputies.⁴⁵

Harc, a bitter critic of the American Hungarian Federation and its policies, reported on May 12, 1943, that Tors had made a speech at the annual celebration honoring the Hungarian national flag in which he made the following appeal: "Over the waves of the ether, the World Federation of Hungarians turns to Hungarians abroad week after week with words of admonition and supplication. It asks and admonishes them not to forget the homeland, those living here, and not to listen to those unfaithful stewards, who are not the true servants of the Hungarian cause...."

(E) Relation of the World Federation of Hungarians to the American Hungarian Federation

Considerable dispute has existed concerning the relationship of the American Hungarian Federation to the World Federation of Hungarians. Without digressing to discuss the different arguments, it should suffice to call attention here to what the American Hungarian Federation itself or its representatives have said about such connections.

(1) Influence of the Supporters of the World Federation in the Revival of the American Hungarian Federation

The formal reorganization of the American Hungarian Federation did not take place officially until November 16, 1938 (nearly three months after the Second World Congress), when the organization's Bylaws were accepted. [...] At this time the Federation was put on a sound financial basis by being assured of the regular monthly contribution of the three largest Hungarian fraternal associations in the United States.

A careful perusal of the sources, however, clearly indicates that the American Hungarian Federation was functioning as an organization prior to November 16, 1938. Already in 1937 plans were being made to resuscitate the Federation, now long defunct, in order that it could be represented at the coming Second World Congress of Hungarians. In his annual report, Rev. George Borshy-Kerekes stated that 1937 was a year of "historical significance". He reported that in July and August of that year he had been in Hungary where he took "significant steps" in making known the activities of the Hungarian Reformed Federation and where he "obtained favors and advantages through the kindness of important agencies for our pilgrimage group and for our young people." Rev. Borshy-Kerekes stated that upon his return from Hungary on September 3, 1937, he "immediately began to work out detailed plans and preliminary propaganda for our trip in 1938 through articles in the newspapers and lectures." Rev. Borshy-Kerekes pointed out that he had submitted his plans to the supreme council of the Hungarian Reformed Federation on September 28 and after approval had begun carrying them out.⁴⁶

On November 3, 1937, the officials of the four Hungarian fraternal organizations held a conference in Washington, D. C., the first of its kind. The organizations represented were, the Verhovay Association, the Hungarian Reformed Federation, the American Sick Benefit and Life Insurance Association, and the Rakoczi Aid Association. At this conference it was decided to send delegates led by the presidents of the respective organizations to the Second World Congress of Hungarians. At the same meeting the officials of the four organizations worked out a plan "in the interests of a united social ideal and representation for Hungarians in America".⁴⁷

On March 9, 1938, the same fraternal associations held a conference in Bridgeport, Connecticut. At this meeting Stephen Kundrath, one of the representatives of the Rakoczi Aid Association, reported that he

and his colleagues had been directed by their superiors to attend the present meeting and subsequent meetings on the condition that they may remain "completely free from politics". He stated that they would only be permitted to participate if no assistance were proffered to the Hungarian Government and if no demonstrations were made on its behalf by sending representatives to Budapest. Kundrath stipulated that the conference must discuss only matters of interest to the fraternal organizations.

Rev. Ujlaky of the Hungarian Reformed Federation replied that this was not a "question of politics but of building up Hungarian unity. It is not politics if we Hungarians in America in the interests of our own future build up our own Hungarian front and if through it we find ourselves working for the welfare of Hungarians all over the world. Hungarians in America will have a future only as long as we work in every conceivable manner with this Hungarian interest."

Joseph Darago pointed out that it was the "Rakoczis" who were "playing with politics" when they talked about the "Horthy or any other kind of Hungarian Government, and they in turn make their members conscious of their attitude." Darago declared that "the political idea must be separated from the national idea.... The homeland can have a government carrying on any kind of politics, but if we do not profess ourselves to be Hungarians we are denying ourselves."

After considerable deliberation the conferees, including the representatives of the Rakoczi Association, decided that "representing the Hungarians at the World Congress is not politics, but a national question in which we must take part in our own interests".⁴⁸

According to Nadanyi the reorganization of the Federation took place at a meeting held in Detroit, Michigan, on May 30, 1938, during a "get together" of American Hungarian leaders who had been trying for a long time to form an association which could guide the activities and represent the interests of Americans of Hungarian extraction.⁴⁹ At this meeting a pamphlet — *What Does the American Hungarian Federation Want?* — was issued which further attested to the connections between the American Hungarian Federation and the World Federation. According to this pamphlet, the American Hungarian Federation stressed its desire to maintain "the closest possible cultural cooperation with the World Federation of Hungarians with headquarters in Budapest, which embraces all Hungarians in the world, in order to keep intact their heritage [as Hungarians] and to protect the historical truths concerning the Hungarian nation...."

The affiliation of the American Hungarian Federation with the World Federation is explicitly described in its By-Laws as adopted on November 16, 1938, which declare that the aim of the Federation is "to counteract all attempted discriminations and falsifications directed against the Hungarian nation and the historical truths of the Hungarian race. For this reason [it is the aim of the Federation] to keep the closest kind of cultural connection with the World Federation of Hungarians."

(2) American Hungarian Federation Leaders' Participation in the Second World Congress of Hungarians

The official minutes reported that 283 persons from the United States attended the Second World Congress of Hungarians, representing some fifty-six organizations. Among those attended were many prominent leaders in the American Hungarian Federation. This was emphasized in the following commentary on the World Hungarian Congress, by an official organ of a member organization of the American Hungarian Federation.

"The World Federation of Hungarians, an organization en-folding our people on all five continents has come into being under the patronage of Admiral Nicholas Horthy, Regent of Hungary. The aims of the Federation are to form and foster cultural and economic ties between the people of the old country and their brethren abroad. Its officers are men who have previously proven their ability as officers of the world congress, and such representatives of the Hungarians from the United States and other countries as Jozsef Darago, Janos Dezso, Andor Dobay-Szekely, Msgr. Elmer Eordogh, Dr. Ferens Ujlaki, Bela Farkas and many others. [...] It is the aim off the Federation to protect the right[s] of Hungarians wherever they may be and to have the old country and her sons under foreign flags work together for their mutual benefit".⁵⁰

Several resolutions were introduced at the Second World Congress in the name of the American Hungarian Federation. These resolutions are indicative of the support of the Congress and the cooperation extended to it by the Federation. For example, resolutions 9, 12, 40, and 41 propose that the second generation Hungarian in America who has graduated or who is attending college should have the opportunity of one

year of post-graduate work in a Hungarian university. Similar opportunities, according to these resolutions, should be accorded the students in Hungary. In this way an exchange system could be worked out which would make "a cultural link possible between the homeland and the Hungarians in the United States". The American Hungarian Federation also proposed that the World Federation make it possible for at least fifty worthy poor students from among American Hungarians to attend Hungarian universities. The funds in this case were to be provided by the Immigration Foundation of the Hungarian Government. The resolutions also contain proposals for the exchange of professors and teachers. The American Hungarian Federation requested the World Federation to send to the United States "a few Hungarian teachers who would teach our children" in summer schools.⁵¹

Some of the representatives of the American Hungarian Federation individually assured the delegates to the Second World Congress of their support. The address by Msgr. Eordogh at the closing session of the Congress is illustrative of this action. Msgr. Fordogh declared that "he would do "everything possible" in America in the interests of the World Federation so that it may spread "everywhere".⁶²

A letter from Baron Sigmund Perenji to Joseph Darago, president of the Vorhovay Association, dated July 3, 1937, suggests that persons prominent in the affairs of the American Hungarian Federation also assisted with the plans for the Second World Congress. In his letter Peranyi expressed pleasure at the approaching visit to Hungary of the Verhovay delegation in 1937. Porenyi stated that he was convinced that "the participants will return to the United States strengthened in their Hungarian sympathies and will serve the great Hungarian cause...." [...].⁵³

In connection with the plans for the participation of the American Hungarians at the Second World Congress, it is noteworthy that Dr. Ivan Nagy, ministerial secretary for, the World Hungarian Federation, came to the United States on a visit in January, 1938. Nagy at this time was believed to be the right-hand-man of Under Secretary Stephen Antal. [from 1935 to 1944 Antal occupied a series of cabinet posts in Hungary's government, including that of Minister of Propaganda (April 1942 to March 1944) - ed.] Nagy spent about three months in the United States during which time he visited twenty-four cities and delivered nineteen lectures. Although Nagy did nothing conspicuous during this period he did survey American Hungarian activities and one article about his trip was published in the domestic Hungarian-language press.⁶⁴

Any attempt to appraise the participation of the American Hungarians in the Second World Congress must take cognizance of the portentous developments which provided the setting for that gathering. Plans were made to bring the propaganda work among the Hungarians abroad to a climax in the Second World Congress. This was also the year of the Austrian "Anschluss" and the Munich Agreement. As a result of these developments the pro-German orientation of the Hungarian Government was given considerable impetus. [...]

(3) Plans for Revisionist Propaganda Among American Slovaks and Carpatho-Russians

Available information indicates that persons prominent as leaders in the American Hungarian Federation were sympathetic towards and supported the plans of the Hungarian Government to carry on revisionist propaganda among the American Slovaks and Carpatho-Russians. [...]

(4) Forms of Support by the American Hungarian Federation

On September 12, 1942, *Magyar Jovo*, a bitter critic of the American Hungarian Federation, reported that Hungarian "fascist" propaganda was being smuggled into the United States and that it was being distributed by "unseen" hands. The same issue referred to the calendar published by the World Federation of Hungarians for 1942 which was distributed in the United States after Pearl Harbor. *Magyar Jovo* implied that this work was being done by the American Hungarian Federation at the direction of some "secret Horthyist center".

Baron Perenyi in his annual report for 1941 made the following reference to the publication of such a calendar. "We [the World Federation of Hungarians] put some of our prized photographs of Hungarian life overseas at the disposal of those who published a calendar of world events."⁵⁹ Copies of the calendar examined by this Section contained photographs of the World Congress of Hungarians and mementos of various objects of interest to patriotic Hungarians. It appeared to be a useful channel for the stimulation of the loyalty of overseas Hungarians to the "homeland".

This calendar was apparently the same publication referred to by *Magyar Jovo*. Available data clearly establish that such a calendar was

distributed in the United States after Pearl Harbor, but it is not certain that this was done under the auspices of the American Hungarian Federation.

Due to the lack of its own news organ, the World Federation had a regular section in the *Nagymagyarország*, published in Budapest by the Hungarian National Federation. Despite the fact that this newspaper was pro-Nazi in polioy, [...] copies of it were apparently distributed in the United States through the central office of the American Hungarian Federation. According to Tibor Kerekes, the costs for mailing this publication were assumed by the American Hungarian Federation in payment for the assistance it had received from the Word Federation in locating birth and marriage certificates for Hungarians in the United States.⁶⁰

(5) Tibor Kerekes and the
World Federation of Hungarians

It is noteworthy that the *Nagymagyarország* on August 1, 1940, published a letter dated July 9, 1940 from Tibor Kerekes, executive secretary and a moving spirit in the present American Hungarian Federation, to the officers of the World Federation of Hungarians. Referring to his work as a professor of modern European history at Georgetown University, Kerekes wrote: "The knowledge fills me with deep satisfaction that during the course of long years the young intelligent Americans number thousands who as my students have learned, and thus understood, the great historical injustices which were perpetrated on our dear homeland when the shameful Treaty of Trianon mutilated the body of thousand year old Hungary."

Calling attention to his position as executive secretary of the American Hungarian Federation, Kerekes stated:

"In this capacity it is my duty to organize the first, the second and third generations into a united large national organization so that Hungarian blood may have authority and influence in the new homeland. [...] It is with deep satisfaction that I report from here — from the new land to the homeland — that beginning with the President of the United States every statesman of consequence including congressmen, senators, and political leaders have had their attention called. through me, to the serious international position of mutilated Hungary, Without exception, I have received understanding and sympathetic replies from all. [...] [A]t the coming peace trials, where the

United States will have such an important role to play, American representatives will attend with knowledge concerning the Hungarian question. We will not permit a second Trianon because we believe in justice for Hungary: the resurrection of thousand year old Hungary." [...]

(F) Evaluations

On the basis of the information above, it can be concluded that certain leaders of the American Hungarian Federation were collaborating with Baron Perenyi and his subordinates in an attempt to create a world Hungarian organization which would embody an American section. Already in the summer of 1938, at the Second World Congress, cooperation pursuant to this objective had reached extensive proportions. Cooperation between these persons apparently continued unabated until the outbreak of the European war in 1939. When Hungary joined the Axis Coalition in 1940 [1941? – ed.] (following the suicide [in early April, 1941 – ed.] of Count Paul Teleki, the Hungarian Prime Minister), most American Hungarians began to question the wisdom of Horthy's pro-German policy, and many suggested that Hungary had in reality become a victim of Nazi Germany. This viewpoint, with the assertion that Regent Horthy had been able to prevent complete Axis dominance in Hungary, has been increasingly characteristic of the supporters of the American Hungarian Federation.

The plan to create an active overall world organization of Hungarians — in which the American Hungarian Federation would form an integral part — was never completely carried out. This was probably due to the following factors: first, the failure of the American representatives to arrive at a complete understanding with their Hungarian-compatriots at the Second World Congress; secondly, the inability of the World Federation leaders to put their plans into operation before the beginning of the European war; thirdly, the difficulty of securing active support from the American Hungarians for the motherland (Hungary) when their present homeland (America) was itself going through increasing dangers and demanding ever greater sacrifices from its citizens.

Fragmentary letters and articles indicate that complete harmony of purpose did not prevail at the Second World Congress. It appears that the American delegates resented the somewhat dictatorial attitude of the Hungarian officials. They, in turn, were apparently disturbed by the independence of action demonstrated by some of the Americans.

An article by Martin Himler, an American Hungarian publisher, argued that the World Federation was not a propaganda organization serving the Axis, but does admit: "it is true that Stephen Antal [pro-Nazi propaganda minister] did everything in his power to take the World Federation of Hungarians from the jurisdiction of Section II of the Foreign Ministry in an effort to transfer it to the Propaganda Section which he had organized in the Office of the Prime Minister".⁶³

In the same article, Martin Himler, who attended the Second World Congress as a visitor (according to his own statement he sat in the balcony), claims that he was approached by Antal's subordinates for the purpose of "buying the cooperation" of the important American Hungarian newspapers by granting subsidies. Himler states that he, of course, rebuffed these advances.

That all was not in complete accord was further indicated by a letter from Darago (later a leader within the American Hungarian Federation) to Dr. Charles Nagy, the executive secretary of the World Federation of Hungarians, dated October 3, 1938. Herein Darago emphasized that unless it was possible to organize the American Section of the World Federation so that "definite economic advantages" would be forthcoming, there was a possibility that "the organized American Federation will make itself independent of the ideas of the World Federation, and will start on the path which it considers most advantageous for itself".⁶⁴

Since the plan for the creation of an overall world organization of Hungarians was still in the formative stage it is probably true that most of the American Hungarians attending the Second World Congress did not know what sort of meeting they were attending. With the possible exception of certain American Hungarians such as Darago, Rev. Borshy-Kerekes, Msgr. Eardogh, and others, it is a fair assumption that most of the American delegates regarded their attendance at the Second World Congress primarily as a visit to the "old homeland" rather than as actual participation in the creation of a world organization to propagandize in the interests of Hungarian foreign policy.

Finally, the most important factor which prevented the complete collaboration of the American Hungarian Federation with the World Federation of Hungarians was the rapid tempo of world events. The outbreak of the European war in 1939 and the avowed sympathies of the United States for the cause of the Democracies as opposed to that of the Axis coalition, of which Hungary soon became a part, definitely precluded the possibility of consolidating the World Federation of Hunga-

rians into a closely knit organization which could count upon the unre-served support and collaboration of Americans of Hungarian descent.

Nevertheless, it appears that a small group of American Hungarians — such as Rev. Borshy-Kerekes, Msgr. Eordogh, and Joseph Darago — were earnestly cooperating with the home office of the World Federation of Hungarians in support of the policy of the Hungarian Government in its efforts to regain the lost territories and prestige of the Kingdom of St. Stephen.

[Taggart's] FOOTNOTES [to the memorandum]

1. F. B. I. Report. John P. Buscher. dated 5/5/43 at Cleveland Ohio. Re: Stephen Szabo, p. 3, Records File No. 149-1114.
2. *The Fraternal Compend Digest*, 1942 edition, p. 257.
3. *Testveriseg*, September, 1943, p. 8.
4. *The Fraternal Compend Digest*, 1942 edition, p. 256.
5. F. B. I. Report, J. E. Jones, dated on July 6, 1942, at Newark, N.J., Re: Slovak League of America, pp. 23-24, 26. Records File No. 100-4675; a more recent F. B. I. Report by J. Raymond Ylitalo, dated on September 1, 1943, at New York City, Re: *Slovak v Amerike*, Records File No. 145-7-1121, failed to verify that Gustav Kosik was ever subsidized by the Hungarian Government. Confidential Informant, T-4, reliability unknown, advised that a certain Rev. Biskurvanyi of Guttenberg, N. J., frequently visited the Hungarian Consulate in New York City. According to an F. B. I. Report by L. Frederick Ratterman, dated on July 19, 1943, at Newark, N. J., Re: Hungarian Propaganda among Ukrainian and Karpatho-Russian Communities, an informant has advised that a priest in Guttenberg acted as the intermediary between the Hungarian Government and Kosik in the payment of \$1,000 monthly; also. Kosik admitted to the informant having received such money.
6. Dr. Sandor Krisztics, ed., *A Magyarok Vilagkongresszusanak Targyalasai* (Minutes of the World Congress of Hungarians), Budapest, August 22-24, 1929; published by the Central Office of the Hungarian World Congress, 1930, Budapest.
7. *Pesti Naplo*, September 18, 1938.
8. Martin Himler, "Is the Hungarian World Federation a Nazi Organization?", *Magyar Banyaszlap*, June 25, 1942, p. 1.
9. Information taken from special reprints of this speech, printed in Budapest at the expense of Parliamentary Deputy Gyula Somogyvary, who made the recommendations.

10. Joseph Nagy, "Before the Second World Congress of Hungarians". *Lathatar* (a magazine devoted to "the life of minorities and Hungarians abroad"), May, 1938.
11. *Az Ember*, New York City, July 4, 1942.
12. *Peter Lloyd*, Budapest, November 22, 1941.
13. *A Magyarok II. Világkongresszanak Targyalásai* (Minutes of the Second World Congress of Hungarians), Budapest, August 16-19, 1938, pp. 167, 171-172; hereafter cited as Minutes Second World Congress.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 147,
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
20. *Magyarok Vasarnapja*, Cleveland, Ohio, April, 24. 1941.
21. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 71.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
25. Report by Baron Perenyi, "Meeting of the World Federation", *Reformatus Ujsag*, Washington, D. C., July, 1939, p. 13.
26. Official Report of the Work of the World Congress of Hungarians since its Founding by President Perenyi. Minutes Second World Congress, pp. 85-88.
27. *Magyar Hirlap*, New Brunswick, N. J., May 16, 1941, p. 2.
28. "Meeting of the World Federation", *Reformatus Ujsag*, Washington, D. C., July, 1939, p. 13.
29. Mimeographed report of an Interpellation in the Hungarian Parliament during the course of Budgetary Hearings of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 1937-1938.
30. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 148.
31. *Magyar Hirlap*, New Brunswick, N. J., May 9, 1941. p. 2.
32. *Verhovayak Lapja*, Pittsburgh, Pa., May 29, 1941, p. 3.
33. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 86.
34. *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Budapest. Volume 7, No. 1, Spring, 1941, p. 22; Annual report of President Perenyi, *Magyar Hirlap*, New Brunswick, N. J., May 16, 1941, p. 2.
35. *Nagymagyarország*, June 1, 1941, p. 3.
36. *Lathatar*, Budapest, May, 1938, p. 3.
37. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 86.
38. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 102.
39. *Magyar Hirlap*, New Brunswick, N. J., May 16, 1941. p. 2.

40. *Lathatar*, organ for overseas Hungarians, Budapest, May, 1938, p. 24.
41. *Az Ember*, New York City, July 4, 1942, p. 2.
42. *Magyar Nemzet*, Budapest, May 9, 1941, p. 1.,
43. *Magyar Hirlap*, New Brunswick, N. J. May 16, 1941, p. 2.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava*, March 19, 1943, p. 7
46. *Reformatus Ujsag*, April, 1938, p. 18.
47. *Reformatus Ujsag*, November, 1937, p. 7.
48. *Reformatus Ujsag*, April, 1938, p. 52.
49. Paul Nadanyi, *The Free Hungary Movement*, p. 11.
50. *Reformatus Ujsag*, Washington, D. C., October, 1938, p. 12.
51. Minutes Second World Congress, pp. 45-46, 53-54.
52. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 147.
53. Photostatic copy of a letter in the files of this Section from Baron Sigmund Perenyi to Joseph Darago, dated. July 3, 1937,
54. See *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava*, January 27, 1939.
55. *Voelkischer Beobachter*, August 16, 1933, p. 2, with Antal's portrait.
56. Minutes Second World Congress, p. 147.
57. Photostatic copy of a letter in the files of this Section to Joseph Darago from Andrew Fay-Fisher, September 17, 1938,
58. Facsimile of an undated letter from Joseph Darago to Fay-Fisher, published in *Magyar Jovo*. July 20, 1943; photostatic copy of letter in the files of this Section from Joseph Darago to Fay-Fisher dated November 7, 1938.
59. *Magyar Nemzet*, Budapest, May 9, 1941.
60. Memorandum of conversation on December 13, 1940, between Adolf A. Berle, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State, and Dr. Tibor Kerekes. A telephone conversation by this Section with Tibor Kerekes on October 23, 1940, confirmed that the American Hungarian Federation had just received [300] copies of the *Nagymagyarország* for distribution.
61. Intercept, BER 5734/43, from Andras Tamas to Tibor Kerekes, dated February 9, 1943; Intercept, BER. 9863/43, from T. Kerekes to A. Tamas, dated. March 24, 1943.
62. Secret interview with Szenes by the Office of Strategic Services on the boat before disembarkation, July 7, 1942,
63. "Is the World Federation of Hungarians a Nazi Organization?" by Martin Himler, *Magyar Banyaszlap*, May 25, 1942.
64. Photostatic copy of a letter in the files of this Section from Joseph Darago to Charles Nagy, dated October 3, 1938.

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[end of Taggart's notes to his memorandum, part 1]