TABLE OF CONTENTS

SYNOPSIS

Hungary is situated at the cross roads of Central Europe and its fate depends mostly on the immediate interests of the past and present great powers. For the past 11 centuries its shear existence was constantly in the balance. From its greatness under the Renaissance king Matthias Corvinus in the 15th century, the road was downhill. Today on only one third of its former territory, with millions of Hungarians under foreign rule, Hungary by and large, still menaged to cling to medieval ideas of chivalry and devotion to help the innocents victims of despots and dictators.

Starting with the victimized and persecuted Hungarians under the new Czechoslovakian, Rumanian and Yugoslavian rulers right after WW I., continuing with thousands of our brethren chased out by Serbs from Vojvodina in l935, hundreds of thousands of refugees and P.O.W."s of many nationalities found safe heaven on Hungarian soil during WW II.

Starting with thousands of Jews from Austria and Czechoslovakia, continuing with the great masses of Polish refugees, and with a lot of other nationalities, mostly French, Italian, Russian, Serb, Dutch, British etc. escapees from German P.O.W. camps and ended with American and British airmen shot down over the country. The epoch ended partially with the German military occupation of Hungary on the 19th day of March, 1944. Even after this date, most members of the Hungarian armed forces, authorities and civilians defied the German efforts of rounding up all foreigners on Hungarian soil. Thousands of refugees survived the hostilities and were repatriated after the war.

It should be emphasized, that the Hungarian governments of the period were under extreme pressure by the Germans to hand over the escapees, refugees and the POW's to them. Even governments under the German occupation resisted this constant demand to surrender these people, with various degree of success. Especially irksome was to the Germans, when with the tacit approval of the Hungarian government, tens of thousands of mostly Polish soldiers left the country to join the Allied Forces.

We are willing to compare our record of handling the refugees with the record of any European nation under German occupation or influence.

INTRODUCTION

Not for the first time in the course of Hungary's history, during the past seven or eight years our nation and her society had to face a flood of refugees seeking asylum in our country. First came the tens of thousands of Transylvanian Hungarians and Romanians fleeing the dictatorship of Ceaucescu; then thousands from the former German Democratic Republic. Then, since the summer of 1991 as a result of the civil war that erupted in the Balkans as a consequence of the declaration of Croatian and Slovenian independence, followed by the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, thousands of refugees - in several waves - came seeking the help and protection of Hungary. This series of tragic events, the flood of refugees, and the efforts made by the Hungarian nation cannot help but evoke the past when, in the course of her history, our country or the Danube-basin, was placed in the same situation and opened her doors to those left homeless by strife.

Although international law makes by now a precise distinction between political and economic refugees, the burden of caring for them still falls on the receiving country. The Geneva Agreements initiated by the Red Cross (1864, 1929, 1949) govern the treatment of the war-wounded, the prisoners-of-war and the civilian refugees; determine the forms of the care they are given; protect the rights of the interested; and define the ways of communication between the opposing parties. yet the person, the refugee himself, does not always fit into this precise framework of rules and regulations. Often the refugee "appears" even though two nations are not in open conflict; what is more they may be allies. This is what happened in the 1980s in the case of Hungary and Romania, as well as Hungary and the GDR, causing considerable tension not only between these states but also in their societies. The political war-time refugee seeks asylum but harbors in his soul the hope of a speedy return to his naive land. On the other hand, the economic refugee seeks work, a livelihood, and is often fuelled by the hope of settling down permanently. The receiving country's responsibilities are singular: the political and war-time refugee needs care and support aside from the protection of his rights; the economic refugee wishes to integrate

into the economic life and workforce of the host country. In the first instance, society is, most of the time, tolerant and ready to help; in the second, tensions are more frequent. The intricacies of this question are nothing new; their development can be followed from the Middle Ages on.

The Hungarians were pushed into the Carpathian basin as a consequence of their ongoing battles with the Petchenegs (Bessenyos). Their remnants, as well as the Jasigs and Cumanians, were, in the course of the later centuries, absorbed by the Magyars and settled down, even before the Tatar invasion (13th century). The geographic names and those of their settlements, as well as their office-holders that were maintained for a long time, prove that these ethnic groups were considered separate and independent within the Hungarian kingdom. Considering the circumstances at the time, their absorption went relatively smoothly; after all, there were vast uninhabited regions available. The exception were the cattle-breeding, nomadic Cumanians who clashed with the settled Magyars, tillers of the soil. Their final settlement came about slowly, after the Tatar (Mongolian) invasion, when they were finally fully integrated into the Magyar realm.

The next great flood of refugees was started in the middle of the 14th century by the advance of the Ottoman Empire which threatened our nation too. Gradually occupying the Balkans and aiming at the heartland of Europe, the Turks systematically destroyed nation after nation pushing hundreds of thousand homeless fleeing their advance. Depending on the scale of the Ottoman expansion, more and more people sought refuge in Hungary, transforming the ethnic make-up of vast regions. The expression "Southern Slav" is truly a collective term as it encompasses the Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, Macedonians, Bulgarians; that is to say peoples as different in their culture, religion, and traditions from one another as they are from the Hungarians.

But we must not forget that the Hungarian kingdom maintained close ties with its southern neighbors even before the 14th century. The independent Croatian Kingdom became, in 1102, an integral part of the Hungarian crown with an autonomous government; only the king's person tied the two together.

On the southern fringes of the Hungarian realm, there were scattered Sloven and Vend settlements which were increased by

systematic introduction of these people, on among others - the lands of the Cistertian Abbey. The Turkish menace tightened the links between the Hungarian kingdom and its southern Slav neighbours. From the 14th century on, the Serbian Principality bore the brunt of the Turkish attacks; so they sought an alliance with their northern neighbor, the Hungarian Kingdom. In 1404, Sigismond, King of Hungary, entered into an alliance with Istvan Lazarovich, the reigning Serbian prince who became the king's vassal in exchange for military assistance. In the meantime, as they needed more and more help, the Principality left the defense of several of their most important forts to the Hungarian soldiers. In 1427 they ceded Nandorfehervar (present-day Belgrade) and several forts in the province of Macso to the Hungarian Kingdom. The aristocrats and noblemen who lost their estates to the Turkish expansion received land in Hungary. Istvan Lazarovich himself and later Gyorgy Brankovich, both reigning princes, received substantial estates in Hungary where they also settled Serbians. But these were not only their men; they were also true refugees. The oldest such settlements are Kiskeve and Rackeve on the Island of Csepel where the Eastern-rite Catholics enjoyed full freedom of religion and a tax-exempt status. Independently of the above process, in the course of the 15th century, an important number of Serbian refugees settled in Hungary's southern border counties. Their numbers increased significantly after Serbia's fall to the Turks in 1459. Thus, in 1464, King Mathias settled several tens of thousands of Serbs in Nagylak and the region along the Maros (river). His policy was greatly influenced by his counting on these Serbs as future soldiers. Some five-thousand Serbian cavalrymen served in his famous "Black Army". The boatmen, crucial to the defense of his southern borders, were also almost exclusively Serbians. By that time, the Serbian population in our country - settlers or refugees - numbered over 200,000; it was augmented by another 100,000 under the reign of Ulaszlo I and Louis II *1.

King Mathias gave tax-exempt status to the refugees also. A 1481 document gives an insight into his thinking : "...they should prosper under the reign of the Holy Crown and that their example be followed by others living under Turkish rule. Noting the exceptional treatment enjoyed by those who came before them, they should be ready to come into our land."

Thus were formed on Hungarian soil the most important settlements along the Danube and other rivers in Tolna county, in the vicinity of Pest and Buda, in Rackeve and Szentendre, to name just

the most important ones. Aside from raising crops, their inhabitants had diverse occupations: they were mainly merchants to the transit trade but were also engaged in river transport, in viticulture and fruit-growing, as artisans, etc. They also had a significant role in cattle- and hog-breeding. The most important strains of cattle all originated there.

In the middle of the 16th century, the Turks struck hard at Croatia, letting loose a flood of Croatian refugees into Hungary. A parallel can be seen between the treatment of the Serbian and Croatian settlers/refugees: the Croation nobles who lost their estates received land held by the Crown. The Zrinyi family, which played such a notable role in Hungary's history, thus became the main players in the country's political life. Naturally, these Croatian nobles brought in their own serfs or settled refugees on their estates. The first big Croatian wave arrived in Hungary between 1520-1530 but between 1529 and 1532 in the sparsely inhabited counties of Zala, Vas, Somogy, Sopron, and Moson some forty-thousand. *2

Croatians found a new home. Some thought of their stay here as a temporary arrangement but after the fall of Buda in 1541 they had to abandon all hope of a return. The government also felt obliged to deal with this flood of refugees; therefore, in the 1560-70s it systematically settled some 60-70 thousand Croatians in the counties of Sopron, Moson, and Gyor, as well as the southern regions of Austria. Some got as far as Sarospatak and even Moravia. It is interesting to note that the records of the Croatians indicate, with their names, a descriptive form of their places of origin; thus, "Bosnian-Croat", presumably came from around Bosnia, and "water-Croat" can be assumed to have come from the seashore. This latter group was settled mostly in the County of Sopron, near Lake Ferto. There, they formed the "southern-Slav crescent", a band of connecting settlements along our western borders.*3

Together with the Serbian and Croatian massess, some Bulgarian groups arrived too. It is hard to estimate their numbers.

After the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, great crowds of Hungarians fled the occupied territories. In their stead, the Turks forced Serbians to settle; some of these had even been obliged to serve the Turkish army as auxiliaries. In exchange for their military service, these were given exemption from taxation. This later became one of the bone of contention between the Hungarians and the Serbians as these auxiliary troops often ravaged the Hungarian

territories. After the Turks were driven out at the end of the 17th century, the Habsburg policy of resettling the depopulated regions invited not only German immigrants but also Serbians for the southern borders. They were promised tax-exemptions, religious freedom and the establishment of an Eastern-rite bishopric. The invitation of Vienna did not fall on deaf ears in the Serb population suffering under Turkish rule: in that decade, 200,000 Serbians arrived, led by the Patriarch Arsenije Crnojevic (Arzen Csernovics), to settle the depopulated southern regions. In 1692 and 1695, Emperor Leopold I.'s privileges granted collective rights and exemptions to the Serbians settling in. These will become the basis of the l9th century's erupting nationalist movement. It was Vienna's deliberate policy to grant these privileges: she wanted to build on them to play Hungary off. Later, Joseph I, Charles "I, and Maria Theresia all confirmed these privileges, thus effectively removing these Serbian-inhabited border regions from Hungary's administrative supervision. This separatism was significant not only from the legal and ethnic point of view, but also in its religious aspect as the head of the Serbian Church in Hungary was as well its temporal head. With the end of the 17th century, one of the Middle Ages' largest migration closed. Its aim was our country's territory and, as a consequence, created this significant southern-Slav minority in Hungary *4.

The Polish refugees arriving from time to time on the Hungarian nation's soil - except for those from the Szepesseg and the borders of Poland and Hungary - are typical of all phases of the care given historically to refugees (emigration, social work, etc.). The political and economic decline of the Polish state in the 18th century stirred the ambitions of her neighbors (Austria, Russia, and Prussia) to acquire additional territory. Between 1772 and 1796, they divided three times Poland's territory. At the beginning of the l9th century, Polish patriots hoped for redress from the Napoleonic wars but his fall sealed their fate. At the Congress of Vienna (1815) the Holy Alliance declared its final decision: they attached to Prussia the industrially more advanced western part (the Grand Duchy of Poznan), to Russia the central and eastern territories (Kingdom of Poland), and Austria received Galicia. The Republic of Cracow represented the Polish State under the supervision of the three powers.

The three territories developed very differently. The fate of the Poles living under German rule depended on the strong Germanization process. Under Bismarck's chancellorship, for

instance, they were almost wholly deprived of their rights They emigrated "en masse", which was greatly encouraged by the Prussians. Apparently the situation was the most favourable in the Polish Kingdom; until the Polish revolt in 1830 the only ties to Russia were the tzar's person who represented the Polish king and the presence of the Russian troops that were stationed on Polish soil. But as the Polish autonomy was in direct conflict with the autocratic rule of the tzar, in the 15 years of its rule the Russian court gradually tightened its hegemony over the Polish Kingdom which, of course, stirred more and more Polish patriots to revolt. In the economicaly underdeveloped Galicia, the Polish nobles' rights and use of the Polish language were left intact. Therefore not only did the Polish nobility live in peace, the Galician aristocracy played a significant role at the court in Vienna in guiding the Austrian Empire's domestic and foreign policies.

The Poles, naturally, could not accept this situation. They were always sensitive to any international mood, and seized any opportunity to regain the independence of Poland. In 1830 the Russian court tried to curtail the autonomy of the kingdom, which resulted in a Polish revolt against the tzar.

As a result of the centuries-old Hungarian-Polish friendship, Hungarian politicians always watched with great interest the events unfolding in Poland and immediately reacted to them. The Hungarian villages and regions received the Polish refugees with open arms. In the Age of Reformation, the sympathy shown the Poles was not only an altruistic gesture but also a political statement. After the 1830 Polish revolt broke out, the Hungarian counties organized collections and balls to benefit the Poles. Among Hungarian youth, Polish costume became the fashion and many young men surreptitiously crossed the border to help fight the oppressors. The Hungarian Opposition - Deak, Kolcsey, Eotvos, Kossuth - openly supported the Polish cause. This was watched with anxiety in Vienna; Austria did not wish to get involved in the events and followed them nervously. Although the revolt of the Polish nobles was only directed against the Russian Tzar and did not extend to the other two territories, it found a considerable echo there also.*[5]

In May, 1831, the Polish rebels suffered a crushing defeat at Ostrolenka; the Russians marched into Warsaw, starting bloody reprisals. Polish history speaks of the political refugees of the 1830 revolt as the "big emigration". These emigrants were composed not only of the nobles and soldiers who participated in the revolt, but also of a great number of intellectuals. Eight- or nine-thousand Poles

fled to France, fewer to England, Belgium, Switzerland, or the United States, but all left their country via Galicia and Hungary.

The refugees were helped everywhere in Hungary. Vienna did not want any conflict with Russia and feared any opposition from the Galician Poles. So the government ordered searches of "agitators" found on the Empire's soil, even though it knew that no one in Galicia or in Hungary supported these searches. Neither were these police activities strongly enforced as they tended to create resentment against Vienna in the two other territories. Despite these tactical considerations, the police "assiduously" searched for Polish rebels. Chancellor Reviczky even had a register kept of all Polish and Hungarian nobles' houses, of cities and ecclesiastical and lay institutions where refugees found asylum. In some cases, they even searched the homes but they soon gave this up because of the counties' heated opposition. The police "never found" the wanted Poles, although they were publicly visible on the terraces of coffee-houses, where they basked in the population's sympathy, or gave speeches at the balls given for their benefit. Relatively few Poles of the first wave of the "big emigration" stayed in Hungary. Those that did, settled mainly in Budapest, Pozsony (Bratislava today) and other large provincial towns of the Felvidek (northern Hungary), such as Bartfa, the center of the Polish refugees in Hungary.

In 1834, Austria and Russia signed an extradition treaty but it had very limited force in the Kingdom of Hungary. So the Polish rebels who had found asylum in Galicia, simply crossed over into Hungary. Thus Jerzy Bulharyn - one of the deputies of Adam Czartoriski, leader of the conservative wing of the Polish refugees - lived until 1848 in our country, undisturbed and under his own name, while the Governor of Galicia twice (1839, 1841) asked the county for his extradition. Correctly, Vienna felt that the counties ignore her orders and keep their refugees secret. Vienna was irritated by the fact that, counting on the Hungarians' sympathy, the deputies of the Polish emigration in Paris circulated freely on Hungarian territory. They found it an unheard-of event that Janusz Woronicz, Czartoryski's deputy, went to Budapest to negotiate with Teofil Modejewski over the agreement between the emigrants' conservative and democratic wings. These two wings, by the way, urged the rebels at home and abroad who took part in the revolt, to seek asylum in Hungary where they will not be exposed to any danger.*6

In 1846, revolt erupted in Cracow. The revolutionary democrats took up arms against Vienna, for a societal transformation. After

their defeat, the Hungarian authorities had "the task" to ferret out the refugees arriving in Hungary and to give them up to Vienna. The result was the same as before. The mood is best characterized by the instructions that Miklos Vay, royal commissioner, gave: he ordered the capture of those Poles only who "foment rebellion", whereas all the others were to be received with "friendship and sympathy". But he never specified which ones "foment rebellion" and which are to be received with friendship.*7

In March 1848, the Poles living in our country rejoiced in hearing of the revolution and the formation of the first independent Hungarian government. The Poles of Budapest received with a torch-light parade the representative from Galicia who came to establish relations with the newly formed Hungarian government. In October 1848, the revolution sprang up anew in Vienna; after their defeat, the Polish participants sought refuge in Hungary again, as did the unsuccessful fighters of Poznan. Close to 20,000 Poles took part in the Hungarian freedom fight - Wysocki, Dembinski, and last but not least, Bem - tried to help.*8

The defeat of the 1848 and 1849 revolutions abated the Polish independence movements for a little while only. In 1863, a new revolt erupted in Russian Poland. After its fall, its participants - about 4-5,000 people - again fled to Paris and London through Hungary. As before, Hungarian society tried to help them by collecting money and other charitable activities. They hid the refugees and the arrest warrants remained as meaningless now as before.*9

During the last decades of the past century, the Polish waves of emigration took on a different character. From the occupied Polish territories, industrialization and the development of agriculture as big business forced more and more people to leave their country. This despite the 1861 tzarist law liberating the serfs.

Millions of Poles left their historic country, seeking a livelihood and work opportunities in Europe and in America. Of these, 6 million went to the United States; 750,000 to France, 300,000 to Canada, 400,000 to Brazil, 120,000 to Argentina, 50,000 to Australia. Even in Belgium, the Poles numbered 30,000 and in England they totalled close to a million. From Poland's historic territory, many also went to the interior of Russia, such as St. Petesburg, the Baltic States, and to European Russia itself. Many thousands of unemployed emigrated from Galicia also as Austrian

and Czech industry could only absorb a limited number of Poles *10.

The first wave of socio-economic Polish refugees hit our country around 1880. The majority of these came from Russian Poland, and only a small number from Galicia. The booming construction in Budapest and the developing industry made good use of the cheap labour. Aside from the capital, the Poles formed large colonies in Kassa, Miskolc and other provincial industrial towns. These colonies were augmented, from the 1890s on, by 8-10,000 Polish temporary agricultural labourers who came every summer. At the close of the last century, some 200,000 Polish workers were employed in Hungary. At the turn of the century, the number of immigrant Poles changed constantly, depending strongly on Hungary's need for labour, the scale of emigration from Poland, and the Poles' migrations farther from our land.

The number of Poles was dwarfed by the others of Hungary's minorities; it was also negligible compared to the numbers of other European and American colonies. The census of 1900 recorded 50,182 Poles (not Hungarian citizens) as living on Hungary's soil; of these 3,789 in Budapest. In Croatia and Slovenia 20,834 Poles settled temporarily. In 1910, in Budapest alone, 15,573 Poles were counted; 36,524 in the whole country. After the peace treaty of Trianon, the 1920 census registeed 8,748 Poles as living in the entire country; of these, 1107 in Budapest. The cause of this striking decrease in numbers is, of course, the sizable loss of Hungary's territory on the one hand, and, on the other the return of the Poles to their homeland, or repatriation.*11

During the last decades and at the turn of the century fast developing Hungarian industry recruited its work force not only from among the socioeconomic refugees of Poland but also from all peoples of the Monarchy - Czechs, Moravians, Croats, Slovenes, but mostly Slovakians. This, of couse, reflects the internal movements of a state's population which also includes the search for work of the Polish refugees.*12

During the last two decades of the past century, after Alexander III. came to power (1881), hundred-thousands of Jews fled the Russian Empire to escape the pogroms there. This wave of refugees repeated that of the end of the 18th and of the early l9th centuries when numerous Jews left their country of origin, particularly the Ukraine. After 1881, upon the orders of minister Ignatiev, the Jewish populations of Warsaw, Kiev, Odessa, Jekaterinoslav and

Moscow and of their environs were plundered and massacred, causing masses of them to flee to America, Palestine and the countries along Russia's western borders. The second wave of Jewish flight came in 1904 when the government tried to deflect popular anger at the loss of the Russo-Japanese war, as well as the revolutionary mood, by instigating anti-Jewish activities. The systematically organized pogroms in the larger cities prompted further thousands to flee. The bulk of the Jews coming from Russia settled in Galicia or in the territories that Hungary lost as a consequence of the Trianon peace treaty, namely Transcarpathia. They created the large rural settlements where they practiced agriculture and animal husbandry. Some took roots in the regions of present-day Hungary where they represented the poorest segment of the local Jewish population. These Jewish immigrants settled around the perimeter of industrial cities such as Budapest, and became small entrepreneurs. These became the victims of the holocaust in 1944 *13.

Between and during the two world wars, Hungary became at various times the refuge for diverse waves of people. After the peace treaty of Trianon - and already before - she had to care for about 200,000 refugees who came from the lost territories. They had to be settled, their rights had to be protected, opportunities for work had to be organized for them. The Hungarians from Transylvania, the Northern Region, and the Voivodina had to be treated differently from the "traditional" refugee care: after all, they were Hungarians. Both the government and the parliamentary opposition considered the organization of their care a common duty. Since there was no language barrier, they could easily be integrated into the workforce. The Interior Ministry was entrusted with this task. This divided even-handedly among the counties the funds voted in the budget for this purpose and even managed to create jobs The care given to the Transylvanian refugees and to those arriving from other lost territories formed the charitable institutions that readily adapted their treatment to other but similar situations. They centralized their efforts and intervened, under certain circumstances with the government authorities. These, in turn, immediately established contact with them. *14

By the 1920s, the general population had slowly absorbed the refugees that followed the First World War. But beginning in 1938, during the heightened tension preceding the Second World War, more and more Transylvanian Hungarians crossed over into Hungary. On the other hand, after northern Transylvania was re-annexed to Hungary, a huge migration took place, from south to

north and north to south. Settling the refugees, finding work for them and generally caring for them became a societal task. It was entrusted to the Interior Ministry's Social Work Division. In 1941, a new responsibility was the settlement of the people from Bukovina and the saving of the scattered Hungarians living outside the historic borders. *15

After the Anschluss of Austria and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938-39 new refugees arrived by the tens of thousands. These were mostly Jewish - by religion or ethnicity - who spent as short a time as possible in Hungary; they tried to get as fast and as far away from Germany as they could. The treatment they received was delicate as Budapest had to reckon with Germany's protest but they had to be helped along in their flight. The great majority moved along within a few weeks; some only spent days in our country. Most of them came with passports and only had to wait out the time it took to process their visas. The situation changed radically when the borders with Austria and the newly independent Slovakia were reinforced from the other side.

In June of 1939, with the knowledge of the Foreign Ministry the Interior Ministry organized the transport to the Danube Delta, on the river steamers Queen Elizabeth and Carl Dusan of 900, mostly Czech, Slovak, Transcarpathian, German, or Austrian Jews. Defying the imposed law of guarantine, the steamers took to the open sea where they transferred their passengers to the cargoship "Julia Hoemi", flying the Panamanian flag and steaming to Palestine. The trip was guaranteed by the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. This Panamanian steamer was the last to have reached its destination undisturbed. This mode of fleeing was repeated in May 1940. Then, a steamer under the Bulgarian flag, transported several hundred Jews from Pozsony to the Danube delta. This passage, too, was guaranteed by the Hungarian Foreign Ministry.

The care of the Jews raised some separate questions within the general treatment given to the Polish refugees in 1939. It must be noted here that of the 20,000 refugees in the care of he Interior Ministry that came from the Northern Region (Felvidek) most were "bona fide" Hungarians but there were quite a few that had false papers.*16

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HUNGARIAN REFUGEES FROM TRANSYLVANIA, THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS

The first wave of refugees came after the First World War. In November 1918, at the end of the appearance of the Romanian troops, close to 200,000 people left Transylvania. Most of them were intellectuals or members of the public administration. On December 1st, 1918, at Gyulafehervar, Transylvania was joined to the Romanian Kingdom, promising complete eguality to all minorities. "All peoples have the right to their own education, its governance and dispensation of justice in its own language, its autonomous public administration run by people of its own ethnicity." - so says the declaration of unification. Then it continues: "All peoples have the right, proportionately to their numbers, to full representation in the legislative bodies and the government." *1

This proclamation, reflecting the European spirit, did, indeed, promise the Hungarian population eguality, freedom of language, autonomy, education, and eguality of language before the courts. Although after the Romanian occupation, the higher-ranking officials of the public administration were dismissed, care was taken to replace them with Hungarian-speaking Romanians. They did not touch the schools; theaters, cultural institutions, and publishers remained. Only the staff of the supervisory authority became Romanian. This engendered some illusions on the part of the Hungarian and other ethnic populations regarding the Romanian state's tolerance of her minorities.*2

In the Trianon peace treaty, Transylvania was annexed to Romania; this represented the loss of some one-and-a-half million Hungarians on a territory of 102,000 km2. In the peace treaty Romania accepted the responsibility for minority rights, general eguality of rights, and the free use of national languages It also empowered the representatives of the minorities to turn to the League of Nations for remedying their grievances. This spirit embued the l923 Romanian constitution, even though it meant regression on some points from the proclamation of Gyulafehervar..

From that moment on, an ever-widening rift appeared between the Constitution and its practice. Fewer Hungarians profited from the division of the great landed estates; they could receive smaller and more limited bankloans as did the Romanians to maintain their farms and small industries. At the same time, higher taxes were levied in the Hungarian inhabited regions. The division of the large

estates also brought with it the intensive settlement of non-Transylvanian Romanians.*3

As a consequence, in the 1920s, ever greater numbers of people decided to leave their homeland. In 1918-19, first the officials of the Hungarian public administration left whose members had no other means of livelihood but their salaries. They were followed by thousands of intellectuals (professors, jurists, judges, lawyers, physicians, etc.) After Trianon, even the agricultural and urban workers by the tens of thousands chose to flee. This migration was two-fold: on the one hand, people continuously fled to and settled in Hungary; on the other, some 100,000 migrated to the territories of historic Romania (the Regat) to find some work. Close to 50,000 Hungarians emigrated to America. The migration to the Regat was a curious process: in their homeland, the skilled workers were pushed to the side, in the industries of the Regat they were hired with alacrity and higher wages. Here, they were not made to feel the disadvantages of being Hungarian.*4

The most cruel means of discrimination - that the Hungarian press dubbed the "numerus valachium" - was the clause of "lack of adequate knowledge of the Romanian language". On this basis, masses of public officials were dismissed. This clause was later extended to private industry also. Those dismissed were mostly professors, teachers, and clerical workers; in their stead, Romanians were hired. For instance, in Transylvania (that is, in the purely Hungarian-speaking regions) teachers who spoke Romanian only, but no Hungarian, were employed with a 50% increase in salaries, which practically paralysed education. At the same time, the Romanians withheld public assistance from certain schools; thus education in the Hungarian language only survived in parochial or private schools. According to Romanian statistics of 1930, 57.6% of the Hungarian students were enrolled in parochial schools that did not benefit from state subsidies. There were some Hungarian (or Hungarian Romanian) language high schools but the bacchalaureat exams could only be taken in Romanian before a Romanian board. Even vocational training was given in Romanian from 1927 on. Despite the pressures, the Churches played a dominant role in maintaining Hungarian education and Hungarian cultural institutions but the Romanian authorities never sanctioned the opening of a Church-sponsored Hungarian university.*5

According to official Romanian statistics of 1930, 24.4% of the inhabitants of Transylvania were Hungarians. One third of these

lived in the lands of the Szekelys, one-third in the larger cities, the rest along the western border. Whereas the Hungarian statistics of 1910 show that on the same territory 53.2% were Romanians, 32.4% Hungarians, 10.6% Germans, and 3.8% were of other minority groups.

Comparing the two statistics, we find that the Hungarian inhabitants decreased by 9% but not the other minorities. Only the Hungarians emigrated, mostly from the cities, some from villages.*[6]

In the 1930s, a new wave of nationalism, the fascist movement the Iron Guard, swept out of Moldavia. It became a significant political force during the economic crisis; its social demagoguery built on the dissatisfaction of the peasant class' and small office-holders' miserable living conditions. It preached the need to create a "more just and moral" world while eliminating its opponents in the most ruthless fashion. It ascribed to the Hungarians the source of all of Romania's problems, spreading terror in the Hungarian inhabited regions. The activities of the Iron Guard increased the Hungarians' legal and illegal emigration; more and more - some 47,000 - people went seeking a new home, mostly in Hungary.*[7]

During the advance of fascism, Charles II, Romania's king, introduced a dictatorship directed partly against the Iron Guard but which remained nonetheless a right-wing movement. The new Romanian constitution (1938) dissolved the political parties, as well as the unions. The Front for National Renewal became the organ of political life which encompassed the organizations of the minorities. The truth of the matter is that many people attached great hopes to this system since it promised to remedy the grievances of the minorities and the lowering of the tensions - but no action followed the promises.

With the 1940 Second Vienna Decision, Germany and Italy returned 43,000 km^2 of northern Transylvania's territory to Hungary, with a population of 1.3-million Hungarians, 1.2 million Romanians, and 80,000 Germans. This, of course, had an adverse effect on Hungarian-Romanian relations. The southern Transylvanian Hungarians of military age were immediately ordered to join work brigades; internments and imprisonment on various grounds became common in Southern Transylvania. It is no wonder, therefore, that a considerable migration took place from Southern Transylvania to the Northern part. The Hungarians of the Regat fled to Hungary proper where they were later joined by the Szekelys of Bukovina. The latter were settled in Bacska; after WW

II their remnants were settled near Bonyhad in the place of the deported Germans.*[8]

It is impossible to determine the exact number of the refugees as most of them. with the help of friends and relatives, immediately found work and became integrated into society. The majority of them stayed in Northern Transylvania and settled - or were settled by the government - in places and jobs left vacant by the Romanians who, in turn, went to Southern Transyvania. Between 1940 and 1943, about 200,000 Hungarian refugees received some assistance organized by the government. The Hungarian governments regarded the help given to the Hungarian refugees as a social task and entrusted it to the Interior Ministry's IX. Social Work Division. The director of this division was Dr. Jozsef Antall (1896-1974); as government commissioner, he was put in charge of all matters concerning refugees (Polish, French, Dutch, Belgian southern Slav, etc.). True, at the beginning, upon pressure applied by the government's party, Under-Secretary Miklos Bonczos was put in charge of the Transylvanian Hungarian refugees. But, during the prime ministership of Miklos Kallay (1943-44) and after Miklos Bonczos became Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, the task of caring for the refugees became wholly Dr. Antall's domain .*[9]

It fell to the above-mentioned Social Work Division of the Interior Ministry to receive and register each refugee, to supply them with food and organize their assistance, to find temporary schools for their children. Material help was provided by many organizations: the Hungarian Red Cross enlisted other international Red Cross chapters and humanitarian institutions; within Hungarian society, The Committee of Assistance to Hungarian Refugees and the Committee to Help the Transylvanian Hungarians, etc., came to the rescue.*[10]

From 1939 to 1941, the Hungarian government spent 26.4 million pengos to help the Hungarian refugees from Romania. This sum was reduced to 9.6 million in 1942-1943 after the flood abated*[11] Those refugees who could not, through friends and relatives, secure some accomodations and a job for themselves, were directed into camps where they had complete freedom of movement. Their children had schools organized for them and they received health and medical care free of charge. The young people already enrolled or planning to enroll in universities or other institutions of higher learning had places put at their disposal and were helped with state scholarships. In the central and transit camps

full board was provided for them. The Interior Ministry called upon the counties to make accomodations and work possibilities available to the Transylvanian refugees and, to ease the "crowding" in northern Transylvania, to receive a proportionate number of these refugees.*12 Thus, the refugees that went to the counties, received lodgings, work and a stipend to pay for their expenses which was reimbursed by the Hungarian government.*13

The counties organized the lodging and the job opportunities; the Ministry of the Interior, out of the 26.4 or later the 9.6 million pengos, reimbursed the expenses of the legislative authorities (of county, city, or village) which had to give a strict accounting of them.*14

According to the records, by the autumn of 1940, 50% of the Transylvanian refugees were settled and working, although the number of those receiving assistance still amounted to 62,000 people. Of the latter, the majority retained the refugee "status" until the end of the war; these were mostly of peasant stock to whom agriculture could only offer temporary work. They continued to live in organized camps; their financial assistance was based on prevailing wages for their category of work, supplemented by a family allowance depending on the number of their children. As some health officials detected some disease among the refugees (such as trachoma among the Szekelys of Bukovina), all were subjected to a complete health examination.*15

A different question was that of citizenship. The Hungarian government adopted a flexible attitude, leaving it up to the refugees' free will whether to become a Hungarian citizen or remain a Romanian one. Many kept their Romanian citizenship until the end of the war. By doing so, they escaped military service, kept the government's assistance which secured a fixed livelihood for them and, many, hoped to return to their homeland after the war.

From southern Transylvania, the Romanians deported some 10,000 Saxons in whose place they settled the Romanians who migrated from Northern to Southern Transylvania. The ancestors of these Saxons had lived for centuries in Romania; now, deported, they wanted to test the Nazi propaganda which declared that Germany is ready to receive with work all ethnic Germans. Germany needed them as the war effort required more and more soldiers, depleting the work force of industry and agriculture alike. Thus, only a few of the Saxon refugees wanted to stay in Hungary; most wished to go to Germany with their families. But for this, they

needed the approval of Germany which was withheld until the completion of "racial/biological examinations", carried out, rather slowly, on Hungarian soil. The black-haired, black eyed individuals of middling or small stature were not accepted as not of the "German type". However, most of those "weeded out" were spirited over into Austria by the employees of the Interior Ministry, using bribes and by outwitting the Germans.*[16]

After the peace treaty of Trianon, relatively few Hungarians took refuge in our country from the Northern Region annexed to Czechoslovakia and Transcarpathia. Those that came were mostly officials of public administration or those who, without ouside means, had real problems of survival. In Yugoslavia, the situation was different: there the great landed estates were confiscated with Serbians settled in the place of the Hungarians. In the cities, the industrial properties were nationalized. From the southern part of the erst-while Hungarian state, about 100,000 people fled, most of them before the Trianon peace treaty. Most of them settled in Hungary's south or in Transdanubia, but some went as far as Budapest or its environs to seek a living. At the railway terminals, the so-called "wagon cities" created a shocking sight; in the 1920s thousands of refugees, who could not find shelter elsewhere settled for years in railroad cars and eked out a living with government assistance Finally, the capital city of Budapest helped them out of their desperate plight by creating camps for them around the perimeter of the city, in Kobanya, Kispest, Pestszenterzsebet and others. such as the Augusta-, Maria Valeria-, and Weckerle-camps. Here, at last, they could lead more human lives.

The last great wave of refugees came in the summer of 1944 when hundreds of thousands fled before the advancing Soviet army, leaving everything behind, just trying to save their lives. It reached its peak with the arrival of people from Transylvania and Yugoslavia. In the latter country, the atrocities of the partisans of Tito played a dominant role.

NOTES

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(3). Ibid
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(12) Ibid. 4056 cs. The Transylvanian refugees, 1940
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THE LAST HOURS OF PEACE

After Czechoslovakia's dismemberment, it became increasingly clear that the next victim of Hitler's Germany will be Poland. From the spring of 1939 on, the world has been watching with anxiety the deepening rift between Germany and Poland but hoped that the countries that maintained friendly relationships with England, France, and Poland will be able to avert this tragedy. Feeling friendship for Poland but tied by her vital interests, the Hungarian government did its best, with its limited means, to smooth over the German-Polish differences and to avoid becoming caught up in the war. When, in the spring of 1939, Poland obtained England's and France's guarantees, Hitler had already signed, on April 11, 1939, the secret war plans against Poland, code named "Fall Weiss". The world, of course, knew nothing about this secret plan and pinned its hopes, once the offer of military assistance to Poland became known, it would deter Hitler from opening a war on two fronts.*1

In these times of tension, Poland could count on the support of Hungarian diplomacy. Even before the signing of the English-Polish mutual assistance pact, this was made clear in a speech made by Polish foreign minister Jozef Beck on April 6th, in London, when he stressed the special significance of Hungarian-Polish friendship. In Hungary, the English-Polish and French-Polish mutual assistance pacts were regarded as reinforcing Poland's security and placing her in a key position in that territory. They were also viewed with caution as, after all, they did not diminish the antagonisms between the two countries.

Naturally, Germany reacted with asperity to England's and France's show of solidarity with Poland. As a response, she denounced, on April 28, 1939, the friendship treaty she had entered into with Poland in 1934 and cancelled the naval agreement with England. This precluded all possibility of negotiations, even though Warsaw was willing to make concessions concerning Gdansk (Danzig). A never-before-seen anti-Polish campaign was started in Germany: day after day, the German press published ever-newer slanderous accusations against Poland. This press campaign found an "unfavourable" echo in Budapest: the public reacted sharply to

this onslaught and pro-Polish demonstrations became an almost daily occurrence. The Polish government received with satisfaction this outpouring of sympathy; as a consequence, masses of people went to see the Hungarian artists' exhibit at its opening in the capital which was attended by some Hungarian politicians also. On April 27, 1939, Istvan Csaky, Hungary's foreign minister, called the German-Polish differences "worrisome", a declaration that was published by the press. At the same time, he sent the following instructions to Villani, Hungarian minister to Rome, in case the German minister inquired about Hungary's attitude: "..we are not willing to undertake any military action, direct or indirect, against Poland. By indirect action I mean to say that we shall refuse any German demand for her army to cross Hungarian territory to attack Poland, be it on foot, by vehicles or by trains. Should the Germans then threaten force, I shall reply that we shall answer force with force. We shall regard as enemy anyone who sets foot on Hungarian soil without permission." *2

The Hungarian minister also had to inform Ciano, Italian foreign minister, of this. Hungary was confident that Italy will not join Germany in an armed conflict with Poland. This assumption was based on a conversation Mussolini had with the Hungarian military attache in the course of which he declared that since the German-Polish conflict was limited to the two countries, Italy planned to remain neutral. In the message to be given to Ciano, Foreign Minister Csaky also alluded to the deep friendship between the Italians and Poles. In fact, there were demonstrations of this friendship in Rome, similar to those in Budapest.*3

At the time of Pal Teleki's visit to Germany, in April 1939, Hitler expected Hungary's government to take a public stand. The German chancellor brought the Polish question up with Teleki, saying that "it will have to be settled one way or another". German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop reproached Teleki for an article that appeared in (the newspaper) Pester Lloyd urging the creation of a Rome-Belgrade-Budapest Warsaw axis. On the other hand, Germany declined Teleki's offer of mediating between Berlin and Warsaw.

Poland reacted sharply to every Hungarian manifestation, even though she realized the pressure put on Hungary. She was ready to make sacrifices to bolster Hungarian-Polish friendship. Thus, the April 29, 1939 economic treaty made in Warsaw which doubled the volume of trade benefiting Hungary only. The Polish press viewed with gloom Pal Teleki's visit to Berlin; it assumed that the

Hungarian prime minister will have trouble resisting German demands.*[5] There was a real basis to its worry. In exchange for Hungarian assistance or any Hungarian support in the military conflict against Poland, Ribbentrop offered to intercede with newly independent Slovakia to join Hungary as an autonomous territory. Foreign Minister Csaky refused Ribbentrop's offer point blank; he did not want to obligate Hungary at this price. Of course, the Polish press knew nothing of all this; it is therefore understandable that it regarded the Hungarian policies as uncertain and tried to prevent Hungary from accepting presumed German offers.

A strange polemic ensued among the press in Budapest, Warsaw, and Berlin. The Hungarian newspapers evoked the past of friendship between Hungary and Poland which went deeper than any foreign policy considerations; the Polish press did not question these feelings but expressed its worry about the divergence of sentiment and reality. Berlin took this as signs of increasing tension in Hungarian-Polish relations. Berlin noted with concern that, during their May 1939 visit to Budapest, Mr. Emeryk Hutten-Czapski, president of the Polish-Hungarian Society, and baron Goluchowski, president of the Szejm's foreign affairs committee, paid an ostentatious visit to Regent Miklos Horthy and Foreign Minister Csaky. Upon his return, Hutten-Czapski declared that Hungarian society's sympathy with Poland is unaltered, that there are no differences between the two countries even though - and that was emphasized by the press - Hungary has strong ties to the German Reich, economically and in the question of revision (of the Trianon peace treaty). The same themes were expressed in Polish Minister Orlowski's speech at the opening of the Polish Institute in Hungary. In a statement made over Warsaw radio, baron Goluchowski spoke of the Foreign Minister's friendship toward Poland and of his sober appraisal of the situation, stressing the Hungarians' open sympathy for the Poles and hostility towards Hitler.*[6]

In the summer of 1939, as German pressure on Hungary mounted, Poland would have liked to see a friendship treaty between the two countries. Although Hungary could not take this step, she never failed to express publicly her feelings of amity towards Poland. At the opening of the newly elected parliament, Miklos Horthy - stressing the unalterable Hungarian foreign policy - declared that "the laws of true friendship bind us to Poland which has again, after an interruption of centuries, become a neighbour.*[7]

(This referred to the fact that after Czechoslovakia's

dismemberment, we again shared a Carpathian border with Poland.)

In Warsaw, Horthy's words were greeted with satisfaction, in Berlin with displeasure. As a consequence, the government instructed Dome Sztojay, Hungarian minister in Berlin, to clarify to the German foreign ministry: "...For the time being, Budapest would like to avoid taking a public stand on Poland for fear of tightening the Romanian-Polish relationship."*[8] Berlin was fully aware that Hungary will, under no circumstances, support Germany against Poland. Under Secretary Woerman's declaration, therefore, came as a reply: "Germany is averse to the declarations of Polish Hungarian friendship made at the opening of parliament. She would like her friends to be friends..."*[9]

Hungarian diplomacy did not refrain even from passing secret information on to Poland. In July, 1939, Foreign Minister Csaky declared to Polish Minister Orlowski that he foresees serious conflicts in German-Polish relations but does not believe war will ensue. He stressed that Hungary will never take up arms against Poland, neither in the case of a Polish-German war nor in a world war. A little later, on July 24, 1939, Pal Teleki addressed two letters to Hitler delineating Hungarian foreign policy objectives. In the first, he stated that in case of a general conflict Hungary will attune her policies to those of the Axis powers. In the second, he emphasized that "unless a significant change occurs in the present circumstances, Hungary is morally in no position to enter into armed conflict with Poland." He held firmly to this position even going so far as to deny transit to German troops. Hitler flew into a rage; Ribbentrop tried to apply pressure on Csaky. Although Csaky asked that Berlin disregard the two letters neither the prime minister nor the Hungarian diplomats were ever willing to accede to German demands in the Polish question. *[10]

As proof, in August 1939, Foreign Minister Istvan Csaky assured Foreign Minister Jozef Beck of Hungary's neutrality in the expected German-Polish conflict. She would resist any violation of her territory with the purpose of attacking Poland. The Foreign Minister's words were acknowledged with satisfaction in Warsaw. On the other hand, in Berlin, Deputy Secretary Woerman informed the Hungarian Minister that "the deliveries of war materiel will be stoped as long as Hungary's position remains ambiguous."*[11]

While behind the scenes vigorous preparations took place for the overrunning of Poland, the press engaged in polemics, the people

became enervated by the scorching summer heat. Hope of an agreement glimmered with the news of the German Soviet pact of friendship and cooperation followed by a flood of amicable pronouncements. No one knew of course the background of this pact; even years later people doubted that two nations could come to an agreement over the dismemberment of a third, drawing up the exact lines of demarcation, carefully weighing the proportions of the division. This gave a free hand to Germany with regard to Poland and to the Soviet Union for the Baltic States. It is an odd quirk of history that while people still hope for and believe in peace, death and destrucion are already lurking in the background....

September, 1939

On September 1st, 1939, at 5:40 in the morning, Warsaw radio announced that German troops have crossed the Polish border and that Polish cities are being bombed. The broadcasts were frequently interrupted but this special report was continuously repeated. This moment signified not only the beginning of the long-expected German-Polish war but also of, at that time unimaginable, world conflagration.

The assault was launched not only on the full length of the German-Polish frontier but also from the south, from the territory of the neighbouring Slovakia, as well as from the north, from East-Prussia. From the spring of 1939 on, the Germans living within Poland were subjected to subversive incitements and their anti-Polish movements were supported. These activities were not limited to mere propaganda but they were trained for military action and the gathering of information. The activities of the so-called "fifth column" were included in the Germans' military planning and their subversive actions weakened the home front. About 1.8 million Germans took part in the Polish campaign, equipped with the most modern weapons and supported by 2,000 airplanes. In contrast, Poland could only mobilize one million men and had only 400 airplanes.*[12]

The Polish strategy, according to "western" ideas, called for focussing the resistance on the western borders in order to allow the expected launching of the French-English offensive against Germany. No strategy was worked out in the case of an attack coming from the east, as the Polish-Soviet relations gave no grounds for such a probability. The assault was "joined" by the man-of-war Schleswig-Holstein which had arrived in Gdansk on August 25, 1939 on a "courtesy call". From there, on September 1st, a murderous barrage was launched against the Westerplatte peninsula which was heroically defended by its garrison of 182 men under the command of Major Henryk Sucharski.

The German army really did make the best use of its numerical, technical and marching advantages, attacking simultaneously the

seashore, Pomerania, Silesia, Mazovia and Podhale. Already on September 2, 1939, the army of "Cracow" led by general Szyling had to start evacuating Silesia, after heavy fighting in Katowice and Chorzow. On the western front, despite some successes at Mokra and Borowa Gora, Julius Rommel's "Lodz" army had to begin retreating towards Warsaw. Also the "Pomorze" army, led by Wladyslaw Bortnowski, facing superior German land and air forces, had to pull back towards the country's interior. The German troops routed the armies called "Carpathia" and "Prusy" and the so-called "Poznan" army, led by Tadeusz Kutrzeba. started retreating also. The same fate awaited the "Modlin" army of Krukowicz-Przedrzymirski too. Its handful of men defended the Westerplatte until September 17th; the Germans expected to occupy the peninsula within a few hours. At the same time, the Germans sank the two biggest Polish men-of-war which covered the Polish navy'sflight to England.*[13]

After the collapse of the western front, on September 6, 1939, Commander-in-Chief Rydz-Smigly ordered the entire Polish army to retreat to the rivers Vistula and San, to establish defensive lines in the eastern part of the country and the concentration there of total mobilization. This launched the establishment of the army called "Lublin", as well as the organization of Warsaw's defense. General Rommel was entrusted with Warsaw's defense while the high command moved its headquarters to Brzesce near the Bug. At the same time, the government, all government offices, as well as parliament, transferred to a south-easterly region, believed to be better protected. This marked the second phase of the defensive war the major battle of which was fought between September 9 and 17th near Brzura where two army corps battled superior forces. This protracted battle lengthened the defense of Warsaw where the army found willing auxiliaries among the civilian population under the leadership of Mayor Stefan Starzybski,

Despite the tenacious resistance of the Polish army, the German troops reached the line at the Vistula at various points. From the south they pushed to occupy Zamosc and encircled Lwow (Lemberg), thus cutting off the two Polish army corps from one another. The high command, Ignacy Moscinski, President of the Republic, and the government were aleady staying, on September 14th, near the Romanian-Polish border and transferred the headquarters onto Romanian territory on September 17th.*[14]

On September 17, 1939, a fatal event occurred in Polish history:

without any preliminary warning or declaration of war, the Soviet army launched its attack on the full length of the Polish-Soviet border to take possession of east Poland. There were no significant Polish forces in those territories where the Polish army tried to develop its hinterland. At the start of the assault, the Polish minister was informed that "because of the collapse of the western front, the Red Army was instructed to cross the border in order to protect western Bielorussia and the western Ukraine and to defend their inhabitants." Within days, the Soviet army achieved its planned goals: it took 250-300,000 prisoners-of-war; immediately deported the leaders of the local administration; arrested the intelligentsia; and gave free rein to Ukrainian and Bielorussian anti-Polish nationalists. At the beginning of November 1939, the Soviet Union officially "annexed" the occupied territories and joined them to their respective neighbouring republics.

After the Polish government's evacuation onto Romanian territory, the third phase of the war began: the Germans laid siege to Lwow (Lemberg) which was, despite the German-Soviet agreement, occupied by the Red Army on September 19th. Between September 18th and 20th, the remnants of the "Cracow" and "Lublin" army corps fought fierce battles with the Germans but could not break out their encirclement. The besieged Warsaw held out until September 27th despite continuous artillery barrages and aerial bombardments. The defenders of Modlin gave up the fight on September 29m 1939. But at Koch, general Franciszek Kleeberg's Independent Military Group continued the war, nor did Major Henryk Bobrzanski's units put down their arms. These units were the seed from which sprang the war of resistance, lasting years.*[15]

Although some units or army corps gave themselves up, the Poles never put down their arms, nobody capitulated to the Germans. Beyond the borders, the government transformed itself and so did the army which fought alongside the Allies until the end of the WW II. In bloody battles hundreds of thousands of Poles gave their lives for their country, for the rebirth of Poland.

The territories occupied by her troops were simply annexed to Germany. They were under military administration, under general Rundstedt. from mid-September 1939 on but on October 26, 1939 a civilian administration was introduced. Thus the Seashore, Greater Poland, Silesia, the northern part of Mazovia, Lodz and its environs, as well as certain regions of Cracow and Kielce became part of the German Reich. The remaining Polish territories became

the Chief Province with Hans Frank named as its head. The more important Polish cities (Cracow, Warsaw. etc.) were ruled by a governor. The territory of the Chief Province covered 91,000 km2, with 9.5 million inhabitants of which 95% were Polish. As their first measures, the Germans ordered the closing of all cultural institutions - theatres, libraries, museums, etc. and abolished all Polish educational entities, from elementary schools to universities; only elementary and vocational schooling were left available to the Poles. A manhunt was started against Polish intelligentsia. As early as October 1939, they arrested and deported to concentration camps the university professors that stayed behind, as well as the members of the Polish Academy of Sciences; they also suppressed the Polish-language press and book publishing. Despite these draconian measures, Polish teachers and professors continued to educate the young; in small groups, under illegal circumstances, existed secret institutins of elementary-, mid-level and higher education, defying the rules, in the face of danger and possible deportation.*16

Hundreds of thousands of Poles were taken to Germany for forced labour or were obliged to work for starvation wages in industries with German interests. Already the German military rulers began the deportation of Poles, particularly Polish Jews, to the Chief Province; there the Jews were crowded into specific places. In their stead, German settlers were brought in; this started the transfer of Polish industry into German hands. In the first transport about 40,000 Poles were taken to Germany; by the end of 1940, their number surpassed 350,000. Massacres took place already during the first weeks of the occupation. Those who did not want to leave or were considered "superfluous" were simply liquidated. In the autumn of 1939, the concentration camps at Auschwitz and Majdanek were established, soon to be followed by others, peopled mostly by Poles (prisoners-of war, the intelligentsia, Jews, gypsies, resisters). But soon deportees from other regions came too. A significant number of Poles were annihilated during the first months of the occupation. The human victims of WW II amounted to over 5.5 million in the home country of Poland alone.*17

The situation was no different in the Soviet-occupied eastern regions of Poland: aside from the soldiers who became prisoners, leaders of the political parties and of public administration, politicians, the intelligentsia, as well as priests, were arrested by droves. The Soviet administration considered everyone a Soviet citizen; as a consequence the Soviet penal code was applied to any transgression of anti-Soviet activity or resistance. Tens of thousands

of the arrested were taken to exile in Siberia or to the forced labour camps; in the mass graves of the Gulag rest the bodies of thousands of Polish prisoners. Moscow also made good use of the system of deportations: they "cleansed" purely Polish regions and settled Ukrainians, Bielorussians and other nationalities in their stead. The lives of the officers and non-commissioned officers who became prisoners of the Soviets ended tragically: these, together with politicians and leading intellectuals, were gathered between Smolensk and Harkov and were put under pressure to join the Red Army. This was particularly true for technical officers and non-commissioned officers. Officers loyal to their oath and their government refused to comply. These were liquidated in May, 1940. The mass graves of Katyn and Starobielsk received the bodies of about 25,000 officers.*[18]

The Polish Government and the Reorganization of the Resistance

The Romanian authorities completely isolated the Polish head of state, the government, and the military high command that had fled onto its territory on September 17, 1939, even though the two nations - Romania and Poland - had, since 1929, a friendship and cooperation agreement in effect between them. This was the reason the civilian and military leadership of Poland relocated onto Romanian territory and to try, from there, to reorganize Polish resistance. However, Romania did not live up to her obligations under the pact; she simply "disconnected" the civilian authority and the military from further events. Several representatives of Polish political life, as well as commanders of the highest rank, departed - mostly through Hungary - for France and England whence to undertake the reorganization of Polish resistance. On September 30, 1939, Ignacy Moscinski *19, aware of his situation and taking full responsibility for what had happened, resigned from his office and empowered Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz *20, who had fled to western Europe, to form a new Polish government that was to function abroad. On that very same day, in Angers, France, Raczkiewicz named general Wladyslaw Sikorski as prime minister and defense minister to reorganize the Polish government and military.*21

The government-in exile was composed of members of the Labour-, Nationalist-, Peasant-, and Polish Socialist parties which functioned in Angers until France's German occupation, then in London. On November 7, 1939, general Sikorski received President Raczkiewicz's instructions to establish a Polish military high command which would coordinate all anti-German military activities within and outside of Poland and organize its forces recruited among the soldiers who fled to France, as well as among the volunteers of the Polish colonies living in western Europe and America. First, the Sikorski-government entered into an agreement with the English and French governments concerning the reorganization of the Polish army. Then the agreement of January 4, 1940 between France and Poland clarified the status of the Polish army the equipment of which was undertaken by France. On December 31, 1939, he ordered the Polish soldiers in Yugoslavia and Hungary to evacuate to France. At the same time, he asked the young Poles living in

Belgium, France and America to join his forces.

By the spring of 1940, he had an army of 75,000 men stationed in France, England, and the Middle East. When France was overrun by the Germans, units of the Polish army fought alongside the French troops. About 10,000 Poles were caught in France where they reinforced the resistance movement.

On August 5, 1940, the Sikorski government signed a new pact with England which regulated the presence of the Polish troops in England. On August 22, 1940 they came under the High Command of the British Commonwealth of natins and fought, as allies, in the battles of the near- and middle-East, particularly in Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Lybia and Tunisia. They participated in the Sicilian and south-Italian landings, the invasion of Normandy, the liberation of France, and all the actions in Germany.

Of course the Polish government-in-exile did not give up on, or remain neutral to the fate of, close to 200,000 Polish soldiers who became prisoners of the Soviets on September 17, 1939. Right from the beginning, the Soviet government did not recognize the Sikorski government and showed marked hostility towards it. After the outbreak of he German-Soviet war, on July 30, 1941 the Soviet-Polish pact was signed in London. As a consequence, on August 14, 1941 an agreement was reached on the organization of the Polish army on Soviet territory. Already at the time of the pact, the question of the Polish officers' corps and its whereabouts was raised but was never openly answered; their fate was kept a deep secret.*22 Because of the tight situation the Soviet Union found herself in, Stalin and Sikorski signed a new pact of cooperation on December 4, 1941 in Moscow. This brought real cooperation about and the organization of the Polish army could begin. But this resulted in some more conflict: the Soviets at first, refused to accept general Wladyslaw Anders *23 as Commander-in-Chief and wanted the Polish military forces of about 100,000 men under their own command. This jeopardized the decision-making powers of the Polish high command. It was feared that, because of the poor equipment of the Polish army, it will just be used as a shield and left to bleed to death and will be fully subservient to the Soviet command. General Anders flew to London and it is only due to the severe pressure applied by the Allies that the spring of 1942 saw the deployment in Iraq of the Polish army when 120,000 men left the Soviet Union. They were then present at the great battles of the middle-East, the landing in Italy. They also figured in the plans of the projected landing in the Balkans.

Local resistance was reorganized in September 1939 when general Michal Kraszewicz-Tokarzewski tried to concentrate the

disparate forces into his organization called In the Service of Poland's Victory. Independently of this, general Sikorski ordered general Kazimierz Sosnkowski*[24] to establish the regional units of the Alliance of Armed Fighters. This Alliance was composed of the officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers who did not become prisoners-of-war, as well as the reservists and volunteers. To this Alliance were also joined the military bases that the refugee soldiers established in Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and other places. Again upon ordes of Sikorski, the general in charge of the Alliance of Armed Fighters became general Sosnkowski who was evacuated, via Hungary, to France from where he directed the operations of the local resistance and of the various bases. He also stayed in contact with Warsaw Budapest-Zagreb-Paris and kept the communications open with the middle East, the Balkans (Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey), and maintained as well courier service through Lithuania and Sweden.

The first big tasks of the Alliance of Armed Fighters was to set up the evacuation towards France and the Middle-East and to establish the cadres of the local resistance. During the first phase of this organization and to keep it effective, armed clashes were prohibited to avoid its being destroyed before it was born. In May, 1940 the high command of the Alliance of Armed Fighters was relocated to London, merged with the military general staff, and continued to function as its VIth division. General Roweczki *[25] became commander of the local resistance; he reorganized the contacts with the government-in-exile and the general staff during the summer of 1940. The reestablishment of these contacts made it possible to put locally into place the representatives of the government-in-exile. It was through them that this government directed the anti-German activities. Only after this thorough preparatory work, could the all-encompassing military action begin. This did, indeed, cause serious troubles to the occupying German forces: it wreaked havoc with the supply lines to their advancing forces thus making difficulties for the military leaders. On February 14, 1942, the general staff in London reorganized the local military units into the "Home Army" and coordinated its activities with those of the general staff.

Aside from the military units functioning under orders from the general staff in London, the partisan units influenced by the Soviet Union also came into being in early 1940. These partisan units joined forces in 1941 under the name of Fighting Alliance which transformed itself in early January 1942 into the armed troops of the Popular Guard. There is no doubt that the Popular Guard inflicted severe damage on the German forces but always represented the

Soviet's point of view.

A break in the relations between Moscow and the government in-exile in London came about in 1943: in April of that year the mass graves of the Polish officers who were murdered by the Soviets in Katyin were discovered. Moscow put the blame on the Germans. On April 25, 1943, the Polish government broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

The year 1943 brought several momentous turning points to the European conduct of the war: on the eastern front, it marked the beginning of the German retreat, it saw the landings in Italy and, in Poland, the increased activities, code-named "storm", of the Home Army causing incredible losses to the occupying forces. By that time, Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski*[26] led the Home Army instead of general Rowecki who had been arrested by the Gestapo. The differences between the Home Army and the Popular Guard became more and more acute as the Popular Guard tried to prepare the country for a Soviet-style take-over after the war. Moscow made no secret of her intentions to shape post-war Poland's future. The activities of the Popular Guard took on increased importance with the advance of the Soviet troops. This political direction created the National Public Council which immediately contacted the Polish communist emigres in Moscow. Stalin accepted this organism as official representatives of Poland. At the same time, Stalin refused Churchill's plea that Moscow re-establish diplomatic relations with the London-based government-in-exile even though the Polish question was central to the on-going discussions among the four great powers. As soon as on July 21, 1944 in Chelmsk the first Polish city occupied by the Soviet troops - the Polish Committee for National Liberation was formed, Stalin immediately recognized it as the provisional Polish government and urged it to create a new public administration.

A tragic consequence of this conflict was the Warsaw Revolt when the Home Army fought the Germans heroically for 66 days while the Soviet army stood by, on the other side of the Vistula, watching with indifference as the revolt was crushed and tens of thousands of Poles lost their lives. Only after the last Polish soldier died and Warsaw was reduced to rubble did the Soviet Army cross the Vistula and take possession of the ruined capital. Thereafter, members of the Home Army were subjected to a manhunt and Moscow reported to her allies that these soldiers commit atrocities behind the Soviet lines. Moscow never acknowledged the existence of the other Poland. On April 21, 1945, she signed the Soviet-Polish pact of friendship, mutual assistance and cooperation with the government she installed herself.

The Hungarian government and the Polish refugee question. September 1939

The German guns were already booming when on September 1, 1939, German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop informed the Hungarian government, via the Hungarian legation in Berlin, of the outbreak of the German-Polish armed conflict. At the same time, Budapest was told that "the German government does not, for the time being, expect any military aid", and only asks the Hungarian government not to proclaim its neutrality. Pal Teleki*27 and his government knew that this was not the end of the matter; sooner or later, the Germans will ask for permission to their troops cross through Hungarian territory. In his letter of September 5, 1939 to the Italian Foreign Minister, Foreign Minister Csaky informed Ciano that Hungary intends to stand by her earlier resolve to deny all demands of passage. On the very same day, Hungarian minister Dome Sztojay *28 was asked by Berlin whether Hungary had any territorial claims against Poland. The question meant that Berlin still supported Hungary's guest to restore her historica boundaries but that support came at a price. During Csaky's*29 September 7, 1939 visit to Berlin the question of transit was not raised. However, two days later, on September 9, 1939, Ribbentrop telephoned Foreign Minister Csaky from Berlin, asking, on behalf of the German Army, for the Kassa-Homonna-Lupkow railline which the army was to use the next day already. Csaky could not reply to this request without authorization from the Council of Ministers; all he was able to do was to forward it to the government. The very same day, during discussions, it was decided to reject the request, a decision that was seconded by the government. It was stressed in the reply that acceding to such a request "would not live up to Hungary's honour."*30

Naturally the reply outraged Berlin, prompting Ciano to write the following sentence in his journal: "The Germans will not forget this refusal and the Hungarians will pay for it sometime."*31 This was not the end of the story, though: the next day the Slovakian government asked for the use of the Kassa-Nagyszalac railline. This too was refused with the threat of mobilizng Hungarian troops in

that region should the Slovaks attempt to force the issue. Reacting, German minister Ermannsdorf stated to the Hungarian government that Slovakia being under German protection, any force will be met with German force.*[32]

By standing by her resolve, Hungary not only gave proof of her friendship for Poland, but helped the Polish army. It also made the refugees' flight into Hungary easier

The Hungarian press followed Germany's Polish campaign as factually as was possible while not trying to hide its friendship towards Poland or its sympathy for the stricken population. The articles cover tragedies, arousing pity in the readers. Nowhere is there praise for the actions of the German troops. From mid-September on, more and more articles covered the appearance of Polish refugees in Romania and Lithuania.

The standpoint of the Hungarian government

Giving in to German demands, the Hungarian government did not proclaim its neutrality in the German-Polish conflict but this did not lessen the tensions caused by the pro-Polish attitude of the Teleki government. Germany suspended the delivery of war materiel to Hungary; as a reply, Teleki introduced special measures which he also applied to the pro-German political parties. Teleki counted on the first appearance of the Polish refugees at the beginning of September, 1939 and set his time-table accordingly. We have to emphasize in this inroduction that Hungary, from September 1939 on throughout WW II, offered such exceptional care to the military and civilian Polish refugees that it attracted the attention of the whole of Europe. This made it possible for the Polish soldiers to move from our territory to western Europe to join the reorganized Polish army. The care of the Polish refugees fused the anti-German political movements together, hiding anti-Hitlerian endeavours behind the official and societal assistance.

The acceptance of the Polish refugees and their humane treatment provoked even more heated German protestations as in the spring of 1939. Berlin viewed with acute distaste the reception of the refugees in Romania, Hungary and Lithuania. It was out of political reasons that the Polish refugees gravitated toward Romania where the pro-German government "created" even worse conditions than if they had stayed home.*33

Early on, Berlin "informed" the Hungarian government of her feelings about the Polish refugees. Foreign Under-Secretary Weizsacker told Hungarian minister Dome Sztojay on September 17, 1939: "We put the heaviest pressure on Romania concerning her treatment of the Polish refugees crossing the Polish Romanian border. We expect strict neutrality of her vis-a vis Polish soldiers, that is that they be immediately disarmed and interned." Not much later, Bulgarian German minister Wilhelm Fabricius told Hungarian minister Bardossy: "The treatment and care given to the Polish refugees in countries frendly to the Axis powers are against German interests."*34 These remarks were meant as warnings as the first Polish refugee did not set foot on Hungarian soil until September

10, 1939. They arrived in bigger waves after September 15, 1939, over the Verecke-, Tatar-, and Jablonka-passes.

The Teleki government was ready to receive them but it could not estimate their numbers nor the rhythm of their arrival. It knew it could count first on lots of soldiers, but it never thought of the civilian refugees, among them so many children. Therefore, it instructed the military commands of Munkacs, Ungvar, Beregszasz, and Kassa to put as many units on the border as was necessary for the reception, according to international agreements, of the refugees seeking asylum. It also informed the public administrators to expect a great number of refugees. They were to provide temporary shelters for them and, together with the army, see to their provisioning, They were to be assisted by the Red Cross.*35

The situation in Poland changed daily: on September 17, 1939, the government transferred its headquarters to Romania; the Red Army crossed the Polish-Soviet border and, without great resistance, took possession of a significant amount of Polish territory; Warsaw was strangled by the German troops laying siege. The conditions became hopeless; more and more units of the Polish army sought refuge in Lithuania, Romania, and Hungary. As early as September 17, 1939 Polish Minister Orlowski*36 asked Foreign Minister Csaky what kind of treatment Hungary intended to give to the refugees. Csaky's reply was clear: Hungary was going to abide by the Geneva convention. This meant disarming the soldiers and putting them into camps established in the country's center. As for the civilian population, the government saw two choices: those who were able to fend for themselves would be considered alien citizens; those who could not would be taken into the government's care and placed in refugee camps. At the same time, Csaky asked Orlowski to have his non-essential personnel, as well as that of the consulate at Ungvar go to places assigned by the military on the border to assist in the reception of the refugees.*37

The interest displayed by he Polish minister was to be expected. Hungarian minister to Warsaw, Andras Hory *38 , who followed the government in its move, had already transmitted the Polish foreign ministry's request that Hungary come to the aid of the refugees*39. Few days later, the Polish military attache asked for an audience at the Hungarian foreign ministry in a similar matter. Foreign Minister Csaky informed Polish minister Orlowski of the Hungarian standpoint, even though the government had not yet dealt

with a request of this nature. On September 18, 1939, in agreement with Interior Minister Ferenc Keresztes Fischer,*40 Prime Minister Pal Teleki gave the necessary instructions to open the Polish-Hungarian border. During its meeting of September 24, 1939, the government belatedly approved of this measure, officially accepting the refugees and discussed their treatment.*41 Foreign Minister Csaky informed the Polish minister of the government's decision which the latter immediately transmitted to his government. In possession of this decision, the commander-in-chief ordered the commanders of its Carpathian Army deployed in the border region to take their units across the Hungarian Polish frontier. The following days, complete units crossed the border, among them the 10th armoured brigade; the 3rd mountaineering sharp-shooters' brigade; the 3rd heavy artillery regiment; the 3rd regiment of fusiliers from Podhale; the 4th regiment of sappers from Stryj; the 9th and 12th regiments of Uhlans; the militias from Cracow, Poznan, Przemysl, and Lwov; the battalion of railroad defense; the police and customsmen; the border guards of the southeasten sector; the Institute of Military Cartography; as well as the 5th signal corps from Cracow. During the next few days arrived at the border: the 53rd infantry regiment from Warsaw; the 11th motorized anti-aircraft regiment; the mechanized artillery division from Stryj; the armoured division from Brest; the 6th regiment of fusiliers from Podhale; the armoured units of the 9th regiment; as well as the 9th field hospital. Aside from the above whole units, smaller units, as well as individual soldiers crossed the border.*42

Their reception was well organized: after being disarmed, these whole units set up their camps near the frontier, provisioned by the military. From there, they were directed towards the country's interior. On the other hand, a different and confused picture emerges from the reception of the civilian population and of the individual soldiers. In theory, the latter also belonged under military surveillance but, by-passing the Hungarian authorities and the designated sites, they tried to reach Budapest and the interior regions. They were helped along by the Hungarian population which received them with open arms. This was so flagrant that on September 27, 1939, the Chief of General Staff*43 issued the following instructions: "...In the cities, the local residents buy up the Polish military insignia and wear them provocatively. They greet everyone with enthusiasm. I must draw attention to the foreign policy consequences of this undesirable demonstration."

The Hungarian and Polish governments were in constant touch

since September 17, 1939 to formulate the parameters of the care to be given to the refugees. Kobylanski, Chief of Cabinet of the Polish foreign ministry, Jerzy Nowak, president of the Polish National Bank, and other important persons came to Budapest. The representatives made several trips between Budapest and Slanik, the Polish government's temporary headquarters. *44 This contact was important: it helped formulate the treatment of the refugees and avoid unexpected surprises. The newspapers informed their readers of what went on at the border and of the reception of the refugees. The September 21, 1939 issue of "Fuggetlen Magyarorszag" ("Independent Hungary") reports: "...There are refugees everywhere; in the public buildings, improvised hospitals. Every space is taken up by the flood of refugees. According to some calculations, over 20,000 military and more than 50,000 civilian refugees crossed the frontier. *45

The discussions with the Polish government's representatives served as the basis for the meeting of the Council of Ministers of September 22, 1939, as well as for the conference of September 24, 1939 with the Interior-, Foreign-, and Defense-ministries, as well as with the representative of the Prime Minister's office. At this conference was formulated the organization of the care of the refugees, the scope of its duties and the division of its responsibilities. The conferees wished to apply Law XXX. of 1936 which was based on the Geneva Convention of 1929 that Hungary had signed when she became a member of the League of Nations. This law defines the treatment to be given to prisoners-of-war and to military refugees. It was decided at this conference that the Defense Ministry will take care of the military refugees, and the Interior Ministry of the civilians. It was further decided to ask for the assistance of the international aid and humanitarian organizations and to include the activities of the similar local ones. As a result, the Defense Ministry established its 21. department dealing with the prisoners-of-war. Within the Interior Ministry, this fell to its Office of Alien Control *47 and the IX. Division of Social Work and Assistance.

On September 25, 1939, after the government's decision was reached, Defense Minister Karoly Bartha*48 issued detailed instructions concerning the care of the military refugees, their disarming and placing in temporary camps. These instructions define for the first time the organization of the military internment camps: the Defense Ministry was responsible for their location, for providing the food and the armed guards but discipline inside the camps was maintained with the assistance of the Polish officer

corps. Thus, a senior officer or an elected person functioned alongside the camp commander and saw to it that discipline was maintained in the camp, that the commander's every order or instruction was promptly carried out, etc.*[49]

It is a fact that by the beginning of Octoberr 1939, there already were 88 civilian and 91 military camps on Hungarian territory, the inhabitants of the latter being the more numerous. More and more attention was, however, focussed on the civilian population as there were no definitive treaties regulating their legal status as was the case for the military personnel. In general, they were interned as illegal aliens under police supervision. In their case, Hungary departed from the general rule: after being registered by the police, the refugees came under the care of the Social Work Division of the Interior Ministry. Instead of being placed in internment camps, the refugees were given "alternative" accomodations. The camps were only virtual camps as the administrative region indicated as the refugee's place of residence became his camp. The refugees were lodged in private homes, boarding houses, or hotels.

This phenomenon was duly noted by the foreign press. MTI's London correspondent reported to Budapest: "...Hungary's reception of the Polish refugees did not escape England's attention. Lord Noel Burton emphasized that the Hungarian Children's Welfare organization sent to the border one of the eminent administrative experts who, aside from his work of general welfare, set up temporary schools for the refugeesl children and directed the nationwide organization for their care."*[50] Although there is a slight mistake in this quotation, it is clear who is meant by it: Dr. Jozsef Antall (1896-1974) then a high ranking official, director of the Interior Ministry's Social Work and Welfare department (his son became Prime Minister of Hungary after the fall of the Communist regime in l990). Later, the Poles affectionately called him "Daddy" and considered him as their ultimate protector. Within the ministry he dealt with refugees since 1938, first with the over 100,000 Hungarian refugees from Transylvania.*[51]

After 1945, dr. Jozsef Antall became Minister of Reconstruction; in his recollections he writes: "...In Hungary, the treatment of the refugees was based on the rare cooperation of the government and the opposition parties. The Transylvanian Hungarians and the Poles represented the two biggest groups. Later some other groups were formed. such as the French, English, Russian, Dutch, Yugoslav, Belgian, and Czech, but none reached the numbers of these two. Then, from various countries, came the

Jews whom we immediately supplied with Christian papers; later, after Italy's defection. the Italians of Badoglio."

There was no disparity between the government and the opposition about the treatment of the refugees. I am sure that no student of the times who knows the political situation in our country can believe that the matter of the refugees could be handled without Regent Horthy's agreement or without the support of Prime Minister Pal Teleki and Miklos Kallay. *52 Not to mention Interior Minister Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer who, throughout the war, was the refugees' helper and protector. His role took on a particular importance when, during Laszlo Bardossy's prime ministership. Changes occurred in the General Staff, some members of which were unfavourable to our cause. It is perhaps unnecessary for me to mention that among the higher ranking leaders of the prime minister's office and the foreign ministry our work was highly regarded.

Pal Teleki and Miklos Kallay asked me several times to report on the refugee question and I had to keep Keresztes-Fischer regularly posted. lt is interesting that I never received any instructions from either the Prime Minister or my immediate supervisor, the Interior Minister.

They acknowledged my riport, or part of it I found politically expedient to report. They assured me of their trust. Under the circumstances, I could not expect more. Posterity must be attuned to these conditions. The anti-Hitler - or "pro-British" as they were known then - members of the government gave me no instructions to establish schools and even less to supply the Jews with Christian papers; these were kept for special circumstances. But I knew they were with me; the minister trusted me. I repaid his trust by not telling him of disagreeable problems: I took care of these myself or enlisted the help of my friends in the Opposition, such as the Rev. Bela Varga*53, the pastor of Balatonboglar and parliamentary representative of the Smallholders Party. Within the Interior Ministry, Laszlo Osvath, Ministerial Division Head and Interior Minister Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer's most trusted collaborator, was of tremedous help in all good causes, not the least of which was refugee care's success. Laszlo Osvath*54 was not only the personification of correct human attitudes but also a dyed-in-the-wool Hungarian of a humanistic point of view and deep social sensibilities. His guiet, modest demeanour hid great bureaucratic expertise and profound human wisdom. As chief of the presidential division, he played a decisive role in questions of personnel and in creating the paradigms of my functions. Our activities could not

have become so successful without our developing personal friendship and political accord. He is one of the "forgotten people" in present-day Hungary; he had to suffer many injustices, like ZoltanBallo*55, Utassy*56 without whom we could not now talk of the "other Hungary" and her modest but undeniable good deeds. Although it can not be proven, I always had the feeling that he (Utassy) recommended me as chief of personnel to Minister Keresztes-Fischer. The Minister, as well as Pal Teleki, always treated me with special recognition. I think I deserved this trust, ending in the German Gestapo's prison. Laszlo Osvath contributed greatly to the success of refugee care by supplying me with the tools I needed, giving me sage advice, and "intervened" in questions that necessitated his human and political experience" Thus summarizes Jozsef Antall in his memoirs the management of refugee care.*57

It was Jozsef Antall also who gave an interview in 1971 to Polish Television on those fateful days in September: ". . . We felt that no limiting regulations must be applied to the Polish refugees. I was put in charge of their care; but the Hungarian people - who never heard of moral principles, the Geneva Convention, the Hague Agreement were way ahead of us. They were right there, at the border, receiving the Polish refugees, unselfishly urging, them "to come, Poles, stay with us". They gave the refugees everything that a Hungarian peasant might possess. I, as the guardian of the Poles, their Government Commissioner, traveled to the border to establish receiving stations..."*58

It is evident from contemporary sources that the housing and feeding of a significant number of Poles caused sonsiderable problems for the Hungarian authorities. The IX. Division of the Interior Ministry issued orders to the public administration units near the borders to cooperate with the military, as well as with the domestic and foreign aid associations*59. To coordinate their activities and unify them, the Association of Hungarian-Polish Societies*60, together with the domestic and foreign Red Cross organizations and other humanitarian institutions, created the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care, as the coordinator of all the volunteer societies' activities. Before its creation, the Association of Polish Societies and the Hungarian Red Cross separately and individually - rallied their forces, sent their activists to the border to help the refugees.and be of assistance to the public administration units. Already on September 9, 1939, the Hungarian Red Cross organized camp kitchens and temporary shelters near the

border. Their main centers were Kassa, Ungvar, and Munkacs, as well as the settlements near the mountain passes. The Hungarian Miczkiewicz Society, the Hungarian-Polish University Students' Association, the National Hungarian-Polish Scout Association, and the Association of Polish Legionnaires organized nation -wide collections, the proceeds of which were given to the Defense and Interior Ministries*61. These societies formed the Hungarian-Polish Commmittee of Refugee Care, the creation of which was also strongly urged by the Hungarian officials. The Polish Legation participated actively in the work of this Committee; the Polish government contributed material and monetary assistance provided by foreign aid associations which was thus easily diverted to the Hungarian authorities for the care of the refugees. This care required a close and effective cooperation between the voluntary organizatins and the Hungarian state offices.

Based on contemporary documents, memoirs, and historical research, this cooperation was complete. The Defense or Interior Ministry could always obtain material and human help from the Committee which, in turn, always asked the authorities for their opinion in humanitarian or assistance questions. The judicious use of the financial help was particularly important in the autumn of 1939 when several tens of thousands, possibly even 100,000 refugees needed care. That is why the Coordinating Committee*62 was formed with the participation of the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care, together with representatives of the Defense, the Interior and the Foreign Ministries, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Polish Legation. The Red Cross, in the meanwhile, established its own temporary camps, organized the transport of the refugees away from the borders, helped the Defense and Interior Ministries in establishing and provisioning camps in the country's interior, and with settling the refugees there*63.

The location of these camps created a special problem. Most of the refugees wanted to be as far away as possible from the, by then, Hungarian-Soviet or Hungarian-German borders. Many already contemplated leaving the country; in fact the soldiers awaited such an order. There were several plans but both the Defense and Interior Ministries honoured the Poles' wishes. They wanted to be close to the Yugoslav border, the authorities, however, had to pay special attention not to place them near villages with strong Volksbund or Arrrow-Cross Party organizations so as making German espionage more difficult*64. This topic was already discussed during the Hungarian-Polish military conference of September 17, 1939; they

asked for a central camp in Baja so as to be as close as possible to the frontier*65. The organization of these camps fell to Jozsef Antall who picked sites (Nagykanizsa, Kalocsa, Lenti, etc.) where he knew the local authorities to be anti-German and friends of the refugees.

In his l974 memoirs, Tamas Salamon Racz*66, retired deputy minister, in 1939 secretary of the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care, writes the following on the question of finding sites for the camps: "....according to Polish wishes we proposed to organize the camps along the Hungarian-Yugoslav border, on the shores of Lake Balaton, in the Baja region, from Hercegszanto to Lenti. Jozsef Antall, the government's Commissioner for Refugees, accepted our proposal and designated villages where, he knew, the authorities were friends of the refugees (Kalocsa, Nagykanizsa, Lenti, etc.) and will participate in the establishment of the camps. Upon his instructions, the camps were organized. It happened in some cases that he could not let it be known to ignore the escapes from the camp. In many places we dealt with honest, well-intentioned people who did what they could to help us and supported the refugees, such as the ones in Nagykanizsa and Lenti. We know that throughout the country but in the ministries also there were two trends: one was wholly friendly to the Poles, the other - particularly some members of the Interior Ministry's Police and Constabulary Divisions - tended to side with the Germans. The Hungarian government's attitude was to follow the precepts of international law. Thus, the soldiers were interned; the civilians were assigned to specific locations which they could leave in exceptional cases only and never the country. This was changed in the spring of l940 when the rules were considerably eased. We also had to reckon with these if we wanted to facilitate the refugees' escape. One section of the Interior Ministry closed an eye when refugees "disappeared" or escaped through the border; in fact, it instructed its agents to do so though not, of course, in writing. We had to count on determined resistance from the other section. It happened many a times that the constables fired on the refugees or on the cars transporting them if they did not stop upon command. Of course, the majority acted differently but we must not discount the difficulties one section caused the other"*67.

The section that Tamas Salamon-Racz mentions in his memoirs based its attitude on the anti-refugee standpoint and the protestations of the Germans.. Through its agents, the German Legation observed the pro-refugee attitudes of Hungarian society and its manifest signs

of friendship for the Poles, their humane treatment by the official authorities, their willingness to help them escape. While at the beginning of September, 1939 they only sent "warnings" to the Hungarians about their attitude, by the second half of September the protests became constant; in fact, on October, 14, 1939 the German ambassador handed a sharply-worded memorandum from his government to Foreign Minister Csaky*[68]. Some excerpts from this: ..." it is a violation of the law of neutrality that in some camps the Polish officers were allowed to keep their weapons; - that there is open fraternization between Polish and Hungarian officers; - that the Hungarian govermnent tolerates the continued functioning of the Polish Legation; - that there is open recruitment in some military camps and that the Polish Legation opened a special office to organize and facilitate the escapes toward France."

From the protest of October 27, 1939: "the local Polish Consulate issues passports already stamped with French visas, as well as letters of recommendations addressed to the Yugoslav legation and travel papers to the Italian authorities to all refugees who ask for them. According to reliable reports, the French Legation gives, in some cases, false French passports to the refugees although the French minister denied this to our Foreign Minister. On the basis of this new incriminating evidence, we issue our strong protest to the Foreign Minister for these new violations of the law of neutrality. ."*[69]

The German press also attacked this Hungarian friendship for the Poles. From the October 27, 1939 of the Neue Tageblatt: ". . . we shall no longer tolerate the care that the Hungarians give to this demoralized Polish rabble!!!" Berliner Borzezeitung, October 28, 1939: "... the irrational Hungarian sentimentality towards the Poles must be ended once and for all."

At that time, Neurath, then German Foreign Minister, told the Hungarian consul in Prague: "In Berlin it is viewed with displeasure that the Polish officers were not interned in Hungary, thus making it likely that they will escape to the Polish forces in France. As far as Berlin knows the Hungarian military circles maintained the correct attitude but the behaviour of others, non-military people, can hardly be squared with international norms."*[70]

Because of the German protests and "warnings", the otherwise pro-Pole Minister of Defense, Karoly Bartha, issued on October 2, 1939, a circular letter addressed to all army corps commanders. In it, he draws his commanders' attention to the following: "...despite the instructions given about the internment and care of the members

of the Polish armed forces that entered Hungary, there are always cases that document the non-compliance with these decisions... Lately, I have been informed that a transport of Polish soldiers was greeted with a military band at the station and was accompanied by them to their internment camp... In Budapest, one still meets Polish officers or soldiers, walking about by themselves and in uniform. I cannot ignore these and must warn the army commanders that it is of the utmost importance to carry out my instructions which are based on the Geneva Convention. Our neighbors view it as a breach of the law of neutrality the delayed internment of, and open fraternization with members of the Polish armed forces. I do not have to press that such behaviour could lead to disagreeable consequences for the government and be the starting point of some unpleasant incidents."*[71]

It was obvious to all that the Minister meant Germany when speaking of "neighbors". It was in the interest of the Hungarian authorities to enforce discipline in the camps - at least outwardly - as the lack of it created the basis of the German protests, thus making the evacuations more difficult. Both ministries regulated the limitations on the refugees, the functioning of the camps, their supervision, and the means of their provisioning. To strengthen discipline, it was decreed that the officers could only leave the military camps "against their word", and the enlisted men only in an organized and supervised fashion. For the civilian population, "leaving camp" meant leaving the administrative boundaries. On the other hand, it was also decreed that unauthorized "leaving camp" could not be punished by judicial hearing; therefore a "penal camp" was established in Siklos. This applied to both the military and the civilians alike; Here punishment meant that one was under no circumstances allowed to leave the camp during the term of the sentence. Aside from that, the inmates were free to maintain contact with the world and could be visited by their relatives. Until the spring of 1940, the fortress at Komarom was reserved for detaining for a specified time those soldiers who were caught trying to escapc. But here the Hungarian arrny was "tolerant" and - as many memoirs testify - often helped the refugees to escape once more. Gaudiers, member of the Ieague of Nation's medical commission, alludes to these contradictions between reality and the ministerial decrees when he expresses his surprise that during the last days of Sepember 1939 only 4 Hungarian soldiers guarded several thousand Polish refugees in the Losonc camp and that no camp commander was as yet named by the Hungarian authorities."*[72]

NOTES

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(2) National Archives. Foreign Ministry (heretofore FM) K.63.1939. 17/715000
(3) Ibid. FM, K.429. 3/1940: 17/7/45-47 f.
(4) Ibid. FM, K.429. 3/1939. 17/7/345 f.
(5) Batowski, Henryk: Pierszwe Tygodnie Wojny, Poznan, 1967
(6) Op.Cit.
(7) Records of the Lower House of Parliament, Budapest, 1939. Vol. 2. Minutes of the first opening session
(8) Diplomaciai Iratok Magyarorszag Kulpolitikajahoz 1939-1943, Vol. IV, Budapest, 1966.
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(10) lbid; 17/7/ 7214
(11) Ibid. 17/7/ 7233
(12) Batowski, Henryk: Op. Cit (5)

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(14) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op. Cit (1 /15)
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(17) Szokolay, Katalin: A Varsoi Getto, Budapest, 1978
(18) Dokumenty Ludobojtswa. Katyn. Warsaw, 1992
(19) Moscinski, Ignacy (1867-1946): President of the Polish Republic between June 1926 and September 29, 1939. From 1912, chemistry professor at the University of Lwow; organized the chemical industry after 1918. He urged strenghtening the presidential power and was for reorganization. Together with the Polish government and parliament, on September 17, 1939 he defected to Romania where he was interned. On September 29, 1939 he resigned his post and passed his duties on to W. Raczkiewicz. He lived in Switzerland from December 1939 on.
(20) Raczkiewicz, Wladyslaw (1885-1047), President of the Polish Republic in exile. Lawyer, minister of the interior in 1926, 1925-1926, 1935-1936. Marshall (president) of the Polish szejm (parliament). From 1934, president of the Polish World Federation; because of this, W. Moscinski passed on to him the post of President of the Republic. He summoned to Angers (near Paris) all the exiled members of the Szejm. On September 30, 1939, he named General Sikorski prime minister and minister of defense; on October 7, 1939 the army's commander-in-chief and chief supervisor.
(21) Sikorski, Wladyslaw (1881-1943), Polish general, prime minister, commander-in-chief. Originally hydraulic engineer. Member of the Pilsudski led Association of Combatants and of the chief council of the Independence Movement. During WWI was head of the military office. In 1920 he was Chief of Staff of the 5th and later the 3rd army corps; 1921-22 prime minister and defense minister; 1922-23 defense minister; 1924-25 commander of the Lwow regional army corps; after 1925 politician opposed to Pilsudski's policy of reorganization. In September 1939, he escaped to Romania and went to France from there. On September 30, 1939 he became prime minister and defense minister, on October 7, 1939 commander-in-chief. In the autumn of 1939 he organized the European and North African Polish armies and domestic resistance was developed under his direction. He settled the Polish government's and army's relationship with, and the forms of assistance they received from, England and France. On July 30, 1941 he signed an agreement with the Soviet Union which came to naught in 1943 after the discovery of the mass graves at Katyn. On July 4, 1943 he died in Gibraltar in an airplane accident.
(22) As a result of the Soviet Union's coordinated attack with Germany on September 17, 1939, about 180,000 Polish soldiers became prisoners of the Soviet Union. Together with the civilians who were also captured, their number soon reached 250,000. In addition to the politicians, leading intellectuals, priests, and high-ranking officers, ordinary citizens were also taken to prisoner-of-war camps, and some were sent to Siberia. In the autmn of 1939, the Soviet military authorities and the NKVD opened three camps for the intermnent of the Polish officers: in Kozelsk, in Starobelsk, and in Ostaskov. Under the supervision of the NKVD came the 4,500 men in Kozelsk, 25 km. from Smolensk; the 3,900 in Starobelsk, east of Harkow; and 6,500 officers and men in Ostaskov, 320 km.

away from Moscow. Among them were 12 generals, 1 admiral, as well as numerous politicians, such as deputy prime minister Jan Stanislaw Jankowski; minister Stanislaw Jasiukiewicz; several members of the Szejm and the senate, and many university professors. They wanted the Polish officers to join the Red Army but since they refused, the three camps were liquidated more or less at the same time between April 3rd and the middle of May. The inhabitants of the camp at Kozelsk were murdered in Smolensk and the forest at Katyn. Those at Starobelsk met with the same fate while those kept at Ostaskov were drowned in the White Sea. So far only the mass graves at Katyn were opened up (about 9,000 people) but in 1991 mass graves were discovered at Starobelsk. The fate of some 1,400 officers is still unknown. Through some lucky circumstances about 500 escaped death. In the winter of 1943 some hungry wolves unearthed the corpses in the forests near Katyn leading the German troops to open up the mass graves reporting their find to Berlin on April 13, 1943. On April 15, 1943, TASS blamed the Germans for the massmurders of the Polish officers. In May, 1943, an international medical commission. among them Ferenc Orsos, professor at the University of Budapest, examined the bodies. It declared unanimously that the murders took place in April-May 1940 when this territory was under Soviet authority. In 1944, when this region came again under Soviet occupation, after some additional opening up of the graves, the Soviet authorities "proved" that the Germans were guilty of the mass murders. During the Nurnberg trials, the Soviet prosecutor accused some German officers of the mass slaughter in Katyn but the defendants could give proof of having been stationed elsewhere during the time indicated by the prosecutor. The charges were dropped. In 1989 Moscow admitted the NKVD's responsibility for the mass murders.

(23) Anders, Wladyslaw (1892- 1970), Polish general, politician. In the WWI he was an officer of the Russian army, from 1918 on, a colonel, then general of the Polish army. He was captured by the Soviets on September 20, 1939, then in September, 1941, became commander-in-chief of the Polish army established on Soviet territory. In 1942 he took his army through Iran to the Middle-East and became commander of the Polish army there. In l944-45, he commanded the Polish forces in Italy, was commander-in-chief of the Polish forces of the West in 1944. He stayed in exile after WWII, became member of the Council of Temporary National Unity. He died in London.

(24) Sosnkowski, Kazimierz (1885-1969), Polish general, politician. Before 1914, he was direct collaborator of J. Pilsudski, was chief of staff of the I. Brigade of the Polish Legionnaires; deputy of the President of the Military Council of the Temporary Council of State; was kept in prison in Germany in 1917. From 1918 he was one of the organizers of the Polish army and was commander of the reserves. Between the two wars, he was minister of defense, chief of the general staff, and corps commander. He was commander of the southern front in September 1939. From October, 1939 on, he organized the Association of the Armed Combatants. Upon orders from Sikorski, he evacuated through Hungary and was Minister of State and Vice-President of the Republic until 1941. From July 6, 1943 to September 30, 1944 he was commander-in-chief of the western Polish army. He settled in Canada in 1945 and lived near Montreal.

(25) Rowecki, Stefan (1895-1944) (aliases: Grabica, Grot, Rakon): Polish general, commander of the Home Army. Professional officer, served in various capacities.

From 1932-39 editor of the "Przeglad Wojskowi" (Military Review). In September 1939 he was commander of the armoured regiment defending Warsaw; from January 1940, commander, then from June 1940 commander-in-chief, of the Association of Armed Combatants in Poland. From February, 1942, commander-in-chief of the Home Army. On June 30, 1943, the Germans arrested him and he was held captive in Sachsenhausen. Upon news of the Warsaw uprising of 1944 the Germans executed him. He is author of the theoretical work entitled "Street Fighting" (1928).

(26) Komorowski, Tadeusz (1895-1969) (aliases: Bor, Korczak, Lawina, Znicz): Polish general, commander-in-chief. Before and during WWI, officer of the joint Austro-Hungarian army; between the two wars, professor at, and commander of, the Polish Military Academy. Commander of the Cracow division of the Association of Armed Combatants 1939-40, its deputy commander-in-chief 1940-43, from June 1943 commander-in-chief of the Home Army. The Warsaw uprising of 1944 broke out upon his command. On September 30, 1944 he was named commander-in-chief of the whole Polish army. He lived in Great-Britain after 1945; from 1947-49, he was president of the Polish government-in-exile. In 1951, he published in London his memoirs entitled The Underground Army

(27) Teleki, Pal count (1879- 1941): prime minister, internationally renowned geographer, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) (correspondent: 1913; director: 1922; honorary: 1925). Parliamentary representative of the Constitutional Party: 1909-15, 1915-18. Director of the Geographical Institute 1909-1913; general secretary, later president, of the Hungarian Geographic Society 1910-23; president of the Turan Society (1913-16) and of the League of Nature Conservation (1918-19); university professor from 1919. During the Republic, was foreign minister, than later agricultural minister in the Szeged government.; prime minister and foreign minister 1920-21; resigned after the first anti-royalist putsch. Founded the Revisionist League in 1927. He was among the first to recognize the dangers of Hitler's Germany. Between the two wars organized the means of intellectual development and was president of the Council of Public Education (1936-37); minister of religion and public education (1938-39). Prime Minister 1939-41. Reorganized the government's party under the name of Party of Hungarian Life; stood up to the attacks of the right- and left-wings, as well as to the meddlings of the Germans but was obliged to join the Tri-partite pact. In 1941 he signed an eternal friendship treaty with Yugoslavia but committed suicide as a protest against the Nazi attack of the southern Slavs (See C. A. Macartney's Teleki Pal Miniszterelnoksége (note 1/5)

(28) Sztojay (Stojakovics), Dome (1883-1946): politician, general, prime minister. First professional officer, then from 1935 to 1944 Hungarian minister in Berlin. Prime minister from March to August 1944 during the German occupation. During his reign significant German demands were met, such as sending a great number of Hungarian troops to the front, allowing the deportation of Jews, putting Hungarian agriculture at the disposal of Germany. Horthy forced him to resign on August 24, 1944. The People's Court condemned him to death as a war criminal and he was executed.

(29) Csaky, Istvan count (1894-1941): diplomat, foreign minister. From 1935 chief

of the foreign minister's cabinet, foreign minister from 1938 to his death.

(30) Op.Cit. (1/2)

(31) Ciano, Galeazzo: Journal Politique 1939-1943.

(32) Ibid.

(33) In September 1939 the retreating Polish army and masses of civilians fled, aside from Hungary, also to Romania and from there to Bulgaria, to Lithuania, Denmark, and Sweden. Abt. 15,000 soldiers and 5,000 civilians arrived in Lithuania, abt. 45,000 soldiers and 10.000 civilians to Romania. On September 17, 1939 the Polish Head of State, the government, and the commander-in-chief (Marshal Edward Rydz-Smigly) fled to Romania. This can be explained by the fact that since 1929 the two countries were joined in a friendship and mutual assistance pact. However, the Romanian authorities did not display the same attitude as the Hungarians: although it kept the terms of the Geneva Convention but interned the members of the government, leading politicians, the military leaders (as well as the soldiers and the civilians). Upon German demand, they forbade the Polish government all activities; this led to the resignation of the Head of State and the government. Financial assistance was deficient and so were the means of earning a living. According to the army's Office of Refugees, in the autumn of 1939, 102 camps were established where 66,000 internees were kept, of which abt 40,000 were soldiers and abt 25-26,000 were civilians. The camps were mixed, housing both soldiers and civilians, amd were strictly guarded - no one was allowed to leave them. They were centrally provisioned. The bigest camp was in Babadag where 19,645 Poles were kept. There were 25 generals,711 officers, 1804 junior officers, 2,358 non-commissioned officers, and (14),747 enlisted men. Members of the government and the Head of State were kept at a resort-town not far from Bucharest. Upon instructions from Gen. Sikorski, the secret Polish evacuation started from Romania also, coordinated with the Hungarian action, but most of the evacuated Polish soldiers went to France through Hungary. In addition, many refugees, having heard of their humane treatment, fled from Romania to Hungary. The closing of the Polish Legation in October 1940 perturbed the Polish government forcing it to transfer to Hungary the tasks of the proposed secret Polish military centers.

(34) National Archives, FN K.63. 17/7/72345

(35) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op. Cit. (1/15)

(36) Orlowski, Leon count, the Polish Republic's minister in Budapest 1936-41.

(37) National Archives, FM. K.63. 16/6999

(38) Hory, Andras (1883-1971): diplomat. Minister in Belgrade 1924-27; Rome 1927-31; Warsaw 1934-39. In 1934 permanent deputy of the foreign minister; retired in 1941. Physical labourer 1948-1962; he wrote his memoirs (From Bucharest to Warsaw, Budapest 1987) 1962-67 He emigrated to Austria in 1967 and died in Vienna.

(39) Hory, Andras: op.cit. (38)

(40) Keresztes-Fischer, Ferenc (1881-1948): politician, interior minister 1931-35, 1938-44. During WWII, member of the conservative, pro-British group of Bethlen, Kallay. Arrested by the Gestapo on the first day of the German occupation, was sent to concentration camp in August 1944. He did not return to Hungary after 1945. His ashes were brought back in 1994.

(41) National Archives. Minutes of the September 24, 1939 session of the Council of

Ministers.

(42) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (1/16)

(43) Werth, Henrik (1881-1946): colonel-general; chief of general staff 1939-41.

(44) Hory, Andras: Op. Cit.

(45) Fuggetlen Magyarorszag 1939, Sept. 21

(46) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (1/15)

(47) Ibid.

(48) Bartha, Karoly (1884-?) Colonel-general, minister of defense 1938-42

(49) Archives of Military History. MD. Pres. Ministerial order and circular letter of September 25, 1939.

(50) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (1/15)

(51) Antall, Jozsef, Sr. (1896-1974): politician, minister. From 1924 civil servant in the ministries of Public Welfare, Finance, and Interior. Head of the IM's IX.(social welfare) division, ministerial counsellor, commissioner of refugee care. After WWII deputy minister of reconstruction (August-November 1945), temporary finance minister (April 1945); minister of reconstruction in the first coalition government (November 1945-August 1946); politician (party director). representative of the Smallholders' Party (1945-50); president of the Hungarian Red Cross (August 1946 to 1949). For his efforts on behalf of the refugees he received decorations from Poland, France, Great Britain, USA, the Netherlands, as well as from other nations. In 1990 he received recognition from Israel as "A Man of Good Will . In Warsaw, Paris, and Jerusalem commemorative plagues were installed for him and in Warsaw a street and a Memorial Society was named after him. His son, Antall, Jozsef Jr. (1932-93) was prime minister after the transition (1990-93).

(52) Kallay, Miklos (1887-1971): politician, prime minister. Minister of Agriculture 1932-35; prime minister 1942-44, was foreign minister also 1942-43. In his foreign policy he leaned towards Great-Britain; in fact in 1943 he took steps to secede from the war. In his domestic policies he made concessions to the middle-class opposition. On March 19, 1944 he fled to the Turkish Legation, later surrendered to the Germans. He lived in Italy l945-50 but settled in the USA in 1951. He was member of the Hungarian National Committee which took the role of government-in-exile.

(53) Varga, Bela (1903-95): politician of the Smallholders' Party, Roman Catholic priest, papal prelate. Upon invitation of Gaston Gaal, he joined the Smallhoders' Party and became its parliamentary representative in 1939. From 1929 on he was parish priest in Balatonboglar where he organized the Polish high school. He played an important role in the care of the Polish refugees and provided cover for their anti-nazi activities. After March 19, 1944 he was forced into hiding and lived in Budapest from 1945 on and helped Wallenberg in rescuing Jews. From the spring of 1945, was one of the leaders of the Independent Smallholder's Party and orchestrated its electoral victory. Was Speaker of the House from February 3, 1946, to June 2, 1947 when, fearing arrest, he fled to the West. In 1949 became President of the Hungarian National Committee that took the role of government-in-exile. He returned in 1991.

(54) Osvath, Laszlo (1872-1970): lawyer, chief civil servant in the Interior Ministry which he joined in 1915. Head of the presidential division 1935-44. He had a significant role in establishing the parameters of refugee care and in its

guidance. Was close collaborator and confidant of Interior Minister Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer. He resigned from his post the day the Germans occupied Hungary, then was forced into hiding. In 1945 he was division head at the Interior Ministry for two months, then was retired. He was in internal deportation from 1951 to 1954. Worked as a physical labourer in a shoe factory, later became its bookkeeper.

(55) Balo, Zoltan (1883-1966): colonel. posthumously brigadier-general. From September 24, 1939 on he was head of the DM's 21. division, care-giver to the Polish, French, Dutch, etc. refugees who sought asylum in Hungary. Supported the secret resistance movement among the Polish military refugees; the evacuation. Therefore he was removed from his post upon German demand and was retired. In 1950, his pension was terminated and he was obliged to do physical labour. In l991, he was promoted to brigadier-general.

(56) Utassy, Lorand (1897-1974): general, economist, professional officer, military diplomat. Military attache at the League of Nations 1936; at the London, Washington, and Mexico Legations 1937-42. From 1943 head of the 21. division of the DM; he played a significant role in the care of refugees, in organizing the defense of theit rights during the German occupation. He was arrested on October 16, 1944 and was tried. In 1945, he participated in the reorganization of the Hungarian army and was promoted to brigadier-general but was removed from the army in 1948. He made his living as an economist. In 1992, he was posthumously promoted to colonel-general.

(57)- Antall, Jozsef's memoirs: Menekultek Menedeke. A Hungarian humanist in the 20th century, Budapest, 1996.

(58) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (1/15)

(59) National Archives. K.150. IM. IX.Division. 4023 bundle.

(60) The Association of Hungarian-Polish Societies joined into one federation all the assocations and societies that functioned in Hungary; Hungarian Society of Mickiewicz (1923); Association of Polish Legionnaires (1924); National Hungarian-Polish Federation of University Students (1933); National Association of Hungarian-Polish Scouts (1933) etc. Its president was count Karoly Szechenyi, president of the Union of the Hungarian Sugar Industry. In 1940 he transferred his post to count Ivan Csekonics, ex-minister to Warsaw.

(61) Mational Archives. K.150. IM.150. 4023 bundle.

(62) National Archives. K.64. documents of the Hungarian chapter of the Polish Red Cross (1939-44). 1. bundle.

(63) Ibid.

(64) Antall, Jozsef: Op.Cit. (57)

(65) Archives of Military History. DM. Memoirs of Balo Zoltan.

(66) Salamon-Racz, Tamas (1911-): mechanical engineer, deputy minister. From 1939 on secretary of the Association of Hungarian-Polish Societies, then of the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugees. Collaborating with the military and civilian authorities he participated in the evacuation. Upon demand of the Germans he was arrested on March 5, 1941 and sentenced to seven months in prison. On October 19, 1942 the government in London bestowed on him its "medal of Merit for Service, with golden swords". After 1945 he became deputy minister of industry; later he functioned in various places as chief engineer. He retired in 1979.

(67) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit (1/15)
(68) Op.Cit. (1/2)
(69) Wilhelmstrasse es Magyarorszag. German diplomatic documents on Hungary 1933-44, Budapest, 1968; doc. #245.
(70)Ibid.
(71) Archives of Military History. DN.pres. October 2, 1939.
(72) Ibid. DM.pres. XXI. Field reports.

Hungarian-Polish Institutions Caring for Refugees

As mentioned earlier, for the care of the refugees the IX. social and welfare division of the Interior Ministry, as well as the 21. division of the Defense Ministry were designated. Organization of the latter was only started after September 25, 1939; Defense Minister Karoly Bartha put his trusted collaborator, retired colonel Zoltan Balo, in charge. This ministerial division supervised the Polish military refugees at the highest level: it superintended the camps, saw to their provisioning, kept the records; it also took pains to carry out the stipulations of all international agreements concerning military refugees. It was helped by the office of the Representative of Polish Soldiers Interned in the Kingdom of Hungary, which also acted as a liaison between the camps and the ministry. Its jurisdiction was egually established by the Geneva Convention. This office not only transmitted the ministry's rulings to the military exiles but it also had the right to initiate decisions and to express an opinion on them. Within its parameters functioned the officers' court-martial tribunal, as well as the committee judging acts of insubordination. Source material mentions these two legal military offices as Military Representatives which were not subject to the 21. division. Col. Zoltan Balo reached his decisions after discussions with the Military Representatives, appointed Polish camp commanders solely on their recommendations, consulted them on questions of discipline and regrouping, etc. In fact, it was upon their request that he moved numerous groups from one camp to another in the southern border region to facilitate the evacuations. The Militay Representatives ordered a liaison officer to each army corps to assist the commander in maintaining contact, to counsel them, express their opinion, summarize the wishes of the camp's inhabitants, transmit the orders of the Hungarian camp commanders, etc. *1.

The first commander of the Military Representatives was General Stefan Dembinski *2 who started their organization - and his functions - already at the end of September 1939. Gen. Sikorski, head of the Polish government-in-exile, gave his approval. It was commander-in-chiefRydz-Smigly*3 who originally nominated him to this post and ordered him to defect to Hungary. Gen. Dembinski

had an important role in initiating discussions with the Hungarian military leaders, in organizing the life of the Polish military exiles, and, later in setting up the evacuations. German intelligence followed with great interest Dembinki's activities and many were the "incriminating" pieces of evidence that they brought to the attention of the Foreign Ministry. They did not protest against the existence of the Military Representatives; they found its jurisdiction too broad and the nomination of its chief a mistake. Because of the repeated protest, Gen. Dembinski had to be removed and someone else was put in his place to deflect the Germans' attention with questions of personnel from the activities of the Polish military exiles. Gen. Dembinski was evacuated soon thereafter and became one of the outstanding generals of the Polish army that fought on the western front. In nominating his successor, certain differences between the Hungarian and Polish officers surfaced: colonel Jan Emisarski*4 nominated the Polish military attache Kazimierz Glowacki, while Zoltan Balo proposed colonel Marian Steifer, his comrade-im-arms from the WWI. In the end, gen. Sikorski came down on the side of Steifer, thus showing his trust in the Hungarian leadership. It must be said, however, that many Polish officers looked with suspicion on the friendship between col. Steifert and some Hungarian officers with whom he had served in the WWI. The case of col. Steifer never came to rest; several proposals were formulated for his removal. Finally gen. Sikorski had to remove him and named in his place Lieutenant-Colonel Aleksander Krol, officer of an engineering corps.

Even more complicated was the civilian refugees' care which was overseen, at the highest level, by the IX. division of the Interior Ministry. Aside from organizing the official institutions, the most important point was to secure its financial backing. On November 3, 1939, the Council of Ministers decreed that these expenses be entered into the category of the Interior Ministry's "Public Welfare and Humanitarian Institutions: transitional expenses not covered by the budget"41, thus guaranteeing the official financial base. At the same time, it was decreed that a sub-office of the IX. division, the Office of Refugee Care, he opened to strenghten it. In addition to its function as the official record-keeper, it was also meant to act as liaison among the volunteer organizations, the Polish refugee institutions, and the official state authorities*5 . Cooperation among all these was extremely important as the volunteer organizations could do things that the official authorities could not. They could, among others, receive financial assistance from abroad; organize aid drives the proceeds of which were distributed according to the IX.

and 21. Divisions' wishes or instructions. The "Hungarians for Poles" national fund-raiser was significant in that it made contributions possible for those who otherwise would have no connection to Polish refugees. Until its official closing on January 15, 1941, the Polish Legation played an active role in mounting these fund-raising actions; it also looked after the interests of the refugees.

Among the various official institutions was also the Foreign Ministry's VII/C division. the Central Office of Alien Control (KEOKH). According to the September 25, 1939 regulations, this Office kept a record of all refugees, military or civilian, who entered Hungary, and supplied them with the necessary papers enabling them to stay. The military and civilian supervisory authorities could only deal with those in possession of this paper. The heads of the IM's IX. Division, Jozsef Antall, and Sandor Simenfalvy of the KEOKH, were on good terms and shared political attitudes. It was due to this that many a refugees received false IDs, that Jews were given Christian papers, and those that the Germans wanted extradited were supplied with yet another new set of identifications. Sandor Simenfalvy took enormous risk with what he did for the refugees. No wonder, therefore, that the Gestapo, accompanying the German occupiers on March 19, 1944, first went to the offices of the KEOKH, confiscated all the records and arrested Sandor Simenfalvy*6.

Many legally functioning Polish refugee organizations joined in their care, the most importaht of which was the Polish Civilian Committee. In the autumn of 1939, it was still the Polish Legation that represented the interests of the Polish exiles with regard to the Hungarian official authorities but it could not interfere in the internal affairs of the Polish refugees who were cared for by the Hungarian state or in the modalities of the contacts with the Hungarian officials. There really was a need for a Polish organization that would direct the internal affairs of the exiles, that could take care of the social, cultural, educational, and health care needs of the military and civilian refugees, handle press releases and book publishing, acting, at the same time, as liaison between the exiles and the state authorities. The fact that no time limits could be set for the stay of the refugees made the existence of this organization even more important. All these duties were covered by the afore-mentioned Polish Civilian Committee (PCC) which was created upon the urging of the IM's IX. Division though not specified in international conventions. Henryk Slawik*7, Socialist representative, reporter

and newspaper editor of Katowice, became its head. So writes of him Jozsef Antall in his memoirs: "... I, as the guardian, government commissioner of the Polish refugees, travelled near the border establishing reception centers. My interpreter was a reporter named Slawik who, at our first meeting, told me: "This will be a long war! We, the Poles, will win this war. But because of this, the Poles will have to work, and they will need schools, so that they can play an active role in the future Poland." Then I said to him: ~you will be the boss of the Poles!"

The creation of the PCC*8 was made even more urgent by the thousands of Poles who besieged the IM with their personal requests and it was impossible to take care of them within a short period of time. Although there was a Polish sub-division under the IX. division, but its duties were mainly translating and filing - it could not interfere in the life of the emigres. The need for the PCC was also stressed by the Polish Legation which could not foretell when the Germans will demand its closing even though the Foreign Ministry assured it of its continued functioning. From the beginning of October 1939 long discussions took place about the PCC's creation: first, they wanted to give these tasks to the Hungarian agency of the Polish Red Cross but the divergent characteristics of the Red Cross, as well as the need for long-term planning, made it obvious that a special organization be formed. Officially the PCC came into being on November 2, 1939; it was accepted by the Polish Legation and, through it, by the Polish government acknowledging that it will represent the interests of the Polish exiles vis-a-vis the Hungarian authorities in social, cultural, educational, etc. matters. As mentioned before, Henryk Slawik became the head of the PCC; residing in Hungary since the autumn of l939, he represented the Polish Socialist Party in exile. He was attacked by the Pilsudski-wing among the exiles who, anyway, were not happy about the PCC's formation along the party lines of the coalition. In this, they found support among those Hungarian aristocrats who, otherwise, helped their cause generously.*9

Through the Hungarian National Bank, the PCC received significant financial help from the Polish government which was maintained throughout the war. In fact, the PCC has become the most important organization of the emigration, thus causing some friction with the Polish Legation. It was completely independent and initiated action in the educational, cultural, and health-care/medical fields; it even intervened in cases where it had no right to do so. In this dispute, gen. Sikorski sided with the PCC. When the Polish

Legation was obliged to cease its activities, the Interor Ministry sent a circular letter to all subservient authorities informing them that henceforth the PCC will act on behalf of the refugees.

The PCC adapted its functions to the needs of the exiles. It fell to it to assure the financial backing of the elementary, high-school, and university-level education; to develop cultural programs; to organize and direct the social welfare of the exiles*10. It saw to the functioning of the Polish judiciary; of the schools, cultural programs, press relations, and book publishing. Under its aegis appeared the emigration's daily and weekly newspapers, the most important of which were: Wiesci Polskie; Tygodnik Polski-Materialy Obozowe; and Nasza Swietlicowe*11. Also, with its material and practical help appeared the text-books for the Polish schools; Polish and Hungarian belles-lettres; translations; dictionaries; and publications for courses of general knowledge. It is difficult to summarize its diverse activities; to describe them all would require a much longer work.

Among the legally functioning Polish organizations was the Polish Pastoral Office which counted some 50 priests and officials as its members. Upon suggestion of Radomski, bishop of Wroclawiek (who was later evacuated to the West) and with the approval of Justinian, Cardinal Seredi, archbishop of Esztergom and Prince Primate of Hungary, Piotr Wilk-Witoslawski, a Franciscan army chaplain with a rank of major was put in charge of the religious organizations, coordinating the work of the Polish priests. Also took care of cultural, educational and the religious instructions, welfare and youth programs. The priests also had a major role in the field of organizing the armed resistance and military intelligence gathering. They have also operated the famous Warsaw-Krakow-Budapest-Vatican kurier service. Many of them ended up in the Mauthausen concentration camp.

The Polish Government's Secret Military and Civilian Organizations.

Behind the legally functioning Polish organizations, from the end of September 1939 on, the Polish Government established its network of secret military and civilian organizations. Their purpose was not only the guidance of the activities of the exiles living in Hungary, but also to maintain contact with the domestic resistance and with the newly formed Polish army functioning in the West. In this system, of great importance were the Polish Civilian Committee (PCC) and the Representatives of the Polish Military Interned in the Kingdom of Hungary, both of which carried out secret instructions. The parties associated with the Polish government - the Polish Socialists, the Peasants', the Workers'. and the National parties - designated separate agents in the autumn of 1939, to represent them among the exiles in Hungary the cooperation of whom was assured by the personal composition of the PCC. When, in February 1940, the Inter-Party Unification Committee was formed by the government-in-exile in France, a new chapter opened up in the lives of the emigres. The tasks of this Committee were not only to reinforce the government's work but also to join under one heading the various domestic resistance groups and military organizations. Its activity was extended as well to the institutions of the Polish emigration living in Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and other states*12.

Between May 29 and June 2, 1940 a conference was called in Belgrade that was attended by the Polish government, the army chief, the leaders of the domestic resistance and the commanders - or their representatives - of the military bases functioning in other territories. The purpose was, first of all, the unification of the various domestic resistance groups and the establishment of contacts between the army chief and the military forces in other countries. In the interest of unified leadership, it was decided to establish branches of the government, the agents of which would be drawn from the coalition parties. Here the decision was taken to open such a branch in Hungary and in Romania also; thus was created in Romania the "R-placowka" and in Hungary the "W-placowka". The head of the Hungarian branch was Edmund Fietz-Fietowic~*13

(Peasants' Party); its members were Piotr Opoka-Lowenstein*14 (Polish Socialist Party); Stanislaw Bardzik*15 (National Party); and Jozef Slys*16 (Workers' Party. For the time being, this branch functioned alongside - often above - the Polish Legation and was under the direct supervision of the Polish Interior Minister. In a special message, gen. Sikorski asked count Orlowski's cooperation with regard to this branch.

This branch was not only meant to assure the collaboration of the various parties but also the synchronization of the political activities with military politics. Another, most important of its task was the establishment of the Budapest-Warsaw and Budapest-Angers courier services. It had barely started functioning when its contacts were interrupted because of the French defeat by the Germans and the government's move to London. It was in these trying times that the branch established the conditions for the Budapest-Warsaw courier service; thanks to this, within six months they were in direct contact with the government in London.

The head of the branch; Edmund Fietz-Fietowicz - a former diplomat established excellent rapport with the similar Smallholders' Party, with its parliamentary representatives, particularly with the Rev. Bela Varga*17, pastor of Balatonboglar. Similar contacts were established between Slawik and the Hungarian Socialists with personal sympathies playing a role. Fietowicz arranged his work with great circumspection; he managed to unify the various political and military groups within a short time. He maintained excellent relationships with prime minister Pal Teleki, interior minister Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer, and many opposition leaders. He shunned publicity and "worked in the background" as instructed by his government. (As a note of special interest it is worth mentioning that he does not appear on any of the photographs that were taken at the numerous Polish festivals.) The importance of the Hungarian branch was enhanced when it was named as the contact between Warsaw and the government in London. This was based on the excellence of the London-Budapest-Warsaw courier service. The important information was sent to London first by the Legation in Budapest then by the one in Belgrade; the consignments to Warsaw were taken by the couriers recruited among the exiles, often at the risk of their lives. After Yugoslavia's German occupation a different solution had to be found and here the Hungarian diplomatic service often proved helpful. The functions of the Hungarian branch grew considerably after the beginning of 1941 as the Romanians severely curtailed the activities of the Polish

refugees, eliminating, for instance, the Polish Red Cross agency that settled there*18.

The courier service was led by Waclaw Pelczak who, after a few failures, established the "relay system". This meant that each route was divided into 5-6 segments and that someone else carried the material on each segment and each courier only knew the identity of the one from whom he received it and the one to whom he handed it over. It was thanks to this courier service that London received all the information on Poland, on the massacres by the Germans or, conversely, Warsaw received, via Hungary, the army chief's secret instructions. Of curse, there were other lines of communication also, such as the Warsaw-Stockholm-London line and the one through Instambul. Some important information was sent through more than one line; in case of one's failure, the other might reach its destination. Jozsef Antall helped the courier services tremendously: he gave the couriers false papers, established "safe" houses, rest areas. From 1941 on, the courier service only carried coded messages. The various Polish organizations received their financial help through this service. Once, in 1943, such a shipment was delayed but the Polish consignee needed the money urgently. They turned to Jozsef Antall for help; he then advanced the necessary sum until the shipment arrived. In other cases the "delayed" material was sent by the Hungarian diplomatic service to Rome or Lisbon, whence Polish couriers took it to the addressee*19.

The branch's activities were secret; Hungarian state officials, the leaders of the Polish refugee care and the politicians were not informed although they knew of its functions. Direction of refugee care and the life of the exiles proceeded smoothly until the death of Pal Teleki but the defeat of Yugoslavia and under the prime ministership of Laszlo Bardossy the situation changed. Although he personally set no limitations, under his rule the pro-Nazi, and therefore anti-Polish, elements were strengthened. This was the time when Col. Zoltan Balo, head of the Defense Ministry's 21. Division was replaced by Col. Lorand Utassy, although the latter continued his predecessor's pro-Polish policies. On the basis of the German Legation's "incriminating" evidence Fietowicz was arrested, as were other Polish leaders. Jozsef Antall and Zoltan BaIo managed to free some of them and sent them to Siklos or some other provincial camp but this incident gave warning to the leaders of the exiles and of the military resistance to be more cautious. It must be said that the arrests or the banishment to provincial camps did not signify a break in the Polish leaders anti-Nazi activities; it only meant that those

leaders whose functions were temporarily curtailed were replaced by others who very successfully took over their roles. Real change came with Miklos Kallay's rule: he freed Fietowicz from the prison of the Hadik-barracks and the other prisoners by amnesty those who were sent to the provincial camps could also return to Budapest*20.

As part of Miklos Kallay's plans for ending Hungary's participation in the war he also contacted the W-Branch. In the late autumn of 1942, through the intermediary of Jozsef Antall, he met with Fietowicz to establish relations with the Polish government-in-exile in London. Travelling with a Hungarian diplomatic passport through Turkey, Fietowicz carried Kallay's letter to gen. Sikorski in which he outlined Hungary's political situation, her plans for the future, and asked for the Polish government's support. From that moment on Fietowicz was recognized as the Polish government-in-exile's representative in Hungary though still avoiding publicity. Replying to Kallay's missive, gen. Sikorski expressed his appreciation for the refugees' treatment and assured Kallay of his personal support*21. These contacts were always maintained; in fact the legations in Lisbon and Ankara played pivotal roles in this. Lisbon forwarded through the Polish legation the Hungarian government's messages and information to London, while Ankara's Polish legation enabled the Hungarian government to make contact in Turkey with the British government. These contacts prepared the way for Albert Szent-Gyorgyi's, Ferenc Vali's, Karoly Schrecker's and Laszlo Veress's missions to Turkey. Through Fietowicz, on the other hand, the Prime Minister was always informed on London's and the other Allies' attitude on his plans for defection. In the summer of 1943, at Kallay's request, Fietowicz undertook another trip to London; this was viewed with displeasure by the Polish military leaders who were afraid that the Germans will discover the trip's purpose and will pay closer attention to the Polish military resistance in Hungary*22.

Polish Military Institutions in the Autumn of 1939

The organization of the secret Polish military commands on Hungarian soil effectively started during the last few days of 1939. By that time a significant number (about 50,000) of the Polish armed forces were already in Hungary; it was therefore obvious that they wanted to maintain contact with their commander-in-chief. To establish this relationship, several members of the Polish general staff arrived in Budapest on September 21, 1939; they also had the mission of forming secret military institutions. It was to fulfill this mission that on September 21, 1939 the Ekspozitura-W, or the Polish Military Agency in Hungary, was created under the leadership of gen. Emisarski*23, the Polish Legation's military attache. In mid-October 1939 he travelled to Paris to make contact in France with the reorganized Polish army chiefs and the government. Their first task was to create the Budapest-Paris and Budapest-Warsaw courier service. For this purpose, Lt.-Col. of the general staff, Jan Mazurkiewicz, came to Budapest. The couriers' route went through Belgrade and the one to Warsaw led through Slovakia. The Hungarian military leaders were of great help in this endeavour.

The second but most important task of the Ekspozitura-W was to organize the Polish military forces' evacuation to France from Hungary*24. Gen. Sikorski ordered this directly; but this, by now famous, evacuation order did not concern only those who already were there but also all those who would arrive in waves from Poland and whose passage had to be assured into Hungary, then through Yugoslavia to France. The army commands functioning in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Split also became part of this network. From the point of view of the army's reorganization, this evacuation, code-named EWA, was of sufficient importance for the Polish Defense Ministry to establish a sub-division under whose aegis Emisarski's evacuation office also worked. It was located on Vaci utca 36, in the Polish Consulate. The Representatives of Polish Soldiers Interned in the Kingdom of Hungary also joined in this work. This cooperative effort was led by Gen. Dembinski who had excellent relations with the Hungarian military leaders. But even before the arrival of Gen. Sikorski's order, the evacuation had

already started: ad hoc or organized groups of Polish soldiers, in several waves, made their way to the Yugoslav border. Already during the first days of October 1939, Gen. Dembinski led discussions at the Defense Ministry with a view of establishing several military camps in Transdanubia, or, at Polish expense but with Hungarian approval, a central camp near Mohacs. This would have greatly facilitated the evacuation from Hungary of te Polish miltary forces. However, the Hungarian authorities having refused their approval for a central camp for fear of German protests, this was not realized there but near Nagykanizsa. But the camp here and in other southern parts of the land made organized evacuation easy. The Evacuation office forwarded, through the Military Reprezentative, the request for regrouping to the 21. Division of the DM which, in turn gave the necessary orders to transfer to another camp individual soldiers, or groups of them destined to be evacuated.*25 Special cultural groups were organized; these went from camp to camp carrying not only their cultural message but also instructions and orders, delivered Polish, French, English and other nations' passports, organized the escape of the Polish soldiers, coordinated with the various commanders the escape's timing, route and means of transport. There were regular recruiting stations in every camp where civilians could also volunteer*26. In this respect they were in close collaboration with the IM's IX. Division which transferred soldiers to civilian status or the other way round. One way of evacuating was to transfer soldiers to civilian status, giving them false ID papers, clothing, and train tickets. The Committee for Refugee Care, therefore, bought great quantities of civilian clothes, covered the costs of travel, rented trucks and cars, and secured the approaches to the southern borders*27. Many Hungarians participated in these actions, like, for example, Tamas Salamon-Racz, Secretary of the Committee.

According to the orders of the Polish Defense Ministry. the first to be evacuated to France were: enlisted men between the ages of 18 and 35; non-commissioned officers (without age limitations), mostly those of mechanical training; junior officers up to age 35; and officers up to age 40. Field officers, officers of the general staff, and generals could only leave with special permission. There were two ways of evacuation: the recruiting stations prepared lists of prospective evacuees, sent them with photographs - to Dembinski's Military Representative's office which obtained for them the necessary passport, visa and other travelling papers, as well as, in certain cases, the documents transferring them to civilian status. Upon orders, they dressed in civilian clothes to receive at the

Consulate the needed papers and boarded a train towards Yugoslavia. The second way was the so-called secret way of evacuation. The evacuees received the escape's routing either in Budapest or in Nagykanizsa and crossed the border at night from one of the southern civilian camps (Murakeresztur, Barcs, Letenye, etc.). The local population helped them along (for ex. the ferrymen on the Drava) and so did the collaborators of the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care, as well as members of the local administration.

It is well-known that the Hungarian railroad workers carried daily hundreds of refugees to Yugoslavia in sealed wagons. It was also common practice for the evacuee simply to escape from the military camp, ask for admittance to a civilian camp and simply leave the country at the right moment. The IM's IX. Division assisted them in these endeavours*28. Jozsef Antall regularly informed the reliable leaders of southern Transdanubia's public administration about when to expect a considerable number of Polish refugees to cross the border. He also asked them not to make difficulties when individual soldiers wanted to be admitted to a civilian camp. It also helped that from the end of October the daily stipends were distributed every ten days which also meant a head-count. Escapes should have been reported daily and the necessary steps taken for the escapee's discovery. However, with this change in the distribution the evacuees had enough time to escape*29.

The Hungarian military leaders, the camp commanders participated in these schemes also. In Nagykanizsa, in the building of the Frank coffee-factory, the work of the recruiting station was made easier by the camp commander's, Lt. Col. Geza Gunde's, tolerant attitude. His manifestations of friendship for the Poles early on drew the Germans' attention who repeatedly asked for his removal from his post. Later on the command in Szombathely was obliged to remove him but the recruiting station owes a great deal to his "permissiveness"*30).

The evacuatlon did not only concern the soldiers already in Hungary but it also touched those that were recruited in Poland whose transit through Hungary had to be secured. This went on throughout the war; even after the big evacuation came to an end in Hungary, some military-age men continued to arrive - although in fewer numbers - who had to be sent on to France. Of these I only have to mention Gen, Sosnokowski, Foreign Minister Jozef Beck*31 and Gen, Mieczyslaw Trojanowski*32 who stayed on in Hungary, apparently not wishing to take an active role (of which

more later). Two of the subsequently outstanding generals of the Polish army, Stanislaw Maczek*33 and Franciszek Kleeberg also escaped to France via Hungary. Regent Horthy's receiving gen. Sosnokowski and marshal Rydz-Smigly - who fled from Romania back to Poland via Hungary - is proof that the Hungarian authorities were fully aware of the evacuation's purposes.

Naturally, the evacuatlon brought on the Germans' protests. A memorandum dated October 14, l939 shows them to be well-lnformed: "... the Polish Legation opened an office the aim of which is to recruit Polish soldiers and to send them on to France." On October 18, 1939 the German Charge d'Affaires, in presenting his oral protests, mentioned the name af every camp where the recruiting, preparing and concentrating of soldiers take place. The next day he named all the leaders who guide the evaquation and on October 20, 1939 handed over a memorandum of the Germans' protest against the mass evacuation of the Polish soldiers. German minister Erdmannsdorf, in his reports to Berlin, detailed the circumstances of the Polish evacuation and the Hungarian official institutions that abet it. It was no secret to the Germans that the French and British give visas on post-dated Polish passports and that, in fact, they themselves give passports to the Poles. He described the exact route through Belgrade-Zagreb to Modena on the French-Italian border*34. Because of the constant German protests, on October 28, 1939, Janos Vornle, deputy foreign minister, felt obliged to warn count Orlowski, Polish minister, of the importance to stop the "escapes". Both men, of course, knew that their meeting was only due to German pressure.

At the beginning of 1940, German intelligence discovered gen. Dembinski's and col. Emisarski's role; therefore, because of the "incriminating" evidence, Dembinski had to be removed from the Military Representatives' office. Subsequently both of them were evacuated from Hungary. Emisarski's replacement, Lt.Col. Karnaus had to leave soon too as the Hungarian intelligence found at a railroad station a secret message he sent to Paris. Zoltan Balo, therefore, was forced to send Karnaus to the Siklos penal camp. From here he escaped with the help of Tamas Salamon-Racz and went to France. But Col. Balo never forwarded the "incriminating evidence" anywhere; after his death, it was found among his papers and was given with all the others to the Archives of Military History*35.

The EWA action continued from October 1939 until June 1940,

the German conquest of France. During that time about 60,000 men fit for military service passed through Hungary. It is impossible to determine the exact number, even with archival research, and it has come to occupy the focal point in publications devoted to refugee care. But even though changes may occur in the numbers, this cannot change the positive view held of the Hungarian state's attitude. It is certain however, that from the autumn of 1939 to 1940 the state's officials refused to divulge the exact numbers, which in many instances they did not know themselves, and this despite continuous German protests. The many agencies assisting the refugees did not provide statistical data on the numbers of refugees they helped to escape to France or other countries via Yugoslavia. Some situations were difficult to assess as many of the refugees departed already a few days after arrival. Contemporary press reports only guessed at the number and the state officials, because of its delicate nature, only released made-up figures. The first numbers only appeared after the end of WW II.

In the book Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon a Haboru Evei Alatt (Budapest, 1946), edited by Jozsef Antall, Minister of Reconstruction, approximates the number of Polish refugees at 140,000, of which 110,000 were soldiers. These numbers appear realistic to those who took part in this action and these numbers appeared in the first publications. Of course nobody could write about all this before the 1970s as it-would have altered the picture that was painted of Hungary's attitudes during WW II - it would have shown another Hungary! The situation was different in Poland - there was no ban there on writing about the refugee question; it only had to emphasize the negative opinion on the London government-in-exile. The fact that the military and civilian resistance in Hungary was closely tied to the London government gives the heroism and patriotic ardour lesser importance. It changes the view of Hungary's assistance if the numbers of those that were helped and those that evacuated were somewhat altered.

Even a Polish historian was found who put the numbers at 23,000; so the number of 50,000 was accepted as the median. This obviouus misinformation also found its way into the first Hungarian publications despite the data published in 1946. There are many problems inherent in archival research: on March 19, 1944 the Germans confiscated the records on the Polish refugees maintained by the Central Office of Alien Control as well as the lists of the Polish organizations, while at the Interior Ministry and the Foreign Ministry a great number of records were destroyed, rendering all statistics incomplete. Another important source, the files of the Hungarian Red Cross were also destroyed, partly at the end of WW

II, partly in the 1950s by a water leak. This "insufficiency" is reinforced by some personal recollections: some refugees went through Hungary without encountering a single aid person and left for Yugoslavia within a few days. On the other hand, the numbers of the camps' inhabitants were constant: these determined their rations. Only the names listed were not always accurate: the Polish camp commanders often "replaced" the name of an escapee with one that also tried to escape. It also becomes apparent from these recollections that behind the name of one Polish soldier sometimes 10 or 15 people were hidden: the escape was reported only as the last resort*36. Thus the camp lists of the end of 1939 really do not represent the truth. Also missing from the records kept by the state officials are the names of those that were cared for by voluntary organizations. This is particularly true of the Hungarian Red Cross which acted totally independently in this aid action. It could do so because its easily movable units were specifically trained for such action and were true experts in handling extraordinary situations. The data amassed by the Hungarian Red Cross is missing from later works. Therefore, the report that appeared in the 1940 yearbook of the International Red Cross seems forgotten. Here Edith Takats reports that from the end of September 1939 to March 31, 1940 the Hungarian Red Cross, aside from other organizations, took care of 30,681 Polish soldiers and 11,000 civilians that it housed and fed in its own camps. It spent 2,272,000 pengos on them, two-thirds of which was reimbursed by the International Red Cross*37. Later, when final camps were established, the IM took over the care of the civilians from the voluntary organizations and reimbursed the Hungarian Red Cross for half of its expenditures. Neither must we forget that until the end of March 1941, the Budapest agency of the International Red Cross knew of 94,000 refugees who turned up in Hungary.*38

It is certain that determining the numbers at a later date is extremely difficult. However, the accounting records and the recollections of those that joined the army going through Hungary allows us to estimate their number at 100,000*39. Nor must we forget that not all who evacuated through Hungary went to join the army: there were civilians, women, children, old people. As an example let me mention the elementary school at Barcs where there were many changes: some of the pupils who started out in the school year were no longer in Hungary within a few weeks. The number of students enrolled for the 1939-40 school year presupposes a building that could contain 8 or 10 times their number*40.

In determining the number, we must remember that many who went through Yugoslavia did not go to France to join the army; some went to the Middle East. Many were Jews who already tried to go to Palestine or the United States. They made their way to Turkey where a sizable Polish colony was established; then from there to a third or fourth country. Thus, the Polish emigration to France must not determine the numbers of those who went through Hungary*41.

Polish Military Structures from the Spring of 1940.

The end of the first great wave of evacuations created a new situation among the Polish soldiers in Hungary and necessitated some changes in the military leadership. The first Polish command carried out the evacuation and established the courier service very efficiently. In the spring of 1940 new forms of military leadership were established; these were ratified at the conference of May 29-June 2, 1940 in Belgrade. In addition to the civilian organizations, it created secret military (support) bases; as a result, the code-named "Romek" base in Hungary and the "Bolek" base in Romania were set up. Similar changes were necessitated in the military detachments functioning in Belgrade, Sofia, Athens, Istambul, Cairo, and elsewhere*42.

The task that was given to the Hungarian "Romek" base, in addition to continuing a limited degree of evacuations, was to maintain contact with the government-in-exile in London, the general headquarters, and the domestic resistance. Its first commander was Col. Alfred Krajewski, secretary at the Legation in Budapest, with Lt.Col. Zygmund Bezeg "Longin" as his deputy. Col. Krajewski did not stay in his post for long: he was implicated in the famous Karnaus report and sent to Siklos also. Both men later escaped to England. His replacement, Lt.Col. Bezeg, also shortly joined the fighting army so Col. Stanislaw Rostworowski was head of the "Romek" base from the autumn of 1940 to May 1942. He reorganized the courier service, set up strict regulations for conspiracy, and restored the London-Budapest-Warsaw courier service which was interrupted by the government's move to London. This was very important because the government in London transferred its financial help to the local resistance movements via Budapest. It is well-known that the military courier carried 1 million zlotys to Poland to the commanders of the resistance until December 1939 and 6 millions' worth of currency until August 1940. In the autumn of 1940, they also carried 140,000 dollars and close to 300,000 Reichsmark to the Polish territories. This service continued until the end of March 1944*43.

The other task of the secret military base was to run the

operations of an illegal print shop. Here they produced the false identity papers, documents, and the flyers, brochures and other publications that the domestic resistance movements ordered. This support base carefully organized the escape from the Romanian internment camp at Dragoslevele of marshal Rydz-Smigly, brought him to Budapest and accompanied him to Cracow via Arva (October 21, 1941). While in Budapest, the marshal was received by Regent Horthy and Lt. Col. Ferenc Szombathelyi, Chief ot the General Staff.

At this time, the "Romek" support base also established radio contact with London and Warsaw but its functioning required the collaboration of Hungarian organizations.

In May, 1942 some personnel changes occurred in the leadership of this support base: Col. Rostworowski was named commander of the Cracow division of the Home army, with the rank of brigadier-general. In his place Col. "Dod" Franciszek Matuszczak was named; at the same time, the code-name "Romek" was changed to "Liszt". As a spirit of futility pervaded the military camps, bringing with it problems of discipline, Col. Matuszczak wanted to strengthen the moral/military attitude and the patriotism of the more than 20,000 Polish soldiers. Although the enlisted men left behind after the evacuation were unfit for military service because of age and ill health, they were still fit for the reserves of the domestic resistance. The feeling of hopelessness was only partly lifted by the permission to seek work which not only added to the soldiers' income but eased the monotony of camp life. Col. Matuszczak worked out a program of courses: continuing education for the officers, and for the enlisted men courses in radio transmission, drivers' education, and training as mechanics. According to surveys, at least one-third - abt. 5-6,000 men) of the soldiers living in the camps in Hungary were fit for military service. They initiated the creation of a secret military command which was approved by Headquarters. In March, 1943, Headquarters put the "Liszt" support base's men under the direct Command of the Home Army which was sanctioned by general Rowecki*44. Col. Jan Korkozowicz "Barski"*45 was named as their head. (At the same time he also had to fill the post of the base's deputy commander.) This secret military command functioned in the camp of Pesthidegkut and carried out the orders of the Home Army's commander. These were to prepare special units of the men in Hungary as reserves that could be transported instantly across the Carpathians to join the war of the partisans, or to assist the Anglo-American forces in case of a Balkan landing (which never materialized).

To realize these projects, Col. Korkozowicz formed special units in each camp and worked out plans for their training. He searched out suitable landing places in Transdanubia for an Anglo-American aerial parachute descent. The Polish military leaders sought connections to the Hungarian army's general staff. With Col. Lorand Utassy's help, the Polish officers could hold maneuvers - as continuing education - on Hungarian army bases. Training could be conducted in the Polish camps also and the units and sub-units were re-formed accordingly. The Polish Medical Service examined the men and declared 1,475 officers, 4,148 soldiers, and about 1,000 civilian youths fit for active duty. The Hungarian military authorities secretly furnished weapons and ammunition for these exercizes*46.

From the summer of 1943 on, depending on the state of their training, volunteers were continuously funnelled into Polish territories. Subsequently, upon request of the Home Army, officers and non-commissioned officers were also sent. At that time, Col. Adam Sapieha ("Tokaj") visited Budapest in secret to undertake in the name of the Home Army's command, discussions with the Hungarian general staff. He asked that the Hungarian army provide weapons and ammunition from the stock that came into Hungary in the autumn of 1939 to the Hungarian units of the Polish army in case of an Anglo-American landing. The second request was that weapons and ammunition be given to partisan units by the detachments of the Hungarian army on Polish territory or near the eastern front. Furthermore, Col. "Tokaj" proposed to the general staff that they should jointly prepare a plan for the Hungarian and Polish armies for the transition period before the allied forces arrived in Hungary through Yugoslavia. The Polish military leaders also asked the Hungarian authorities not to obstruct but help the Polish army's return to Poland and to give them back their equipment*47.

German intelligence soon got wind of the Polish military leaders' secret discussions and of the organizational activities in the camps. The alert was sounded by an October 19, 1943 report to Berlin of Walter Bierkamp, chief SS officer of the governor-general's office. The essence of his message was that "...exists a Polish resistance organization that has numerous connections with Hungary where they are planning to mount an army of 10.000 men." German intelligence had always suspected such an organizational activity in the camps but because of the strict enforcement of conspiracy regulations very little information had escaped. It was due to this that relatively few military leaders were

arrested after the German occupatiom of Hungary compared to the number of civilian resistance leaders. The Germans were aware of the importance of the camp at Pesthidegkut; there were some arrests there, too: for example, Gen. Trojanowski who was presumably meant to be the commander of the military force to be mobilized. Col. Utassy temporarily moved Col. Korkozowicz to a camp in Ipolyszalka and hid other military leaders in civilian apartments or in the provinces. Within a few weeks, Col. Korkozowicz was back in Budapest: the Support Base sent him to the forest near Stara Ves (Slovakia) to discussions with the command of the Home Army. Here he received instructions to reorganize the Support Base which continued its functions under the code-name "Pesztka", with new conspiracy regulations and a new code*48.

The confidential Hungarian-Polish discussions continued even after the German occupation and became more animated before the negotiations for defection. The Polish military leaders were aware of these and offered the assistance of the Transdanubian Polish armies against the occupying German forces. Similarly, secret conversations were held about the help in weapons and ammunition that the units of the Hungarian army near Warsaw could give to the rebels. The unsuccessful efforts at defection, the subsequent Arrow-Cross Party putsch, and the first few weeks of Szalasi's regime alerted the Polish military leaders to caution although they remained in contact with Lt.-Gen. Janos Kiss's Hungarian military resistance. During the Arrow-Cross Party ruler the Polish military refugee camps were hard hit: the Germans collected the remaining inhabitants of these camps and force-marched them to Germany; the majority of the residents were saved from this fate by the Hungarian population.

The evacuation

The central management of the evacuation was entrusted to the Directorate of the Evacuation in the Ministry of Defense of the government-in-exile constituted in Anger, France. A decisive role was played by the military attaches functioning in Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey, as well as the special agents detached to these legations and consulates in the regional (by country) organizations of the evacuation. The practicalities were seen to by the so-called "EWA" (Evacuation) offices. As already mentioned, in Budapest Lt.-Col. Jan Emisarski-Pindelli, in Romania Lt.-Col. Tadeusz Zakrzewski, military attaches, made the evacuations possible. The network was completed by Col. Tadeusz Wasilewski in Belgrade, Lt.-Col. Stanislaw-Luzynski in Athens, and Lt.-Col. Leopold Goebel in Split. The Polish refugees who fled to the Baltic States were sent on to the west by Lt.-Col. Zultec-Mitkiewicz at the legation of Riga, as well as the military attache at the Stockholm legation, Lt.-Col. Tadeusz Rudnicki, Gen. Sikorski, prime minister and defense minister's special delegate*49.

The Ekspozitura "W" (the Agency in Hungary) that Lt.-Col. Emisarski created was entrusted with the withdrawal of the Polish military and civilian people, and to ensure the continuous flow of evacuations. Emisarski received his orders directly from the Directorate of Evacuations and carried them out by means of the Evacuation Office of the legation. According to Col. Jan Korkszowicz, about 30 people worked at the Budapest "EWA" office, among them Jozef Zaranski, consul-general; Piotr Wilk-Witoslawski, Franciscan friar and chaplain-major; Stanislaw Rzepko-Laski, chaplain; Major Lipcsei-Steiner; Colonel Kazimierz Glowacki Lurther, several people who had special missions: such as Major Mieczyslaw Mlotek; Colonel-Chaplain Antoni Miodonski; Lt.-Col./diplomat Jan Karnaus who acted as consular counsellor under the name of Dr. Dohnel, commander of the defensive division*50. Also active in the organization was Gen. Dembinski, commander of the Representatives of Polish Soldiers interned in Hungary who maintained contact with the various camps through Polish liaison officers.

The evacuation office was in contact with Henryk Slawik and his Polish Civilian Committee although they did try to keep the civilians as far away as possible from their conspiratorial actions. Through the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care, the IX. Division of the IM was helpful in furthering the escapes, arrangimg transfers from military to civilian camps, travel, lodging and countless other details. An important role was played in the evacuations by the Polish Catholic Apostolate in the Kingdom of Hungary, whose priests transmitted the various orders, and carried the necessary papers and money. The Polish Hospital in Gyor and the Polish Physicians' Group not only took care of the medical examinations but also, to ensure greater mobility, called "patients" in for fake "treatment" at their offices in Budapest or the Hospital in Gyor*51.

A small minority of the evacuees left Hungary legally by train, with valid travel papers (passportf French or English visa) but the majority crossed the Hungarian-Yugoslav border illegally. Special Polish aides at Nagykanizsa, Barcs, Murakeresztur, Babocsa, and Gyekenyes helped the escapees. On the other side of the border, Lt.-Col. Tadeusz Wasilewski's so-called "information centers" received them. Such functioned in Szabadka, Veroce, Eszek, Csaktornya and Kapronca. From there, the evacuees could choose two routes to France: one led to Zagreb-Milano-Genova-Montena-Nice, while those who wanted to go by sea went Zagreb-Split-Marseille. There was also the Zagreb-Athens-Piraeus line that was taken by those who, from the autumn of 1939 on, evacuated to the Middle-East. True, one could go to Marseille from Piraeus also but the "Middle-Eastern" evacuees fell under the command of Gen. Weygand*52

In the course of the evacuations often the "double-escapes" were practiced. This consisted of soldiers' asking to be admitted to a civilian camp from a military one and then escaping at the proper time. They always entered the civilian camp under a false name, sometimes several false names, after repeated transfers. This method was "applied" mostly in case where someone was wanted by the Germans or whose extradition they demanded*53.

The escapes from the camps started in the autumn of 1939 already but mostly in small groups; from the end of October 1939 on, though, the size of the groups grew steadily. For instance, on October 19, 1939, 250 people escaped in one night from the camp at Herbolya where 1.000 soldiers were housed*54. From the Citadel in Budapest. belonging to the IM, on November 3, and December 1,

1939, 71 and 41 soldiers escaped*55. From civilian camps also the escapes increased: one night 154 people fled the camp at Belsobocs*56. All of the 171 Poles at Kazar in Nograd County "departed" within three days*57.

During the first phase of the evacuation, Poles trying to go to France crossed the Hungarian-Yugoslav border in large groups. The protests of the German legation also contained details of the technique of the evacuation as the ranks of their intelligence services were frequently augmented by pro-Nazi elements. Their reports shed light on the evacuation, the attitudes of the commanders. The majority of the Hungarian military leaders acted ambiguously in the case of the evacuations, some did not act at all. The Miodonski case will illustrate the former*58: Antoni Miodonski, the chaplain-colonel of the Przemysl army corps, fled to Hungary in September 1939. Sent to an officers' camp near the village of Csiz, he escaped on October 21, 1939 and left for France. He returned to Budapest-on November 14, 1939 with a special mission entrusted to him by the Defense Ministry of the Polish government-in-exile; he became the fully empowered commissioner for personal matters of the evacuation. He got a legal assignment with Gen. Dembinski's Military Representatives. On March 25, 1940 he was evacuated anew as the German intelligence searched his apartment. There they found 19 civilian jackets 19 vests. 23 hats, 19 neckties, 19 winter coats but confiscated only one cassock. The "incriminating" evidence was seized and placed in an army depot. They could not arrest Miodonski who happened to be away from his home; however, he wrote from Budapest asking that his personal belongings be immediately returned to him, or rather be given to Col. Mikolajczyk, his liaison officer*59. The fact that Miodonski had already long been in France - again - when on May 4, 1940 Col. Zoltan Balo asked that he be arrested and sent to the penal camp at Siklos adds spice to his story*60. The main German charge against Miodonski was that he had singlehandedly evacuated almost the whole camp at Ipolyhidveg: of the 501 men there only a handful remained in Hungary.

The Miodonski case is not unique or the only one; there have been countless others. But the Germans were right when they said that "Hungarian supervision of the camps was limited to adding up the number of escapees" and that "supervision is pro forma, admittance to the camps means simply signing in."*61

NOTES

(1)

a. Kapronczay, Karoly: Lengyel Katonak Magyar Foldon, Budapest, l994;

b. Godo, Agnes: Magyar-Lengyel Kapcsolatok a II. Vilaghaboru Alatt, Budapestt 1976;

c. Lagzi, Istvan: Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon (in Polish), Warsaw, 1981

(2) Dembinski, Stefan: brigadier-general, first commander of the Representatives of the Polish Military that functioned in collaboration with the DM's 21. Division. He had to be relieved of his post upon German demands; then evacuated via Belgrade to France where he became one of the commanders of the army fighting on the western front.

(3) Rydz-Smigly (1886-1941): politician, marshal, commander-in-chief. After 1935, commander-in-chief and chief supervisor of the Polish army. On September 17, 1939 he transferred his headquarters to Romania but as the Romanians restricted his activities, he resigned on September 29, 1939. He was interned in a resort town near Bucharest from where he escaped to Hungary in 1941. He spent ten months here (was received by Regent Horthy); with the help of the IM and DM he was spirited back into Poland where he died shortly after of a heart attack. In exile he acknowledged his responsibility for Poland's defeat and for this reason he did not wish to accept another role.

(4) National Archives. 1939. Minutes of the November 3, 1939 meeting of the Council of Ministers.

(5) The office functioning on the sub-division level took care of translating Polish applications and certain other matters. All applications went first to this sub-division, the head of which was Jan Krzemien who used to be chief ministerial counsellor of the Polish Interior Ministry.

(6) Antall, Jozsef: Menekultek Menedeke. Egy Magyar Humanista a 20. Szazadban, Budapest, 1996; his memoirs.

(7) Slawik Henryk (1894-1944): social-democratic newspaper reporter from Silesia, representative at the Szejm before 1939, one of the leaders in Hungary of the Polish emigration, president of the PCC. He entered Hungary on September 21, 1939, immediately joined in the legal organizational work but soon became one of the leaders of the civilian resistance movement. On March 19, 1944 he went into hiding but the Gestapo tricked him into arrest. In August 1944 he was executed in Mauthausen.

(8) Members of the Polish Civilian Committee (PCC): Andrzej Pysz; Stefan Filipkiewicz, painter, professor at the Cracow Art Academy; Henryk Urban; Zbigniew Borowsko, counsellor at the legation; Edmund Fietowicz-Fietz; Rudolf Cywicki; Zbigniew Zaleski; Bogdan Stypinski; Zbigniew Kosciuszko.

(9) Baratok a Bajban: Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon 1939-1945, eds: J.R. Nowak, T. Olszanski; Budapest, 1935

(10)

a. Stasierski, Kazimierz: Scolnictwo Polskie na Wegrzech w Czasie DrugiejWojny Swiatowei (A lengyel iskolaugy Magyarorszagon a Masodik Vilaghaboru Idejen), Poznan, 1969;

b. Kapronczay, Karoly: Lengyel Iskolak Magyarorszagon a Masodik Vilaghaboru Idejen Magyar Pedagogia, 1974. #3;

c. Budzinski, Franciszek: Lengyel Gimnazium es Liceum Balatonzamardiban es Balatonboglaron, Balatonboglar, 1989.

(11) Immediately after the arrival of the first groups of refugees an information service in their mother tongue was started. The Legation in Budapest issued the first guidebook, edited by Press Secretary Ulatowski, under the heading "Biuletyn Informacyjny" (Information Gazette), already during the last days of September 1939. This mimeographed publication only appeared six times. In October 1939, the Legation asked the Hungarian authorities for permission to publish Wiesci Polskie (Polish News) which was the continuation of the Biuletyn Informacyjny appearing twice a week from November 3, 1939 on and three times a week from January 30, 1940 on. It was distributed all over Hungary. Its editor-in-chief was Jozef Winiewicz; after his departure it was taken over by dr. Zbigniew Kosciuszko, historian, reporter, head of the Polish News Agency in Budapest. Members of the editorial office were: Zygmund Bogucki, Jadwiga Bogucka, Janusz Kowalczuk, Zbigniew Grotowski, Jerzy Szwajcer (Jotes), Roman Michalski, and Stanislaw Jankowski. The other important publication was the Tygodnik Polski-Materialy Obozowe (Polish Weekly - Camp News) which was published by the PCC. From mid-1940 on appeared the Swietlicowe Materialy Obozowe (Camp Club News) which in 1941 merged with the publication Nasza Swietlica (Our Club) of the YMCA under the name of Tygodnik Polski. This paper dealt mostly with literary, artistic, social, and economic matters. From June 25, 1943 on the Tygodnik Polski carried every two weeks a supplement, called Glos Zolzierna (Voice of the Soldier) edited by Lt.-Col. Aleksander Krol. Other important and popular publications of the editors of the Wiesci Polskie were the Rocznik Polski (Polish yearbook) and the Kalendarz Polaka na Wegrzech (Polish Calendar in Hungary). Three issues of these appeared, edited by Zbigniew Grotowska, Maria Jankowska, and Stanislaw Staniszewski. From the historical point of view of importance are certain camp publications which depicted camp life. There were other occasional publications. After Germany occupied Hungary, only one publication, the Slowo (the Word), appeared but this too folded after eight issues.

(12)

a. Nurek, Mieczysla: Polska w Polityce Wielkiei Britanii w Latach 1936-1941, Warsaw, 1983,

b. Bieganski, Witold: W Konspiracji i Walce. Warsaw, 1979;

3.- Boniec, Zbigniew: Polskie Spotkania na Wyspach Britijskich, Warsaw 1972

(13) Fietowicz-Fietz, Edmund (1891-1944): Polish diplomat, politician of the Peasants' Party. Before reaching Hungary, he was Polish consul in Pozsony (Bratislava). He was arrested on March 19, 1944; the Germans tortured him to obtain information on the Hungarian plans for defection. He was executed in Mauthausen.

(14) Opoka-Loewenstein, Stanislaw (1889-1944): socialist politician, his party's representative in the W-Center. He played an important role in the secret resistance movements. In August 1944 he was executed in Dachau.

(15) Bardzik, Stanislaw: lawyer, major in the reserves, representative of the National Party in W-center.

(16) Slys, Jozef (1890-1944): politician, representative of the Labour Party in the W-Center. During Slawik's arrest and stay in Siklos, was temporary head of the PCC. Arrested on March 19, 1944, the Germans executed him in Mauthausen.

(17) Rev. Bela Varga's interview on his life. "Uj Magyarorszag", July 11 August 12, 1991.
(18) Kapronczay, Karoly: Akkor nem volt Lengyelorszag..., Budapest, 1992.
(19) Antall, Jozsef: Op.Cit (6)
(20) Ibid.
(21) Juhasz, Gyula: Magyar-Brit Titkos Targyalasok 1943-ban, Budapest, 1978.
(22) Ibid.
23) Emisarski-Pindelli, Jan: colonel, Polish military attache in Budapest from 1938; one of the organizers of the evacuation. He was obliged to leave Hungary in 1940, became regimental commander in the Middle-East; took part in the Italian campaign. Remained in England after 1945. His memoirs are kept at the Sikorski Institute in London.
(24)
a. Bieganski, Witold: Uchodzcy Polscy na Wegrzech w latach 1939-1945. Antyhitlerowska dzialalnosc Polakow na Wegrzech i Balkanach, Warsaw, 1971;
b. Juchniewicz, Mieczyslaw: Polacy w Europelskim Ruchu Oporu 1939-1945, Warsaw, 1972;
c. Lagzi, Istvan: Adatok az 1939 oszen Magyorszagra Menekult Lengyel Katonak Evakuaciojanak Tortenetehez, Hadtortenelmi Szemle, 1973;
d. Felczak, Waclaw: Powrot i Legenda, Warsaw, 1966;
e. Emisarski, Jan: Ewakuaciaz Wegier, Goniec Karpacki 1959, #2 and #3.
(25) Emisarski, Jan: Op.Cit. (24/5)
(26) Lagzi, Istvan: Op.Cit. (24/3)
(27) Op.Cit. (6)
(28) Emisarski, Jan: Op.Cit. (24/5)
(29) Antall, Jozsef: Op.Cit. (6)
(30) Gunde, Geza (1892-1976), colonel; in October 1939, while a lieutenant-colonel. he was named commander of the Nagykanizsa camp. Upon German demands, he was relieved of his duties in April 1940 for helping the evacuation. (For this, he received a Polish decoration in 1976.) In 1948 he was removed from the army, was sent into internal deportation in 1951; was physical labourer from 1954; was gallery guide in a museum 1968-1976.
(31) Beck, Jozef (1894-1944): Politician, lieutenant-colonel, foreign minister. During WWI he was aide-de-camp to Jozef Pilsudski; 1926-1930 was chief of the defense minister's cabinet; in 1930 vice-president; foreign minister from 1932-1939. On September 18, 1939 he fled to Romania from where he went, via Hungary, to France at the end of September. He died in London.
(32) Trojanowski, Mieczyslaw (1886-1944): Polish general. Entered Hungary on September 21, 1939; lived to the end in the officers' camp at Zugliget. On March 19, 1944, the Gestapo arrested him and executed him in Mauthausen in August 1944..
(33) Maczek, Stanislaw (1892-1990): Polish general. During WWI he was professional officer in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy's army; after 1918 became member of the Polish army. In 1930 was made general and commander of the 10. motorized cavalry brigade. In September 1939, he retreated with his unit to Hungary. He evacuated at the end of October, participated with his reorganized brigade in the French actions. Lived in England from June 1940; in February 1942 he became commander of the I. Polish armoured division. Took part in the actions

in France, Belgium, and Holland. Legendary hero of the break-through at Falaise; he is immortalized in Breda with a monument. He lived in London until his death.

(34) A Wilhelmstrasse es Magyarorszag, Budapest, 1968.

(35) Archives of Military History, DM, Zoltan Balo's memoirs.

(36) Antall, Jozsef; Op.Cit. (6); Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (18); -- Op.Cit. (1/1); Op.Cit.(9/9).

(37) National Archives, K.6414; Documents of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross, 1939-1944.

(38) Kapronczay, Karoly: The Health Affaire of Polish Refugees in Hungary during WW II. 1939-'1934; Orvostorteneti Kozlemenyek, 1976.

(39) Mational Archives, K.150. IM IX. bundle #9324. Accounts.

(40) Stasierski, K.: Szkolnictwo Polskie na Wegrzech w Czasie Drugiej Wojny Swiatowej, Poznan, 1969.

(41) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. ~18)

(42) Lagzi, Istvan: Op.Cit ~1/3); Godo, Agnes: Op.Cit. (1/2)

(43) Ibid.

(44) Rowecki, Stefan: See Notes of the previous chapter.

(45) Korkozowicz, Jan (Barski) (1901-1974): colonel; one of the commanders of the Polish soldiers in Hungary, 1939-1945, commander of the Support Base. Returned to Poland in 1945.

(46) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (1/1);

(47) Ibid.

(48) Lagzi, Istvan: Op.Cit. (1/3)

(49) Bieganski, W.: Op.Cit. (24/1)

(50) Kozkozowicz, Jan: Wojsko Polskie na Wegrzech 1939-1945. Polish Institute of Military History,V/21/33, pp.13-(14), p. 31.: Archives of Military History DM 1940-21-21-3555-23.695. Report of the regimental commander of Budapest to the 21. Division of the DM. Col. Karnaus arrived in Budapest on December 21, 1939 from Belgrade as a diplomatic courier. His residence permit expired on May 15, 1940.

(51) Archives of Military History DM 21-21-3556-31.107 or 21-21-3554-13.512

(52) Korkozowicz: Op.Cit. (50)

(53) Archives of Military History DM 1940-21-21-3556-38.

(54) Ihid. 1940-21-21-54.342/48.966 Telegraphed report from the command of the VIII. army corps of Miskolc.

(55) Archives of Borsod-Abauj-Zemplen County, Alisp/eln.20/1940. 17.013/1939.VII.Res./(56) January 4, 1940, issue of Official Newspaper of Heves County.

(57) Ibid, February 4, 1940

(58) Archives of Military History 1940-21-21-3555-1850. Report of Royal Hungarian commander of Polish officers' camp of Csiz.

(59) Ibid.

(60) Ibid.

(61) Ihid.1940-21-21-3555-16.660 (German protest)

SOCIAL WELFARE OF THE POLISH REFUGEES

In the autumn of 1939 the Hungarian Government was not yet ready to receive the masses of Polish refugees streaming toward her borders even though it did make some preparations for this expected event at the time the German-Polish war broke out. After securing the financial backing, the first order of business was the organization of lodging. In all aspects of refugee care, the principles of the Geneva Agreement were applicable. Thus, the the military refugees' care fell to the Defense Ministry's newly created 21. Division (handling prisoners- of-war) or to the regional military commanders who worked closely with this Division.

Between the two world wars, based on the experiences of the first, several Agreements were signed for the protection of the rights of military and civilian refugees. These aimed at regulating and securing by means of international law the individual or collective rights of refugees within the borders of belligerent or receiving countries, the conditions of their housing and feeding, and the activities of countries or institutions that come to their assistance (such as the International Red Cross).In 1927, and within the organization of the International Red Cross, the Association for International Assistance was created for the specific purpose of caring for prisoners-of-war and refugees. Our country signed this agreement on April 17, 1927, thereby committing herself that in case of war she will help the International Red Cross in providing assistance to military and civilian refugees. However, in 1929, the International Red Cross initiated a very similar agreement within the League of Nations that Hungary, not being a member yet of this organization, could not sign at the time. This could only take place in 1936, and the agreement was entered that year into the Hungarian legal code. The XXX. law of l936, concerned itself primarily with the care of military prisoners and refugees and with their rights. Within that law, § 81 dealt with the civilian population that had the same rights to care and assistance. (It must be noted here that in 1934 there was a proposal for an agreement concerning the civilian populations but its finalization and ratification only took place after the WW II. The member states of the United Nations signed this specific agreement in 1949.)

According to this agreement, every country - even the belligerent ones had to provide their prisoners-of-war with the same treatment as that granted to their own secondary reservists, including cultural and educational possibilities, and appropriate health care. In countries that are at war with each other (or have no diplomatic representation), the International Red Cross acts as neutral foreign agent protecting the rights of the captive military and civilian entities. The countries holding these prisoners must guarantee the free activities of any protector or culutral-educational organization.

The Teleki-government applied the terms of the 1927 agreement to the Polish refugees; in fact, lacking any international agreements, it went beyond the accepted international law as far as the civilian refugees were concerned. It created extraordinarily humane conditions for them, which provoked German protests. It is a fact that the authorities - governmental, military, and voluntary agencies - did their utmost for receiving and housing the masses that flooded the country. It was impossible to gauge the rhythm and number of arrivals since these refugees used not only the official border-crossing points and the well-trod highways, but crowds also came across the mountains, on untravelled footpaths. From October, 1939 on some arrivals were recorded coming from Romania also*1. The news of Hungary's humane treatment soon spread among the strictly guarded and interned Polish refugees who, taking another risk, tried to reach our country.

Hungary considered the military refugees as prisoners-of-war and, after their being disarmed and registered, sent them inland. This was done with strict regard of the international agreements by the Hungarian military commanders with the assistance of civilian authorities and voluntary agencies. However, concerning the civilian refugees. a different set of rules had to be worked out lacking any particular reference to them in the Geneva Agreement. According to Hungarian law, any alien residing in Hungary without a valid passport had to be placed under the supervision of the Interior Ministry's National Center for Alien Control (KEOKH). This would have meant that all their activities would have automatically fallen under police scrutiny and obliged the government to send them to internment camps. This was the attitude taken by the Romanian authorities. The great number of civilian refugees, as well as the high proportion of women and children among them, prompted the Hungarian authorities to disregard the requirement for police procedures and surveillance. Rather, applying the law as flexibly as possible, it declared all Polish civilian refugee care a social welfare

case. Thus, assistance to the civilian exiles fell to the 21. (Social Welfare and Assistance) Division of the Interior Ministry which, together with the KEOKH kept their records, saw to their settlement in camps. Imbued by true humanitarian spirit and his anti-Nazi sympathies, the director of this Division, Jozsef Antall (1896-1974), organized the care of the civilian refugees making every potential anti-Hitler move possible. In this respect, the Interior Minister, Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer, played a significant role: without his tacit approval such encouragement of anti-Hitler activities could not have taken place in his jurisdiction, particularly in the midst of constant German protests. Egually essential was Regent Horthy, without whose unspoken agreement the Polish refugee care, the voluntary agencies' legal activities or the resistance movement, could not have been developed as they were.

With regard to the Polish exiles and later to the refugees of other nationalities, it must be stresssed that in September 1939 no one could foresee the extent and duration of the conflict; therefore, long-range planning was necessary. Aside from providing social welfare, the exiles' other problems had to be heeded: in their altered conditions, for example, cultural-educational programs. as well as medical-health care, had to be provided. These could only be carried out after permanent settlement in camps. In choosing the sites for these camps - both military and civilian certain important special political considerations had to be taken into account: they had to be far from towns or villages that had significant Volksbund or Arrow-Cross Party sympathizers; and, upon the Polish Legation's request, as close as possible to the Hungarian-Yugoslav border, thus facilitating the ever-increasing evacuations*2. The military camps were closed units, guarded and supervised by the Hungarian army, whereas the civilian camps had a modified form. In their case, the word "camp" was loosely applied and covered the whole territory of an administrative entity that housed the refugees. These were often lodged in rented apartments or boarding-houses the cost of which - in additlon to the per diem stipends was covered by the 21. Division of the Interior Ministry. The "camp commander" was the highest local authority (county sheriff, town-clerk, mayor) who had the help of the refugees' elected representatve*3.

At first, they took roll-call every day. Later, from the end of October, it was taken only every ten days, at the time of the payment of the stipends; this made escapes easier*4.This was changed back to daily control in May-June 1940, at the time of the French-German war, and was meant to protect the evacuating refugees: so that they

should not be caught in Italy or France. Similar "limitations" were applied for their safety in April 1941 after the German occupation of Yugoslavia. The escapes noted at roll-call had to be reported immediately to the constabulary or the police which was to publish an arrest-warrant for the escapee*5.

The civilians in camp received their allotments (per diem stipends, financial assistance, gifts, etc.) directly from the Interior Ministry, thus trying to shut out the [German] "sources of information" built into every governmental unit. This was most important in the autumn of 1939, and the spring of 1940, when the scale of evacuations reached its highest point. But even after the end of the big wave of evacuations, there remained a significant number of Poles in Hungary to strain the resources of the state and of Hungarian society. It must be said here that from the first the voluntary organizations (Hungarian Red Cross, humanitarian associations such as the all-encompassing Hungarian-Polish Commmittee for Refugee Care) played a tremendous role in the financial aid and in the caring for the refugees. They set up temporary camps near the border and organized collection drives the proceeds of which were either given to the respective ministry or were distributed by themselves. In the social welfare question of decisive importance were the various Red Cross associations, (the Hungarian branch of the Polish Red Cross or the Polish Physicians' Group formed within the Hungarian Red Cross), the international aid societies, and the representatives in Hungary of the Polish associations from the U.S. and other countries, such as the Polish Association of America*6. In similar fashion, the Vatican and the world organizations of several Protestant Churches lent a helping hand.

Two legal Polish organizations, guaranteed by international agreements, the Polish Civilian Committee (PCC) and the Representatives of the Polish Military in the Hungarian Kingdom (RPM), joined in these important activities. The RPM ensured the protection of the rights of the military refugees; the PCC did not have this duty as it was, in the autumn of 1939, still fulfilled by the legally functioning Polish legation. The international agreement of 1939 made the formation of the PCC possible even though the Germans always protested its application. The PCC and its deputies in the various camps had the responsibility of distributing aid and donations; in fact, it disposed of its own funds and maintained a warehouse of material assistance both furnished by the government-in-exile in London and forwarded through the International Red

Cross.*7 The Polish organizations in Hungary regularly helped those in Poland that were persecuted by the Germans and the Poles held captive in various camps. This could only be done through the International Red Cross; but from the summer of 1941, the Hungarian Red Cross hospital trains going to the eastern front always took along packages destined for Polish addressees, primarily medicines and money*8. During the 1940, nation-wide collection "for Poles", the Hungarian pharmaceutical industry gave vast guantities of medicine to the aid agencies and guaranteed free delivery of medications to the camps.

In the autumn of 1939, the directives were developed for all future social welfare care of the Polish refugees. At that time, everything was centralized, based on temporary and transit camps. Modifications could only take place once final camps were established. Both ministries proceeded in a similar manner, and so did the Red Cross that maintained some 43 temporary camps, as well as the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care*9. Once the number of refugees diminished and the final camps were established, one could switch to individualized treatment of the civilians, and introduce different daily stipends depending on the level of education and the number of individuals per family. Every civilian refugee residing in the country received a per diem stipend; the soldiers received the pay of their rank. According to the #78/1940 Order of Refugee Care every adult and child over 12 years of age received a daily sum of 1 pengo; children under 12 got 1.50 pengos. Furthermore, if they did not live in "closed" camps, their rent was subsidized. Among the intellectuals, those that figured on the special list of the IM (the activists of the Polish organizations, their leaders or those that were proposed by them) had their stipends fixed at 4 pengos. After 1943 this was modified to 7 pengos for those with families and to 5 pengos for single individuals. This modification also set the stipend of those on the camp lists at daily 5 pengos, plus 4 per child. In the case of children studying in Hungarian schools and subject to tuition, the schools were either asked to grant them exemption or the IX. Division of the IM paid it*10. These sums exceeded the average Hungarian's income. The same #78/1940 Order allowed military and civilian individuals to seek work but in that case the stipends were only paid to the non-working members of the family. The same Order also dealt with the infirm and the pregnant mothers who received - against a medical certificate - an increased daily stipend. Needless to say, the occasional assistance received from outside sources (Red Cross or the Polish Legation) had no bearing on the governmental stipends.

Christmas and Easter gifts of money or material goods counted as regular assistance. These gifts included clothing (winter or summer clothes), books, toys and sweets for children.

According to the guide issued by the DM at the same time, in addition to the daily food ration, the following pay was allocated: to generals 8, to field offcers 6, officers 4, officer candidates 2 pengos daily. Again, aside from the daily food rations, professional non-commisioned offiers received daily 1 pengo, enlisted ones 50 filler. Members of the officers' and non-commissioned officers' families received 2 pengos, with an additional 2 pengos per child.The soldiers got 20 filler daily. Of course, in case of outside work, the regulations applied to them also: no pay during the time of their contract*11.

Permission to work became effective on July 1, 1940; the director of the IM's IX Division, Jozsef Antall, issued a circular to all public administrators asking them to provide jobs for the refugees or to put them in touch with potential employers. The Ministry of Industry and Commerce made a list of all possible available jobs and gave it to the IM which broke it down by regions and sent this on to the various camps. The potential employers could then contact the local administration or the military commanders for workers. According to contemporary statistics of the year 1943, of the 35,000 resident Poles about 6,500 found permanent jobs; during the summer about 20,000 had seasonal employment harvesting; gathering in the crops, and other agricultural work. This was mostly undertaken by the soldiers, in organized units. Again according to 1943 statistics, 890 people worked in the Polish organizations*12. In additlon to the material care of the refugees, the real challenge for social welfare care was to provide the educational-cultural and health-care programs.

THE RED CROSS AND THE REFUGEES

In mid-September 1939, at the appearance of the first Polish refugees, the Red Cross immediately mobilized its units and asked the International Red Cross and other Red Cross associations for help. As the situation became more and more chaotic, the two responsible ministries, the military and civilian administrations, all counted on the assistance of the Red Cross in receiving the refugees and in caring for them. In fact, it had to do things which were not in its sphere but it agreed to help out of humanitarian spirit. From the first, the Hungarian government counted on the Red Cross, partly because of the quick mobilization of its specially trained units, and partly - because of its foreign connections - it was able to receive outside help immediately. Thus, the Hungarian Red Cross became, at least temporarily, the focal point of refugee care. The fact that its organizer was the one who also unified the domestic and foreign assistance programs, created the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care, and - within its own association - several sub-agencies (among them the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross) is proof of this. The Hungarian Red Cross aligned all its activities with those of the International Red Cross, coordinated foreign aid (British, American, Danish, Swedish, French, etc.) At the height of its activity, between October 1939 to June 1940, the Hungarian Red Crss took care of about 50,000 Polish military and civilian refugees keeping the responsible ministries informed all along. In all aspects of refugee care, the Red Cross acted in accordance with the government's directives and consulted the local authorities weekly.

During all this time, it not only helped the state-established camps but maintained camps and shelters of its own. In the spring of 1940, after the great evacuation ended, it liquidated its own, by now superfluous, camps and, in June 1940, transferred their inhabitants to the Polish civilian and military camps*13. After this it only handled humanitarian and assistance programs and enlarged its Polish contingent for this purpose. It is noteworthy that an article by Edith Bors-Takacs*14 in the March 1940 issue of the Bulletin de la Ligue de Societes de la Croix-Rouge speaks of 30,681 military and 11,000 civilian refugees that the Hungarian Red Cross cared for until February 29. 1940 utilizing other Red Cross associations and

domestic and foreign aid. This care meant arranging for their room and board and covering their other expenses.

The International Red Cross took over the expenses for 20.400 military and 1,870 civilian refugees; their expenses totalled more than 2,272,000 pengos. In all fairness it must be said that the IM refunded half of this sum in June 1940, after receiving the last groups of refugees. The balance due them was paid in 1941. In its correspondence with the IM concerning the trasfer of money, the Red Cross mentioned having cared for 35,000 military and 15,000 civilian refugees*15. This letter mentions the possibility of some individuals "having been registered several times" as the refugees were in constant flux and some took on different names. The assistance was divided among 82 camps and continued to the end of the war. According to Katalin Fabian, who used to be the registrar for the Red Cross, this organization took care of 96,000 Poles during the war years. From Red Cross statistics, we know that until the spring of 1940 13,000 Poles returned to their native country; there were altogether only 2,000 refugees of German origin that went back to Poland.

The other task facing the Red Cross was assistance to the Polish aid societies. This characterizes the period after June 1940 but it started well before that. Of these, the first to come into being was the Hungarian branch of the Polish Red Cross*16. Already at the end of September 1939, units of the Polish Red Cross started their activities in Hungary. Through the Hungarian Red Cross they maintained contact with the newly established Polish Red Cross center in Anger, France. The subsequent leader of the Hungarian Polish Red Cross, Lt.-Col. Eustachy Serafinowicz, director of the Lodz branch of this organization, entered Hungary on September 19, 1939; on October 2, as advisor to the Hungarian Red Cross, took part in the discussions with the IM. During these, they asked for permission for the Polish Red Cross to start its actvities in Budapest. The official permission was granted on October 9, 1939; this was the first Polish Red Cross organization that was re-established outside of Poland's borders and served as a model to all other Red Cross associations. In Anger, the headquarters of the Polish government-in-exile in France, the re-organized presidency of the Red Cross issued a circular letter to all its branches scattered throughout Europe urging them to continue their activities in newly formed regional units*17. This request was supported by the International Red Cross which gave legal protection to all Red Cross units receiving Polish refugees. Polish Red Cross stations opened in many countries that accepted Polish refugees (Lithuania, Romania,

Yugoslavia, England, Switzerland), whereas the stations in Belgrade, Bucharest, and Geneva looked after the interests of the Polish refugees in France, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The unit in Tel Aviv was formed last, in the spring of 1940 but was kept, from its inception, on the express demand of the Polish government,under the supervision of the Hungarian Red Cross*18.

Officially, the Budapest branch of the Polish Red Cross functioned within the Hungarian Red Cross. Among its duties was to maintain contact between the leadership in Anger and the directors of the Hungarian Red Cross. However, with special permission, it acted totally independently in fulfilling its Red Cross duties vis-a-vis the Polish refugees (passing on messages, searches, reuniting families, humanitarian assistance, etc.). Its volume of activities increased dramatically after the spring of 1941 as Yugoslavia's German occupation forced it to close its Belgrade station, and in the autumn of 1943 when Romania liquidated its independent branch in Bucharest. The Budapest branch of the Polish Red Cross became the largest unit, its territory having been expanded to cover also Bulgaria and Turkey. in addition to Yugoslavia and Romania*19. As a result of the collaboration of the two Red Cross associations, the Hungarian Red Cross opened branches in Lemberg and Warsaw where - acting under the directive of the Polish Red Cross - they rescued many of the politically persecuted, regulary assisted the population and the inhabitants of the concentration camps*20. It is a proven fact that the Hungarian Red Cross workers in Lemberg and Warsaw handed out dispensations to members of the resistance movements; they always helped Poles to escape to Hungary with the hospital trains. Again through the Hungarian Red Cross, the Budapest branch of the Polish Red Cross established contact with the French and Spanish camps, regularly assisted the Poles there, and transmitted their messages to their families.

The Budapest branch of the Polish Red Cross chose to be represented in the PCC by Zbiegniew Borowko*21, thus taking an active part in the management of the Polish emigration's affairs and in the resistance movement. In October 1939 it was planned to entrust the health care and the care of the infirm to the Polish Red Cross. In view of the Geneva Agreement and the special character of the refugee care, it was the Polish Red Cross association itself that suggested creating the Polish Physicians' Group (PPG)*22 as an autonomous unit. This would leave to the Red Cross the task of procuring medications and hospital supplies, offering nurses'

training programs, and generally help with the social welfare assistance. The various tasks having been clearly defined, the two associations worked in tandem, without friction, although the Polish Branch created its own Doctors' Service*22. This was meant to furnish education in health and hygiene, devise the curriculum for the nurses' training, and supervise the 35-bed officers' hospital in Eger.

The Branch was divided according to the task each part was to fulfill. Col. Serafinowicz*25 was its head, Adam Meisner*25, member of the PCC, his deputy. The association was divided into four departments: the foreign (director: Bronislaw Zrudski; assistance (dir: Jozef Skolski); the registration and information (dir: Maximilian Wojtas); and the medical (dir: Kazimierz Ruppert). Led by deputies, the eight Hungarian sub-stations of the Polish Red Cross (Budapest, Esztergom, Sarvar, the Balaton region, Szeged, the Drava region, Eger, and the Upper-Tisza) formed part of the Hungarian station, as did the sub-stations in the various camps managed by agents. In the Station's center, there were about 50 workers, in the provincial sub-stations about 100, aided by numerous volunteer activists. The social welfare department stood at the focal point of the Station's activities. It soordinated its functions with other Red Cross associations and with the competent Hungarian authorities, as well as with Polish emigre institutions. In their assistance programs, the Polish government-in-exile and Polish Red Cross acted completely independently. Also, it was this Station that kept in contact with the American-Polish Association twhich opened its agency in November 1939) which gave assistance not only to Polish refugees in Hungary but also to the families of 12,000 incarcerated Poles in Poland. It also helped abt. 10,000 Poles living in the Balkans with shipments of food and money*26.

The social welfare division was ably helped by the registration and information division. In addition to its regular work, this division also dealt with reuniting families, transmitting messages, searching out information on members of separated families. The foreign department, aside from lending a hand to the other divisions, maintained contact with other Red Cross associations and humanitarian organizations functioning abroad.

One of the principal activities of the Polish Red Cross was the dissemination of information on health care and hygiene. This was mainly done through the Free Catholic University. It also organized courses and lecture series in the various military and civilian camps. The transcribed lectures were then later mimeographed and distributed; they appeared also in the exiles' press.

NOTES

(1) National Archives, K.150. Documents of the IM's IX. Division, Item #4024: numbers, accounts reports. 2.- Rechmann, Jan: Uchodzcy polscy na Wegrzech. Kwartalnik Hist. 1965, Vol. 52. 2.- Kapronczay, Karoly: A Menekultugy Iranyitasa, Historia, 1988, No.3.

(2) Antall, Jozsef Sr: Menekultek Menedeke. Egy Magyar Humanista a 20. Szazadban, Budapest, 1996. His memoirs.

(3) National Archives, K.150. IM, IX, Division. 2nd chapter of order #(14).299/1939. Also. a strictly confidential ministerial order #23.162. Res VI-B. 1939.

(4) Ibid. Item #4024. Circularized order on refugees #78/1940.

(5) Ibid. #254/1940. January 5, 1940.

(6) The Polish YMCA (KIE). In the autumn of 1939, coinciding with the Red Cross, the agents of several foreign Polish associations appeared to assist the Polish refugees either through the Hungarian-Polish Committee of Refugee Care or independently. They supported the military and civilian camps with significant monetary or charitable gifts. Subsequently, they sent through the Red Cross donations and food pacckages to Poles languishing in French, Spanish or even German internment and concentration camps. The most outstanding of these associations was the American Committee of Assistance to the Polish Refugees which functioned through the Red Cross staffed with YMCA (young Men's Christian Association) or KIE (Association of Christian young Men) workers. Its office in Budapest, on Akademia utca 5, was managed by Czeslaw Psukoski; his deputy was Jozef Wagner and Franciszek Ryborczyk was its secretary. It had abt. 30 Polish workers. The other aid association, the Association of Polish-Americans, had its Budapest office at Tara-utca 3. It was led by Stanislaw Panikiewicz; his deputy was Tadeusz Hubicki and Wladyslaw Najchrzak was secretary. This office had abt. 35 Poles in its permanent employ; they furthered the Association's activities with information and administrative work.

(7) National Archives.K.150. IX. Division of the IM. #975/eln. 1939.VII/B. 1939. November 8. Item #4024.

(8) Ibid. F.1614. Material of the Polish Red Cross.

(9) Ibid. Items #4025-4027. Lists of camp rolls l940-1944.

(10) Ibid. Item #4024. Circularized order #78/1940; order #254/40 on refugees.

(11) Archives of Military History. DM eln. 21-21-1940; Orders of the year.

(12) National Archives. K.150. IM IX. Item #4026. Reports of the year 1943 .

(13) Ibid. Item #4027,. Document #67.189.

(14) Bulletin de la Ligue de Societes de la Croix Rouge.

(15) See Note #(13)

(16) Documents of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross, originally kept in the archives of the Hungarian Red Cross, are now at the National Archives (P.16g1, 1642). The Hungarian Red Cross abandoned its offices in the Baross-utca 32, leaving its archives behind which were mostly destroyed by water leakage. The remaining documents. together with fragments of the Polish Red Cross papers, are now at the National Archives.

(17) National Archives, P.1641.

(18) Ibid.

(19) Ibid.

(20) Arend, Rudolf: Emigracja Polska na Wegrzech w latach, Arch.Hist.Med. 1964, #4.

(21) Borowko, Jozef Zbigniew: counsellor at the Polish legation in Budapest. He stayed there after the shutting down of the legation with instructions to take over the tasks of Slawik or Fietowicz-Fiets in case they are prevented from carrying them out. After their arrests in March 1944, he tried to reorganize the PCC in its original form but it was re-created with more modest functions alongside of 21. Div. of the DM. However, it was not accepted legally. In August 1944, Borowko negotiated with Friedrich Bonn and Col. Lorand Utassy about organizing the personal protection of the Poles. He also created the "P" section of the International Red Cross; in the spring of 1945 he became a member of the commission that dealt with repatriations.

(22) The Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross, in addition to handling health-care education, also provided personnel and equipment to maintain health in the camps. Its own Doctors' Service, under the leadership of Prof. Kazimierz Rouppert, was essentially created for health-care education and the training of nurses, but it was also entrusted with the runing of the 35-bed officers' hospital in Eger to avoid further wrangling between the followers of Pilsudski and Sikorski.

(24) Serafinowicz, Eustachy, Lt.-Col, Colonel after 1943. President of the Red Cross Association's Lodz Branch; upon instructions from the government-in-exile in Anger, he organized the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross. He had a significant role in developing the high standards of the Red Cross's activities. He went into hiding after March 19, 1944 and returned to his homeland in the spring of 1945.

(25) Meisner, Adam: was the official deputy to the president of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross.

E D U C A T I O N

Children and school-age youngsters comprised a great part of the Polish refugees, therefore their further education had to be assured. The Hungarian authorities and the leaders of the Polish emigration pondered this question since the early autumn of 1939.*1

This was the motive for separating the children and youth who arrived without parents and putting them up in what became known as the "yellow house" in Balatonzamardi. This one-story building was the Horthy Miklos State Children's Resort secured for the refugees by Jozsef Antall. Here, and on Polish education in general, divergent views emerged between the Ministry of Religion and Culture, on the one hand, and - on the other, the leaders of the state officials and the voluntary organizations that cared for the refugees. Balint Homan, Minister of Culture, only allowed what the Germans did in Poland. That meant only elementary schools and vocational training was permitted; he did not allow high schools and higher education.

However, the majority of the youths at Balatonzamardi were of high school age - l00 elementary, vs. 200 high school age children, the (14)-15 years olds. And these caused the most problems: the older ones wanted to fight the Germans and therefore many escaped. But there was tension even among those not suited to warfare. Most of them had their studies disrupted by the war, they lost their parents, and were subject to feelings of uncertainty and hopelessness. There was only one way to combat this atmosphere of gloom and to-make them focus on new goals: begin regular schooling. In Balatonzamardi, in addition to principal Hieronym Urban, professional subject teachers, together with some volunteer adults, were entrusted with their education. In the boarding school there was room for about 150 youths, the IM rented four villas for lodging the rest and for classrooms. With time, the IM transferred here 16 subject teachers and as many adult teachers' aids. A circular letter asked the registrars at the border to make separate lists for teachers many of whom were later sent here and to other schools. Their numbers fluctuated wildly, as did the pupils'; the average camp school enrollment was around 250*2.

Partly because of the start-up difficulties, the teachers had a lot of trouble enforcing discipline in Bakatonzamardi. There was tension among the "day students" too, whose parents also lived in camp. The faculty of the Polish High School and Lyceum (as this institution was renamed after December 1, 1940) worked out plans for rich after-school activities and cultural programs. The subsequently well-known theater and dance group was conceived here, as was the choral group under the baton of Stanislaw Swirad. Volley ball, soccer, and water sports were popular. The resort camp of Somogyszentimre also belonged to the school. Established in the buildings of Elemer Marffy's estate, the camp was a summer haven to those children who had no relatives in Hungary and therefore had nowhere to go since the building of the Horthy Miklos Children's Resort had to be returned to its original functions during summer. Anyway, they tried to avoid attracting the Germans' wrath for the "privileged treatment" of the Polish refugees with their school, by now famous throughout Europe.

At one point, it was proposed to send the Polish children to Hungarian Schools but that could not be realized because of the differences in the Polish and Hungarian systems. Besides, the language barrier was insurmountable*3.

Those in charge of refugee care insisted on maintaining the Polish system and wanted to hand out diplomas equivalent to those in Poland. Three distinct educational forms (elementary, high school/lyceum, and vocational) had, therefore, to be established and appropriate faculty found for them. The first was the easiest: in case of few pupils, schools with undivided classes and proper teachers could be organized anywhere. The second (high school/lyceum) was harder: these required specialized teachers, textbooks, proper tools, laboratories. Division by classes and activities had to be strictly enforced.

As mentioned, the teachers among the refugees were listed and handled specially. Upon suggestion of the PCC, every designated camp received its quota of elementary and high school teachers with special attention to the school/camp on the Balaton where they were fully entrusted with maintaining discipline*4. The IX, Division of the IM and the 21. Division of the DM gave their approval to the establisment of an elementary and high school/lyceum. The schools opened in December 1939, and January 1940, but had to close on June 3, 1940, earlier than was planned as the Ministry of Culture forbade this open form of high school education upon repeated

German protests. What prompted these protests was the use of "Polish" High School and Lyceum in the school's name, of Polish faculty, and the Polish curriculum despite their prohibition.

In June, 1940, therefore, a new form of high school education had to be invented. This consisted of the youth Camp established next to the military and civilian camp in Balatonboglar. The IX. Division organized the camp and gave its financial backing while the PCC, together with pedagogic experts, worked out the curriculum. The Rev. Bela Varga, pastor of Balatonboglar, gained lasting merit in the creation of this youth Camp by handing over, for educational purposes, the church's House of Culture and helped settle the youth Camp in the Grand Hotel and six boarding houses. He subsequently became the chief protector of the youth Camp; he was fully aware of the resistance movement in wich he, himself, frequently participated, often at the risk of his life.

The established curriculum was applied in all the camps' elementary schools; the high school/lyceum part only in Balatonboglar. Its essence was to maintain the Polish spirit, the standards and requirements set by the Polish educational system. In its details, however, the curriculum included instruction in the Hungarian language, as well as Hungarian literature, history, and geography. To make room for these, some subjects - such as singing, physical education, and handicrafts - were dropped; these could be made up in the free time*5.

In addition to the political obstacles to these educational endeavours, the schools suffered from a lack of textbooks. Since there were practically none, all liberal arts instructions were based on note-taking. At first, instruction in the natural sciences proceeded the same way; it was only later that a sufficient number of textbooks printed in Hungary and abroad could be provided. Classroom work was also made difficult by the different levels of knowledge among the pupils. In most classes youths coming from various parts of Poland, from urban and rural schools, were lumped together so communal work was slowed down. The teachers had similar problems overcoming the psychological turmoil of the children. The vicissitudes of emigration and existential uncertainty had their effect on the children's mood. The mid-term drop-out rate was also a problem which was characteristic of the camps' elementary schools. These sometimes reached 80-90%; in fact, the school in Bacs could not even finish the school year*6.

Despite all these hindrances, the result of emigration was that the

parents attached greater importance to education; instruction was based mainly on homework in all camp schools, except the one at Balatonboglar. Led by lay people, tutoring groups were formed to facilitate the children's learning. However, there was no lack of teachers; in fact in Csizfurdo there were more teachers than enrolled pupils*7.

One of the pre-conditions of successful education was to ensure proper compensation for the teachers. Therefore, the IX. Division of the IM raised the per diem stipends of the-intellectuals and the PCC regularly gave them additional assistance.

General or Elementary Schools

The general or elementary schools were the first to be established by the Hungarian authorities. The first such schools, as already mentioned, was in Balatonzamardi where about 300 orphaned children were settled. Of these 60-100 children were of general school age. Their education had begun in November 1939, already, under the guidance of Marian Andrzejewski. Originally it had two teachers which went up to five after the school's transfer to Balatonboglar. They planned activities for the full day but they also included free time. In each subject they gave the classroom hours prescribed by the Polish system except that in classes 5 and 6 they reduced the math and geometry classes from five to four and eliminated the "study of the environment" to make room for Hungarian language instruction*8.

Undoubtedly, the most difficult situation was in Balatonzamardi: in the autumn of 1939, it still counted as a temporary camp; there were numerous escapes, particularly among the older boys, and many of the teachers only waited for their passport or a chance to "depart". The tense, nervous atmosphere eroded discipline. There was a great deal of breaches of discipline and of breaking of rules. Among the younger children, the lack of a "home" caused many difficulties. In this respect, the faculty, with superhuman effort, created a home-like environment resulting in a peaceful, quiet atmosphere.

The school in Balatonzamardi differed vastly from the other camp schools where there was only instruction and where the children lived with their parents. The first such school was established in Barcs but it was short-lived. Since it was located on the Drava, groups of Poles used it as a spring-board to escape to Yugoslavia; a feeling of impermanence filled the camp. None of the enrolled pupils finished the 1939/1940 or the 1940//1941 school years. In fact, during the 1940/1941 school year, teachers from Balatonboglar came to instruct the children. The local Hungarian elementary school offered its classrooms for afternoon instructlon but here, too, the main hindrance to effective teaching was the lack of textbooks*9.

Shortly after the Barcs school, a school opened in Kadarkut; this one functioned until the German occupation. A civilian camp of abt. 250 people was established in this village, about 22 km. from Kaposvar; the inhabitants worked outside the camp and led a relatively good life. They had well-organized cultural activities: They had a chorus and an orchestra, as well as a literary society. They regularly invited lecturers and they had organized foreign-language courses for the adults. In this camp, Janina Kedzior, principal, operated a permanent school for about 30-40 pupils. At first, here too instruction took place in the afternoon in the classrooms of the local elementary school but for the 1940/1941 schoolyear, the PCC rented a three-room peasant house for this purpose. Here they could expand their functions to the whole day, providing meals. The district's physician took on the role of school doctor.

Most of the pupils at Kadarkut went on to attend the high school in Balatonboglar. The school established in Keszthely matched the standards and attendance records of the one at Kadarkut. This camp of abt. 300 inhabitants turned out to be the intellectuals' camp. In its general school, serious work was performed and its graduates could continue their studies at Balatonboglar.

Compared to the serene atmosphere at the schools at Kadarkut and Keszthely, the school established in October 1939 at the military and civilian camp of 3,000 at Nagykanizsa had a much more difficult time. The majority of the camp's inhabitants were military with a significant amount of civilian families. Already in October 1939, the camp's pedagogues - led by Michal Czubuk, reserve officer and professor - held meetings with the aim of opening a general and a high school and to have the Hungarian authorities approve them. Following Culture Minister Homan's principles, approval was granted for the general school which came into being on October 13, 1939 with 13 teachers and close to 100 pupils in the classrooms of one of the local schools*10.

The military personnel regularly escaped from the camp at Nagykanizsa which had its effect on the civilian population as well. Thus, of the 100 enrolled students, only 29 finished the 1939/1940 school year, and of the 13 teachers only 3 remained in Hungary. For the next school year only 30 children enrolled but this school year, because of the camp's liquidation under German pressure, could not be finished here. The civilian inhabitants were transferred first to Heviz, then to Dunamocs. Because of these multiple transfers, the

school opened the 1941/1942 school year in Dunamocs but with a completely different cast of characters. Instruction began in temporary quarters but soon the PCC rented highly suitable accomodations for the school. Compared to the number of residents of the camp (150), the school's enrollment was relatively high (19); they were taught by 5 teachers. During this school year the number of new enrollment (9) egualled the mid-term drop-outs (10), whereas of the graduates of the 6. and 7. graders only 3 went on to Balatonboglar. The children enrolled for the 1943/1944 school year could no longer finish their studies because of Hungary's German occupation. The Gestapo arrested the teachers; the inhabitants fled.

Despite the multiple transfers, the standards of the school at Dunamocs were extremely high: 80% of the youngsters finished the school year with satisfactory results; special attention had been paid to group work. The students published a school paper entitled "Nasza Gazetka" which they distributed in mimeographed form. They regularly went on school outings to Esztergom and other famous sites. The teachers undertook adult education also; aside from the foreign-language courses, they made it possible for some grown-ups to finish their interrupted schooling. They also organized three-month educational courses on subjects of interest*11.

The above mentioned schools were all established in civilian camps; but in Nagykanizsa, where the military and the civilians were not really separated, the military helped initiate such a general school. There were other general schools in or around military camps but they had far fewer pupils; the reason being that very few officers or non-commissioned officers fled with their families. About 85% of the military camps' inhabitants were foot soldiers who arrived alone*12.

The 21.Division of the DM and the PCG contributed to the schools established in or near the officers' camps and their faculties were chosen among the teachers doing their military service. The first one of this type of schools opened in Csizfurdo in October 1939 under the leadership of Nikolaj Czarkowski, high school teacher and reserve lieutenant. The number of teachers changed all the time; instruction was based on 4 teachers but as many as 10 were listed as they kept evacuating. In May 1940 this officers' camp, together with its school, was liquidated. The enrolled 30 children finished the 1940/1941 school year in Eger*13.

From that school year on, the school at the Eger officers' camp,

led by teacher Witalis Piotrowski, a Piarist father, functioned until March 19, 1944, the day of the German occupation of Hungary. During that time, it graduated 300 youngsters. This school was an exception to the other military camp schools: in Kiskunlachaza only a few children participated in tutoring sessions, and in Zalaszentgrot professor Leszczynski and retired teacher Lux Ervin only had 25 children in charge*14.

The number of general schools of the Polish refugees - counting also those that functioned for short periods - was 27 which represents respectable endeavours. It also shows an emigrations' will to live and hope for the future.

Polish Jewish Schools

Within the programs of the education of refugee chldren, that of the Jewish children must be dealt with separately as the Hungarian law of differentiation was applicable to them also. When, in the autumn of 1939 refugee care was organized, upon Jozsef Antall's oral instructions, all military and civilian refugees of the Jewish faith were given Christian identity papers (except for those who insisted upon being registered truthfully), and the "religion" column was certified by the Office of the Polish Apostolate. The mimeographed texts of Catholic prayers were distributed among them so as to avoid detection of the false papers by the German informants*15.

A significant number of children of the Jewish faith arrived by themselves: their parents, in the hope of rescuing them, had them smuggled out of the various Polish ghettos or their parents already lived in Hungary with false papers. Therefore, in Vac in 1943 the Polish Orphans' Home was organized; it was officially known as the Home of the Orphans of Polish Officers. Here they settled children between the ages of 4 to 16. This orphanage was established by the IX. Division of the IM, which also covered part of its upkeep, together with the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care and the PCC, as well as the Polish government in London through the Red Cross. The choice of Vac as the site of the orphanage was deliberate: there was a camp there already esablished for Polish officers with families. Therefore, the creation of such an institution would not have aroused the Hitlerist informants' attention. A school and a nursery school also functioned in the orphanage. Franciszek Swider was the head of the institution. Piarist Father Boharczyk lived there also and taught the orphans Hungarian. The Polish Catholic Apostolate also helped maintain the orphanage and - for conspiratorial reasons - Wilk-Witoslawski found it expedient to visit it often*16.

The educational level was very high at the institution. The children, themselves, were fully aware of their situation and, with their help, the teachers shaped a good communal life. The institute's motto was "Friendship, Trust and Solidarity"; the children fully understood its significance. They never attracted the populations'

attention or the interest of the police. It was only at the moment of the German occupation that the Hungarian espionage and police found out its real purpose: until then they only knew of an "excellent orphanage".

The orphanage and schools were directed by F. Swider, Maria Tomanek-Waskowska, and Anna Bratkowska, with Dr. Jan Kotorba, the legendary physician, also taking a significant part in the children's care. He was renowned not only as the doctor ever-ready for daring exploits in the resistance but also for his soothing care of the children. He managed to cure many who suffered from psychological trauma.

The educational-formative work was based on the children's self-government, on volunteers, and on free-time occupations. The older ones maintained order, helped the younger ones in their studies, and led the communal work. The PCC donated a 1000-volume library to the orphanage.

The serene atmosphere of the orphanage was shattered by the German occupation. The German authorities ordered the listing of the teachers and children and did not hide their intentions of deporting them to concentration camps. One of the charges against Jozsef Antall, who was immediately arrested, was the creaation of this institution. The constant presence of Hungarian and German armed guards around the orphanage caused panic among the residents. The 21. Division of the IM managed finally to stop their deportation and all were allowed to stay there until the liberation of Vac. But by that time the International Red Cross took over their protection*17

Between 1939-1943 several smaller institutions were created for the education of Jewish children in villages surrounding Budapest. The most significant of these was the one at Rakosfalva where, under the direction of Stanislaw Vincenz(18) 35 children - all provided with false papers as at Vac - were boarded and educated. These were between 7 and 13 and their education followed the Polish system. A similar institution was the one at Csillaghegy, led by Wiktor Trumpus, where 30 children were instructed constantly. For a while there were nursery schools for Jewish children at Szentendre, Csobanka and Leanyfalu but these were disbanded in 1943 upon German protest. Part of these children were sent on to Vac. It is also noteworthy that 123 Jewish children graduated from the high school in Balatonboglar*18.

High Schools

As mentioned earlier, high school education started in Balatonzamardi but ended in June 1940 due to German protests; the high school organized in Balatonboglar was its continuation. When, on April 13 , 1940 Balint Homan ordered the closing of the high school (with the end of June, the end of the school year), many people proposed taking the high school into another European country. Both Henryk Slawik and Jozsef Antall opposed this plan: they were looking for a new way of continuing this school. They argued that the number of lone chhildren cannot, on moral grounds, be left without supervision or simply sent to civilian camps. Therefore, a youth camp, with organized activities, had to be established for them*19.

This made it possible to continue, half-way illegally, the high school at Balatonboglar; this was an important step for the 200-250 students at Balatonzamardi. Thus, at the end of August 1940 opened at Balatonboglar, as a resort camp near the military and civilian camps, the Youth Camp for 300 Polish youths. To avoid attracting attention, they ordered the parents to Balatonboglar also giving the camp an appearance, after the summer session, of a day-camp providing activities for the children. The children without parents or relatives lived in a boarding school. All this made it possible to organize the (illegal or half-way open) high school instruction. For this purpose, 36 teachers were ordered to come here. Henryk Urban, high school principal in Lodz and member of the PCC, was the camp's commander but was replaced in the summer of 1941 by dr. Piotr Jendrasik. The work of Urban and Jendrasik gave the final shape to this school the principles of which were formulated by the PCC. The main concepts were the strengthening of the patriotic spirit, the adaptation to the emigration, and the the continuation of the Polish educational system. (Like the general schools, the high school, too, dropped some subjects - singing, physical education, free-time activities - that were replaced by the compulsory studies of the Hungarian language and a course entitled Knowledge of Hungary.) The teachers were chosen among the most experienced ones and only four of them were not teaching before the war.

The high school/lyceum in Balatonboglar had to work within a

shortened school year: for security reasons it could not open before the end of the summer season, i.e. mid-Septenber, and had to finish at the end of May or by early June. After that, for the tourists and the summer residents, it really had to have the appearance of a resort camp.

As opposed to Zamardi, instruction here started with fewer difficulties. For the 1940/41 school year the children had enough Polish mimeographed textbooks, they had a library of about 4,000 books, and adequate resources for scholarly or practical activities. Special regulations ensured the teachers' financial compensation: the IX. Division allocated to them the increased per diem stipend for intellectuals. To this was added the monthly 30 pengos that the PCC gave them. The children also received full board the cost of which was borne by the IX. Division, augmented by the PCC. During the first year, instruction was given in the classrooms of the local school; by the autumn of 1942, they had received the Catholic house of culture that was transformed to a school. These surroundings were better for specialized activities and literary circles. They also had workshops for book-binding and cabinet-making which comprised the children's vocational training*20.

Sports and cultural events complemented the specialized and practical training. The various sports replaced the physical education classes dropped from the curriculum; the cultural events demanded steady work by the camp's chorus and orchestra. The camp's amateur theatrical group and literary circle were much in demand for performances at other Polish refugee camps and at Polish-Hungarian friendship meetings.

The alterations in the teaching system did not mean decreased material: there note-taking replaced the textbooks. Also because of the lack of textbooks, learning circles and tutoring groups were formed which were led by expert teachers or older students. Classes in Polish language, literature, and history were never dropped: these formed the heart of the patriotic education. Neither was the teaching of foreign languages curtailed; here conversational skills replaced the textbooks that they needed. The teaching of the natural sciences received a big boost in 1943 when the camp purchased the entire contents of the physics and chemistry laboratories of a high school in Budapest that closed. The lack of such laboratories caused great worries to the teachers. In the purchase of these, Vince Tomek, the Piarist Order's Provincial in Budapest was of tremendous help: he had coordinated the donations of the other teaching orders*21.

During the first school year at Balatonboglar, all grades were represented. The first two grades were the most populous (60 and

56 students). However, there were great differences in age among the students of a class: the 60 students of the freshmen class were born betwee 1922 and 1928; 70% of them were considered overage. Similarly, in the lyceum class 50% were over the normal age by 4-5 years. The proximity of the military camp was noticeable in the family backgrounds of the students: 51% were offspring of officers or noncommissioned officers. The drop-out rate was the highest in these grades (in the high sdchool 12, in the lyceum 19) but the reason was not only their departure from the country. Some students enrolled in these classes without adequate preparation; because of the high levels of instruction many dropped out durng the first few months. There were many cases - particularly among the older students - who, upon reaching the age of military service, escaped and joined the fighting forces in the west. For the 1941/42 school year the numbers stabilized: there were 231 students (150 boys and 81 girls) in the 11 classes of the high school and lyceum. The majority of these students had had their schooling interrupted by the war; only 83 of them started out in Balatonboglar. The drop-outs fell to insignificant numbers and the enrollments equalled the graduating class. The camp's high school and lyceum handed out a total of 205 baccalaureate diplomas and 500 year-end report cards. Of the graduates. 90% had studied here; the remainder had studied in the vocational school functioning in the military camp in Eger and had completed the necessary course work as private students*22.

There were about a hundred young people living in the Youth Camp at Balatonboglar who had arrived in Hungary without parents. Most of them were boys who, merely as thrill-seekers, escaped from their homes, and joined the crowds moving towards the border in the autumn of 1939. A boarding school was set up for them where, with the others, they participated in full-time activities. The Jewish youths, provided with false papers, were also settled here. The erst-while students still remember fondly their boarding schools in the National Hotel, as well as in various boarding houses and villas*23.

The camp's high educational-instructive standards were reflected in the camp newspaper entitled "Mlodziez". Its first issue appeared on August 28, 1943 and was written exclusively by the camp's residents. It generally contained between 70 and 100 pages. Its essays and shorter articles dealt with Poland's future, the situation of the exiles in Hungary; it published news of the life and fate of Poles living in other European countries; it bolstered the patriotic spirit among the young people. German intelligence consistently

monitored this newsaper; one of the reiterated points of the German Legation's protests were the articles in Mlodziez*24.

Life in the Youth Camp at Balatonboglar was relatively serene. Only in the spring of 1941, at the time of Yugoslavia's occupation, did the posssibility of closing the camp cause uneasiness among its inhabitants.

Later on, once or twice the German Legation had issued search-warrants against one or another of the Youth Camp's inhabitants but the imperiled youths were spirited abroad by the PCC with the help of the Hungarian authorities.

The police checked the camp for the first time during the weeks following the March 19, 1944 German occupation of Hungary. They searched the physics lab first for illegal radio-receivers and transmitters. As a result of these events, the faculty handed out the final report cards to all the students - without year-end exams. The majority of the students were sent to other camps; only those without parents or relatives were left in the camp, or rather were sent to the summer camp at Somogyszentimre. Most of the faculty, first of all those the Gestapo was looking for, went into hiding. When the camp was put under military command the Germans caught and arrested Jendrasik, the principal, and seven of his colleagues, as well as several students, confiscating, at the same time, the camp's cash reserves of 12,000 pengos. The captives were sent to concentration camps in Revensbruck, Buchenwald, and Mauthausen where many of them perished. The population of Balatonboglar and its region protected and rescued the inhabitants of the camp*25.

The illegal high school of the Polish Youth Camp at Balatonboglar was unique in Europe during the WWII. The only other high school we know of was in Switzerland but its language of instruction was only partly Polish. The significance of the high school in Balatonboglar is not diminished by the fact that it introduced a shorter school year and a modified curriculum.

When speaking of mid-level Polish education, one must remember the horticultural-agricultural vocational school in Beny where 28 students received theoretical and practical training since the autumn of 1943. The establishment of this vocational school was sanctioned by the Ministry of Religion and Public Education as the Germans also permitted such schools in occupied Poland. The PCC named Hilary Szamarag as principal of this school with the Rev. Jan Kozakiewicz to assist him*26.

The aim of their training was to produce potential leaders of large horticultural and agricultural units. The classroom instruction in theory was complemented by its practical application on the 5 acres of land the IM had rented for this purpose. The students could enrol in this school after completing the 7th grade of the general school and could stand for a specialized baccalaureate after their studies. Few documents remain of this school in Beny and, like other Polish educational institutions in Hungary, this one too ceased to exist after the Germans occupied the country, its students scattered to various refugee camps.

The other fields of specialized training covered mostly subjects in the military camps: courses in electrotechnology, driving, installation and operating telephones, etc. Here were formed those who were to depart shortly to join the fighting army; therefore, the courses and numbers were contingent on the military's needs*27.

We must also mention the volunteer nurses' training courses organized by the Red Cross. Its graduates were put to work not only in Hungarian and domestic health-care but were also sent to the Polish fighting army's military health-care units. Among the older, 15-18 year old, students at the Polish Youth Camp in Balatonboglar particularly popular were courses in driving instruction and electrotechnology, and - among the girls - nursing. This prompted the German memorandum protesting "military training" among the young people.

Adult instruction was an important part of the educational program. In several military camps the soldiers had the possibility to complete their general schooling. In Jolsva, for instance, Franciszek Czubak and Stanislaw Lojan organized two groups: in one, they taught those who completed 1 through 4 grades; in the other, they gave courses covering the material of the 5 through 7 grades. In Zalaber, Zdislaw Zawadzki, reserve officer, organized similar courses with the help of a teacher; but here the most popular course was aimed at the illiterate older soldiers*28.

In the military camps, adult education was complemented by language courses where, in addition to European languages, Hungarian was also taught. Of similar significance was the system of instruction for university students mobilized for military service, many of whom had gained admission to Hungarian universities.

University Students

Within the Polish education programs for refugees, the continuation of studies of higher learning caused the greatest difficulties. About 500 university students were mobilized, sent to the front, and fled to Hungary arriving as military refugees. The aid associations for Polish refugees handled their case separately; those who wanted to enroll in a Hungarian university were removed from military camp and supplied with civilian papers. Balint Homan strictly forbade such an enrollment, but from the autumn of 1939 on the Budapest University, claiming autonomy, allowed the students to audit their courses. Under these circumstances the Polish Association appealed directly to Prime Minister Pal Teleki who - because of the German protests - also had to refuse permission*29.

The case of the university students was settled by compromise. Lacking permission from the Ministry of Religion and Public Education, the office of the prime minister judged each case individually for approval. The application for permission to enroll had to be accompanied by the IM's or Jozsef Antall's personal certification. Based on this practice, permission was granted for full enrollment at the universities and the credits they had earned so far were accepted.

The PCC accepted the supervision of the two student homes, as well as part of their maintenance to which the Hungarian refugee-care authorities contributed a considerable sum. Aside from the registration fee, tuition was free of charge: therefore, the students' increased aid covered the costs of their studies. In the autumn of 1943 201 young Poles enrolled at the universities of Budapest: 129 men and 72 women. The most popular was the Polytechnic University of Budapest but many young people studied at the Peter Pazmany University's liberal arts and its medical schools. There were also students at the Facullty of Metallurgy of Sopron and the Mining Engineering School at Veszprem, as well as at the Academy of Music and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. There were Poles at the universities of Debrecen, Szeged, and Pecs; at the School of Agriculture in Keszthely and at several seminaries*30.

In the pursuit of university studies, the biggest difficulty was the

lack of knowledge of the Hungarian language. Therefore, it was decreed that during the first year of studies the students could take the examinations in any western language. The Polish Institute was of big help to them by supplying them with textbooks and by organizing Hungarian language courses. In 1943 the PCC established a self-help group called "Bratnik" which, in addition to financial help, also tried to remedy the various problems that surfaced. This group had cordial relations with the Hungarian student organizations and contributed substantially to the success of an exhibit featuring Polish culture mounted in Budapest in 1943.

On March 21, 1944 the Gestapo arrested 15 university students on charges of spying and during the subsequent weeks many students were imprisoned and taken to Germany in August of 1944. On the same day, they raided the two student dormitories; the students had to flee. Some laid low at the homes of acquaintances; the majority were hidden by anti-German university professors and administrators. The situation was the same in the provinces. In the spring of 1945, 33 Polish students enrolled at the university; they stayed in Hungary until 1947 and finished their studies here*[31].

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THE INDEPENDENT POLISH HEALTH-CARE SERVICE

After arranging for suitable living conditions, the most important steps to be taken concerned the refugees' health-care and medical services. Law #XXX. of 1936 guaranteed the refugees medical care and hospital stays free of charge; this was reinforced by the IM's circular #1046/1939 that stated that "all military and civilian refugees shall receive free medical care." The military health services and the municipal health officers were appointed for this task. All municipal authorities were to inform these health officers of the number of refugees in their territories and specify the name of the physician appointed to take care o them. He was to visit the camps, to "...supervise their accommodations, the general cleanliness, their nutrition and water, their disinfection, isolation rooms for infectious patients, set up vaccination programs, the treatment, nursing, and eventual hospitalization of patients... The necessary vaccines can be obtained directly from the National Istitute of Public Health (Budapest IX, Gyali ut 4), indicating that the vaccines are destined for refugees. The IM will cover the cost of the vaccines."

Treatment of the sick will be undertaken by the appointed physicians who will receive compensation from the IM for their work. The appointed physicians will visit the refugee camps at least once a week and supervise them for general health. The names of the treated patients are to be entered in a journal, together with their medical history, the dates of the visits, as well as the prescribed medications."

Further, the circular dealt with the supply of medications, the designation and equipment of a doctor's office, of isolation rooms, the stocking and maintaining the on-site pharmacy. Hospitalization was completely free of charge for those who needed it. The last chapters concerned the use of refugee health-care services: "...if there are any refugee doctors in the region the appointed municipal physicians may call upon them for help in the course of their work as public health officers and health-care providers. Aside from such services, the refugee doctors may not practice as physicians and cannot put out their sign. If there are any nurses (male or female) living in the region, city, or village, they must make themselves

available to the appointed municipal health officer upon orders from the camp commander*1."

What is significant about this circular is that the Hungarian authorities planned from the first to establish the refugee health-care/medical service to ease the burden on the Hungarian providers. Taking care of the refugees truly surpassed the capabilities of the regional health officers; therefore, such tasks - except for the surveillance of public health - soon fell to the Polish doctors and health-care professionals. Such personnel were listed separately and scattered throughout the camp system. The measures that guaranteed the refugees' health-care/medical needs started to take shape in October 1939 already. At that time, of course, only the most rudimentary care could be provided but it became clear that within the social welfare system the health-care/medical requirements would constitute a special unit.

During the first few weeks it seemed that the IM would entrust the refugees' health care to the members of the Polish Red Cross that settled in Hungary and thus solve the problem. In the course of the negotiations concerning the division of tasks, the IM proposed that the Red Cross establish, within its own jurisdiction, a special unit for the health problems of the refugee camps*2. Thus was created on November 3, 1939 the Polish Physicians' Group (PPG) which organized the health-care/medical services in the military and civilian camps, while the equipment and supply of medications was assured by the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross with the intermediary of the International Red Cross and the financial cooperation of the IM. Even though the PPG was formed within the Hungarian Red Cross, its relationship with the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross was very cordial and close. The Polish Red Cross organized courses in nurses' training for service in the camp's health services, as well as generalized courses in health-care. The health services also contributed to the assistance, statistical, and humanitarian programs; their camp representatives collected the information for local problems. Professor Kazimierz Ruppert was head of the health-information services, as well as the organizer of the 3-6 months nurses' training courses. The about 90 nurses serving in Hungary were graduates of these courses; others evacuated to serve the fighting army*3.

The PPG effectively took over the refugees' medical care; as its head was named Jan Srzednicki-Kollataj (1886-1944), medical general. erst-while professor and commander of the Military Medical

Academy (university)*4. Already at the end of October, 1939 an appeal was published in the newspaper entitled Wiesci Polskie. under the name of Dr. Medynski, for all military and civilian doctors that arrived in Hungary to register and join the activities of the PPG. Some 100 military and civilian doctors responded even though, according to the registrations and memoirs, close to 500 Polish doctors had fled to Hungary*5. What helped the response was that the IM allocated increased daily stipends to the doctors that joined (about 180 of them until the end of the war) and gave them permission to travel throughout the country. The PPG officially started its work in November 1939 and the effectiveness of its activities was mainly due to the leadership of Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj. The structure of this service allocated one or more doctors to each camp, depending on the number of its residents, and the smaller camps were joined in the service of a district doctor. The final form of this medical service was reached by the summer of 1940 when every camp had an independent doctor's office, infirmary, isolation rooms, and a pharmacy. They were staffed by members of the PPG, supervised by Hungarian medical authorities. Forty-one doctors and dentists belonged to the civilian circuit; some of them took care of 2-3 camps*6.

The expansion of all these services is entirely due to the PCC and the health-care organization. The 78/1940 directive made primary care only free of charge; for instance, tooth extraction was free but further treatment - prosthesis, dental surgery, etc. - was not. The PPG organized the dental services, the employment of dental technicians, made prostheses free with the PCC taking care of the costs. The activities of the dental services covered several camps with regular office hours in some places. They had their orders filled at the dental laboratory of Budapest.

Evacuation abroad was minimal among the members of the PPG. Of the some 500 Polish doctors, the majority had departed from Hungary and many had reached high ranks in the Polish army. Those remaining were highly esteemed not only by their compatriots but also were popular with the Hungarian population. Some of them learned excellent Hungarian and when the local doctor was mobilized by the army he was often replaced by a Polish one.

The network of Polish doctors extended to the Polish schools and Youth Camp also but their role of "school doctors" was kept to a minimum. Only the Polish Refugee Orphanage of Vac and the Polish Youth Camp of Balatonboglar had their own school doctors*7.

Hospitalization was the second field of expansion of the Polish

health-care. This caused great worries as early as the autumn of 1939. Not only was the availability of beds limited but, as most of the patients did not speak anything other than Polish the language barrier was a tremendous obstacle to effective treatment. Therefore, the public and military hospitals employed Polish doctors whose primary responsibility was their sick compatriots. Hence the proposal to create exclusively Polish health-care institutions, staffed by Polish personnel, and serving the sick of the camps, was justified. Thus, the Hungarian and International Red Cross, the IM and DM, the foreign aid societies, and the repressentatives of the exiles' own organizations formed a coordinating committee in the spring of 1940. This committee was meant to distribute the material and financial help and its best use. It established in Budapest, the Polish Consultation Center; it proposed the creation of a 140-bed Polish Hospital in Gyor; the Old-Age Home in Keszthely; the 50-bed Health Institute in Letkes; the gastro-intestinal department of Ipolyszalka; the neurological ward of Szentendre; the tuberculosis section in Matrahaza. Their equipment was provided partly by the Hungarian authorities, partly by the members of the committee*8.

The largest of these was the 140-bed Polish hospital in Gyor. It had four sections (internal medicine, surgery, dermatology and venereal diseases, ear-nose-and-throat), as well as its own laboratory and X-ray unit. Originally it was meant to be a military hospital but it accepted numerous civilian patients. The director of the hospital was Stefan Sobienicki, M.D.; it had nine doctors and a military doctor, eight nurses and two medical cadets. Later on, 15 medical non-commissied officers and a 15 corpsmen were ordered here. Most of the doctors were specialists and provided excellent care. This institution was housed in the storage area of a wood processing plant that was transformed into a hospital by the coordinbating committee. The existence of the hospital was justified by the proximity of large military camps. All health institutions in Hungary came under the supervision and technical leadership of this hospital*9.

Within the Polish health-care system, the physicians functioning in the military and civilian camps formed a special group. In addition to their everyday work, they also carried out secret missions: they took part in the evacuation's medical-military organization; gave first-aid courses; prepared soldiers and Red Cross nurses for medical duty; performed examinations for fitness*10.

The Polish doctors and health-care providers carried out invaluable services among the refugees. Their homelessness and

altered living conditions perturbed the people; depression was widespread and - particularly in the military camps - uncertainty caused rampant alcoholism. Tuberculosis became common and many a patient was sent to the sanatorium in Matrahaza. In the autumn of 1940, after the big evacuation, the PPG ordered a nation-wide health survey of all the camps, which was repeated every year. The 1941 survey showed that 75% of the soldiers left in Hungary were elderly and in ill health; 71% were not fit for military action. Of these, 1.75% suffered from pulmonary- and respirtory ailments; 0.6% of venereal disease; 33% of gastro-intestinal illness; 29% of rheumatism; and the remainder of some neurological problems. Sixty-six people required constant hospitalization. Of the officer corps, 70% were under 40 and fit for action; their remaining in Hungary was either their personal decision or was dictated by higher military reasons. According to the 1941 survey, 33% of the camps' inhabitants had dental treatment (extraction, filling of caries, prostheses, prophylactic, etc.).

The PPG also registered births and deaths. As of March 19, 1944, 142 refugees had died (131 men, 6 women, and 5 children: 24 of tuberculosis, 10 of pneumonia, 24 of heart disease, 9 of cancer, and 3 committed suicide. Of the deceased, 2.5% were military personnel, the rest were civilians. There were 204 births in Hungary and 610 miscarriages. (only those who stayed permanently in Hungary were counted in this category.)*[11]

The majority of the doctors treating the refugees were not specialists; they had been municipal district doctors or had been attached to an insurance company. Therefore, Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj sent the specialists to a health institution or the Polish Consulting Center in Budapest or, depending on their knowledge of the language, were detailed to Hungarian hospitals. At the same time, courses in continuing education for doctors were organized in Gyor and Budapest. Ten of the Polish doctors in Hungary carried on their scientific research and 23 of them had articles published in the Hungarian medical journals. Among these was the article by Rudolf Arend*[12] on the mobility of the eyes which drew international attention (1943).

The Polish refugee health-care in Hungary and its independent practitioners deserve a chapter of their own in the history of Hungary during WWII. They were as much a part of the resistance movement as was the educational program; both developed their invaluable contributions within the German sphere of interest.

N O T E S

(1) Natinal Archives, K.150. IM, IX Division, Item #4024. Decrees on refugee care.
(2) Ibid, P.1641.. Documents of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross.
(3) Ibid.
(4) Srzednicki-Kollataj, Jan (1886-1944): physician, military doctor, general. He received his medical diploma in 1910 at the University of Moscow; continued his studies in Vienna and Cracow. During WWI he was military doctor of Jan Pilsudski's Legions. He had a significant role in organizing the Polish army's military-medical services. From 1926 he was professor at the Military Medical Academy (univerity); its commander from 1931. In September 1939 he fled to Hungary but following the commander-in-chief's wishes he did not evacuate but did participate in the evacuation by medicall preparations. He established the PPG and the health-care services for the refugees. On March 19, 1944, the Germans shot him in the Polish Consulting Center in Budapest.
(5) National Archives, P.1641. Lists of names
(6) Ibid. IM K.150. IX. Div. Item #4024. Special lists of the IM.
(7) Kapronczay, Karoly: The Health Affairs of Polish Refugees In Hungary during World War II 1939-1945. Orvostorteneti Kozlemenyek 1976.
(8) National Archives, P.1641, Documents of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross. Minutes of the meetings of the coordinating committee, 1940-1944.
(9) Csorba, Tibor: Sylwetki Lekarzy Polskich na Wegrzech 1939-1945, Arch.Hist.Med. 1959, #4; Arend, Rudolf: Emigracja Polska na Wegrzech w latach 1939-1945, Arch. Hist. Med. 1964, #4.
(10) Ibid.
(11) Arend, Rudolf: Op.Cit.
(12) Arend, Rudolf (1901-1979): physician, university professor. Studied at the University of Cracow, where he also taught. Military doctor during WWII. He arrived in Hungary at the end of September 1939; director of the Polish neurological/psychiatric department at Szentes. He evacuated in 1943 and was medical colonel on the western front. He returned to Poland after 1945; was professor of psychiatry at the University of Cracow.

AFTER THE GERMAN OCCUPATION

The occupation of Hungary by German troops had dire consequences for the Polish refugees. In addition to open persecution, the arrest and removal of the Hungarian officials who aided and abetted the resistance movement and assisted in the refugees' care weakened those institutions that the refugees had looked to for help for nearly five years. As a consequence of the mass arrests the exiles' leadership virtually disappeared but, as we shall see later, the institutions were re-created and new leaders were put in the place of the arrested ones. Fortunately not ALL were taken to prison: some remained and the Poles could still count on their help despite the changed circumstances. However, because of the German presence and the changes in the ministries, the Poles had to work fast.

On March 19, 1944, the Gestapo arrived in Budapest with exact lists of names; it knew the names and aliases of the Polish leaders, the activities of the exiles' organizations, and even the numbers and false identities the Hungarian authorities had given to them*1. Not only did they have detailed information on the leaders of the civilian organizations but also of the functions of the secret Polish institutions, of their leaders and their residences: "...Although the occupying troops' 'Wegweiser' (guide) car arrived at 8 AM in the center of Budapest's Apponyi ter, the German cars loaded with SS- and SD-men started rolling out of the German Legation's and other German buildings' garages at dawn for their raids. There were two reasons for their ability to capture the leading Poles within two or three days: One was that their spies in Hungary - the Volkbundists and the students of the Reichsdeutsche Schule - had prepared lists of their potential victims and kept tab on their whereabouts. This could only be somewhat counterbalanced by the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care's more influential members obtaining false documents in Hungarian names from the Hungarian authorities for their leaders and for finding appropriate hiding places for them. The other reason for the success of their raid was the incredible carelessness of Edmund Fietowicz, the representative of the government-in-exile in London.

[As mentioned] the leaders of the Social Division of the IM and

the polittical division of the Foreign Ministry (Istvan Meszaros) warned Fietowicz by telephone at 5 AM that the Germans had crossed the border and are approaching Budapest. They suggested that he destroy all documents and disappear. For some unexplainable reason, at 2 o'clock in the afternon the Gestapo found Fietowicz still in his office, sorting through papers with two of his colleagues, Opaka and Gurgul, and - stuffing the documents they wanted to keep into two suitcases - he made ready to leave to go into hiding. The Gestapo arrested all three, confiscated the confidential papers on the basis of which it started - and finished within 2-3 days - the arrest of the Polish leaders."*2 - to quote the book Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon a Haboru alatt (Budapest, 1946).

The Gestapo cosidered the arrest of Fietowicz of paramont importance; they knew of his role in the planned defection, his relationship with Prime Minister Miklos Kallay, and of his trips to London and Portugal.

This is why he was among the firsts to be warned to flee by Jozsef Antall; he sent warning messages not only to the Polish leaders but to many Hungarian politicians also, among them Arpad Szakasits*3. The documents that the Gestapo seized from Fietowicz were used by them against him and others during the interrogations. Presumably it was exhaustion and depression that caused Fietowicz's incomprehensible behaviour; subsequently the death of others was - unjustly - blamed on him. With Fietowicz, a very important Polish leader fell into the Gestapo's hands; through him, they tried to reach, or obtain incriminating evidence against, others. His fate was tragic: for the first three days he was continuously beaten, deprived of sleep and, as a heavy smoker, was "teased" with cigarettes*4. They allowed him to light one up, then took it away from him immediately. But neither beatings nor psychological torture could break him; they got no information out of him; he was accused only by what the intelligence found on him and his own documents. His sufferings ended in August 1944 when he was executed in Mauthausen, together with some of his comrades. A similar fate awaited his colleagues Gurgul and Opoka-Lewenstein, who were arrested with Fietowicz; they, too, ended their lives in Mauthausen, martyrs to their country's liberty.

Dramatic events took place in the Fo-utca 11/13 Polish Consulting Center the "occupation" of which was also on the Gestapo's immediate hit list. That day, chief physician Dr, Teofil Kandaffer*5 was on duty but in the early morning hours many Red Cross workers - Jozef Skulski, Maksimilian Wojtas, Boleslaw

Noga, Zygmund Pogoda, and Ignacy Bochnyrowski - hastened over to the Center to destroy and remove "incriminating" documents*6. The memoirs describing the ensuing events differ in details but the esssence is the same: the Gestapo wanted to arrest Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj here as one of the leaders of the evacuation and the organizer of the military-health care of the soldiers departing for the front. The above mentioned book fixes the time of the raid at 5 PM on March 19th, others at the morning hours. What is certain is that the doctor-general was also warned of the dangers in the early morning. The fact is that Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj was present at the 9 o'clock Polish mass at the chapel of the Piarist Fathers and discussed with others the events to be expected*7. He did not say what he planned to do but he did not want to return to his home in Pesthidegkut. By that time the Polish Consulting Center was already in German hands.

Dr. Kadaffer and the Red Cross workers were taken into custody in a back room and the Gestapo started their search. They confiscated documents, arms, ammunition. They secured the front door from the main and second floors. The front door was kept locked; the patients had to ring the bell to be admitted; many were caught then and there. Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj arrived around noon. He did not see anythng suspicious since the Gestapo-men were hidden. He rang the bell; when it was opened, the Gestapo were behind him. They pushed him into an antechamber, pinned him against the wall, and ordered him to put his hands up. The Polish general reached uncertainly toward his inside pocket; presumably he did not hear the order in all the shouting since he was well-known for being hard-of-hearing. He was instantly machine-gunned down and collapsed dead. The Gestapo assumed he was reaching for a weapon and used a weapon on him; in truth Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj only wanted to show his identity papers; he had no weapon*8. The same fate awaited Dr. Kandaffer (he died two days later of his wounds) and Nurse Sikorska who both tried to help him. In the afternoon they killed Jan Skobel, a disabled soldier, in flight. A Hungarian policeman on duty saved the life of another patient who innocently rang the bell*9. By that time, presumably, the Gestapo's zeal had abated; after all, they had achieved their goal: they had annihilated the commander of the Polish Physicians' Group, had confiscated many incriminating documents and had arrested numerous people.

One after the other, the Gestapo took over all the premises where the Polish exiles' organizations functioned, where they handled their affairs. They arrested all the Polish refugees who appeared there,

including some completely innocent of political activities. But they did not manage to lay their hands on Henryk Slawik, president of the PCC who went into hiding somewhere in the Balaton region but was on the Gestapo's list of firsts to be arrested. After two weeks his wife went to Budapest to fetch a few things from their apartment. The armed men of the Gestapo awaited her there. They captured the careless woman and put a notice in the press that they will execute her unless Slawik gives himself up*10. Slawik complied and he, also, finished his earthly life in Mauthausen in August 1944. From him, they primarily wanted to learn of the relationship with the Hungarian ministries and with the state officials who helped the refugees; they wanted information on the state administrators and politicians. Despite cruel torture, he divulged nothing. Even when confronted with Jozsef Antall, he denied that the IM and Antall personally knew anything about the secret anti-German activities. He did not try to save his life; with his steadfastness he prevented many deaths.

According to memoirs, about 600 Poles were arrested during the last days of March, among them Gen. Mieczyslaw Trojanowski who had lived in Hungary since October 1939 but had no particular role in the life of the military emigration. Polish sources state that the Germans hastened to capture him because, to their knowledge, he was named commander of an artillery regiment to be formed in Hungary and put at the disposal of the Home Army and which represented its reserve in case of a Polish revolt. Col. Adam Sapieha (Tokaj) discussed this project in the autumn of 1943 with the Hungarian Chiefs of General Staff; even the proposal that the Hungarian army, stationed in Poland, would hand over to the Home Army a certain amount of ammunition and other war material*11. As per order #240/1943 of the Home Army, the above mentioned Polish unit in Hungary had to be formed and trained by February 1944. Doctor-Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj led the military-health preparations. The Germans were informed that Gen. Trojanowski accepted to play a central role in this project. Some of the other captured leaders were: Lt.-Col. Aleksander Krol, commander of the Polish Military Representatives collaborating with the DM; Lt.-Col. Eustachy Serafinowicz, president of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross; almost the complete slate of the PCC, among them Adrzej Pysz, Stefan Filipkiewicz. Lt.-Col. Krol managed to survive war's hell, Prof. Filipkiewicz died in Vienna on his way to Mauthausen. The rest were all executed.

The Polish priests living in Hungary did not escape this wave of

arrests either: together with Father Wilk-Witoslawski, ten Polish Catholic priests were thrown into prison. They were accused of conspiracy, espionage, and armed resistance.

On the other hand, at some Polish organizations - the offices of the newspaper Wiesci Polskie and the Polish Library - their raids were fruitless: they found neither documents nor people even though they waited in vain for days.

The Germans' surprise raid on the university students' dormitory in the Vadorzo utca must be part of the chronicle of that fateful March 19th day. Because of the warning they received, the majority of the students immediately disappeared and found refuge with acquaintances. Only two girls were left in the dormitory; they were raped and then incarcerated. Such brutality was characteristic of the Germans' behaviour towards the Poles. They found the Poles' addresses in the confiscated documents of the Central Office of Alien Control; on the basis of this list, they captured countless civilians who had not gone into hiding. They seized every opportunity to "teach the Poles a lesson" and used every available means to carry out their plan to deport every Pole to concentration camps. Such an instance was the so-called "Janikowski-case"*12. Janikowski, a Polish lawyer, in a drunken state, threw a wheelbarrow into the Danube from the Erzsebet-Bridge. The passing German patrol laughed at first, then they found out that "the joker" was a Pole, they arrested him. They accused him of murdering a German soldier by throwing him into the Danube. Such cases were everyday occurrences; they arrested indiscriminately every Pole that came to the Hungarian authorities to pick up their daily stipend or ration coupons. They inspired fear and terror in everyone. The Germans did not shy away from using the most drastic means and expected the Hungarian authorities to do the same. In this they were hindered by their interest in maintaining the appearance at least of Hungarian sovereignty.

In the Polish question they had a problem in that Regent Miklos Horthy guaranteed the Poles personal liberty and their status as refugees. These forced them to certain "moderation". Those they had already captured became German prisoners; they were accused of conspiracy and espionage and refussed to free them. As for the other Polish refugees - military and civilian - they demanded that the Hungarian authorities tighten the rules. They did not want to change the situation of the military camps; however, they did want to alter the "tolerance" shown the civilians.

Fundamental changes took place within the IM. On March 20,

1944 Dr. Jozsef Antall presented his resignation to the new Interior Minister, Andor Jaross; within a few days he, himself, was arrested*13. He discussed the continuation of refugee care with his trusted colleagues who remained friendly to the Polish cause but were willing to serve the Sztojay-government (such as Istvan Meszaros and Istvan Apor). He also had discussions with Col. Lorand Utassy, head of the 21. Division of the DM. It soon became clear that under the circumstancces the DM would best serve the interests of the refugees, could guarantee their personal liberty and rights. This was proven correct when they took the refugees' care out of the IM IX. Social Welfare Division and handed it over to the Housing Office of the KEOKH where only a small group dealt with their housing requirements. Thus the Polish refugees' care ceased to be a social welfare question and became a police case. It also came under the supervision of Undersecretary Laszlo Endre who was notorious for his hate of the Poles. Among his first acts was the suspension of financial assistance and, on April 29th, prohibition of the activities of all Polish organizations (schools, cultural institutions and groups protecting the refugees' rights). These decrees did not apply to the institutions supervised by the DM nor to the organizations of the Polish Red Cross. In place of the captured Lt.-Col. Krol, Col. Zbiegniew Cieslinski was named as head of the Polish Military Represenттives. The PPG was led by doctor-colonel Chmielnicki and Stanislaw Wawrzyniak chief doctor, one for the military, the other for the civilians*14.

The worst blow was the prohibition of the PCC's activities since it put an end to the protection of the refugees' rights vis-a-vis the Hungarian government authorities. Before his capture Henryk Slawik even tried to reorganize this institution by naming new members to the Committee to replace the imprisoned ones. Before he gave himself up, he asked Zbiegniew Borowko, the erstwhile counsellor to the Polish Legation in Budapest, to handle the affairs of the PCC, obtaining the permission of the London government-in-exile to do so. As member of the PCC, Borowko had always played an important part in the life of the Polish emigration; he had even received authorization from the London government to take over the leadership anytime. As counsellor of the Polish Legation in Budapest, he participated in organizing the 1939/1940 evacuation and the refugee institutions. Before leaving, Polish Minister Orlowski recommended his counsellor who stayed in Hungary to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. The German Legation demanded Borowko's immediate expulsion which the Hungarian authorities refused. They had no official objection to his staying. Like

Fietowicz, Borowko shunned publicity. Within the PCC, he dealt with questions concerning the International Red Cross; as an ex-diplomat, he had great expertise in these matters. He travelled several times to Switzerland under aliases and carried out secret missions*15.

The Polish emigration also prepared for the eventuality - which occurred with the German occupation - of entrusting to the International Red Cross the protection of the rights and interests of the refugees.

In its radio message of April 14, 1944, the :Polish government in London empowered Borowko to reorganize the PCC to represent the refugees vis-a-vis the Hungarian authorities and to establish immediate contact with the Budapest representative of the International Red Cross. In the meantime, the Polish government in London started negotiations in Geneva on the questions of financial assistance to, and protecttin of the rights of, the refugees in Hungary*16.

It was obvious to the London Polish government that with the German occupation the situation of the Polish refugees in Hungary became very precarious and took a dangerous turn. The strict control of the civilian refugees, their transfer to closed or central camps, the extradition of the Jews to the German authorities were all to be expected. From the point of view of protecting the refugees' interest not only was the prohibition of the PCC's activities a great blow but also the Gestapo's incarceration of the Hungarian politicians who supported the Polish cause.

ATTEMPTS TO FORM NEW ORGANIZATIONS

The changes that occurred in the IM and the forms of new organization could under no circumstances replace the conditions that were in existence before March 19, 1944. On April 29, 1944 was issued the decree ordered by Laszlo Endre that prohibited the activities of all the Polish institutions. It did away with all the financial assistance from the end of March, suspended permission for Poles living in the provinces to travel and ordered the strict surveillance of the military camps but it did not - for economic reasons - revoke permission to take on employment. The Polish question raised the tension between Hungary and Germany: German memoranda demanded instant extradition to Germany of all Poles. But even before that, the Germans demanded the removal of Poles from certain territories where - they said - "they engaged in conspiracy and espionage for Germany's enemies". At other times, the German Legation demanded the formation of all Poles into workers' brigades and their transfer to a central camp. The situation of the Sztojay-government became more and more difficult: not every member of his cabinet shared Laszlo Endre's atttitude of hate for the Poles. The Foreign and Defense Ministries were for the status quo. Even Regent Horthy did not want to change their situation. He also opposed their extradition to Germany although he did not manage to free those that were already incarcerated.

In the meantime - unfortunately no precise date exists - the Polish Civilian Committee (PCC) was re-established under the presidency of Zbiegniew Borowko. Its members were: Piotr Imielski, Adam Meissner, Marian Palamarczyk, Stanislaw Cywicki, as well as general secretary Zdislaw Antoniewicz. Borowko immediately contacted Col. Lorand Utassy and Counsellor Istvan Apor, in part to ensure the protection of rights and the supply of provisions, partly for the legalisation of the new PCC*[17].

Before entering into the details of these negotiations, we would like to draw attention to some very important facts that show a different angle of the activities that Borowko and the PCC undertook under extremely difficult circumstances. The Polish emigration's life

and its resistance movements are described in their particulars only until Hungary's occupation by Germany. After that, due to lack of documentation, these activities are generally sketchy. Yet this one year is no less important than the previous four. In fact, for most, this was the most trying, the most difficult year of their exile. It is primarily the personal recollections that give information on this period, even though most disclose only their authors' trials and and their fate.

Protecting the refugees' rights and providing for their needs fell to the few refugee-friendly Hungarian state officials still in their places and the leaders of the PCC. The Hungarian Red Cross could only help them for a little while; nor was the refugees' lot much improved by the assistance the government-in-exile in London could send them via the International Red Cross. The situation was made worse by the possibility of enacting the tightening of procedures demanded by the Germans. The members of the PCC agreed with Utassy's and Apor's view that the best thing for the refugees would be to come under the protection and supervision of the DM*[18].

As a result of these negotiations, the emigrants presented an 8-point proposal that Utassy discussed with his interdepartmental committee. These were the following: 1.- To prevent the deportation of the Poles; 2.- To prevent the military and civilian refugees' removal from their places of residence; 3.- Transfer of the Poles from the proximity of military targets and war industry lest the Germans accuse them of espionage; 4.- To maintain the military camps; 5.- To maintain the refugees' right to work outside as their only means of survival; 6.- To arrange for the protection of the civilian refugees' rights and assure them of their means of livelihood in order to ease tensions; 7.- To continue allowing the refugees to live in Budapest and to maintain the camp at Pesthidegkut; 8.- To legalize the activities of the PCC*[19].

The first interdepartmental discussion was held at the IM at the end of May when Lajos Kudar, colonel of the constabulary, presided. Present were representatives of the Foreign Ministry; the Ministries of Industry and Commerce; and of Agriculture, as well as agents of the DM and the Office of the Prime Minister. Two proposals were discussed at this meeting: the first was presented by Istvan Apor counsellor, as agent of the Prime Minister's Office and which agreed in essence with the 8-point proposal of the PCC. The second was presented by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce which. in agreement with the General Staff and the IM's Center of

State Defense, concerned the use of the Poles in workers' brigades and their transfer to central camps. The representative of the General Staff countered that this could be a last resort only as the Poles, as brigade members, could still engage in "espionage"; he proposed, rather, full military surveillance and supervision. Ferenc Duruggy, chief of the Foreign Ministry's legal department, in agreement with the Hungarian Red Cross and the written support of Friedrich Born, the Budapest representative of the International Red Cross, proposed to maintain the status quo in the protection of the refugees' rights and the refusal of their extradition to Germany. No final decision was taken at this meeting; a heated argument broke out over the held-back payment of the refugees' stipends. All those present agreed that these have to be paid as the civilian refugees' debts are a burden on Hungarian society. The representative of the Foreign Ministry stated that Prime Minister Sztojay is also opposed to the extradition of the Poles but did not raise any objection to the deportation of the Jews. The chief of the 2nd Division of DM - in contrast to Col. Utassy - protested sharply the "conspiracies" taking place in the military camps and proposed the gradual extradition of the interned Polish soldiers. Again, nothing was decided and the meeting was adjourned to the beginning of June.

At the end of May 1944, during the vacation of Undersecretary Laszlo Endre, the IM managed to pay out the daily stipends that were delayed for two months, He stopped these immediately upon his return. The Polish leaders and the Hungarian government's administrators then decided to seek the help of the International Red Cross in the protection of the refugees' rights and that, until a final decision was taken, the civilian refugees could individually request their transfer into the military camps that the DM supervised. Lorand Utassy, Istvan Apor and Zbiegniew Borowko held discussions with Friedrich Born on the refugees' right-protection question. Upon the appeal of the London government, he promised to handle the matter speedily. After these preliminary moves, the second interdepartmental meeting took place on July 12, 1944; the various ministries and the military authorities were represented by the same people. Istvan Apor was the first speaker: he objected to the deportation of the Jews; he stated that this was contrary to our obligations under the international agreements. He then proposed that the care of all Polish refugees be undertaken by the DM, a proposal that Col. Lorand Utassy - with the authorization of his minister- accepted. He asked the IM to effect the delayed payment of the stipends or their disbursement to the DM. At this meeting it was decided to transfer by September 1st 1944 all the civilian refugees to

the military authorities and place them in the nearest military camp. The IM promised to pay out the stipends or to transmit their lump sum to the military commands by August 1st, 1944. On September 1st, 1944 the DM established the Central Territorial Command of the Interned Polish Soldiers, with headquarters in the camp at Zugliget, where they kept the records of all Polish military and civilian persons living in Hungary. It must be stressed, however, that about 3-4 thousand Polish refugees did not comply with the instructions to register. They continued to hide out with Hungarian families, expecting a better turn of events, and working for their livelihood under the still valid permit*[20].

During the first days of June, 1944, Lorand Utassy, Istvan Apor, Zbiegniew Borowko, Gubrinowicz and Zaleski started discussions with Friedrich Born on the question of protecting the rights of the refugees. These were pro forma negotiations as the 1929 Geneva Convention that Hungary signed in 1936 gives the task of protecting the rights of refugees whose country has no diplomatic relations with the host country to the International Red Cross. Born asked the Polish government for a formal invitation and the Hungarian Foreign Ministry for its consent. The requested invitation from London arrived in Geneva a few days later; however, so did the Hungarian Foreign Ministry's stern refusal. "Placing the affairs of the Polish refugees under international control would provoke the justified wrath of Germany" - they wrote in their reply. On advice from Geneva, Born would have been satisfied if he could obtain Regent Horthy's oral invitation. Hence on August 18, 1944 Born, accompanied by Istvan Apor travelled to the castle in Godollo where he was received in a private audience hy the Regent. Horthy acknowledged the competence of the International Red Cross to protect the Polish refugees' rights and officially asked this organization to do so*[21]. This was such an extraordinary event that all memoirs mention it.

Given the authority or rather having its competence acknowledged, the Budapest Office of the Internatinal Red Cross immediately opened its so-called P.Section (Polish subdivision) and took over all the duties of the PCC (which was maintained) and of all the other banned Polish institutions. It organized the supply, provisioning, and health-care in all the camps that were put under its protection. Its leadership was made up of the members of the PCC, with Zbiegniew Borowko as its head. It used every legal means to stop the deportations which became more and more common from mid-August on. Despite the protests of the International Red Cross,

the about 600 Poles - among them most of the emigration's leaders - arrested at the end of March were deported in July 1944 to Dachau and Mauthausen. The International Red Cross fought hard against differentiating between the military and civilian refugees and against the deportation of the Jews. True, most of them lived in Hungary with false papers; only in Vamosmikola, Kalocsa, Fajsz, and Kadarkut were camps that housed those who insisted on the truth and did not accept the offered aliases. Among the sites in peril was the Polish Officers' Orphanage in Vac. German provocation hit these camps first. The Germans constantly referred to Fajsz where, in fact, some bloody events did take place: the Germans sent in two "agents provocateurs" who spoke perfect Polish. When they were discovered, the resistance killed them. This, of course, served as a justification for the Germans*[22].

The P.Section failed in many instances, particularly in the field of education. Very soon after the occupation, Polish-language instruction ceased in Balatonboglar and the liquidation of the Polish Youth Camp had begun. Similarly, cultural life, the Polish press and book-publishing came to a stop also. The Wiesci Polskie and other Polish newspapers appeared for the last time on March 19, 1944. An attempt was made on August 25, 1944 to publish a newspaper legally but only one issue of the "Slowo" came out. The Polish health-care services suffered only minor losses as the medical and nursing groups continued their activities in the military and civilian camps under the aegis of the Red Cross. Only the Polish Consulting Center in Budapest was closed; the hospital in Gyor functioned until the spring of 1945, suffering greatly from shortages of medications and bandages. The P.Section absorbed the PPG and the health-care units in the civilian and military camps; unfortunately, their activities were limited by the suspension of the doctors' and health-care units' right to travel freely, but the organizations themselves remained under the protection of the International Red Cross which also covered their expenses.

From the standpoint of protecting the refugees' rights, the Internatinal Red Cross was successful in obtaining the Lakatos-government's (which replaced the Sztojay-government) permission for some 300 refugees to continue to live in Budapest, and - in the provinces - for them to live with Hungarian families near the camps. They could freely move about in the administrative district but were not allowed to leave it without permission. Although the International Red Cross could not fully replace the PCC, under the altered circumstances its efforts were respectable and its activities

invaluable. Its primary goals were the financial assistance and the security of the refugees. It could count on the help of the state administrators friendly to the Poles that were still in office, on the anti-Nazi officer corps and on the 21. Division of the DM, mainly on Col. Utassy who gained inestimable merit by organizing the protection of the refugees. In fact, one of the motives for his October 16, 1944 arrest was his care of the Polish refugees.

During this period took place the so-called Opinski-case. In addition to the German diplomatic protests, the activities of the German occupying forces and the counter-espionage, the German Legation decided on creating a pro-German Polish institution in Hungary. Via Istanbul, they brought to Budapest Opinski, a pro-German newspaperman, ex-politician so that he can organize an institution suitable to them. For this purpose, they talked with several pro-German emigres, or with some who were at least not so openly opposed to them. These attempts failed ignominiously; no one was willing to play this shameful role. What is more, even Opinski had to be spirited out of Hungary in fear for his life. In spite of all, the German Legation made another attempt at creating such an institution in September, 1944 but this, too, was a complete failure*[23].

On the other hand, through the intermediary of Col. Utasso, the secret Polish military centers held discussions with the Hungarian politicians and military leaders who wished to sue for a separate peace. Under the Lakatos-government even such concrete steps were discussed whereby the artillery regiment - held in reserve in Hungary for use by the Home Army - would join the Hungarian army in case of an armed conflict between Hungarian and German troops once Hungary's defection became known. In accordance with the second agreement, some 10.000 Polish soldiers were transferred to Transdanubia to support the Allies who would come from Northern Italy to the aid of Hungary in case of a defection. To the Germans they justified this move by stating that, in view of the Russian advances, "it was not desirable to have the Polish military internees in the war zone". Lt.-Gen. Janos Kiss also had excellent relations with the Polish military, and many recollections remember the plans for defection and the negotiations primarily with Vilmos Tartsay. German espionage followed these meetings between the Hungarian and Polish military with great interest. Proof of this interest is the tightened surveillance of the camps and the ever-increasing unannounced raids on them during the course of which some 800 soldiers and officers were arrested and deported.

The Arrow Cross Party Comes to Power

The second big blow to hit the Polish refugees was the coming to power of the Arrow-Cross Party and the formation of the Szalasi-government. The situation of the camps under the protection of the International Red Cross became once again critical. The German and Arrow-Cross units were openly hostile to the refugees, they completely disregarded the international protection. They carried off more and more Poles from the camps supervised by the Hungarian army, and indulged in an obvious manhunt. As a result, in November 1944 several hundred Poles were force-marched to Germany; many were killed on the way.

An equally great loss was the removal of Col. Utassy as head of the DM's 21. Division; his place was taken by Col. Istvan Horvath. The leaders of the Hungarian Red Cross were also replaced by Arrow-Cross sympathizers. Col. Cieslinski was removed from the Office of the Polish Military Represetatives; in his place Major Wladimir Bem de Cosba (descendant of the brother of Jozsef Bem) was named. The recollections differ about the German-sympathizer Col. Horvath: according to Major Bem de Cosba, although Col. Horvath carried out the changes at the Polish Military Representatives' Office, he regularly informed them during confidential meetings of the Arrow-Cross Party's plans. That this was so is proven by the fact that Bem de Cosba's information was given to Borowko who, in turn, told Friedrich Born; he then, by his personal appearance at the threatened camp, could stop the deportation of the Poles. It is also true that Col. Horvath was made part of a pro-German Polish organization which then "forwarded" information to the Poles*[24].

The Szalasi-government planned drastic measures against the Poles and the exiles could scarcely count on any help in stopping them. On October 20, 1944, Foreign Minister Gabor Kemeny proposed, "in the interests of the state", to gather up all the Poles and extradite them to Germany. This violent action started in early November 1944: the Germans broke into the camp at Vamosmikola. gathered up all the military and civilian residents and force-marched them to Germany. On November 1, 1944, they ordered the

Command of the Polish Refugee Camps to collect all the Polish refugees that were living outside of the camps and prepare their deportation from Hungary. The commander of the camp, First Lt. Artur Niklas - whom Col. Utassy had named to his post - was reluctant to carry out this order and, in fact tried to gain time so that the refugees could go onto hiding. Through his trusted subalterns, he even incited them to flee. First Lt. Niklas openly sympathized with the Poles: it was due to his timely warning that no one responded to the appeal published in the press and broadcast over the radio. Numerous recollections mention him with great appreciation. All the camps became depopulated as the German and Arrow-Cross units totally ignored the protection of the International Red Cross and organized open manhunts to capture the Poles. About a thousand Poles from Budapest refused to give themselves up and hid with acquaintances until the end. The International Red Cross fought a losing battle with the Germans and the Arrow-Cross-government to live up to their international obligations. In his memoirs Istvan Apor mentions the many Poles who asked for his help or intervention*25: "...In early November 1944 Borowko informed me that baron Boldizsar Kemeny, the Foreign Minister's brother, wishes to meet with me on Polish matters. He called on me in my apartment and told me that he had already advised his brother on the Polish question and asked him to receive me, an expert on this, as soon as possible. Baron Boldizsar Kemeny used to be the "foreign secretary" of the Christian Party and, as such, followed the problems of the refugees who trusted him. He also participted in the so-called Chalupinski discussions at the Polish Legation where, in addition to Minister Orlowski and members of his staff, some Hungarian monarchists were present. The purpose of the meeting was to foster collaboration between the Hungarian monarchists and Poles with similar goals to prepare the restoration of the Habsburgs. (In Poland it was called Secunder-Genitur.)

[Baron Gabor Kemeny was then the "foreign secretary" of the Arrow-Cross Party. As Foreign Minister, he offered a foreign post to his brother who accepted it as a means to flee abroad.]

Shortly thereafter, his secretary count Odon Draskovich invited me to call on Gabor Kemeny. He asked me to give an account of the Poles' present situation. In a few words, I pointed out to him the centuries-old Polish-Hungarian traditions; their special situation here; their protection by the International Red Cross; the relevant obligations we had undertaken in their case; and finally the fatal consequences that might befall us as a result of their persecution and

deportation. I drew his attention to his own radio broadcast on the relationship of the peoples of the Danube basin in which he also mentioned the Poles. I said that he is a traitor to himself if he does not protect them when they are to be handed over to Germany.

Gabor Kemeny gave an evasive answer, emphasizing that his hands are forced, and that he is unable to act against German wishes. In the end he promised to put feelers out through the Hungarian Legation in Berlin about the possibility of adopting a more tolerant attitude towards the Poles.

The reply that the Foreign Minister assured me would arrive "shortly" never came of course. With this, I considered my mission as terminated; from that moment on I never had any contact with the Arrow-Cross authorities. I limited my activities to helping Poles go into hiding and escape."

This long quote only proves that any action to safeguard the Poles was doomed to failure. Angelo Rotta, Papal Nuncio, also protested the persecution of the Poles at the Hungaian Foreign Ministry and the German Legation; naturally, in vain. In these days, the Nuncio helped the Poles by handing out false ID papers, passports, and safe conducts; he also sheltered hundreds of Poles in religious institutions. The International Red Cross could only offer protection in isolated cases. The situation was made worse by the Red Cross's refusal to leave Budapest when the Szalasi-government fled (Nuncio Angelo Rotta also stayed), thereby severing the connections to the Foreign Ministry. The Russian army's encircling Budapest also cut off the Poles living in the provinces; they all had to look out for themselves and to their Hungarian friends.

Going Home - Spring 1945

The biggest community of Poles to be liberated lived in Budapest. On the newly freed Pest side, presumably on February 16, 1945 they established at Andrassy ut 301 the Provisional Polish Committee which immediately made contact with the representatives of the Provisional Government functioning on the Tisza Istvan Ter, and with the Soviet military authorities. Its head was Col. Stanislaw Spasinski (alias Leon Robak), the well-known personage of the secret military resistance movement, its members were Zdislaw Kazmierski, Salamon Furman, and Jan Wipas. This was the first organization to establish official contact in February 1945 with the Provisional Government. At this time, the P.Section and Borowko were still on the German-occupied Buda side. The Provisional Polish Committee (PPC) received food supplies from the representatives of the Provisional Government.The Soviet command guaranteed the safety of the abt 100 refugees that came out of hiding and that the PPC collected and sheltered in the Polish Home, a boarding-house named after Janos Kovacs.

A few days later a similar organization was formed in Szegen under Aleksander Piskorski; this took care of the Poles on their way from the Balkans to Poland, providing them food and shelter and guaranteed their protection*[25].

A new sitution arose in March 1945 in Budapest: the P.Section of Borowko received massive quantities of food, as well as financial assistance from the International Red Cross, the Polish Red Cross, and several foreign aid associations. Borowko and Spasinski contacted each other and together they tried to revive the Polish Civilian Committee to marshal the Polish forces. However the Soviet command, or rather the Soviet members of the Allied Control Commissin did not want to accept the PCC claiming it was a group attached to the "reactionary" London government. They considered as legitimate only the Spasinski-led organization, although they did not dispute the competence of the P.Section of the International Red Cross, the only one authorized to receive foreign aid (food, clothhing, money, etc.) In the meanhile, the DM of the Provisional Government renewed its role as counsellor to the revitalized Office of the Military Representatives under Col. Charanski. These three

organizations represented officially the Poles' cause and although there were no differences among them in the eyes of the refugees, it was advisable that they unite*26.

Most of the refugees did not wait for the official call to return home; but went home the way they came: individually, on foot, across the Carpathians. The refugees - who knew the Hungarian language and customs - did not hesitate to leave; we still do not know the numbers of those who went back on their own. On the other hand, those returning from the Balkans and the concentration camps, without knowledge of the language and the country. needed the help of committees caring for the Poles. The Red Cross and foreign aid associations became aware of them and increased their food allotment. From March 25, 1945 on, the P.Section, under Borowko, functioned in the Kossuth Lajos utca; a few weeks later it moved to the Vorosmarty-Ter whence it distributed food, saw to the refugees' housing and supplies. The health-services acted as a sub-division.

After trying fruitlessly to have the Soviet command legalize the PCC in its role of protecting the refugees' rights, the Polish Civilian Committee dissolved itself on July 12, 1945 and vested all the power it heretofore had in the Provisional Polish Committee whose re-shaped leadership comprised all the former members of the PCC. Zbiegniew Borowko was its president but remained at the same time the director of the P.Section. This committee now represented officially the Polish refugees. The mayor of Budapest assigned one of the buildings of the barracks on Hungaria Boulevard to shelter the refugees staying in the capital, to secure their food supply and medical care; the aid associations caring for them also moved in here.

The first returning group departed on April 23, 1945 from the village of Tura. The train, carrying about 1,200 refugees mainly from Hungary reached Poland after a stop-over in Vienna and Prague. According to some memoirs, many refuges, having left Soviet-controlled territory, abandoned the train and departed for Western Europe. Other returning refugees took their places on the train*27.

In May-June 1945 approximately 4,000 Polish refugees awaited their return home from Budapest, and about 1,000 others were known to do so in the provinces. The Polish Provisional Committee established collecting camps in Szeged, Szekesfehervar, Tura, and

Hegyko where the refugees received food and shelter, and where the Committee also started its processing of applications for repatriation. The biggest concentration of refugees were at the barracks of the Hungaria Boulevard; here, according to Dr. Wawrzyniak's reckoning, 3,578 people received food and shelter for longer or shorter periods of time. This, of course, is not an exact count of the number of refugees living in Budapest: many went in just for meals and continued to live with their Hungarian friends and tried, through the International and Hungarian Red Cross to expedite their return. It is very difficult to determine the number of those who did actually get repatriated; the numbers mentioned in the recollections must be taken with a grain of salt (some mention 25,000 refugees from Hungary)*[28].

An important element in the question of repatriation was the Polish Repatriation Committee which had begun its activities in Budapest in June 1945 on instructions from the Polish government and which acted as its representative. This Committee collaborated with the Hungarian and Soviet authorities, as well as the Allied Control Commission, in the interests of those wishing to return. The president of this Commttee was Col. Jan Krzemien; its members were those of the Polish Civilian Committee, the Provisional Polish Committee, and the P.Section. The other Polish committees, as well as a new organization, the Polish Liquidation Committee, played subordinate roles. This latest institution had to survey the assets of the Polish state in Hungary; its tasks included the discovery of Polish material property that had entered Hungary in the autumn of 1939 and the preparations for its return. It also had to total up how much the Hungarian state had spent on the refugees in financial assistance between 1939 and 1945.

The Polish Repatriation Committee (PRC) functioned as a diplomatic mission in Budapest as the two countries had no diplomatic relations until the peace treaty. In vain, according to some memoirs, did the PRC try to unite the various Polish institutions: its activities had too many differences with them. One of the reasons was that the president, as well as the personages that came from Poland, did not know the circumstances in Hungary; they did not trust the Polish committees and their leaders; they had an openly hostile attitude towards all supporters of the government-in-exile in London. They did not hide their aversion of Borowko and the officers. At first, they kept their distance from the offices of the Provisional Government and only communicated with them through the Allied Control Commissin. Tensions eased after they

received oral and written assurances that the Hungarian State does not intend to present any material claim to the Polish Government. After this, there were direct negotiations on the collecting and expeditious repatriation of the refugees living in Hungary. In this they were helped by the politicians who had cared for the refugees, first of all from Under-Secretary Dr. Jozsef Antall and the Rev. Bela Varga, Speaker of the House. It was due to their efforts that despite the inflationary pressures, the State gave 150 million pengos, transferred through the Hungarian-Polish Chamber of Commerce, to maintain the camps.

The last transport of refugees - about 1,200 people - left Hungary on August 23, 1945; until that date about 4,000 Poles had departed. After this, only those remained who chose Hungary as their new country, or wanted to stay for their studies. About 100 university students were in the process of finishing their schooling; they joined the organization of Representatives in Hungary of Polish University Students, under the leadership of Leon Rogaly; the IM gave them temporary residency permits. From September 1945 on, Jozsef Antall managed to give them a daily stipend of 1.000 pengos, which increased with the rampant inflation. They obtained their meals at the headquarters of the Danish Red Cross. The last 41 of this group returned to their country on June 30, 1946; thus the existence of the Polish Repatriation Committee came to an end. On this date all the Polish institutions (Polish Provisional Committee, P.Section, etc.) were disbanded.*[29]

With the return of the last refugee a very special era in Hungarian-Polish relationships has come to an end: it was an era of profound meaning and beauty, of excitement and rich in experiences, an era characterized by sacrifice and generosity and the unconquerable power of a thousand-year friendship.

N O T E S

(1) Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon a Haboru Evei Alatt, Budapest, 1946
(2) Ibid.
(3)
a. (Mrs.) Schiffer Szakasits, Klara: Fent es Lent 1945-1950. Budapest, 1985;
b. Antoniewicz, Z.: Igaz Baratok Kozott. Baratok a Bajban, Budapest, 1985;
c. Antall, Jozsef: Polonia Semper Fidelis, Lengyel-Magyar Kurier, 1946, #4.
(4) Antoniewicz, Z.: Rozbitkowie na Wegrzech, Warsaw, 1987
(5) Kandaffer (Kandefer), Teofil (1902-1944), Polish physician. Entered Hungary as doctor-major on September 25, 1939. From November 2, 1939 on, member of the Polish Physicians' Group; lived in the Polish Officers' camp in Zugliget. Head physician of the Polish Consulting Center in Budapest from 1940. On March 19, 1944 he was there on duty; the Gestapo took him into custody around noon. When he hastened to help the wounded Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj - who died shortly thereafter - he was also shot. He died of his wounds on March 21, 1944 at the Hospital of St. Roc. He is buried in the Polish Cemetery of Rakoskeresztur.
(6) The people listed were registrars at the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross. Among the registrations were also confidential documents of the anti-Nazi Polish institutions which is why they started to destroy them. In the file-cabinets the Gestapo found grenades and ammunition. The recollections are contradictory about this: some mention a few grenades, others 4-5 crates of ammunition. Kapronczay, Karoly: Dzialnosc Polskiego Czerwonego Krzyza na Wegrzech w latach II wojny Swiatowej, AHM, 1984. t. 47
(7) Antoniewicz, Z.: Op.Cit (4); Csorba, T. - Csorba, H.: Ziemia Wegierska Azylem Polakow 1939-1945, Warsaw, 1985; Weliczko, M.: Polacy na Wegrzech. Warsaw, 1987
(8) The first recollections - not of direct collaborators who survived the war - mention Gen. Srzednicki-Kollataj's murder differently: they say that he entered the building with a weapon in his hands and died in a shoot-out with the Gestapo. This does not change the facts nor does it diminish his role in the Polish resistance.
(9) Antoniewicz, Z.: Op. Cit. (4); Baratok a Bajban, Op. Cit. (3)
(10) 1.- Antoniewicz, Z.: Op.Cit (4); 2.- Kapronczay, Karoly: Akkor nem volt Lengyelorszag, Budapest, 1992; 3.- Memoirs of Antall, Jozsef, Sr.: Menekultek Menedeke. Egy Magyar Humanista a 20. Szazadban, Budapest, 1996.
(11) 1.- Lagzi, Istvan: Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon a Masodik Vilaghaboru Eveiben, Warsaw, 1981; 2.- Kadar, Gyula: A Ludovikatol Sopronkohidaig, Vol. I-II, Budapest, 1978; 3.- Korkozowicz, Jan: Wojsko Polsskie na Wegrzech 1939-1945, Institute of Military History, Warsaw, V. 21/33, pp. 13-14, p.33
(12) Op.Cit. (1)
(13) Op. Cit. (10/3). On or about March 10, 1944, Jozsef Antall was informed by the Poles that according to their intelligence reports the Germans would shorty occupy Hungary. He, in turnm, told [Interior Minister] Keresztes-Fischer and military leaders who were in contact with him. Upon hearing this incredible but expected news, they secreted numerous important documents and urged the leaders of the emigration to do the same. In the early morning of March 10, 1944

Antall and others telephoned the potentially imperiled Hungarian and Polish people and urged them to flee. In the meanwhile, Antall and his immediate collaborators destroyed the "incriminating" documents at the ministry that concerned the Polish and other refugees. On March 20, 1944 he presented his official resignation to Interior Minister Andor Jaross who wanted him stay and pressed him to retract his resignation. He told him that if he stayed the Germans would not arrest him but that he could count on that if he resigns. After leaving his post, he went to Somlo, to his estate in Kisoroszi where he was in fact arrested on March 22, 1944.

(14)

a. Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (6);

b. Ibid;

c. Lengyel_magyar Orvosi Kapcsolatok 1945-ig, Budapest, 1993.

(15) Memoirs of Istvan Apor, Budapest, November 1945. (Property of the Antall family.)

(16)

a. Ibid.

b. Kapronczay, Karoly: Lengyel Menekultek Elete Magyarorszagon a Nemet Megszallas utan 1944-1945; Magyarok es Lengyelek, Budapest, 1992

(17) Ibid.

(18) 1.- Ibid. 2.- Op. Cit. (15); Kapronczay, Karoly: Op. Cit. (10/2)

(19) Ibid.

(20) Ibid.

(21) Kapronczay, Karoly: Op. Cit. (6); Apor, Istvan: Op.Cit. (15)

(22) Ibid.

(23) Antoniewicz: Z.: Op.Cit. (4)

(24) Apor, Istvan: Op.Cit. (15)

(25) Op.Cit. (3/2)

(26) Ibid.

(27) Ibid.

(28) Ibid.

(29) Antoniewicz: Z.: Op.Cit. (4)

Hungarian Aristocracy and the Refugee Care

The works that have so far appeared on the subject of the refugees' care only mention in passing the role Hungarian aristocracy played in the care of refugees and its relationships to the exiles. Some do speak of the aristocracy's role as initiators and founding members of several Polish institutions. They were not singled out for praise even though they stood at the helm of voluntary aid associations that society organized upon their appeal.

The Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care was forged in September 1939 by the union of the Hungarian Red Cross, the Association of Hungarian-Polish Societies, and several Pole-friendly organizations. Its initiator was count Karoly Szechenyi, president of the Red Cross at that time. He became the first president of this Committee but soon handed his post over to someone more experienced. The Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care - as mentioned earlier in this work - coordinated its activities with those of the refugee care's state administrators at the competent ministries. The bank account that could receive financial assistance from foreign aid associations and the Polish government-in-exile was under its name at the National Bank. Countess Jozsef Karolyi, princess Odescalchi (countess Klara Andrasssy) countess Erzsebet Szapary, countess Ilona Andrassy and other eminent members of Hungarian public life played an important role in this Committee*1. Col. Jan Emisarski, military attache at the Polish Legation remembers them thus: "...It was at the urging of the president of the Hungarian-Polish Society, count Karoly Szechenyi, that the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care was formed. It gave financial assistance to the interned Polish soldiers in the name of the Hungarian-Polish Society. It was also due to his personal influence that the civilian authorities enacted measures that the Polish Legation no longer could take. Of great help were also the Hungarian Red Cross and the YMCA; at the latter, Manager Ferenc Luperer who created 'halls of culture' in the camps." About the organization of the "green border", he mentions the following: "...We opened five exits along the 'green border'; we obtained the map of the border regions, all I had to do was fix the routes leading to the exits. The Hungarian-Polish Society provided unforgettable assistance by

establishing civilian camps in the Yugoslav frontier zone, along the 'green border', that were used as temporary camps by the Evacuation Office. The formation of Gen. Dembinski's Office created favourable relationships with the Hungarians. The Hungarian-Polish Society secretly supported the evacuation by giving assistance to the civilian camps. Many Hungarians drove the Poles to the frontier in their own cars, providing transport and ensuring the border crossing. It is possible that my recollections are too long and boring but I would like to mention, as a perpetual memorial, those Hungarians who outdid themselves in the cause of the evacuation: countess Karolyi, princess Klara Odescalchi, countess Erzsebet Szapary, Tamas Salamon-Racz and his wife, countess Edit Weiss, as well as Ilona Sacellari and countess Ilona Andrassy*2."

We shall encounter these names again and again in connection with the refugees' care. Countess Erzsebet Szapary devoted herself principally to helping the refugee children, in organizing and the functioning of their schooling. Princess Odescalchi in her house in the Fo-utca, gave considerable space, free of charge, to the Polish Consulting Center and Health-Care Services. Parts of the Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross also found shelter there*3. (She did not live to see the end of the war; her life came to a tragic end in 1943.) In this respect she was not alone: many of the civilian camps found a home in the castles and on the large estates of the aristocracy. Many contributed financially to the funds on which refugee care was based. Some offered the possibility of a permanent job on their estates; such a one was, for instance, the estate of countess Karolyi at Fehervar-Csurgo.

A special mention must be made of Istvan Apor*4, the chief counsellor of the II/B division of the Prime Minister's office who looked after the refugee's care throughout the world war. He was in close contact with Jozsef Antall with whom he handled the "delicate cases". Among these was the case of the Polish university students; the problems of sending abroad the Hungarophile Polish intellectuals; the organizing of the scientific work of those who stayed; the matter of the schools; and - particularly under the prime ministerships of Teleki and Kallay - the forwarding of confidential information to the Head of State and to the official administrators of refugee care. As he points out in his memoirs, he also participated in the sending abroad of some important documments and news items.

His role increased after Jozsef Antall's arrest when "it became [my] duty, on the basis of my instructions and sometimes without

them, to look after the refugees, mainly civilian, and to save what could be saved." He was the initiator of the negotiations between the Foreign Ministry and the Defense Ministry - with the involvement of the Prime Minister's office - concerning the protection of the refugees' rights. Lorand Utassy, Istvan Apor, and Zbiegniew Borowko were in constant discussions; what is more, it was through the mediation of Istvan Apor that Regent Miklos Horthy asked Friedrich Born, the Budapest representative of the International Red Cross, to take over this protection. He was also part of the action when, after March 1944, "countess Erzsebet Szapary and countess Jozsef Karolyi issued false papers to the politically compromised refugees or those the Gestapo wanted. This made it difficult to find and supervise them." They also found hiding places for the persecuted refugees in Church institutions, monasteries and convents*5.

In connection with Istvan Apor, I must speak of the Hungarian monarchists (Antal Sigray, Ivan Csekonics, Gyorgy Pallavicini) who tried to save the Poles through actions organized in the government offices after the Arrow-Cross Party came to power. Although they did not meet with much success, their actions were very courageous in these difficult times. The Gestapo arrested several of them and sent them to concentration camps.

NOTES

(1) Members of the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care not only organized the fund-raisers for the Polish associations, societies, and foundations but also established camps on their estates. Later, after the permission to work was issued, they helped find jobs.

(2) W. Sikorski Polish Institute and Museum, London. Memoirs of Gen. Jan Emisarski, military attache at the Budapest Legation of the Republic of Poland; #270, Vol. 4-5 (in Polish).

(3) The Hungarian Branch of the Polish Red Cross also had offices in the Fo-utca 11/13; here the registration and assistance programs functioned. Its leaders and its foreign department found quarters in the Hungarian Red Cross building in Baross-utca 23. Also, on the Posta-utca 13, it had several depots and registration offices.

(4) Upon request of Jozsef Antall, then Minister or Reconstruction, in November 1945 Istvan Apor prepared a memoradnum summarizing the experiences of the Hungarian refugee care between 1939 and 1945 for the peace-treaty negotiations in Paris. This memorandum was supposed to be an addendum to the material taken to the peace negotiations, part of which never reached Paris. Among the lost documents was the summary prepared by Istvan Apor. The only extant copy of it is in the private collection of the Antall family.

(5) This activity of theirs joined the rescue attempts of the Legatons of Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal and Spain.

The Polish Catholic Church in Hungary

In the autumn of 1939, together with the refugees, army chaplains, clergymen and monks and nuns also came to Hungary. To round them up and ensure their activity, Karol Radonski, bishop of the see of Wroclavek came to Budapest and was put up at the Paulist monastery on the Gellert-Hegy. The prior of this monastery was Michal Brzemzucki, a Polish monk, who was instrumental in re-settling the Paulists in Hungary. The Polish bishop's written report of mid-October 1939 to pope Pius XII speaks of the arrival of about 20 priest*1, this number having increased to 60 by early January 1940*2. It was important to regulate their situation as the undisturbed continuation of the spiritual life of the mostly catholic refugees was of primary importancee to them. Although it is true that the Poles had their independent parish in Kobanya, that the provincial of the Piarist Fathers, Vince Tomek, was of Polish origin, and that many Hungarian priests spoke Polish, all this proved insufficient except for providing the initial spiritual care.

Already in early October 1939, Archbishop/Primate Seredi discussed the ecclesiastical status of the Polish priests with Bishop Radonski*3. At its October 3, 1939 meeting, the Hungarian Council of Bishops decided that the spiritual care of the refugees properly belonged to a supervisory council of priests who, at the same meeting passed this jurisdiction on to the Polish priests wishing to function in their territory "provided they are authorized to do so by their own supervisory council*4". It was also decided to ask the Red Cross or the official administrators for a list of the Polish priests so they can be distributed "according to need" on the country's territory*5. Archbishop/Primate Seredi also agreed to the publication of a review asked for by the Polish priests provided that Bishop Radonski takes reponsibility for its contents; he also approved publication of a Polish prayer-book*6. The Polish Pastoral Office evolved from Bishop Radonski's religious center; its publication became the weekly Buletin Duszpasterstwa. The prayer-book appeared and was distributed to the refugees at the end of October 1939*7.

The most important request of the Polish clergy was for

permission to serve in the camps. Archbishop/Primate Seredi intervened with the civilian and military authorities who readily acceded to this request*8. Not all military commanders, however, acknowledged the clergy's right to move about freely until the issuance of the DM's orders #928/1940 and #4181/1940. Since one priest served more than one camp, these orders grant freedom of movement to them. It also allowed them to live outside the camp and instructed the army's corps commanders "to make the priests services possible and support them in the discharge of their duties" in their home-camp and the other assigned camps*9. In addition to being full member of the bishops' conference, Radonski was also roman catholic army bishop and expert counsellor. To enable the priests to serve all the camps assigned to them, on March 13, 1940 the Bishops' Conference gave them permission to celebrate two masses on sundays and holidays or to set up a camp altar in case their faithful could not attend a church. The priests' right to preach and hear confessions extended to all roman catholic refugees; they could hold retreats in individual camps or jointly with other camps. For this purpose, the Hungarian church let them borrow its own institutions*10.

The legally organized Polish Pastoral Office kept all the records of births, deaths, and marriages; tended the Polish tombs; and took care of the cemeteries. In March, 1940 the mayor of Budapest gave a burial lot to the refugees in the cemetery at Rakoskeresztur; the mayoral offices of Gyor, Eger, and elsewhere made similar gestures to the memory of the deceased Polish exiles. The leader of the Polish Pastoral Office was duty-bound to unite the Polish priests; to publish and distribute spiritual material. The Hungarian priesthood received with open arms its Polish brethren; in most cases, the Polish priests lived in the Hungarian roman catholic rectories*11.

Aside from these facilities, the Polish priests had a rough time. That is why, on February 20, 1940, Janos Meszaros, deputy archbishop, established the Priestly Committee for the Assistance of the Polish Clergy to help the roman catholic priests and Church. The IM's IX. social welfare division and the 21. Division of the DM gave them increased daily stipends; their names figured on the special list of intellectuals; allowed them freedom of movement, and free passage on trains*12.

Despite the precautions that the Head of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary and the Hungarian bishops took to maintain a low profile in the assistance and activities of the Polish priests, the German Legation and intelligence did take note of the Polish masses held in Hungarian churches. Since the Hungarian population

ostentatiously participated in these masses, each one of them ended up by being a pro-Polish demonstration. Although the Germans protested, the situation never changed: the national anthems of Hungary and Poland, the "Szozat" [a patriotic poem set to music] and a Polish religious song "God, who Poland..." were always sung*13.

The Polish clergy ensured the children's religious education and participated in their instruction of moral/ethical values. Numerous Polish university students continued their schooling at Hungarian universities; the Polish Pastoral Office supported their endeavours with about 2,000 pengos monthly; in 1942, for instance, it contributed 24,700 pengos to their studies*14. The Free Catholic University provided adult education; this institution was initiated by Bishop Radonski and opened its doors on Februry 11, 1940 in Budapest. Its purpose was to refresh the knowledge some of the refugees had acquired earlier and to facilitate their integration into the new conditions of emigration. Therefore, in addition to scientific lectures, it organized fetes, classes, foreign language courses, excursions, etc.To foster these activities, Free University groups were organized in some military and civilian camps under a group leader who was nominated by the Polish priest and the Polish camp commander*15.

The Polish Pastoral Office fully participated first in the evacuations, then in the secret resistance. The clergy, who enjoyed freedom of movement, helped in the escapes and maintained contact between the camps and the Evacuation Office. As they lived outside of the camps, they could easily receive packages of cilivan clothing or money; in most cases they purchased the train tickets or organized the motor transport.

In several places, such as Nagycenk or Jolsva, - places that often figured in the German protests - it was during Mass that the priests invited the soldiers to escape*16. The priests could listen freely to the Polish Radio from London and told the news to the camps' inhabitants. The Germans often urged the camp commanders to open investigations into the priests' activities but in most instances they "closed the case for lack of evidence" or they helped the targeted person to escape from Hungary*17. Some of the priests persecuted by the Germans went into hiding in Hungarian monasteries or continued their activities in another camp under an alias.

The innumerable escapes provoked more and more German protests prompting Bishop Radonski's departure from Hungary*18. He passed the post of leader of the Polish Pastoral Office to Piotr

Wilk-Witoslawski*19, Franciscan friar and chaplain-major. His secretary was Stanislaw Laski who was one of the organizer of the evacuation: from his office at the Veres Palne utca he provided money and false papers; in the camp at Garany he also urged the soldiers to escape. Because of German protests, the Hungarian police - under the Bardossy-government - introduced censorship over correspondence at the Polish Pastoral Center, an order that Wilk-Witoslawski simply ignored. The other accusation levelled against the Pastoral Office was that it issued false baptismal certificates to the Jews, thus trying to save them and helping them escape.

The mumber of Polish clergymen under the Polish Pastoral Office fluctuated wildly as many were obliged to evacuate. To take up the slack, it was obliged to bring in other priests from Poland to continue the work of the departed predecessors, naturally in their spirit*20. One of the most important courier routes used by the secret resistance was the Warsaw-Cracow-Budapest-Vatican route that ecclesiastics travelled; no wonder then that German intelligence watched carefully every move and activity of the Polish priests. Upon German pressure the IM was forced to intern Wilk-Witoslawski and Laski to Siklos; the leadership of the Polish Pastoral Office devolved on the Rev. Staczek but Wilk-Witoslawski remained the effective leader*21. He continued from Siklos to maintain his contacts and direct the work of the clergy.

The many-faceted work of the Polish Pastoral Office was financed by several donours: the Polish Civilian Committee, the IM and the DM, the Polish government-in-exile and, last but not least, the papal nuncio from the papal fund*22.

The Polish clergy did not avoid the arrests of March 19, 1944: Wilk-Witoslawski, Laski, Czelusniak and later 10 other priests were arrested and deported. Archbishop Seredi intervened with the German authorities for their release but to no avail*23. The about 30 remaining clergymen who still kept their freedom faced difficult times. The IM ceased to help them but the Hungarian Catholic Church increased its assistance: some were settled in monasteries, others were assigned to Hungarian parishes. But many stayed in the camps with their parishioners and were deported to Germany with them.

NOTES

(1) Gergely, Jeno: A Puspoki Kar Tanacskozasai, Budapest, 1984; p. 269
(2) Ibid. p. 265
(3) Ibid. p. 266
(4) Ibid, p. 266
(5) Archives of the Archbishop/Primate; Seredi archives; 1790/1940
(6) Memoirs of Dobromil, Laszlo; Archives of the County Komarom-Esztergom; Manuscript Collection.
(7) Archives of the Archbishop/Primate. Seredi archives 1790/1940
(8) Archives of Military History; DM pres. XXII.929/1940; as well as Ao.I.t. 53.312/1940
(9) Op.Cit (1)
(10) Archives of the Archbishop/Primate. Seredi archives; 1790/1940
(11) Archives of Military History; DM.pres.A.o.I.t. 53.312/1939
(12) OL.K.63.FM.pol.17/7,160 cs. German Minister Erdmansdorff's protest at the Foreign Ministry against the Polish and Hungarian university students who, on February 9, 1940, had a Mass said at the church on Szervita-Ter for the repose of the soul of the massacred university professors of Cracow. The Polish Bishop celebrated the Mass at the end of which they sang the Polish national anthem as was done after every Polish Mass. Then they dispersed peacefully. Although detectives besieged the church and its environs, they did not dare interfere at the Mass organized by the university which rector Domanovszky also attended.
(13) Kapronczay, Karoly: Lengyel Iskolak Magyarorszagon a II. Vilaghaboru alatt; Magyar Pedagogia, 1974; p.78
(14) Archives of the Archbishop/Primate; Seredi archives; 2149/1940
(15) Archives of Military History; HM.eln.XXI.67078/1939. Report on the conditions at the military internment camp of Nagykanizsa. December 22, 1939: "...Polish clergymen Miodinski allegedly maintains the contact between Budapest-Nagykanizsa." 29084/1940: "Ferenc Zelechowski, chief pastor of the Polish internment camp, allegedly had 6 boxes of civilian clothes brought to his apartment for distribution." 4168/1940: "According to confidential information, the army chaplain living at the camp and wearing civilian clothes bought the train-tickets to Budapest for those named [escapees]." 19583/1940: " the command of the 7th army corps reports on March 31, 1940 that 'Clergyman Leon Czerwinski, urged escape during his sermon at the Mass at Nagycsalomja'"
(16) The majority of the Polish priests figuring in the protest memoranda of the German Legation had to be evacuated from Hungary in the end: thus, Miodinski chaplain-colonel, Ferenc Zelechowski and Leon Czerwinski. chaplains-majors, together with about 25 other priests. That is why Polish priests continually had to be invited to Hungary from Poland.
(17) Adrianyi, Gabriel: Funfzig Jahre Ungarischer Kirchengeschichte 1895-1945, Mainz, 1974; p. 97
(18) Archives of the Archbishop/Primate. Seredi archives; 4610/1942
(19) Adrianyi, Gabirel: Op. Cit. (17)
(20) Archives of Military History; DM eln.XXI.6814/1941, 10561/1943
(21) Archives of the Archbishop/Primate. Serei archives; 8846/1944

The Jewish Refugees and their Persecution

The fate of the foreign-born Jewish refugees that sought asylum in Hungary must be treated as a separate chapter in the saga of Hungarian refugee care during the II. World War. Within the drama of the European Jewry, the Hungarian holocaust is a special tragedy: in real numbers it is not the Hungarian Jewry that suffered the greatest losses in the Nazi mass murders*1. We must separate the time before March 19, 1944 from that which followed; what the Germans did in the course of several years in Germany and the Nazi-occupied countries, they did in Hungary within months: they reached the "Endlosung" [final solution] in a short time. Of course, nobody can be indifferent to the laws of 1941 governing the Jews or to the fate of the Jewish workers' brigades that perished on the Soviet front, but all this pales in comparison with what happened between May 15 and July 13, 1944. When the transports rolled into the Auschwitz death-camp, they signified the systematic destruction of one of the largest communities of European Jewry. It is in the light of these events that one must examine the attempts at saving people from certain death - even if they were few in number*2. It is in the numbers that can be measured the attempts that, before March 19, 1944, the "other Hungary" and thereafter the "official Hungary's anti-Nazi circles" did to try to save the domestic or foreign-born Jews.

Rudolph Braham summarizes the results of a lifetime of research work in his two-volume book The Politics of Genocide which appeared in Hungarian also. With its data and facts, it is by far the best work that has been published so far. His data show - supported by Hungarian statistics - that in 1941 725,000 Jews lived in Hungary (including the territories that were re-annexed in 1938). This number was augmented by 100,000 people who had to be considered Jews according to the law of 1939, par.IV (the Second Jewish Law). Forced labour brigades, the massacre in Bacska and the deportations took the lives of 63,000 people*3. Another 500,000 perished as a consequence of the deportations and to a much lesser extent to the Arrow-Cross Party's massacres after May, 1944. Half of the deportations came from the territories re-annexed in 1938 (Transcarpathia and Transylvania); therefore if we look at those

regions, their losses were 169,008 Jews (or 78%) while Budapest's were 88,000 (or 52%). [The 1944 tragedy of the Hungarian Jewry is well-known, many foreign works dealt with it but no one surpassed Braham's research.]

It would be a simplification to say that the Hungarian holocaust happened strictly upon German pressure. The Nazi gains in Germany foreshhadowed the Jews' tragedy and gave fair warning of all that was to come. Hungary's economic dependence on Germany, her foreign contacts with that country in view of Hungary's revisionist policies and certain similarities in their inner structures dominated Hungarian-German relationships. None of these had any direct connection with our treatment of the Jews but the "Jewish question" turned out to be Janus-faced in Hungarian-German relations because of the revision of the Trianon peace-treaty. While the Jews of the re-annexed territories greeted our troops with elation hoping that Hungary will not follow Germany's anti-semitic policies, there were right-wing elements that urged adoption of just such measures. The first Jewish Law of 1938 already gave proof of this; but the second of 1939 and the orders that followed it were enacted directly upon German pressure. However, the Germans were never satisfied with the contents and enforcement of these laws; they were mainly displeased with our treatment of the Jewish population. This dissatisfaction was the focal point of Hungarian-German diplomatic relations*4.

When, in 1941, the Germans decided on the "final solution" or physical elimination of the Jewry, they applied even greater pressure on Hungary.

In 1942, when the newly nominated prime minister, Miklos Kallay, went to call on Hitler at his headquarters for his introductory visit, Hitler specifically asked that the "final solution" be applied to Hungarian Jewry. On the basis of the Jewry's decisive importance to Hungary's economy, Kallay refused this stating that their elimination would be to the detriment of Hungarian-German economic relationships and would create difficulties in the transport of Hungarian goods to Germany. Hitler did not like Kallay's arguments; then Ribbentrop proposed the modification of the Hungarian Jewish laws. In 1942 he asked Hungary's consent to the deportation of Jews of Hungarian citizenship living in Germany. He also asked for the implementatio of laws modelled after those of Croatia and Slovakia. The Hungarian government refused all these requests*5.

In the autumn of 1942 Germany asked for the deportation from

Hungary of all Jews as "they engage in anti-German popaganda and sabotage". It would be desirable if "[Hungary] would enact progressive laws to exclude the Jews from all cultural and economic activitiy; to make them wear a differentiating sign; to assist [them] in the final solution of the Jewish question by collaborating [with them] in their deportation to the East*6.

To ease the pressure, the Hungarian government promised to take harsher measures against the Jews. However, Berlin was outraged about Kallay's speech of October 22, 1942. This is what the Prime Minister said: "I must contradict those who cannot see any other problem in this country but the Jewish question. We face so many difficulties in this country that the Jewish question simply fades into the background." He repeated this several times during his debate in parliament with the represetatives of the Arrow-Cross Party; he refused the wearing of the yellow star; the re-settling and deportation of the Jews. Kallay's opposition to the Jewish question only increased after the German rout at Stalingrad and the Hungarian army's debacle at Voronyezh. He refused to bow to German pressure even while negotiating Hungary's defection to the West*7.

This was the main topic of the April 17-18, 1943 discussions in Germany where Horthy rigidly refused to comply with Hitler's and Ribbentrop's demands, refusal he repeated a few days later once back in Budapest*8. Goebbels writes in his diary: " The Jewish question is the least satisfactorily handled in Hungary. The Hungarian state is full of Jews; even during the discussions the Fuhrer had with Horthy he was unable to convince him of the necessity of more drastic measures*9."

The Hungarian "liberal Jewish politics" always came up at the negotiations Hitler had with Slovak, Romanian. and Croat leaders. Since they had "solved" their own Jewish problems, the opinion of Antonescu, Tiso, and Pavelic was that Hungary is under Jewish influence and is not hard enough on her Jewish population. Antonescu consistently emphasized that "he does not trust Hungary in the least as there it is not the Hungarian people who determine policy but the Jews. This used to be so in the past and will remain so in the future."*10 Tiso echoed Antonescu's sentiments and alleged that every important Jewish leader found sanctuary in Hungary*11.

From the autumn of 1939 on, the ever-recurring "theme" of the German protests concerning the Polish refugees was the hiding of

the Jews they wanted, their rescue and their being sent abroad to neutral or enemy countries. German intelligence paid particular attention to the treatment of the Jews living in Hungary; it was fully aware of the Jews getting false Christian papers, etc. We must admit, though, that neither in the higher echelon nor on the subaltern levels was there full agreement on the treatment of the Jews: until March, 1944 those who rejected the German demands and did not follow Germany's lead in the Jewish question were in the majority. But in both parliament and the government voices were heard advocating a stricter stance against the Jews. The not to be underestimated attitude of the military as well as the subalterns' and oficers' brutal handling of the workers' brigades are proof of this. Yet there were those who opposed the inhuman demands of the Nazis, not only out of anti-German sentiment and for tactical reasons but led by a true spirit of humanism.

As mentioned earlier, after the [Austrian] Anschluss and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, great masses of Czech, German, Austrian and Slovak Jews fled to Hungary in transit to Western Europe or other continents to get as far away as possible from the Germans. It is impossible to determine the exact number. Let us mention only that in July 1939, with the full knowledge of the Foreign Ministry, close to 900 Jews - mostly Czech, Slovak, from the Highlands, Transcarpathia, German and Austrian - boarded the river passenger boats "Queen Elizabeth" and "Carl Dusan" and sailed to Sulina in the Danube delta. From there, in defiance of the quarantine, to the open sea where the Jews were transhipped to the freighter "Noemi Julia" sailing for Palestine. The trip was guaranteed by the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. Flying the Panamanian flag, this ship was the last steamer to reach its destination. This type of rescue was repeated in May 1940 when a steamer flying the Bulgarian flag sailed from Pozsony [Bratislava] to the Danube delta with several hundred Jews on board. This trip was also guaranteed by Hungarian authorities. On May 24th a snag occurred which had to be eliminated within hours as it was endangering the lives of the passengers and the continuation of their journey. Now, Dr. Jozsef Antall, on his own responsibility, ordered the port authority of Mohacs to put on board ship an expert naval officer to pilot the ship onto Yugoslav waters. Within a few hours the boat sailed on in Yugoslavia and the endangered passengers reached their destination*[12].

In September 1939, at the same time as the military refugees - with them or independently - a significant number of civilians

entered Hungary, among them numerous Polish Jews. There were some among the mobilized foot soldiers too. Many were driven by fear, others by sober reasoning: after all, the anti-semitic laws and differentiating orders of Hitlerian Germany were well-known among the Poles also. In his memoirs Arja Papirokkal, (Budapest, Europa, 1989). published in Hungarian also, Bronislaw Szatyn describes this attitude. This Polish-born lawyer who died in California. depicts forcefully the occupation's first days; the mood of September, 1939; the state of mind of the Polish Jews. He also mentions the three possibilities open to the Jews of south-Poland: follow the army retreating towards the frontier and seek asylum in Hungary or Romania; stay and face the horrors awaiting them; or, after September 17th, try to make their way to Soviet-occupied territories. The first option was soon closed to them: the German troops, having reached the Hungarian-Polish border, took harsh measures against those attempting to cross*13.

The Polish Jews arriving in Hungary received the exact same treatment as their Christian compatriots even though the IV law of 1939 (second Jewish Law) was in force. Because of this law, the military and civilian authorities should have applied some differentiating measures against the Jews which these authorities interpreted rather "loosely". As per the Geneva Agreement, everyone was to be considered a refugee; on the other hand, with the Jews, some "modified" procedures should have been applied. The first German protests of mid-September 1939 objected to the specialized treatment; the sympathy demonstrations of the civilian population, its ardent attention; and the Poles' freedom of movement. They stressed the great number of Jews and demanded their instant re-deportation to Germany. The official authorities as well as the voluntary organizations naturally refused this. In its reply, the Foreign Ministry claimed strict adherence to the Geneva Agreement, that, at reception, it cannot consider anyone's religious affiliation, and that, anyway, "[the Jews'] numbers are negligible." This was true: the IM confidentially instructed every member of the military and civilian administrations, the voluntary and aid organizations, as well as the activists of the Hungarian-Polish Committee of Refugee Care to enter everyone as a Christian. Exception was made only for those who insisted on being registered by their true affiliation. Needless to say that not all registrars took note of these instructions; still, the majority of the Jews were registered as Christians*14. The Polish Pastoral Office, which was established at the end of September 1939 and which tended to the Poles' spiritual life, provided Christian papers to all who asked for

them, thus perfecting the "documentation" of the registrations. Archbishop Seredi also instructed the Hungarian priests to certify the Christian faith of those Jews who turned to them but warned them against proselytizing. As he pointed out in his circular letter, the refugees "changed their residence only in the face of persecution."*15 Members of the Hungarian-Polish Committee for Refugee Care had basic Christian prayers printed and distributed among the Polish Jews lest they fall victim to random probes by German intelligence.

The refugee Jews were settled with their compatriots in temporary then permanent camps; they were not separated in the military camps either, despite German protests. Only those were separated that insisted on being registered as Jews; these were housed in Jewish communities in Budapest and the provinces but received the same assistance as the other military or civilian refugees. The ecclesiastical institutions also opened their doors to the Jewish refugees. This had great significance for them after the German occupation of Hungary: for many it was their only means of survival. Archbishop Seredi ordered that the Jewish intellectuals be settled in Esztergom in houses that were near the Archbishop's palace and that had two exits to make escape that much easier. Many Jews provided with false papers got into camps near Leanyfalu, Domos, Csobanka, and Szentendre*16.

As for the numbers of Jews that fled to Hungary, there are no definitive numbers' many different figures have been published. Many of them just went through Hungary, leaving with the evacuation for France or the Middle-East. The Hungarian authorities kept the name-lists of the Jews secret; they could not be controlled anyway because of the false papers but some reckoned that about 3,000 to 5,000 Polish Jews turned up in Hungary. Some Polish works - among them Stasierski's very valuable book - put their figure at between 30,000 and 40,000; these figures seem exaggerated in view of the total count of the Polish refugees*17.

The exodus of the Jews towards Hungary did not end, though, with September 1939. The establishment of the ghettos, the deportation of the Jews into concentration camps and forced-labour brigades prompted them - even though not en masse - to escape over the Carpathians into Hungary. Many attempted to find asylum in Slovakia but found that the Slovakian Jews themselves tried to flee to Hungary. The rhythm of escapes increased in 1940, especially from the Soviet-held territories such as East-Galicia, from the

Lwow. Stanislawow, and Kolomyja regions where the fate of the Jews also turned calamitous. Their numbers. though, have to be reckoned in the hundreds and not thousands. Here, however, the Hungarian army doing occupation duty came to their assistanced: they smuggled the escaping Jews onto Hungarian territory on Red Cross Hospital- and troop-carrying-trains. In his memoirs, Col. Zoltan Balo, chief of the DM's 21. Division for prisoners-of-war and Polish refugees, remembers especially Major Kormendy who repeatedly went back to Galicia to bring the Jews out*18. Once, when he brought out more than 20 Jews in a group he got caught by the border-guards. This is only one of the many incidents that artist-painter Tibor Csorba and his wife Helena collected in the 1960's in Poland among the Polish Jewish refugees as to how they made it to Hungary. They tell of harrowing experiences involving Hungarian soldiers, officers, and Red Cross workers who truly risked their lives in helping them to escape*19.

The 1941 XV. law (the third - race protection law) prohibiting marriage between a Christian and a Jew brought certain changes: it gave a good excuse to the Germans to insist that the Hungarian government modify its "tolerant" attitude towards the Jews. Due to German pressure, the camps at Fajsz, Vamosmikola and Kadarkut were established to house the Jewish civilian and military refugees, at least those who insisted on being registered as such. All this was not enough to satisfy the Germans and by 1943 increased their demands*20. At that time Hitler demanded that Prime Minister Miklos Kallay be dismissed since he did not make the Jews wear the yellow star, did not fire them from the cultural and economic life, nor did he establish ghettos as did other other countries allied to Germany. In their protests the Germans pointed out that Hungary applied a distinguishing treatment to the Polish refugees as well as the Jews whose deportation has been requested since 1939*21. The same German protests object to the Jewish schools, - nursery schools and boarding schools - that functioned in Hungary for the Jewish children.

As mentioned at length in the chapter devoted to education, several educatioal institutions were created from the autumn of 1939 on for the Jewish children near Budapest. The most important was the boarding-school at Rakosfalva led by Stanislaw Vincenz where 35, 7 to 13 year old Jewish children dwelt with false papers. There was a similar institute for 20 to 30 children at the Csillaghegy, under Viktor Trumpus. At first there were nursery schools for Jewish children at Szentendre, Csobanka and Leanyfalu (under the guidance

of Pastor Sandor Puszta, the famous priest-poet) but these had to be disbanded in mid-1943. It is significant that only 123 Jewish students had the opportunity to study at the school of the Polish Youth Camp in Balatonboglar. They lived here with Christian papers*[22].

Because of the frequent protests, the education of the Jewish children had to be re-channelled; particularly since many were alone in Hungary or were smuggled out of the ghettos by their parents with Red Cross workers. For these and the orphans from 4 to 16 the Home for Polish Refugee Orphans in Vac was established in 1943. It was organized by the IM's welfare division, supervised by the Polish Pastoral Office and its expenses were covered by the PCC and through it, by the Polish government-in-exile in London. Its location was deliberately chosen near a military camp in Vac for soldiers with families, thus escaping the scrutiny of German intelligence. The serene and peaceful life of the Orphanage continued until Hungary's German occupation. The German authorities immediately ordered the registration of the children and the teachers of the Orphanage not hiding their aim of deporting them to a concentration camp. One of the worst accusations against Jozsef Antall was the creation of this Orphanage and the same charge was levelled against Wilk-Witoslawski, the head of the Polish Pastoral Office. In the end, despite many difficulties, the residents at the Orphanage were not deported and could stay there until early 1945*[23].

A very significant role in the Polish refugees' care and the protection of the persecuted Jews was played by Papal Nuncio Angelo Rotta, the Budapest representative of the Holy See. Right from the autumn of 1939, the Vatican joined in the Polish refugees' care. It not only distributed charitable gifts but also gave, during the war years, some 18 million pengos to support the Polish schools, health-care services, and cultural institutions. But in addition to any material assistance, the biggest help was the Nuncio's decisive and forceful manner with which he took up the Poles' cause. This was mostly due to his close relationship with Jozsef Antall. The Germans openly attacked the Hungarian government's policies; that is why Hungary had to prove to the West the special treatment the Poles received and all the measures taken on their behalf. That is why were initiated the visits by members of the International Red Cross and the representatives of the various Christian churches. These visitors could then form a clear picture of the activities of the "other Hungary". In 1943, during his tours of the country, Nuncio

Angelo Rotta visited the Polish camps, schools, and institutions. Among others, he also went to the Jewish camps at Fajsz, Kalocsa, Kadarkut, and Vamosmikola. It was in 1943 that he made his famous remark quoted in the world press: "...I came to visit the wretched and the homeless of a crushed nation; instead I saw a free, carefree, joyful, and healthy encampments."*[24]

The Nuncio's open friendship towards the Poles took on added significance after March 1944. In April 1944 and thereafter he protested the arrest of the Polish leaders and the mass-deportations of Poles; he readily accepted to keep the Polish institutions' documents; he handed out innumerable safe-conducts to Polish Jews and others; and helped hide the Jews in ecclesiastical institutions. Despite his efforts, the Germans and later the Arrow-Cross Party-government did deport many Polish Jews but the majority of them survived.

As was made clear earlier, the Kallay-government very decisively refused the application of sterner measure, or of the Nurnberg laws against the Hungarian Jews, as well as their deportation. On the basis of German sources, Braham disclosed that in 1943 some right-wing military leaders conducted negotiations with Germany - without the government's knowledge - about handing over about a hundred thousand Jews*[25]. On the other hand, after March 19, 1944 the political leaders that came to power in Hungary were not only fully subservient to Germany but were ready to embark on Hitler's "final solution". Hungary's occupation greatly complicated her political life: Germany insisted on the appearance of sovereignty, managed Hungary's affairs in such a way as if they were her own choice and not dictated by Germany but rigidly refused any modification of her decision. German minister Veesenmayer had the final word in the formation of the government, and in the application of the restrictive orders to Hungarian political life, as well as in the measures taken against the Jews. Every sign points to the fact that after Hungary's occupation the Germans' main purpose was the realization of the "final solution". Eichmann and his staff arrived in Hungary with the German occupying forces, so that he could rapidly organize the deportations and the "final soluion". The anti-semitic measures that were taken were, to Veesenmayer, a mark of the government's trustworthiness. In early April, Ribbentrop instructed Veesenmayer: "...Do not allow the Hungarian parliament to bring too many exceptions to the anti-Jewish laws. The Foreign Minister deems it necessary that at the IM those should supervise the Jewish question whom intelligence finds reliable or

who are, maybe, their own employees."*26 "Those" became Under-Secretaries Laszlo Endre and Laszlo Baky. But Sztojay, on March 20, 1944 had already ordered the formation of the Jewish councils; on April 5, 1944 the obligatory wearing of the yellow star, that obvious sign of Jewishness; by decree 10.800/1944 ME the removal from book stores of "the works of Jewish or Christian authors of Jewish origin"; and, by extension, prohibiting publication of such works, which led naturally to book-burnings. From March 22, 1944 they limited the amount of money Jews could take out of their bank accounts; ordered them to register their assets and objects of value with the state financial institutions; on April 21 they ordered closed all Jewish stores, plants or enterprises; om April 22 their food rations were cut drastically; on April 27 Laszlo Endre ordered the concentration of Jews in one spot which meant creating the ghettos; on June 4 their freedom of movement on the streets was curtailed leaving them only a couple of hours a day to buy food*27.

Right on March 19, 1944 started the mass arrests of Jews that were characterized as "independent actions" by the German forces and the Gestapo. In his report of March 31, 1944, Veesenmayer mentions 3364 arrested Jews but their numbers increased steadily. The first transport of 1,800 deported Jews left the country on Aprl 29, 1944 on Veesenmayer's instructions. But the Eichmann-commandos - anticipating Laszlo Endre's orders - had already started collecting the Jews living in the northeastern section of Hungary and taking them to one place with the excuse: "...The Jewish question must quickly be brought to its conclusion as the front advances more and more and the population dreads Jewish vengeance more than the brutality of the Russians*28." A special manhunt had begun for the alien Jews, not only those that had entered Hungary in 1939 but particularly the ones that had come from Poland and Slovakia in 1942/43. Their number was put to 5,000. On May 15, 1944 mass deportations of the Jews had begun and it is estimated that by July 10, 1944 437,402 Jews living in the provinces had been trasnported to Auschwitz and other concentration camps. The Hungarian constabulary (gendarmerie) was supposed to carry out the "concentration in one spot and the transport" of the Jews but their supervision was left to the Germans. This is also made obvious by the fact that on May 26 1944 Thadden reported to Berlin the plans for deporting the Budapest Jews*29.

Confidential German reports state that the population felt sorry for the mass deportations; but it also states that this same population vied with the German forces in looting Jewish properties.

Local and foreign outrage put pressure on the Regent who finally decided to stop the transports. At a meeting of June 26, 1944 of the Crown Council he dismissed under-secretaries Laszlo Endre and Laszlo Baky and stopped the deportations on July 6, 1944. This date is of special significance: on this day was meant to begin the deportation of the about 200,000 Jews of Budapest who had already suffered losses of about 20,000*30.

The question of exemptions had a special meaning during the first phase of the deportations. The anti-Jewish law enacted by the Sztojay-government contained a limited number of exemptions: according to the May 10, 1944 orders exempt from wearing the yellow star and from other anti-semitic orders were: the heroes of the WWI (decorated with gold- and the first two orders of the silver-medals); those who were 75% disabled (except for disabilities acquired in forced-labour work brigades); the widows and orphans of WWI soldiers (except again for forced-labour brigades); the alien Jews registered with the KEOKH except "for those countries that have extradition treaties with Hungary"*31. This law gave quite a few exemptions and these had a broad scope. Equally exempt from wearing a differentiating sign (yellow star) were the non-Christian spouses of mixed Christian-Jewish marriages. The law concerning the alien Jews also opened up the possibility of foreign legations giving out safe-conducts or offering asylum. On the basis of the May 10. 1944 ordinance, about 500 people (1,000 with their families) received exemptions due to WWI heroism; the most frequently exempted people were "qualified as Christians".

After Regent Horthy stopped the deportations, it was proposed that he issue special exemptions to those that were not covered by the exemptions contained in the May 10, 1944 law. This was embodied in the decree of August 21 which gave the right to the Regent to issue special exemption to people "who contributed to the national patrimony in the artistic, scientific or economic fields."*32 However, the decree specified that the anti-Jewish laws are still applicable to those exempted. These special exemptions could only be effectively applied during the reign of the Lakatos-government but it was often abused due to corruption.

The Regent's order stopping the deportations was completely ignored by Eichmann and his staff: 1,200 people were deported from the concentration camp at Kistarcsa and masses of Jews were taken from the suburbs of Budapest. They thought Horthy's order was simply meant to gain time and were determined to deport the

about 164,000 Jews from the capital. The "Sondercommando" [special commando troops] led by Eichmann was in a bad mood: it looked with irritation at the "goofs" of the Hungarian government; the "double-dealing" of the Regent; the actions of the foreign diplomats who gave out countless safe-conducts, opened safe houses for the Jews and took all necessary steps to send them abroad.

On August 21, 1944, the legations of the neutral nations addressed a sternly worded letter to the Hungarian government demanding that "the deportations and persecutions cease immediately". Due to this letter and to Romania's defection on August 24, Interior Minister Miklos Bonczos told Eichmann that he intended to re-settle the Budapest Jews in five provincial camps just as soon as they are built but that Hungary will never allow their deportation to Germany. This turn of events in Romania caused the Germans to retreat temporarily from their plans: for tactical reasons they stopped the deportations from Hungary and put off the "final solution" until the military situation was stabilized.

The anti-Semitic pressure eased off in Hungary when Lakatos came to power.In the face of the decisive attitude of the Hungarian government, the Germans reluctantly consented to let the Hungarian authorities deal with the Jewish question: as a compromise the Hungarians "agreed to the re-settling of the Jews from Budapest and to making them do useful work."*[33]

By the time of the Arrow-Cross Party putsch (October 15, 1944), the Jewish community had shrunk to about one-third of its pre-war figures: about 150,000 served in forced-labour brigades; 150-160,000 lived in Budapest in ghettos in "starred" [bearing the yellow-star] houses, outside of "safe houses" or without safe-conducts. After October 15, 1944 the Arrow-Cross Party units were given a "free hand" to indulge in planned or random killings. For the first few days the Szalasi-government watched these killings with indifference but on October 24, 1944 Szalasi stated to Papal Nuncio Angelo Rotta who protested against these atrocities that the Jews will not be deported or annihilated but "will be set work in Hungary".*[34] The protests of the neutral countries compelled the government to exercise some "sel-restraint" and it did not issue a decree that it will disregard foreign safe-conducts and other protective documents.

The German government did not have to urge the Szalasi-government to continue the deportations or to establish the ghetto. So, as soon as the Arrow-Cross Party came to power, Eichmann

and his "Sondercommando" appeared immediately and demanded the instantaneous deportation of 50,000 Jews. At the same time, they demanded the tightening of the guard-system of the forced-labour brigades; the mobilization of all able-bodied Jews for work; and the locking the rest into ghettos. In theory, Germany allowed 8,412 foreign Jews to leave for Sweden, Palestine, or Switzerland. The Eichmann-led action started on October 18, 1944 when they indiscriminately ordered men between 18 and 60 to work, regardless of their health or safe-conduct. This action was repeated on October 22, 1944 when about 40,000 Jews were ordered out to build Budapest's defenses by digging trenches or erecting fortifications. Many were force-marched into Germany and many were systematically killed on the way. On November 12, 1944 the ghetto was established crowding in about 15,000 people who had Swedish (4,500), Swiss (7,800), Vatican (2,500), Portuguese (968) and Spanish (100) safe-conducts*[35]. On November 18, 1944 they assigned a site for the other ghetto where they crowded in all those who had no safe-conducts or other protection. This international ghetto functioned only until the end of December 1944 when - finding the bargaining with the neutral countries futile - the Arrow-Cross-government transferred some 18,000 people to the central ghetto. Many of the young people were driven to forced-labour brigades; the inhabitants of the "safe houses" were killed and thrown into the Danube...

The Budapest Jewry found itself in a hopeless situation once the Arrow Cross party came to power; their possibilities of escape were reduced to a minimum. Many tried to escape or hide but this depended entirely on the Christian population's help. The search for asylum with Christians entailed grave risks for both parties: the captured Jew was ruthlessly disbanded or deported and the Christians could also expect reprisals according to a decree inviting massacre. Unfortunately the anti-semitic propaganda proved effective as shown by the Arrow-Cross units' atrocities, the Lumpenproletariat's pillage of abandoned Jewish homes, shops and other properties. The Christian population itself showed great sensitivity to the plight of the Jews; not only did the ecclesiastical institutions offer them asylum but so did the population as a whole, primarily the anti-German elements and also those who used to have friends among the now persecuted Jews. According to contemporary reports, the Germans were surprised at the number of denunciations on the one hand, and - on the other - at the widespread assistance of the Jews. The denunciations, written documents, are a blot on the country's honour; no such documents

exist on the help that was offered.

During the Arrow-Cross Party reign, many Jewish men found some temporary protection from the deportations in the forced-labour working brigades; after all, not every commander was a follower of the Arrow-Cross-Party-government and there were some who were humane in the midst of inhumanity.

When, after March 19, 1944 the deportations began, the Hungarian Jews woke up to the fact that they are no more protected than the Jews living in other Nazi-occupied countries. With the German occupation disappeared that element of government which refused to bow to German demands and with it the democratic and left-wing opposition that had a strong anti-Nazi standpoint.

In this hopeless situation, the Rescue Committee (Vaadat Ezra ve'Hatzalah) renewed its efforts at saving Jews. This organization, established in January 1943 and until the German occupation, focussed on the rescuing of Jews of the neighbouring countries, collaborated with Polish, Slovak and other nationalities in helping them excape to Hungary*36. It also handed out food and false papers, used its connections to ease the lot of the forced-labour brigades; through its intelligence- and courier service it maintained contact with similar organizations abroad; and kept the big Jewish organizations in Istanbul and Switzerland informed of all developments in fascist-dominated Europe. For instance, five days before it occurred they had exact information on the plans and schedule of the occupation of Hungary.In the weeks following the German occupation, this influential organization got in touch with the leaders of the SS and the Sonderkommandos to find out whether, against compensation, they would desist from establishing ghettos and from the deportations. In the course of these negotiations, the Germans asked for millions of dollars for their "intervention". While some Sonderkommando leaders bargained, others feverishly carried out the deportations. In retrospect, these discussions appear naive; but the Jewish leaders were well aware of their situation and felt that saving even a few thousans people is worth the effort. The immorality of the "human life for trucks" is not imputable to the Jewish leaders: this concept was formulated in Berlin who would willingly have spared the lives of a few thousand Jews in exchange for gasoline and petroleum shipments so badly needed for the war effort. The bargaining reached the phase where they promised to let go a 100,000 Jews for 10,000 trucks and the destruction of the gas-chambers of Auschwitz. That nothing came of this is due to the steadfast stand of the Allies. Be that as it may, these negotiatins gave hope that the Hungarian Jewry could be saved this hope duped them to be robbed. In a hopeless situation the rules

of pure logic do not apply;. In the end, the Germans allowed about 150 Jews to leave on June 30, 1944, a week before Horthy stopped the deportations*37.

After this came the foreign legations' efforts to save the Jews by issuing safe-conducts to those in peril. Miklos Krausz and Charles Lutz, Swiss Consul, worked out a plan to give safe-conducts to 7,000 families in the hope that they will be able to ship them effectively out of the country into Switzerland. By the end of August, 1944 they could have given 2,200 passports and transit visas had they been in the clear about Berlin's hidden motives: the German government did indeed allow the departure of 7,800 Jews under the condition that the deportations continue. At this time Raoul Wallenberg started his activities: he tried to extend the protection of the Swedish kingdom to as many of the persecuted ones as possible. The International Red Cross joined him in his work although its mandate only covered civilian foreigners, These were the people the foreign legations also tried to protect with their safe-conducts.

Civilian society's life-saving actions were concentrated mainly on Budapest. During the month-and-a-half - two months of the deportations from the provinces the population was not in the clear about the motives behind the quick removal of the Jews. What is more, their accelerated rhythm did not make such organized missions possible. From the summer of 1944 on, though, the rescue attempts became more effective but were still limited. Among the governmental organizations, we must mention the DM (or some of its sections) that mobilized Jewish men for forced-labour brigades thus trying to save their lives; also the office of the Regent's cabinet that issued thousands of safe-conducts to Jews prominent in the arts, sciences, and economics*38.

Special mention must be made of hospitals and health-institutions where Jews were hidden. Also, an outstanding role was played by the Christian churches which hid, fed, and guarded Jews in convents, monasteries, mission houses, educational institutions, and boarding-schools. Nothing deterred them: not the case of Jane Hanning, head of college of Scottish Missions who was arrested and died in Auschwitz for hiding Jews; nor the murder by Arrow-Cross Party members of the Rev. Ferenc Kallo. Bishop Vilmos Apor, who was killed by Soviet troops on Good Friday 1945, single-handedly stopped the deportations of a group by boarding the train himself. We could make lists of people, the various forms of life-saving which - though individual actions - were all guided by human charity.

NOTES

(1) Gilbert, Marti: Atlas of Jewish History (1977) In his work he states that 86.7% of Polish, 74% of Slovak and Czech, 85% of Austrian, 82.9% southern Slav,83.3% of Bulgarian, and 28.2% of Hungarian Jews perished. This last figure is disputed by Rudolph L. Braham in The Politics of Genocide: the Holocaust in Hungary [Magyar Holocaust, Budapest, 1990]. As per his reckoning, 437,402 people were deported from Hungary of which 90% did not return having died in one of the death-camps.* To this figure one must add those who died on the eastern front in forced-labour brigades, who were deported to Germany under the Arrow-Cross regime, who were killed in the capital. The number of the holocaust's survivors can be put at 200,000.

*Publishers' Note: Not all deportees ended up in the death-camps. The able-bodied were mostly sent to forced-labor camps and factories. Some of them survived, but never returned to Hungary. Most of the survivors emigrated to Israel, the USA, Australia and Canada At one time the number of Hungarian born Jews in Israel was estimated to be close to 250,000.

(2) Ranki, Gyorgy: A Harmadik Birodalom Arnyekaban, Budapest, Magveto, 1988.

(3) In mid-1941, under the Bardossy-government and upon German demands, from among the Jews that could not prove Hungarian citizenship (Austrian, Czech, Slovak, later Romanian, Croatian, and Serb fugitives from territories occupied since 1938) the KEOKH gathered about 13,000 in the Southland (Delvidek), the re-annexed parts of Transylvania, and in the Northland (Felvidek) and shipped them to Galicia where the Germans received and in Kamenyec-Podolsk killed them. Laszlo Gonda writes in his A Zsidosag Magyarorszagon 1926-1945 [Budapest, 1992] that at that time about 35,000 Jews were deported. Truth is that Bardossy, though he did not attack the refugees directly, did not share the attitude of the Teleki-government towards the fugitives. During his reign the services to the refugees decreased but were re-invigorated under the Kallay-government.

(4) Kallay, Miklos: Hungarian Premier, New York, N.Y., 1954

(5)

a. Braham, Rudolph L.: The Destruction of Hungarian Jewry. A Documentary Account, New York, N.Y., 1963;

b. A Wilhelmstrasse es Magyarorszag. German diplomatic papers on Hungary, 1933-1944. Eds: Gy. Ranki, L. Tilkovszky, Gy. Juhasz. Budapest 1968

(6) Op.Cit. (5/2), p. 695

(7) Op.Cit. (5/2), p. 699

(8)

a. Hitler Hatvannyolc Targyalasa, Budapest, 1983, Vol.II, pp.101-102;

b. Horthy Miklos Titkos Iratai, Budapest, 1963, pp.373-386

(9) The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943. New York, N.Y., 1948; p.357

(10) Op.Cit. (8/1) Vol.1-2;

(11) Op.Cit. (8/1)

(12)

a. Kapronczay, Karoly: Zsido Menekultk Magyarorszagon. Vilag, 1989;

b. Kapronczay, K.: Lengyel Zsido Menekultek Magyarorszagon - Lengyel-Magyar Menekultugy 1939-1945, Budapest, 1990.

(13)

a. Kapronczay, Karoly: Akkor nem volt Lengyelorszag, Budapest,1990;

b. Ibid.;

c. Lengyel Katonak Magyar Foldon a Masodik Vilaghaboru alatt, Budapest, 1994

(14)

a. Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon a Masodik Vilaghaboru Eveiben, Budapest, 1946;

b. Antall, Jozsef, Sr.: Emlekiratai, Budapest, 1996

(15)

a. Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit.

b. Ibid.

c. A Lengyel Lelkeszi Hivatal Magyarorszagon: Lengyel-Magyar Menekultugy 1939-1945, Budapest, 1990

(16) See Note (15)

(17) Stasierski, K.: Lengyel Iskolak Magyar Foldon 1939-2944, Poznan, 1970 (in Polish); p.456

(18) Balo, Zoltan: Emlekeim Lengyelekrol (Memoirs); Lengyel-Magyar Menekultugy 1939-1945, Budapest, 1990

(19) Baratok a Bajban 1939-1945. Recollections of Hungarian refugee care, Budapest, 1985

(20) Op. Cit. (6); p. 818

(21) Ibid. p. 876; p. 880

(22) Kapronczay, Karoly: Lengyel Iskolak Magyar Foldon a Masodik Vilaghaboru Eveiben; Magyar Pedagogia, 1974, #2, pp. 135-171

(23)

a. Ibid.

b. Kapronczay, Karoly: Op.Cit. (13)

(24) Op.Cit. (14/1)

(25) Braham: Op.Cit (5/1)

(26) Op.Cit. (6) p.891

(27) Ranki, Gyorgy: Op.Cit. (2)

(28) Op.Cit. (6); p.897

(29) Braham: Op. Cit. (5/1)

(30) Ibid.

(31) Ibid.

(32) Ibid.

(33) Ranki, Gyorgy: Op. Cit. (2)

(34)

a. Gonda, L.: A Zsidosag Magyarorszagon 1526-1945, Budapest. 1992;

b. Venetianer, Lajos: A Magyar Zsidosag Tortenete, Budapest, 1986

(35) As per Laszlo Gonda's research, the safe-conducts in circulation greatly surpassed the official figure of 15,600. It is estimated that the Swiss issued 40-70,000; the Swedes 7-10,000; the Spaniards about 3,000 safe-conducts. But equally significant was the number of false papers. Using these and the great number of protected Jews as an excuse, already in mid-November began the raids in the internatinal ghetto. In the course of these actios, whole housefuls of Jews were

arrested, shot, and dumped into the Danube.

(36) The specialized literature (the works of Braham, Gonda, Venetianer, Ranki, or the Polish Stasierski, Bartelski, Nowak) contain contradictory data concerning the number of Jews that had fled to Hungary. Braham states that in 1941 at Kolomija 13,000 Jews were killed by the Germans that the Hungarians had expelled as not Hungarian citizens. It is estimated that 63,000 were thus expelled of which 35,ooo were killed. Maria Schmidt, in her work Kollaboracio vagy Kooperacio? [Budapest, 1990], speaks of 2,500 Polish Jews in 1943; the same number of fugitives from the Highlands and the occupied Czech territories. The first official summary (Lengyel Menekultek Magyarorszagon a Masodik Vilaghaboru Eveiben, Budapest, 1946) puts the number of Jewish refugees at 25,000 without going into details about their nationality of citizenship. However, it must be remembered that the great majority of the 1938-1940 fugitives left the country immediately, partly legally, partly with the great evacuation. After Yugoslavia's German occupation, the possibilities of escape became limited. It must also be noted that after Yugoslavia's occupation, the Germans did, in fact, collect and deport the Jews from Bacska, Banat and Croatia. This whetted the appetite of the right-wing elements under the Bardossy government and they did, indeed, collect, deport, and extradite to the Germans Hungarian, Slovak and other Jews that had fled from Northern Transylvania, the Highlands, and elsewhere who were not Hungarian citizens. But this was one action only: as soon as the IM got wind of it, it immediately stopped the deportations, even turning back trains from the border. It accused the constabulary and the military leaders with breaking the Geneva Agreement. The numbers of 30-40,000 Polish Jewish refugees in Hungary quoted in the works of the Polish authors (Strasielski, Nowak, Bartelski) seem exaggerated; their true figure could not have exceeded 4-5,000.

(37) Braham: Op. Cit. (5/1)

(38) Braham: Op. Cit. (5/1)

F R E N C H S O L D I E R S

In her politics of refugee care during the WWII, a special chapter must be devoted to Hungary's reception and treatment of French prisoners-of-war who escaped from German POW camps. Although their number is dwarfed by that of the Polish refugees, their political significance is not. Centuries-old ties bound Hungary to Poland; Hungarian society found the government's special treatment of the Polish refugees and the defiance to the Germans as natural. While popular opinion was never antagonistic to France, the Hungarian-French relationships and the country's mood between the two wars were cool, in some cases outright hostile. The Hungarian public held France responsible for a multitude of sins: the main organizer of the peace treaty of Versailles and Trianon; chief protector of the European status quo; hence the enemy of Hungarian revisionist ideas; the initiator and main ally of the Little Entente which curtailed Hungarian freedom of movement. September 1939 did not bring any negative changes to the not-so-friendly relationship between Hungary and France; Paris watched with sympathy the Teleki-government's pro-Polish politics; it appreciated that he declared himself a "non-belligerent"; that he categorically refused German demands to have their troops transit through Hungary against Poland; and his giving asylum to the fugitive Poles.

The French press greatly valued Hungary's having made the evacuation to France and the near-East easier for the Polish soldiers and not having broken off relationships with the Polish government in Anger despite strong German pressure. Equally, Hungarian-French diplomatic relationships were maintained even after the outbreak of the Polish war when France, like England, severed her diplomatic ties with Germany. In February 1940 a significant French-Hungarian commercial treaty was signed which was meant as a symbolic acknowledgement of the Teleki-government's courage. In the spring of 1940, as the French-German tensions grew and "war was in the air", Hungarian public opinion about France was the same as that about Poland a year earlier. In March, 1940 the Comedie Francaise gave a hugely successful performance in Budapest; even Regent Horthy attended it. In May-June, 1940 the Hungarian press -except for the right-wing - commented sadly on France's life-and-death struggle and her collapse as the expansion of

German power into new territories foreshadowed the future breaking of the will of the defiant Hungarian political body. The Teleki-government continued to try to avoid an open rupture with the Western Powers. In the case of France this was made relatively easy by the fact that she was represented, for a while, only by the Vichy government which collaborated with Germany. But many people at this Legation served "the other France" too. The most important element of the relationship was an exchange of views on what attitude to take with Germany.

In November 1940, French Minister Dampierre - already serving the Vichy government - asked the Foreign Ministry what Hungary intended to do about the two French escaped prisoners-of-war that were caught on the frontier*1. (This is the first authentic document on the French prisoners-of-war escaping to Hungary during the WWII.) Before replying, an interdepartmental meeting was called that the represetatives of the Defense-, the Interior- and the Foreign Ministry attended. They had to formulate a standpoint about the expected crowds of French prisoners-of-war. It was well known that the Hungarian authorities already had great experience in the field of refugee care, but at this meeting three possibilities had to be discussed:

1.- to extradite them to the Germans;

2.- to deport the escaped prisoners-of-war and put them across the border into a territory where the Germans have no power (such as Yugoslavia);

3.- apply to them the stipulations of the Geneva and The Hague Agreements' paragraphs relevant to escaped prisoners-of-war: they can stay in designated places under the 21. Division of the DM*2.

During this interdepartmental meeting an argument arose about the different interpretations of the Agreements' various points. The Foreign Ministry completely rejected the first solution citing the fact that Hungary was not in a state of war with France. It found only the second and third solutions acceptable. But how could Hungary's admission of the prisoners-of-war and mostly her help in further escapes be squared with her relationship to Germany? The pro-German members of the General Staff were of the opinion that the prisoners-of-war must be extradited to Germany, that one must not create a situation similar to that of the Poles*3. He reproached Jozsef Antall, the representative of the IM, that he "coddles" the Poles; that he acted in collusion with them in the autumn of 1939 and the spring of 1940 when the German Legation contantly protested their escapes. Col. Zoltan Balo, representative of the 21. Division of the

DM, argued for admitting them and proposed the same treatment for them as for the Polish prisoners-of-war. The Foreign Ministry was only willing to modify its stance to the extent that - as Hungary is not a neutral country - it deemed insufficient just to assign them a place to stay. It felt that they should be kept under closer supervision, in a closed place, in camps, and that their further escapes be stopped*4. On the other hand, at that time there were only 8-10 French ex-soldiers and their future number could not be determined; therefore, it was decided to place them in the Polish camp designated by the 21. Division of the DM. It was also decided that the 21. Div. of the DM organize a special camp for them as the need arose and should undertake its surveillance. Then they so informed the French Legation which formally and legally assumed the protection of their rights*5. During further discussions it was clarified that their provsioning will be the same as that of the Polish military refugees thus receiving the same provisions as the army and the same pay; that the IM will regularly assist them also and extend to them the right to work outside. No special institution was established for them as the French Legation handled their representation.

From 1941 the French fugitives who arrived in ever greater numbers were placed in the officers' camp at Selyp. At that time there were 56 of them but already there were reports that the French, as well as the Poles, escaped from Selyp; presumably they fled together to Yugoslavia*6. Nevertheless, the theoretical and practical standpoint of the Hugarian government concerning the French prisoners-of-war had not changed. The truth is that the number of fugitives was so small that, beyond feeling "annoyed" at their escape and protesting as a matter of routine, the Germans could not care less about their fate*7 .

A greater number of French prisoners-of-war began escaping at the end of 1941 when Hungary was already at war with the Soviet Union. At that time, about 1.5 million Frenchmen were prisoners in Germany; many were taken to forced-labour in the occupied Soviet territories. They worked at building roads and clearing rubble. Although the 1940 French-German armistice agreement proposed discussions of the prisoners-of-war question, to the Vichy government's great chagrin the negotiations proved futile: it could secure the release of only about 500,000 men. During 1940 the French prisoners felt confident of their early release - they trusted Marechal Petain - but by the end of 1940 - spring 1941 their hope diminished and the number of escapes increased. The German

military authorities placed the French prisoners-of-war into camps organized in southern and mid-Germany, but quite a number of them were held captive on Austrian territory also. It was from these camps that they were taken to forced-labour on Soviet territories but tens of thousands of them were sent to Poland also. The escapes that started in 1941 led to Switzerland and Hungary - depending on the location of the camp - but the forced-labourers working in the Soviet territories aimed at the latter. At the end of 1941 the rumour spread among the prisoners-of-war that escape to Hungary is the better choice: they will not be extradited to Germany, there were possibilities of fleeing farther on to join the de Gaulle forces. The Germans confiscated many flyers urging the prisoners to flee to Hungary and indicating the exact route. By the summer of 1942, on the average 9-10 French prisoners were registered at the Hungarian frontier; their total grew to 600 in 1942 even though this figure does not include those that continued their flight*8. In 1943-1944, their number fluctuated between 800 and 900. One must remember, however, that which we mentioned in connection with the Polish refugees also: the records of the DM contained "fudged" figures and not the true ones as the German Legation frequently protested the special treatment of the French. German intelligence also kept a sharp eye on the camps of the French, on their comings and goings and on their organizations. The escapes reached their highest in the spring of 1941; through Yugoslavia it was free of dangers and from there the fugitives could easily reach their objective. After the German occupation of Yugoslavia, the route had to be changed to Croatia. Not that it was danger-free; still, it offered a better chance than the Serbian territory which was under total German control*9.

In the summer of 1942, the increased numbers of French prisoners-of-war required new measures from the Hungarian authorities which included more settled conditions and some easements. In Hungary, entering the war meant a growing influence of the General Staff which demanded strict surveillance of the French and complete elimination of their freedom of movement. But the administrators that dealt with the prisoners-of-war, such as the head of the 21 Div. of the DM, applied the given instructions loosely, even sabotaging them at times*10.

During the first year, the French were placed in Polish camps where the state provided them with the same assistance, in addition to the significant aid they received from the French Legation. One of the reasons for the escapes was this placing in camps together with Poles with whom, in the end, they fled. Strong ties developed

between the Polish secret military resistance and the French Gaulle-ist officers and soldiers. Thanks to the help of the Poles, the flights of the French prisoners-of-war to the Middlre-East increased during 1941/42; the Polish connections helped them across the border and then on to Turkey*11. Many of those who left on their own got stuck in Romania where the authorities treated the escaped French prisoners as they did the Poles. Another important aspect of the French-Polish relationship was that many of the French forced-labourers from Polish and Russian territories came to Hungary with the help of the Polish resistance movement. Most were guided through the, to them, unfamiliar highland regions by Polish couriers*12 It is difficult to judge the magnitude of the flight towards the south as no relative documents exist in the archives. However, the reported escapes from the camps - particularly while together with the Poles - do not mean that the French always evacuated to rejoin the French army. There were escapes from the beginning: many just could not tolerate being locked up and wished for more freedom*13. According to subsequent reckonings, from the end of 1940 to the spring of 1944 about 3,000 French prisoners-of-war turned up in Hungary. Since in March 1944 there were 981 French in the country, some 1,500 to 2,000 must have fled farther on*14.

Due to the increased number of the French (there were 836 on record), it was decided to establish a special French camp at Balatonboglar keeping, at the same time, the separate quarters in the Polish camp at Selyp. It opened on October 1, 1942. As per an agreement with the DM, the French Legation rented two first-class hotels to house the officers and soldiers the DM directed there(14). At the camp's opening the number of French amounted to about 300; this increased to more than 850 at the time of Hungary's German occupation. Around the Balaton and in Balatonboglar the French prisoners-of-war enjoyed complete freedom of movement; the "camp" was that in name only. Their room-and-board in hotels and their unguarded existence could not be construed as "internment". The DM and the IM agreed to share the cost of maintaining this arrangement, the rental for the hotels being borne by the French Legation. They also expanded the permission to work outside of camps that was decreed in 1941. The IM further agreed to pay a supplement to those workers who did not receive housing from their employers. Those Frenchmen who received permission from the camp at Selyp to work outside remained registered there; they were not officially transferred to Balatonboglar*15. The other place for registering the newly arrived prisoners-of-war was at the

temporary camp at Komarom where they stayed during the identification procedures that took a few weeks. Then they were assigned to Selyp or Balatonboglar. Many obtained their work permits there; their records were then kept at the 21. Div. of the DM*16.

Heretofore the Germans' protests were directed at the admission of great numbers of Poles, their secret organizations, and their evacuation; but now they turned their attention to the increasing numbers of French refugees. By the end of 1942, they repeatedly demanded that, on the one hand, Hungary not allow the French prisoners-of-war to cross the German-Hungarian border, and, on the other, their extradition if they do*17. In its reply. the Foreign Ministry pointed out that the German protests could only apply to prisoners-of-war of countries with whom Hungary was at war and to their escapees, but that Hungary was not at war with France. Thus, through some tricky legalistic reasoning, the demands were refused. (It must be mentioned here that Hungary adopted the same attitude with regard to American, British, and Soviet fugitive prisoners-of-war.) The only measure that was taken upon German demands was the reinforcing of the borders*18. For a short period, it seemed the numbers decreased which could also be explained by the strengthening of the surveillance of the camps and the frontiers by their German guards. There is a mention in the archives that in January 1943 six French refugees were seized by the border guards and returned to the Germans. It is a fact that the local administrative organs, where a great number of pro-German elements functioned, behaved at times very differently from the administrators of refugee care at the DM and the IM. The instructions, issued in 1943 by the DM and the IM and drafted to please the Germans, were very loosely applied but the lower echelons did not always follow in their superiors' footsteps. At the beginning of 1943 any French prisoner-of-war caught within 25 km. from the German-Hungarian border was subject to special procedures; this could explain the case of the extradition of the six*19.

The extradition caused outrage at the Foreign Ministry and the organizations caring for the refugees, thus bringing about a decisive standpoint. In its memorandum, the Foreign Ministry repeatedly pointed out to the DM that the extradition was "in sharp contrast" to the government's attitude. At the end of 1943, the DM instructs the border patrols that they may not extradite refugees caught at the border, prohibits all individual action, and orders that "the prisoners-of-war, captured at any point on Hungarian territory be

given all the rights of refugees." All French prisoners-of-war and refugees had to be taken to the competent army corps command for questioning and then sent on to Balatonboglar. In accordance with an agreement with Vichy-France, the French Legation - in the persons of, first, de Mierry, then from the end of 1942 military attache Col. Hallier - had broad jurisdiction, were regularly in touch with the 21. Division of the DM and the IX. Section of the IM, as well as, naturally, with the French refugees*20. Col. Hallier visited the camps many times; he had to approve any disciplinary action, and, later, the issuance of workpermits. These were organized by units of the DM ad the IM but the French Legation could also act independently in this domain. The escapes (very few) gave almost exclusively rise to disciplinary actions. An attempt to escape the country or leave the workplace without permission were punishable by 2-3 weeks of strict internment to be spent in the military fortress of Komarom. Freedom of movement of the French refugees was gradually made practically unlimited, they could come and go as they pleased where they lived, and, with permission, they could travel anywhere in the country, except the border regions.

In 1942-1943, to improve the lot of the refugees, the Hungarian authorities urged the French prisoners-of-war to seek outside work. There was no coercion; they were free to decide. Since, from 1942, leaving the country became practically impossible and could only be attempted on well-organized, secure routes, one had to reckon with the presence of these fugitive aliens until the end of the war. The manpower shortage resulting from the war and the skill of some of the French workers made these prisoners-of-war much in demand with potential employers*21.

The DM and the French Legation both felt more secure knowing the French are scattered throughout the country rather than penned up in camps. The French were as glad to go to work; the closeness of and the idleness in the camps at Selyp and Balatonboglar went on their nerves; they were happy to exchange these for a workplace in the capital. At the beginning all the French made use of their mother tongue: they became French teachers. In the various schools, they became language teachers, in the high schools professors of literature, language tutors; they even functioned as private tutors. From the end of 1942, their placement in industry was organized, primarily in factories that were declared war-industry. While the Polish refugees were mostly employed in agriculture, few Frenchmen worked on the land*22. In February 1943, the Ministry of Industry asked for a report on the French workers still left idle at

the camp at Balatonboglar; at that time there were only 18. The potential employers, on the other hand, practically besieged the camp commander for French labourers. It became obvious with the greater number of French prisoners that, by now, their employment required certain regulatory measures. The IX. Division of the IM made it clear that their wages, insurance, etc. must be the same as those of the Hungarian workers. They cannot be compelled to work and they were free to choose their workplace. But their employment or transfer to some other employer had to be arranged by the camp commander or the DM's 21. Div. and the French Legation. The French military attache proposed the employers and asked in the name of the prisoners-of-war for transfers to some other workplace. The applications for employees that came directly to the camp commander were forwarded for approval by the Legation to the 21. Div. of the DM, It happened several times that a prisoner took a job without permission which was considered escape but went unpunished in most cases. They simply accepted the prisoner's explanation that he found a job more suited to his qualifications but that his employer refused to let him go*23. The friction that occurred was not with the emloyers who required a well-qualified labour force because of the manpower shortage, but with the military's industrial representatives. These, for political reasons, either opposed the employment of foreign workers or wanted to treat them as prisoners-of-war and subject them to strict controlling measures. This happened at the sugar factory at Selyp when the Hungarian camp commander, the local chief county clerk, first protested the Frenchmen's treatment in the factory. In the end he did not allow them to return there and simply reported the incident to the 21. Div. of the DM. This prompted the DM to take a determined stand in favour of the Frenchmen and to issue a circular letter stating that the refugees are not to be considered prisoners-of-war*24

The last official report, dated January 31, 1944, shows that a total of 680 French refugees worked in state-provided employment: 70, all of the rank and file, in agriculture; 459, of which 90 officers, in industry. and 151 elsewhere. 122 Frenchmen living in the camp at Balatonboglar did not accept employment. Abt. 200 people worked in Hungarian cultural life; many were French teachers*25. Several were employed in the French high school of the Order of Premontre. they taught in the College of Eotvos, lectured at the universities of Kolozsvar, Debrecen, and Szeged, they were private French tutors in aristocratic and middle-class Hungarian families, gave private lessons*26. Throughout the country the number of Alliances Francaises grew by leaps and bounds. Some of the French

refugees were employed by the two French-language cultural and scientfic publications, the Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie and the Revue d'Histoire Comparee. Musicians, waiters, and the specialized bakers and pastry-chefs were particularly popular.

It can, therefore, be stated that all in all the treatment of the French prisoners-of-war and the measures concerning them were extremely humane. For those prisoners who managed to escape from the German POW camps Hungary provided safety and, considering that there was a war on, relatively pleasant living conditions. The administrators of the rules applied them very loosely and they lost even more of their sting in the practical application. This was not at all agaist the wishes of the majority of the political circles but in view of Hungary's relationship with Germany it was best to cover up this activity.

The special treatment accorded the French prisoners can also be explained - aside from foreign policy considerations - by the internal political life of the country. Despite strong German influence, and contrary to other countries vanquished by or allied to Germany, Hungarian political life was not completely destroyed. Opposition parties, even though curtailed, could still function and they often did collaborate with government forces, particularly on the anti-German administrative level. The Hungarian press flourished in spite of censorship. Thus, the opposition forces and parties had the possibility of helping and supporting the cause of the French prisoners-of-war beyond the government and the official organizations.

From October, 1942 on the official center of the French soldiers was the camp at Balatonboglar which - as mentioned earlier - was lodged in the Hotels National and Savoy. At that time was established the French Military Office which took on the role of protecting the rights of the Frenchmen, just as the Representatives of the Polish Military in the Kingdom of Hungary did*27. This organization proposed initiatives and opinions; it forwarded the instructions of the Hungarian military authorities to the camp and the Legation; it summarized the wishes of the French soldiers and submitted them to the Hungarian administrators as well. The French commander of the camp at Balatonbglar was Albert Poupet (1915-1993), career first lieutenant of the French artillery. His official superior as Hungarian camp commander was Jeno Wissnyi-Hoffman, captain in the reserve army*28. The army command of Pecs ordered him to his post, together with some reservists as camp-

guards but their activity was more pro forma than actual. At the camp at Balatonboglar there were quite a few soldiers of Jewish origin but the Hungarian authorities did not separate them*29. With the Polish refugees, in the autumn of 1939, the Hungarian authorities took no notice of a fugitives religion and registered everyone as Christian unless a particular one insisted on the truth. In August 1941, upon persistent German demands, the Hungarian authorities established Jewish camps at Vamosmikola, Kadarkut and Kalocsa for those who stuck to their Jewishness; some 180 went to Vamosmikola. The same rule was applied to the Frenchmen: only those who wanted to, were registered as Jews. The DM and the IM saw to it that the stipulations of the Geneva agreement were adhered to faithfully; therefore these camps had no repressive character even though the first commander caused some difficulties (prohibited listening to the radio, restricted the possibilities of accepting work and leaving camp, etc.). He was soon relieved of his post. In August 1942, six professed Jewish soldiers were transferred to Vamosmikola to which Col. Hallier objected but the DM upheld its order. The 21. Div. of the DM suggested that Col. Hallier turn to the Foreign Ministry as the only entity capable of changing the DM's standpoint. The legal experts at the Foreign Ministry stated that "according to French law the separation of the Jewish soldiers is illegal and unacceptable". The DM accepted this and the six French soldiers were returned to the camp at Balatonboglar in September 1943*30.

As a result of Hungary's German occupation the situation of the French prisoners-of-war changed radically. Until March 1944, the French refugees could feel safe. Althoough they could not leave the country and were officially under surveillance, the population as a whole regarded them in a friendly, rather than hostile, manner. Some pro-German elements looked askance at their presence; this attitude was counterbalanced by the administration's good will and humane treatment. All this changed after March 19, 1944. The occupying German forces were determined to deport to Germany every refugee that came from an enemy country or from one occupied by Germany. After the rapid invasion of Budapest, they went directly to the KEOKH where they confiscated all the records pertaining to aliens. The DM did state that all measures concerning the refugees will remain in effect, yet it was difficult to see how that could be done under the circumstances*31. All institutions caring for the refugees (the DM and IM, the Office of Refugee Care, the volunteer organizations, etc.), as well as the French Legation, did what they could to prevent the Frenchmen's falling into German

hands. Many owe their lives to the warning telephone calls that went out at the dawn of the occupation from the Office of the Prime Minister, the DM and the IM. Many could go into hiding or destroy incriminating documents. There were, however, some contradictory develoments: the warnings called on the Frenchmen to flee while the camp commanders gave instructions for them to stay in place and reinforced the guards. Where no arrests were made the refugees immediately fled, such as Balatonboglar. Whereas in Szigetvar and Siklos, where the French and British refugees stayed, the Germans deported them without delay. At Balatonboglar, First Lt. Albert Poupet, in opposition to Maj. Wissnyi-Hoffman's orders to stay, instantly ordered the refugees to flee so that, by the time the Germans arrived, there was not a Frenchman to be found in the National or Savoy Hotels. Within a few days most of the camp residents returned as they learned of an "agreement" between Col. Lorand Utassy, Head of the DM's 21. Div., and the German authorities whereby these will not demand the prisoners' extradition against stricter control of the camps*32. Nevertheless, some of the refugees tried to leave the country or stayed in hiding with the Hungarian population and thus tried to survive the coming year.

Col. Lorand Utassy urged the Frenchmen to accept jobs and continuously conferred with Col. Hallier in this respect. The French Military Office, the Legation's personnel, and Maj. Wissnyi-Hoffman kept informing the low-lying refugees of employment possibilities, asked them to return to camp, and assured them of the protection of their rights*33. Of greater importance was the organizing the protection of the rights of the French refugees. On March 27, 1944, upon Lorand Utassy's request, Col. Hallier created the Officers' Supervisory Group the purpose of which was "the systematic supervision of the Frenchmen asssigned to work". In addition to maintaining discipline, this group was also meant to re-register the French and to report immediately any excess of zeal of the German police. Despite the German higher authorities' promise to maintain and respect the rights of the refugees, there often came reports from one or another workplace of the arrest of a French worker*34.

This four-member Supervisory Group of Ft.Lieutenant Michel de la Ronciere, Ft. Ltnt. Rene Marouze, Ensign-Chaplain Jean Lapeyre, and medical-ft. lnt.Henri Lanusse, at first dealt only with the security of the French and with organizing their self-defense. From the end of April 1944, their travels and visits to workplaces were more and more characterized by attempts at mounting a

resistance. In May they tried to find secret passages in Yugoslavia; in July-August they prepare, later participate in, the Slovakian revolt*35.

The officials of Hungarian refugee care, as well as the French Legation, did everything possible to avert the Frenchmen's falling into German hands. They warned everyone to use extreme caution, to shun publicity and appearing in groups.*36 The Germans insisted on transferring the camp at Balatonboglar, the introduction of strict supervision and the obligatory forced-labour. The news of the transfer of the camp at Boglar resulted in even more escapes; also the appearance of German authorities looking for foreign refugees to arrest brought on a rash of escapes from the workplaces. Many Frenchmen were captured at their workplaces or at their homes. In these tragic days, the Officers' Supervisory Group and Col. Hallier systematically visited the workplaes where Frenchmen were employed and reported every disappearance daily to Col. Utassy and the DM. Since Budapest was the most dangerous place, they tried to send the Frenchmen to the provinces. The number of arrested came to about a 100 but those who were kept by Hungarians were released. All intervention proved futile for those in German hands*37.

The capture of the Frenchmen was often accidental. The French teachers functioning in private families or in schools were protected and hidden by their families or schools. On the other hand, the two French teachers at the Eotvos College, the two Jesuit seminarians studying at Szeged, and the lecturer at the University of Szeged were all arrested in a random raid. These spontaneous raids, often initiated by informers, did not stop even in June. They took the Frenchmen mainly from places where a larger group worked together: the Hotels Hungaria and Gellert, the Dreher-Haggenmacher Beer Factory, or at the time of their obligatory reporting at the KEOKH*38. Multiple arrests were made in June in Siofok at the gardening center of Jozsef Flement who was of French origin himself. The reason: the French "loudly celebrated" the June 6, 1944 invasion of Normandy in a restaurant*39. As a counter-balance serves the example of the gardens at the baths of Balatonfured where about 30 Frenchmen worked and - thanks to the people of the town - none was arrested. Together with the constabulary, they had organized a warning system: the Frenchmen were instantly hidden at the least suspicious news*40.

The captives were usually taken to the "Gestapo prison" in the

Fo-utca but many also passed through the interrogation rooms of the Gestapo headquarters in the Melinda utca. From time to time they gave a group of them to the Wehrmacht for transport to Germany. There is no reliable information on whether they were taken to prisoner-of-war or to concentration camps. Several groups escaped from the trains bound for the Reich and made their adventurous way back to Budapest where they reported to Col. Hallier. The French Legation gave them new identity papers on the spot; many had to be immediately sent to a hospital*41.

On the basis of the reports of the Officers' Supervisory Group or of the employer, the French military attache gave detailed information on the Frenchmen that disappeared and demanded a search for their whereabouts, as well as their liberation. The results - as mentioned - were varied: the Germans refused to return anyone and Col. Utassy only "got back" a Frenchman from the Hungarian police or constabulary if the commander was anti-German.

It was Col. Utassy's experience that the agreements he made with the higher German command were systematically broken by the lower echelons. On June 5 1944 he held talks with SS-Col. Geschke who promised to make arrests only with cause and to let the 21. Div. of the DM know about them*42. They added to the agreement that exceptions will be made in the case of "vagabonds"; this is, of course, a very flexible term on the basis of which the arrests continued without informing the DM. In protest, Col. Utassy sent his assistant to see Geschke who was not available; his assistant promised "to let the DM know of any arrests." At that time, interdepartmental discussions took place about transferring the Polish civilian refugees also under the care of the DM which the Germans - in view of their disadvantage in the international and military situation - were obliged to accept. The International Red Cross supervised this arrangement*43.

Among the French, though, military organization took on new meaning, the purpose of which was escape through Croatian territory. During the first three months of the occupation there were 12-14 attempts at escaping. Some, who until now were opposed to such daring undertakings, took part in them. One of the organizers, Officer-Candidate Jean-Gabriel Rocquemont de Villory, tried - with the help of the Polish courier-service - to make contact with the Croatian partisans. Some French officers, though, found this plan foolhardy. In the end, he undertook the journey by himself; he successfully reached the Yugoslav partisans, then Italy. and finally Algier*44.

As a result of the German occupation, the Arrow-Cross Party came to power on October 15, 1944. After that, nothing could be done for the French prisoners-of-war. They shared the fate of the persecuted Hungarians: they depended on the courage and sacrifice of their acquaintances, colleagues, employers or landlords. Some of them participated in the Hunarian resistance; about 200, under Ft. Lt. de Lannurien, joined the Slovakian partisans. In the autumn of 1944 the underground de Gaulle Committee was formed which was also in contact with the Hungarian resistance*45.

The Arrow-Cross units and the Germans kept arresting groups of Frenchmen; they practically organized manhunts for their capture. Col. Hallier, Maj. Retournat and the air attache were to be interned in the Hotel Palatinus but Staff Col. Ervin Literary, who handled the military attaches, warned them ahead of time prompting them to go into hiding and joining the de Gaulle Committee. On November 1, 1944 every Frenchman received the order to go into the fortress at Komarom so "that they should not fall into Russian hands". The Frenchmen, of course, had no intention of falling into the trap; they all laid low wherever they could. On December 7, 1944 the Germans occupied the French Legation and confiscated all documents, including those that concerned the refugees. On the same day, by radio broadcasts and letters sent to the available addresses, they instructed the French to move into the camp at Zugliget. According to the official report "most of the appeals were returned with the mention that the addressee is unknown. Therefore the job applications were under false names. Of the 90-100 refugees in Budapest whose letters were delivered, not one moved to the camp". A significant group of Frenchmen of Budapest were hidden by Paul Girard, a manufacturer of textiles who had lived there for a while, and in the atelier of engineer Laszlo Petras 24 Frenchmen were in hiding. Their situation was indeed very difficult in the besieged and encircled Budapest; several were arrested but most survived the fighting. As per the information of the French Repatriation Office, in April 1945 400 Frenchmen left Tura by train bound for Odessa and, from there, by plane to return to France*46.

N O T E S

(1) National Archives K.63. 1940/11 t. 93 cs.
(2) Archives of Military History, DM pres. XXI. 3558 cs. 53167/1940
(3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid. 3558 cs. 115214/1940
(6) National Archives K.63. 11/7 6478/1942
(7) Ibid.
(8) Archives of Military History DM pres. XXI.cs. 113456/1942
(9) Boros, Zsuzsa: Nemet Fogsagbol Menekult Francia Hadifoglyok Magyarorszagon a masodk Vilaghaboru alatt, Torteneti Szemle, 1973, #3, pp. 429-436
(10) Ego Sum Gallicus Captivus. Recollections of French prisoners-of-war that fled to Hungary. Ed: Bajomi, Lazar Endre. Budapest, 1980
(11) Lagzi, Istvan: Militaires Francais Refugies en Hongrie 1942-1945, Acta Hist. Acad. Scuent. Hung., Budapest, 1980 #3
(12) Godefroy, Pierre: Comme la Feuille au Vent. Un Normand dans le Pays des Tziganes, Paris, 1947
(13) National Archives K.63. 11/7 6478/1941
(14) Archives of Military History DM pres. XXI.-1942 rend.
(15) Ibid. 11345/1942
(16) National Archives K.63 11/7-1943
(17) Ibid. IX, 4023 cs. doc. #34567
(18) Archives of Military History DM pres. 78.321/1943 rend.
(19) Ibid. doc. #1145/1943
(20) Ibid. doc. #34567/1943
(21) Op. Cit. (10), p. 35
(22) 1.- Ibid. (10), p. 69; 2.- Lagzi, Istvan: Op.Cit. (11)
(23) Archives of Military History DM pres. XXI.6823 cs. 364/1944
(24) Ibid.
(25) Ibid.
(26) Op. Cit. (10)
(27) Archives of Military History, DM. pres. XXI.3559 cs. 987/1942
(28) Ibid.
(29) In 1943 the Jewish French soldiers were first separated and placed in the camp at Vamosmikola, together with Polish Jews. Despite protests from the French Legation, their situation was worse than that of the others. They were not allowed to take jobs, their rights to free movement and to listen to the radio were rescinded. Cl. Hallier was told that they had "communist sympathies". The problem was solved by moving them first to Selyp, then - provided with Christian papers - to Balatonboglar. In one of the German protests, dated November 11, 1943, it was said that Balatonboglar is one of the concentration camps of the escaped French Jews.
(30) See note (29)
(31) Archives of Military History, DM.pres. XXI. doc. #6826/1044
(32) Ibid. docs. #6826 and 493289/1944
(33) Op.Cit. (10)
(34) 1.- Hallier, Jean-Edern: La Cause des Peuples, Paris, 1972; 2.- Bililian, Daniel:

Les Evades, Paris, 1979; 3.- Pfleger, F.A.: Un Rescape de Hongrie Temoigne, Paris, 1970; 4.- Lemaire, Paul: Le Pont de la Liberte, Melun, 1980

(35) Hallier, J.-E.: Op. Cit. (34/1)

(36), Boros, Zsuzsa: Op.Cit. (9)

(37) Op. Cit. (10)

(38) Ibid.

(39) Ibid.

(40) Ibid.

(41) Hallier, J.-E.: Op. Cit. (34/1)

(42) Archives of Military History DM, memoirs of Col. L. Utassy

(43) Ibid.

(44) Op.Cit. (10)

(45) On August 5, 1940, Noel Caval was named as deputy military attache at the French Legation in Budapest. Before that, he served as intelligence officer in the French army. In 1942,m with a home-made radio receiver/transmitter, he established contact with the Beyrut center of the Free French Forces, with General de Gaulle's intelligence office. He expanded his activities in 1943. In the summer of 1944, he received the assignment from Rene Massigli, foreign commissioner of the temporary free French government, to choose one reliable person among the French colony in Hungary who would head a committee of protection of the refugees' rights after the departure of the German troops. Textile manufacturer Paul Giraud accepted to head such a committee whose members were: Pierre Bertin; Francois Gachot; Pierre Moortgat; W. Scheibli; Lt. Leon Wahl; Anne-Marie Durand, secretary of the Legation; Georges Deschusses, cultural attache; Henri Adler, consul. In October 1944 Col. Hallier, military attache, also joined the committee. In March, 1945 the de Gaulle-Committee first functioned in the National Museum, then at Benczur utca 15.. The Committee closed down in April, 1945 having represented French interests until then.

(46) Op. Cit (10)

BRITISH PRISONERS-OF-WAR IN HUNGARY

The first two British prisoners-of-war - following the French example - fled the German prisoners-of-war camp to Hungary at the end of September 1941. Although diplomatic relations between Great-Britain and Hungary were severed on April 7, 1941, the two nations were not yet at war. Therefore, the two British prisoner-of-war refugees were placed, like to French, under "military internment", supervised by the 21. Div. of the DM, with their rights being protected, as for all other British subjects, by the Swiss Legation*1. The two British refugees were settled in the Ingamdi-wing of the Fortress at Komarom. In December two additional British soldiers escaped to Hungary and joined the first two. They received full room and board and supplemental wages. Their situation changed, though, when Hungary entered the war, first with Great Britain on December 6, and then with the United States on December 13, 1941. A legal battle ensued: the representative of the General Staff was for simply returning them to Germany; the DM deferred the question to the Foreign Ministry which refused the extradition*2. It based its decision on Law XXX of 1936 which prohibits extradition. The military argued that the British wanted to escape several times; on January 3, 1942 two British soldiers joined the French in an attempt at escape but were caught. It is apparent from the minutes that were taken then that they found their treatment satisfactory; they were "simply too bored" and that was why they joined the French in breaking out*3. They said they wanted to go to Turkey, from there to Iran to join up with the British forces. The Swiss minister representing British interest, stated that the four British soldiers' accomodations were good, and that their treatment fully satisfied the requirements of all international agreements*4. In September 1942 the ill-advised decision was taken to transfer the four British soldiers from the Igmandi fortress to the much worse Monostori fortress which they complained about at the Swiss Legation*5. A representative of the Swiss Legation examined the new quarters and lodged two protests about the resettlement of the by now six British soldiers. He disapproved of the new place and stated that the two new prisoners were not really escaped prisoners-of-war but simply two British civilians who fled the German Reich

and whom the 2. Division of the General Staff qualified as prisoners-of-war. The captives then turned to the 21. Div. of the DM saying that they rather be extradited back to Germany. The Foreign Ministry reiterated its original stand: extradition of the six British citizens is not desirable. The DM - as opposed to the General Staff - sided with the Foreign Ministry and solved the problem by transferring, on December 9, 1942, all six British prisoners-of-war to the fortress at Siklos where a Polish camp was established. The IM took over the care for the British civilians and gave instructions to send all future British citizens here. Although the decision of the 21. Div. of the DM was good at the time, it proved to be the starting point of later arguments*6.

The British kept escaping, mostly from Siklos whence - although it was considered a penal camp - it was easier to flee, particularly with the assistance of the Poles. At the same time, the number of British civilians increased: these were lodged in private homes, not closed camps, under the supervision of the local constabulary or mayoral office. It is difficult to determine their number as with increased arrivals successful escapes increased also; on the average, they numbered about 35*7.

In the transfer from Komarom to Siklos, Dr. Sandor Szent-Ivanyi, Unitarian pastor, had a role to play. The Swisss Legation in Budapest assigned him to the spiritual care of the British prisoners; at the same time he was made adviser in legal questions or those of protection of their rights. He was not to blame if the transfer to Siklos did not turn out to be so good. The 21. Div. of the DM thought that anyway the British wanted to escape; the Poles had well-established routes, thus it made it easier for the British to flee. The conflicts did not arise with the Poles but with the Hungarian camp commander who - since Siklos was a penal camp - wanted to discipline and supervise them constantly. The complaints finally reached the Military Office of the Regent and the Supreme Military Council where they agreed with them, even though the camp commander was not yet dismissed. The British soldiers escaped continuously; the minutes of the testimony of those caught fleeing were also submitted to the Military Office. They were unanimous in saying that they wanted to flee via Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Turkey to Egypt to join the British forces there. It is interesting to note that all of them stated that "it was a question of days before Italy and then Hungary will be occupied"*8.

In June 1943 Brig. General Lajos Csatay (1886-1944) was named Defense Minister; at that time he was not yet privy to the

British-Hungarian discussions held at Istanbul. On July 13, 1943 he decided to transfer the British soldiers for "agricultural work" to the estate of count Mihaly Andrassy at Szigetvar*9 even though they were kept on the roster of the camp at Siklos. Thus he put them on equal footing with the French refugees. The information furnished by Dr. Sandor Szent-Ivanyi and his actions to help the British played a crucial role in his decision. News of the Allied landing in Sicily (July 10, 1943) and the fall of Mussolini (July 25, 1943) so fired up the British soldiers that in those days ten successfully escaped. Part of the fugitives arrived in Croatia; some were caught by the Ustasi and sent back to Germany*10. In the pocket of one of them they found Dr. Sandor Szent-Ivanyi's address and telephone number which prompted the Germans to protest. In the minutes, the captives testified that they fled "in order to help the British and American forces that landed in Italy.... They also stated that the Crotian partisans are led by British officers who, presumably, escaped there from Hungary."*11

The British prisoners-of-war were moved on August 11, 1943 to Szigetvar; local recollections put their number at 60. Their being assigned to "agricultural work" was only a formality and justifying excuse; since most of the group were officers, they never did any agricultural work. They spent their time swimming, riding and playing soccer. The number of those transferred seems exaggerated: in July 1943 21 soldiers escaped from Siklos, 2 were moved to the IM's civilian roster; thus according to the records 14 men were sent to Szigetvar. Yet at the first application for assistance in September 1943, they asked for allotments for 50 people*12.

Csatay in August 1943 wanted to make an effective end to the arguments swirling around the British prisoners. He rejected the statement that the assistance they received from the 21. Division abetted significantly the prisoners' escapes. But he was aware of the fact that the tensions in Siklos could only draw the attention of the Germans and the ensuing pressure would be detrimental to the prisoners. He wisely chose to transfer them to Szigetvar where they would disappear from the prying eyes, could live peacefully, and prepare their evacuation. In the opinion of the minister's aide-de-camp, Col. Kalman Keri, if in the future a prisoner-of-war escapes, the army command is not to be blamed; no special report is to be made of it. "If he escapes, no matter, let him escape."*13

For the time being, the escapes of the British prisoners-of-war came to a halt. There is no record that shows their number. In

January, 1944 the prisoners and internees were issued footwear; 35 put in a request for them, yet in February 50 of them were on record*14. The reason for the temporary halt in the escapes was not only the satisfactory treatment they received but also the reinforcing of the southern border. The composition of the prisoners-of-war changed as well: leading personalities arrived, where qualification was represented by rank. Heretofore, they were mainly foot-soldiers or non-commissioned officers; the few of officer rank quickly evacuated toward Turkey. The first refugees were outspoken, often threatening; the newly arrived ones adopted the attitude of the anti-Nazi Hungarian elements. The new ones sought to take up with the Hungarian resistance movement; they quickly recognized any hostility towards the Nazis in the Hungarian officers they came in contact with. They managed to persuade their comrades that, instead of undertaking the uncertainty of escape, they could serve the Allied cause better by staying.

In September 1942 two new British prisoners-of-war escaped from the camp at Lansdorf in Silesia to Hungary: Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Telfer-Howie (1905-1993), artillery officer from South-Africa, and Sergeant-Major Tom Sanders from Palestine. Howie was already 38 years old while most of the British at Szigetvar were 26-28; he was captured by the Germans at Tobruk in 1942. He owes the success of his escape primarily to the daring of Tom Sanders who was born in Tel-Aviv in 1920, an upholssterer who was registered as a sergeant-major. In reality, he was Tibor Weinstein, merchant from Budapest, who emigrated to Palestine in 1932. In Budapest, he searched first of all for his relatives while Howie refused to be registered as he planned to escape to the Allies*15. Through Weinstein he met Zoltan Balo and Dr. Sandor Szent-Ivanyi who talked him into registering officially which he did on October 4, 1943. He was put into the camp at Zugliget as Dr. Richard Fiala, the Swiss Legation's Hungarian doctor, certified him to be in constant need of medical supervision. On this basis, he received permission from Zoltan Balo to live outside of camp; he moved into the Unitarian Church's hostel at Kohary utca 2 as guest of Dr. Szent-Ivanyi*16.

In the absence of relevant documents, it is impossible to determine the exact purpose of Howie's mission. At the hostel at Kohary utca 2, Howie came into close contact with some high-ranking Polish officers who had a secret radio transmitter/receiver; he also met several times Chief of General Staff Ferenc Szombathelyi; ex-Prime Minister Istvan Bethlen; Regent Miklos

Horthy; dr. Ferenc Duruggy of the Foreign Ministry; the representatives of the Corps of Neutral Diplomats of Budapest; and numerous leaders of the Hungarian Independence Movement*[17]. Col. Lorant Utassy (of HM 21), who succeeded Zoltan Balo, put him in charge of all British P.O.W's in Hungary and made him aware of the existence of the International Police Force.*[18]

His secret negotiations, as well as his assigned residency in Budapest, prevented him from organizing the life of the British prisoners-of-war. Help arrived in Hungary in October 1942 in the person of Major Roy Spencer Natusch of New Zealand. After a short stay in Komarom, he arrived at Szigetvar on November 2 and was named commander of the British camp. In reality he was only a corporal in the British army and not a major; three of his companions talked him into registering as a major with the Hungarian authorities. In civilian life he was an engineer. According to documents kept in the archives, Natusch was certified as a major by Howie. As a camp commander, he was popular with his men, he was demanding and decisive and imbued with patriotic spirit*[19]. Major Natusch was immediately made privy to Lt.-Col. Howie's plans: expecting the arrival of Allied paratroopers, he assigned Natusch to organizing their reception and to persuading the British soldiers to stay in place and not to escape. They should keep the interests of the Allied in mind and decide on escaping only once the British paratroop mission has landed. Anyway he found escapes into Tito's partisans' territory dangerous.

Lt.-Col. Howie was aware of the secret British-Hungarian negotiations and of the September 9, 1944 agreement although through some error of interpretation the British living in Hungary had different ideas about the preliminary truce agreement, as did the pro-British elements in the Hungarian government. Dezso Ujvary, the Hungarian Consul General in Istanbul, kept Pastor Sandor Szent-Ivanyi informed in broad outlines of the negotiations there. In his memoirs written thirty years later, Szent-Ivanyi confesses that he still does not know the exact purpose of Howie's presence in Hungary. The British negotiator asked decisive action from Hungary's government against the Germans whereas the Hungarian government expected the initiative to come from Britain. Because of the occupying German forces it was not willing to undertake "the obstructions, the delaying actions and minor acts of sabotage."*[20] In December 1943, Consul Ujvari proposed to treat as civilians "the units that might arrive in Hungary from Germany or German-occupied territories as these enjoyed greater freedom of movement in Budapest." On December 28, 1943 British Foreign Minister Eden

opposed and in the end forbade the parachuting of units into Hungary. Neither Howie nor the opposition parties and anti-German elements knew anything about it. The pause in the Allied bombardments also created the illusion and raised hopes of Hungary's quick occupation by Allied troops. Howie himself never pretended having received a secret assignment from the Allies. The British publication describing the activities of the escaped prisoners-of-war and the surviving crew of forced landings, as well as the formation of M.9 secret service, deals briefly with matters concerning Hungary. But it does think it neceessary to debunk the legends circulating in Hungary about Howie and his companions*[21].

"In the archival documents we found nothing that would confirm or deny the suspicions of the Hungarians, namely that Weinstein and Howie had been secret agents... It is but idle supposition that Howie was anything else than what he said of himself: escaped prisoner-of-war. He was received with great respect when he arrived in Budapest in mid-September" - so says the above book.

Aside from the raised hopes and certain misunderstandings, Howie and his companions believed in the expected coming events, and prepared for any eventuality like true disciplined soldiers. Howie, Natusch, and the astute Weinstein-Sanders have done their job well; together with their host, count Mihaly Andrassy, they got ready to receive the British mission. The tension grew perceptively; unconfirmed rumours arrived from across the border about German troop movements. That is why the more cautious of them abandoned the thought of escaping through Croatia. There were locals who were ready to smuggle goups of 30 or so across the Drava and into the Papuk-Mountains where the Yugoslav partisans were operating; they were told that British officers were there too. The distances were considerable: from Szigetvar the border was 25 relatively safe km. away but from the Drava to the Papuk-Mountains were 50 km. covered by German strongholds and fortified border guards. They would only risk these as a last resort.

In the autumn of 1943 life seemed peaceful at the camp at Szigetvar. It was visited regularly by the Swiss Legation and the International Red Cross. Howie continued to live in the Unitarian Hostel in the Kohary utca but he had some disagreements about the pay he was supposed to receive. He really did not get the stipend stipulated by the Geneva Agreement but that was settled in March 1944.

On March 19, 1944 - the day of Hungary's German occupation - German bombers appeared over Szigetvar. Not much later the SS units headed straight for the Andrassy-estate to re-capture the British there. In their misfortune the British were lucky not to have tried to escape across the Drava; there the Ustasi and the SS-units "highly experienced" in man-hunts laid in wait for the British escapees from Szigetvar. They tried to scatter when the German forces appeared but they never made it: they were all recaptured. Only Col. Natush, Weinstein-Sanders, Lt. Tim Gordon and an unnamed soldier managed to flee. Natusch and Weinstein went to Howie at Szent-Ivanyi's apartment in Budapest*22.

From among the prisoners-of-war in Hungary, on March 19 the German forces only deported the British that were transferred from Siklos to Szigetvar and the twenty Polish officers they found in Siklos. Forceful behaviour was only noted in Budapest, among the Polish and French refugees. But the case of the British of Szigetvar is unique. The fate of the Szigetvar contingent was presumably related to their preparations for the reception of the paratroopers. German counter-intelligence was fully aware of the secret negotiations between the Kallay-government and the Anglo-Saxons. This was made clear during the rather unfriendly discussions in Klessheim on April 16-17, 1943 between Hitler and Horthy when they confronted Horthy with their proofs of these secret negotiations. Equally well-informed was German intelligence of the subsequent discussions of the Kallay-government and the feelers it put out. The only exceptions were the September 9 declaration of surrender and Laszlo Veress's last action of February/March 1944*23. The German Foreign Ministry received its own report on Szigetvar. SS-Col. Edmund Veesenmayer writes on December 10, 1943: "It is amazing how well the Jewish news service works. Within 24 hurs they know everything, including the most intimate events of the Reich. Clearly there are excellent radio transmitters operating in Hungary. And to the detriment of official espionage, there is the case that I discovered accidentally. Near the Hungarian village of Szigetvar, on the estate of count Mihaly Andrassy (who has Jewish relatives) live - clearly with the knowledge of the highest Hungarian authorities - some 16 British officers, escapees from the Reich, who displayed marked activity." In his December 19, 1943 report, Hans Frank, chief governor of Poland, also "remembers" the organizing action in Hungary. In this report he also assumes the existence in Hungary of a secret Polish army of 10.000 which awaits the Allied landing in the Balkans*24.

Lt.-Col. Howie is specifically mentioned in Miklos Kallay's

Memoirs: "Col. Howie worked out the plans for the Allied occupation of Hungary by paratroop units which, in conjunction with the Hungarian army and popular revolt, would attack the German forces. We put a radio transmitter with a secret code at Howie's disposal for him to coordinate his plans with those of the Mediterranean command of the Allies. The transmitter was first placed in the apartment of Szent-Ivanyi, then in the apartment of Ferenc Duruggy, Ministerial Counsellor, finally in the offices of the Regent"*25.

The hope for Hungary's occupation by Allied parachute troops is made manifest not only in memoirs, published documents on the events of the times, but also by political correspondence of the period. In his letter dated February 22, 1944 to Bela Wodianer, Hungarian Minister in Lisbon, ex-prime minister Istvan Bethlen mentions a British landing in Transdanubia as the only possibility to avoid the war that would destroy the country and its economy*26.

Lt.-Col. Howie's fate took an exciting turn: on the morning the German troops overran the country, Pastor Szent-Ivanyi called on Col Utassy, head of the DM's 21. Div. at his office at Szent Istvan Korut No. 5, informing him of Howie's disappearance from the Hostel at the Kohary utca and that since then he has no news of his whereabouts. Bela Gido, ministerial secretary assigned to the prime minister's office, alerted them in the early morning hours of March 19. They immediately dismantled the radio transmitter/receiver and took it to the apartment at Lovas ut 19 of Ferenc Duruggy, ministerial counsellor. The situation being fairly chaotic and for Szent-Ivanyi's protection, Col. Utassy asked him to submit a written report of Howie's departure. On this report, they added: "arrest warrant was issued". Of course, no such order was issued, nor were the camp authorities who were supposed to "re-capture escaped refugees" informed*27.

The following day, Col. Utassy telephoned the commander of every army corps instructing them to make sure all the Polish, French, British or other nationals have their rights protected. He closed off all the camps and stated that the Hungarian army could only protect the internees and prisoners-of-war if this order is strictly obeyed. At this time, Col. Utassy had no assurance that the Germans will not disarm the Hungarian soldiers; that remained to be seen until March 28, 1944. It was to be hoped that he could protect the interned foreign soldiers but his self-assurance was impressive and comforting to them. His seelf-confidence rested on the fact that

he knew personally some of the Wehrmacht officers assigned to Hungary and counted on their help*28.To his luck, one of these was Lt.-Gen. Hans Greiffenberg (1893-1951), the German military attache, who was named - to counterbalance the SS and police units - the commanding general of the Wehrmacht in Hungary. Col. Utassy personally called on Lt.-Gen. Greiffenberg and asked for his help in protecting the internees, the prisoners-of-war, and the captives of the SS. Accepting Utassy's arguments, Greiffenberg, in the presence of Prime Minister Sztojay, convinced SS-Col. Geschke that it was not in the best interests of the Reich to complicate the situation by deporting the military internees and prisoners-of-war then in Hungary. Unfortunately, the respect for the Geneva Convention shown by the higher echelons was not mirrored in the despotic and scheming behaviour of the lower ones: the DM could no longer help those that were arrested the first day of the occcupation, or alter the fact of the deportations of the camps at Szigetvar and Siklos, or the capture of a group of Italians but it did try to protect the rights of those remaining in Hungary. However, the police and security units' behaviour continued to be unpredictable and inconsistent in arresting people at random. But they did not attack the closed camps and only caught those that strayed outside. However, from April they sought - or made up - any excuse to enter them.

Utassy's decisive behaviour kept the camps calm; even the faint hope arose that the captured British, French, and Italian prisoners would be released. That, unfortunately, remained just hope. SS-Col. Geschke "kept his word": he did not deport the interned soldiers to the Reich just kept them under guard in the buildings they had commandeered. But from April 1944 on he systematically deported them, including the 50 or so British soldiers some of whom were lent out under strict guard to pro-German owners of estates in the Counties of Somogy and Baranya for agricultural work. However, no British citizens were captured from among those that the IM cared for*29. The IM registered the British citizens as Polish, Transylvanian Hungarian refugees or as those from the Highlands; in 1943-1944 close to 60 people were under its care. However, the vast majority of them escaped; on March 19, 1944 only 11 remained with false papers; these were placed in the provinces.

On March 20, 1944 the Gestapo by mistake looked for Pastor Szent-Ivanyi at the Unitarian Mission's building in the Hogyes Endre utca; by the time they discovered their mistake, Szent-Ivanyi had disappeared for a few days. Utassy confirmed to the Gestapo that Szent-Ivanyi served the British prisoners-of-war's spiritual

needs upon the express request of the Swiss Legation; in addition he reported Lt. Col. Howie's disappearance*30. The Gestapo could not help but admit the facts and desisted from Szent-Ivanyi's arrest. On March 27 Natusch visited Szent-Ivanyi; he was accompanied by Reginald Barat, the Air Force sergeant of many aliases who already spoke some Hungarian. Szent-Ivanyi hid them for the night in his church before finding secure hiding places for them the next day. Natusch laid low with the Dutch refugees; he received an ID from Van Hootgem and lived with that on the Pasareti ut. However, on April 28, 1944 the Hungarian police arrested him with two Dutchmen and handed him over to the Gestapo*31. The interrogating Germans did not question Van Hootgem's "genuineness": he was deported as a Dutchman to Germany. Natusch escaped from the train but was hurt when he jumped off and was taken to a hospital. Here, however, he was registered under his own name and rank of corporal. For this he was taken to a British prison camp after his recovery. He escaped from here too and fled to Yugoslavia;; he survived the war and returned to New Zealand. In 1977 a book entitled The Double Dutchman appeared in London describing his adventurous life and was a huge success*32.

Weinstein-Sanders hid out in Buda under a false name; he too was in touch with the Dutch. When he learned of Natusch's arrest, he planned to flee to Yugoslavia but thought better of it and stayed in Budapest.

Even after the German occupation of Hungary, the British prisoners-of-war, like the French, continued to drift in. Throughout, they escaped from the prisoner-of-war camps in Austria, went through Hungary to Yugoslavia where they hoped to link up with Tito's partisans and through them with the Allies. Their exact number cannot be determined as the IM's documentation for these times is scanty compared to previous years. Even the remaining records contain contradictions. Those of the escaped prisoners-of-war are mixed up with the records of air crews that survived forced landings. There are reports that the Germans seized and deported from the hospitals the wounded airmen after - and sometimes even before - their full recovery. This despite the still valid order of October 1943 from the General Staff that downed airmen could only be interrogated by the Germans in the presence of Hungarian army officers and must be kept under Hungarian guard. There are many reports that the wounded Anglo-Saxon airmen in the hospitals were not only treated with the utmost skill but were often hidden there from the Germans.

NOTES

(1) Archives of Military History, Documents of the DM's 21. Division; 1941; documents of the British prisoners-of-war
(2) Ibid; December 15, 1941; Col. Zoltan Balo's memorandum to the Legal Department of the Foreign Ministry.
(3) Ibid; 1942; report of the commander of the Komarom prisoner-of-war camp to Col. Zoltan Balo with its annnex, the minutes of January 3, 1942.
(4) Ibid; French-language declaration annexed to the above minutes.
(5) Ibid; Col. Zoltan Balo's memorandum of September 5, 1942.
(6) Ibidl 1942; documents of the British military internees.
(7) National Archives; IM. K.150. documents of the IX. social division; 1942; 4234. Lists of names of refugees and cost accounting.
(8) Archives of Military History; documents of the DM's 21. Dvision; 1942; Affairs of the British internees.
(9) Ibid; Affairs of the British internees. Lt.-Gen., Minister, Lajos Csatay's order for the transfer of the British internees, July 13, 1943
(10) Macskassy, Pal: Chapters from the lives of Allied soldiers that escaped to Hungary during WWII; Hungary 1944; chapters from the history of the resistance, Budapest, 1994.
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a. A Wilhelmstrasse es Magyarorszag, Budapest, 1968; p. 761;
b. National Archives: documents of the Foreign Ministry, 1943; res.pol. documents.
(12) Archives of Military History; documents of the 21. Division; Reports and cost accounting.
(13) Ibid; 1943;; affairs of the British interned prisoners-of-war.
(14) Ibid; 1944; Cost accounting for January/February.
(15) Macskassy, Pal: Op.Cit. (10)
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b. Juhasz, Gyula: Magyar-Brit Titkos Targyalasok 1943-ban, Budapest, 1978;
c. Kovacs, Imre: Magyarorszag Megszallasa, Budapest, 1990.
(18) Archives of Military History; documents of the DM's 21. Div.; documents of Col. L. Utassy, 1943.
(19) Macsakassy, Pal: Op.Cit. (10)
(20) Ibid.
(21) Ibid.
(22) Kovago, Jozsef: Op. Cit. (17/1)
(23) Hitler Hatvannyolc Targyalasa, I-II; Budapest, 1983
(24) Kapronczay, Karoly: Akkor nem volt Lengyelorszag, Budapest, 1991
(25) Kallay, Miklos: Magyarorszag Miniszterelnoke Voltam, I-II, Budapest, 1991.
(26) Ibid.
(27) Archives of Military History; documents of the DM;s 21. Div.; 1944; documents of the interned British prisoners-of-war.
(28) Ibid; Memoirs of Lorand Utassy.

(29) Ibid; documents of the DM's 21. Div.; 1944; documents of the interned British prisoners-of-war.
(30) Ibid.
(31) Ibid; 1944; documents of the interned Dutch prisoners-of-war.
(32) Natusch, S. Jones: The Double Dutchman, London 1977

DUTCH MILITARY REFUGEES

On May 10, 1940, in the early morning hours, the German army, crossing the French-German border, attacked Holland and Belgium. This marked the end of "the funny war"; Holland capitulated after four days, Belgium after eighteen, and France after six weeks. In these few weeks, close to three million soldiers put down their arms and started their long march to prisoners-of-war camps. This number was too much even for Germany, although it decreased considerably as the soldiers availed themselves of every opportunity to escape. The German authorities "made clever use" of the prisoners' ethnicity: they let go 20,000 Dutch and Flemish-Belgian prisoners but only promised freedom to the Bretons, French, and Walloons. Already in the camps, the hope for release stirred up hate against one another which was heightened by the German "racial bias": the Dutch, being a Germanic people, were entitled to more concessions to secure their loyalty. To be sure, the Dutch Queen fled to England, as did the government and high command which continued the war; the army of the Dutch Indies and the Dutch navy joined the Allies. The German high command tried to win over the Dutch officers' and non-commissioned officers' corps; therefore, they asked 2,000 officers and 12,000 non-commissioned officers to sign "a declaration of fealty" against their release. The declaration stipullates that [the signatory] will not take up arms against the German Reich and will not endanger its interests by any means. Whoever signed this declaration by July 14, 1940 could go free, those that refused remained in prisoner-of-war camp. By the expiration of the time limit, only 79 people refused to sign. Among these were: the High Command, all the generals, twelve enthusiastic military cadets, some officers whose signature was unacceptable to the German command, and an elderly subaltern, a stoker in the royal navy. While 1.6 million Frenchmen and 80,000 Belgians found themselves in prisoner-of-war camps in Germany, about 70 Dutch shared their fate. These were in Colditz, in Saxony*1.

From mid-1941, Holland developed a strong resistance movement of her own which dwarfed in significance the anti-bolshevik and SS units fighting on the Soviet front alongside

German troops. In retaliation, the Germans made mass arrests on May 15 1942 when they captured close to 10,000 people. Among these were 2,000 former professional and reserve officers who landed, first, in a prisoner-of-war camp in Langwasser, subsequently in August in Stanislau, near the Dniester. In the course of the year, another 5,000 officers were captured and placed in a variety of camps. Mostly those were arrested that had signed the "declaration of fealty" on July 14, 1940*2.

From 1942, "escape fever" spread fast among the prisoners. The failed attempts outnumbered by the hundredthousands the successes which, compared to the number of attempts and the number of prisoners, were negligible. The French put the successsful escapes at 70,000 (out of 1.6 million), the Belgians have registered 770, the Dutch only 35 of which 15 found asylum in Hungary, together with 35 Belgian officers and soldiers. Most of the Frenchmen tried to get home, as we know, through Hungary*3.

Even before the first Dutchman sought asylum in Hungary and in connection with a memorandum from the Germans about our treatment of the French and Belgian prisoners, on January 18, 1943 the Foreign Ministry presented the following oral arguments to the Defense Minister: "... From the standpoint of international law, the situation of the French, Belgian, and Dutch citizens escaped from German camps is as follows: Hungary was neutral in the war between the German Reich and Poland. She was equally neutral in the war of the German Reich against Belgium and Holland. We still maintain diplomatic relations with France. Although diplomatic relations were severed with Belgium and Holland, no state of war exists with these countries as specified in international law. Therefore, the V. Agreement of 1907 of The Hague is applicable to the escaped prisoners-of-war. We undoubtedly overstep the prescribed limits when we intern the French, Bellgian, and Dutch escaped prisoners-of-war under military guard..." For the Defense Minister, Col. Zoltan Balo replied: he took note of the Foreign Ministry's standdpoint, then states that the internment is not meant to be custodial but supervisory for control; and that it comprises permission to work and live outside of camp."*4 At the time of this exchange, there was as yet no Dutch prisoner in Hungary. Only a few days later, on January 31, 1943, two Dutch lieutenants (Gija van Anstel and Paul van Stokum) crossed the Panter Pass from the camp at Stanislau but were returned to the German authorities by the border guards at Turbacil*5. In those days there were four Dutch citizens who had sought refuge in Hungary, coming from Austria,

but these, not being soldiers, were listed as civilians. Anyway, they left with Polish help within a few weeks for Romania, then Turkey. It is difficult to determine why exactly they fled to Hungary but their aim was their return to Holland. The extradition of the other two Dutch officers stemmed from a misunderstanding of a DM order which stated that the escapees must not be returned but interned if caught outside of a 25 km. strip along the borders*6. The military authorities interpreted this order rather rigidly; however, the DM's 21. Division and the IM's IX. Division - with the help of the Foreign Ministry - won the ensuing debate. These two units fought systematically for the rights of the refugees. According to a confidential circular issued by the IM "returning to another country's border authorities the Belgian and British escaped prisoners-of-war taken into custody must by all means be ommitted ."*7 The DM's Movember 8 order reads: "... the ex-prisoners-of-war, either at their capture or subsequently in the future, must be treated humaneley and according to the old Hungarian traditions... the prisoners-of-war that presented themselves to our army or were captured by them at the border, or those that were taken into custody anywhere in the country enjoy all rights to asylum and their extradition is strictly prohibited..."*8

During the war 35 officers and officer-candidates managed to escape of which 19 from Stanislau or rather, when it was emptied, from the trains. Twelve refugees from Stanislau found asylum in Hungary*9. The first Dutch officer registered by the Hungarian authorities was Genrit van der Waals. a 23-year old lieutenant*10. His story is strange and reads like fiction: the Hungarian-born wife of Dutch Col. Van den Bos asked her father, Reformed Church Pastor Istvan Csuros, to help improve the food of the Dutch prisoners-of-war at Stanislau. Pastor Csuros turned to Reformed Bishop Ravasz who, in turn, asked the Red Cross's General Secretary, Gyula Vallay, for assistance. The Red Cross's hospital trains often went to Galicia so Vallay asked them to take the food that was purchased. The commanding sister of the train received permission from the German camp commander to hand over the food, which she did to three high-ranking officers. This gave the push to Van der Waals to escape on August 21, 1943. Together with a comrade, they joined a cleaning brigade of Soviet prisoners, Waals escaped within a short period of time, his companion followed later. He took to the road by himself and reached the Carpathians on August 27, after walking close to 100 km. His companion was caught after three days and returned to camp*11.

Lt. Van der Waals was sent to the Polish camp at Zugliget; however, within a few days Lolla Smit, general manager of the Philips Works, took care of him and gave him employment. He lived in the Raday College where he joined the Hungarian Independence Movement.

The second Dutch officer was the 25-year old Lt. Arnold Puckel who also fled from the camp at Stanislau with the help of the Red Cross. He was well "prepared" for his escape as he received a number of addresses in Hungary who could help him from the above-mentioned Col. Van de Bos who was also incarcerated in this camp. Back in August, together with two Dutch and one Soviet soldier, he started digging a tunnel which was ready by November. Four prisoners escaped: Puckel, with his Hungarian addresses, turned south, the other two Dutchmen went north with Polish addresses, and the Soviet soldier who helped them, joined the partisans. With the help of Polish and Soviet partisans, Puckel reached the Tatar Pass and was taken into custody at Kenyermezo, sent to Budapest, then to Komarom. After a week's investigation in Komarom, he was sent to the camp at Zugliget but on December 22, 1943 received permission to live outside in the city. He was put up by retired colonel Andras Mayer. At the beginning of January, 1944, he enrolled at the Peter Pazmany University but he never gave up hope that, at the proper time, he and Waals will flee to join the Allies*12.

In Jauary 1944, all at once, ten prisoners arrived from the Stanislau camp when it was emptied: Ensigns Sijborn van der Pol and Joseph Johan Singer; then, off the transport train that left January 11th. eight officers in two groups: Lts. Edward van Hootegem, Harm Jan Lieneman, Cornelius Harteveld, and Peter Joahnnes de Ruyter in one group; in the other Lts. Frans Joseph Gerard Brackel, Gerard Bijl de Vroe, Johannes Adolf Baron Bentinck, and Arik Dirk Leendert Kranenburg escaped successfully. They covered 150 km. on foot, with intentional detours. In the course of their travel, on certain sections partisans helped them along. The three groups, which started separately and independent;y from one another, accidentally met mid-way. Before reaching the Carpathians and upon the advice of the partisans, the group split up into twosomes: thus they crossed the Panter Pass and were taken into custody at Kenyermezo. Then they were sent to the French camp at Balatonboglar*13. They did not stay there for long as, with the help of the Dutch colony at Budapest, they were given employment.

The Swedish Legation, undertaking the protection of the rights of the Dutch refugees in Hungary, gave them a daily stipend of 14.50 pengos over and above the refugee aid and their earnings. According to reports, three more Dutch soldiers arrived in Hungary in April 1944. They escaped when the Stanislau camp was vacated and fled to Moldavia, then - after many adventures - to the north of Transylvania. Because of the changed circumstances they did not travel to Budapest but survived the last year of the war in Debrecen*14.

The Dutch refugees were taken in by the Dutch colony of the capital which, though few in numbers, was very influential economically. Although because of his age Col. Hendrik van den Bos (1901-1965) did not himself undertake the arduous escape, he provided the main contact through his father-in-law, Pastor Istvan Csuros (1870-1947) and his son engineer Laszlo Csuros. Hungarian aristocracy took part in the assistance - and, after March 19, 1944, the rescue - of the Dutch refugees. Among these was a Lt. Bentinck whose brother had been a Dutch diplomat in Budapest until the war broke out. He had good relations with Gyula Dessewffy, Gyorgy and Antal Pallavicini, and through them, with the officers involved in the resistance movement. All strata of society was active in the assistance and rescue of the Dutch refugees. They were harboured by sculptors Ferenc Medgyessy and Lajos Petri; by pastors Karoly Dobos and Imre Szabo; and, during the most dangerous months, geologist Tibor Szalai and his wife hid them in the Geological Institute*15.

Col. Lorand Utassy named as official representative of the Dutch soldiers 37-year old First Lt. E. J. Van Hootegem who was their senior officer. He started his mission with great ambition without, however, obtaining his 15 comrades' consent in everything. They agreed to maintain good relations with the French and British prisoners-of-war in Hungary. After March 19, 1944, First Lt. Van Hootegem maintained contact with the carefully hidden Lt.-Col. Howie, and, through Sandor Szent-Ivanyi, with the resistance movement, first of all with those leaning towards the Anglo-Saxons. He was, however, opposed to his comrades' taking part in the Hungarian underground activities of limited import*16.

After the German occupation their situation changed radically. On April 18, 1944, in the course of a random raid, Ens. J.J. Singer and Lt. P.J. Brackel were arrested in the home of the Dutch de Bres and were taken to Germany. Some of the Dutchmen sought the help

of smugglers but only one escapee, the 27-year old Air Force Ens. Van der Pol, made it to Romania in the first days of August; later, after Romania's defection, he travelled to Bucharest whence, wih the help of the American mission, he made it to Italy where he joined the British Royal Air Force for the rest of the war*17.

Others were not so lucky. Lts. Puckel and Waals tried to get to Tito's partisans but failed: they were sent to the French camp at Selyp for a few weeks. Lts. Bentinck and de Vroe were caught on the Hungarian-Romanian border; they, too, were interned in Selyp for three weeks. Finally, on December 9, 1944, Bentinck, together with Air Force Lt. Toporczer escaped in a Heinkel 111 bomber amd flew to southern Italy. For the rest of the war he fought in the British army*18.

The first arrival in Hungary, Lt. Van der Waals's life had a tragic end. In December 1944, the Polish courier service had to take a message to the Balkan base of the Allies; the young Dutch lieutenant took the place of the captured Tibor Weinstein. On December 5, 1944 at Csirib-Puszta, 5 km. from the Lake Velence, he fell into Soviet hands. After several interrogations he was taken to Szabadka, then Temesvar, from there to Bucharest and Moscow. He was taken to the Lubjanka Prison; he died on August 11, 1948 in the prison-hospital of Lofortovskaja*19.

Seven Dutch officers lived through the siege of Budapest and the Russian occupation. Their senior officer, First Lt. Van Hootegem spoke excellent Russian which helped avoid misunderstandings with hostile Rusian troops. Due to his linguistic ability, none of the seven had to share Waals's fate. At the beginning of February, 1945, they - together with the remaining French refugees - received orders to go to Tura whence, on March 13, 1944, they were taken to Moscow, then to Odessa. On April 15, 1945, the Dutch refugees, clad in Russian uniforms, boarded the Nieuw Amsterdam and sailed from Odessa; they reached Glasgow on May 4, 1945.

The British, Dutch, Polish, and French officers during the Peace Negotiations

In August 1944, Col. Lorand Utassy started confidential discussions with Lt.-Col. Howie and First Lt. Van Hootegem. The purpose of these was the formation of units of armed forces composed of Allied soldiers and prisoners-of-war then living in Hungary. Its provisional name would have been International Police and every Allied soldier would have participated in it. According to the news and based on contemporary thinking, the Allies would have declared Budapest an "open city" where this International Police force would have helped the Hungarian army in maintaining order before the arrival of the Allied troops. This was strictly contingency planning as even the highly realistic Col. Utassy did not think it possible for an Allied troop landing to occupy a part of Hungary without a fight. During these discussions, Howie and Van Hootegem both voiced their view that Hungary will most likely be occupied by Soviet troops as - from what they heard - no preparations have been made by the Allies to create a wedge in Transdanubia. Utassy saw clearly that the Hungarian army's forces were insufficient to stop the Soviets at the Carpathians but - as a professional soldier - he felt that one must be prepared for all evantualities. Hungarian soldiers would have been ordered to join this international unit, such as medical Lt.-Col. Gusztav Merenyi (Scholtz) (1895-1950), chief of the air force's health division. Gusztav Merenyi became the People's Army's brigadier-general after 1945; on August 19, 1950 he was executed on the trumped-up charges of being a French spy*[20].

Utassy meant Van Hootegem to become commander of this unit, even though he was younger and of lower rank than Howie but as professional soldier he had more knowledge and more experience than the British reserve officer. Furthermore, he spoke Russian which could prove advantageous during the expected future events. The decisive point was Van Hootegem's good relations with the civilians of the resistance movement. The composition of the general staff of the planned International Police had to be changed in mid-September as the Regent had different plans for Lt.-Col. Howie. At that time Rex Reynolds, British captain, was already in Hungary; he escaped there in the beginning of August 1944 from a German camp

in Austria. By profession he was a reporter of the daily newspaper Reynold News, of which he was also part owner. After Natusch dropped out, Col. Utassy designated Capt. Reynold as the British senior officer*21. At the time a discussion was organized with Sandor Szent-Ivanyi; Miklos Horthy, Jr.; Howie; Karoly Lazar, general of the Guardsmen; Col. Laszlo Kuthy, commander of the 2nd Division of the VKF (General Staff); and Adam Sapieha (Tokaj), Polish major. Sapieha had come to Hungary several times since August 1943 on assignment of the commander of the Home Army. Here he organized the Polish forces to ready them for assistance to the Polish resistance at the right moment. Howie and Sapieha lived then in the Guardsmen's barracks where Karoly Lazar and Col. Lajos Kudar protected them. It was during these discussions that Miklos Horthy Jr. mentioned the highly important mission his father, the Regent, had for Howie. Because of the importance of ths mission, Howie and Sapieha were. for the time being, hidden in Balatonfenyves.

At that time, Gyula Tost (1903-1944), Lt. Col. of the Air Force and aide-de-camp of the Regent, was searching for a reliable pilot to take, at the appropriate time, the message the Regent wanted to send to the Allies. He picked for this task Janos Majoros, reserve lieutenant of the Air Force. In the meantime, the Regent decided that Col.-Gen. Istvan Naday (1888-1954) should fly to Italy and establish relations with the high command of the Allies. Lt.Col. Howie had to prepare for this trip also, so he was brought back to Budapest and hidden in Tost's own apartment in the royal castle. The Regent received Naday and Howie on September 20th and handed them his letters to the Holy See and to Gabor Apor, Hungarian minister to the Vatican*22. Although the voyage did not provide the Regent with the hoped-for reply, it was highly adventurous: the plane flew with German markings, the radio did not work, it landed on a dark airfield near Termoli and it just missed the high-voltage wires under which it flew at landing. The Allied high command informed Naday that Hungary must deal with the Soviet Union in her attempts at peace negotiations*23. Lt.-Col. Howie was sent on vacation; after a few weeks he volunteered to continue his military service.

After Howie's departure, his position with the International Police force was taken by Cpt. Rex Reynolds while Maj. Sapieha's was passed on to Col. Witold Cieslinski, chief of the Representative of Polish Soldiers that functioned alongside the DM's 21. Div. They were joined by Maj. Boris Chukovin who represented the Soviets

living here. Col. Hallier, who organized the French prisoners-of-war, generally attended these discussions. According to reports, not only was the personnel readied but the differentiating insignia, berets, and IDs were also prepared*24.

The highest military leadership was still unaware of this planned organization. On October 4, 1944, Col. Lorand Utassy advised Brig.-Gen. Antal Vattay, chief of the the Regent's Military Office, of its projected existence. On October 6th he received the reply that "the plans for an International Police force are to be carried out; it could act as a brake on the Soviet forces." After this it is impossible to know what steps Col. Utassy took to accelerate the oganizing process. On October 12, 1944, Antal Vattay again summoned Col. Utassy to an audience; he was informed of the peace negotiations and told that he was being sent to Marshal Malinovski to discuss the details. He received precise instructions from the Chief of the General Staff Janos Voros, in the presence of Antal Vattay and Defense Minister Lajos Csatay. However, they did not inform him of the fact that the truce agreement had already been signed; Utassy, therefore, thought he was going to Malinovski to discuss the conditions of the truce accord. During the night of October 13th to 14th at Desk(?) he told Malinovski that at 8 o'clock in the morning on the 16th he would hand over the details of the German and Hungarian troop emplacements. He also asked for further instructions concerning the defection.

In the morning of October 14th, Col. Utassy reported to the Regent, then returned to his apartment to prepare for his next trip. That afternoon, he met with Cpt. Rex Reynolds and Ft.-Lt. Van Hootegem to discuss the mobilization of the International Police force*25. The order to renew the discussion at Desk was rescinded by Miklos Horthy at 10 AM on October 15th. The subsequent events are well known: the Regent's proclamation was broadcast at noon, but by that evening the truce negotiations and with them the possibility of defection collapsed. On October 16th, Ferenc Szalasi and his Arrow-Cross Party had seized power.At six o'clock in the morning of October 16th, 1944 in the antechamber of the prime minister's office, Col. Lorand Utassy was arrested by SS-Capt. Neugebauer. chief of the unit assigned to the dismantling of Hungarian resistance. He was sent to the prison on the Margit Korut, then to the jail at Sopronkohida; he was freed in Bavaria on May 4, 1945. The International Police force could never be deployed; its members were also obliged to flee...

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ESCAPED ITALIAN SOLDIERS

The escaped Italian soldiers - about 4,000 of them - represent the last great group of refugees seeking asylum in Hungary. On July 10, 1943, the Allied troops landed in Sicily and southern Italy. The Fascist High Council mounted a putsch against Mussolini and on July 24th the King had him arrested, In his stead, he named Field-Marshal Pietro Badoglio as head of state; at the beginning of August he banned the National Fascist Party and started peace negotiations with the Allies. These resulted in the truce agreement of September 3rd, and within a month in the declaration of war against Germany*1.

Skorzeny's action freed Mussolini from his prison thought secure and, with Germany's help, he founded the Italian Socialist Republic. As its president and leader of the Republican Fascist Party, he continued the war on Germany's side. There were now two governments in Italy; the army, too, was divided. Badoglio's government and general staff led the war against the Germans and Italian fascists from Rome and Brindisi which were in British hands. The siuation turned critical when the Italian "Balkan" army, which had sworn allegiance to Badoglio, was declared prisoners-of-war and deported to Germany via Hungary. In Hungary, hundreds of these badoglio-ist soldiers jumped off the open wagons and asked for asylum from the Hungarian authorities*2. Their situation was complicated by the fact that in Budapest there were at this time two diplomatic missions - one fascist and one badoglio-ist - with a great deal of tension between them. The royal Italian mission was in close relationship with the Papal nuncio, Angelo Rotta, dean of the diplomatic corps, who played a very significant role in the refugees' protection*3.

The Hungarian leaders of refugee care - and of course the government also - followed with great interest the press- and diplomatic reports of the developing events in Italy. After the capture of the Italian "Balkan" army, they concluded that Italian refugees would also appear in Hungary fairly soon. Once Germany asked for transit passage via Hungary for trains coming from the Balkans, it was assumed that these would carry the Italian prisoners-of-war.

The DM telegraphed the army commands asking them to assign sites suitable for camps, to assess the possibilities, and to report to the DM's 21. Division*4. At the same time, the chief of the 21. Division contacted the IX. Division of the IM, coordinated the possibilities, paying special attention to potential civilian refugees. They counted on about 2,000 fugitives; therefore, the DM asked the army commands to indicate to them the name of the villages willing to take them in, the type of buildings (castle or manor house, barracks, farmyards, etc.), the number of rooms available, separately for the officers and for the soldiers*5. The reports also had to contain information on the possibilities of housing the guards, and establishing an office and a mess-room. Col. Zoltan Balo held coordinating sessions with Commissioner Jozsef Antall about the financial assistance to the Italian refugees he could expect from the resources of refugee care. Technical discussions were also held about the ways the camps functioning under the 21. Division could be changed to civilian camps in case of need. Instructions were immediately given to have registration forms printed in Italian. Because of the open hostility and arguments between the two Italian legations, it was agreed on Septembrer 28, 1943 that the camps will function under the aegis of the IM but with military guard*6.

The first transport of prisoners-of-war crossed Hungary on August 31; several soldiers escaped off it. On September 9, 1943 the camp commander of Komarom reported having 45 Italian soldiers in his guard. The previous day, by letter of September 8, 1943, the commander of the V. army corps informed the relevant authorities at the DM that 12 sick Italian soldiers have been removed from the transiting transport and put into the army hospital. His question: where should he send them after their recovery? And who will foot the bill for their treatment? The first question was left unanswered; for the second: the Interior Ministry*7.

On September 18, 1943, the representatives of the DM, the IM, and the Foreign Ministry held a conference about the Italian military refugees. Here they formulated their uniform standpoint of principle. They agreed that until a final decision has been taken, it would be expedient to disarm the officers and soldiers (the officers keeping their revolvers and the soldiers the bayonets) and that they stay at their assigned lodgings; that it was not necessary to assign a special armed guard to them; that they could exchange their uniforms for civilian clothes, take jobs that the IM would find for them, and that they could move about freely. Depending on the developing situation, they may have to report to and be under the surveillance of

the police. They have to be concentrated on Budapest where the Italian military attache will cover the cost of their room and board.*8

It is true that when this agreement was reached there were altogether about 40-50 Italian refugees in Hungary, plus the 12 in the army hospital in Szeged. The number of transport trains having increased, the soldiers escaping them reached hundreds in numbers. They jumped off the moving trains and left them in droves when halting at stations (in Szeged, Papa, Budapest-Kelenfold, Gyor) where they escaped by mingling with the waiting people. The German train guards could not shoot into the crowd; the population along the routes even covered the escapes. According to a report of early October 1943 from the commander of the III army corps of Szombathely the following numbers were assigned to temporary quarters:

Nagycenk (in the farmyard of Kiscenk):
700 soldiers
300 officers and subalterns

Veszkeny:
1,000 soldiers

Aszofo:
700 soldiers
300 officers

Bakonypoloske:
150 officers
30 soldiers

Somloszollos:
650 soldiers

Buk:
350 soldiers *9

According to regulations, the escaped Italian prisoners-of-war were supposed to be sent first to Komarom to register and for a health check and then to their assigned camp. By September, the number of escapees increased to such an extent that Komarom could no longer handle them so the army commands sent them directly to a temporary camp for their feeding and housing. At that time, the camps at Dak, Ujszasz, Tetetelen and the above mentioned one at

Somloszollos were already being organized. Because of the great number of refugees, the September 18 agreement, according to which the Italian legation would take care of the escapees, "was no longer valid". The Park Hotel in Budapest was declared temporary camp where those Italians who continuously escaped from the Kelenfold station were placed (114 of them) under the unobtrusive guard of one officer and three soldiers. The Italians were free to move about in Budapest; they went to the movies and restaurants in their uniforms, causing quite a sensation*10. From the collection camps, they were sent - accompanied by unarmed guards - to four permanent camps. In his order, Lt.-Col. Pakozdy writes: "...the escort is to be instructed to treat the Italian soldiers well in every respect." The order of the army command of Szombathely is typical of the treatment: "As per Ministerial Counsellor dr. Jozsef Antall's statement, the Italians are considered internees for the sake of the outside world but are to be treated like refugees."*11

From the beginning of October 1943, the German and Fascist Italian legations continuously protested the reception of the Italian refugees and demanded their extradition. Some officers were demanded by name, personally. Among these were two members of the Italian royal family who were hidden in Somloszollos as Transylvanian refugees by Dr. Jozsef Antall. The Germans planned to blackmail the Italian king with their capture*12.

Like the Polish, French, and British military refugees, the Italians also created an organization to protect their rights which was the same as for the other European refugees. Italian military representatives assisted the 21. Division of the DM and the different army commands by transmitting their orders to their comrades and suggested initiatives from them*13.

It is certain, however, that a significant number of escaped soldiers, dressed in civilian clothes, took the risks and returned home. It is difficult to determine their number. But the border guards along the Drava caught many Italians whom they then sent back to one of the Transdanubian camps*14.

The original plans called for camps at Daka and Ujszasz but the increased quantity of refugees made it necessary to establish two more. On September 4, 1943, dr. Jozsef Antall negotiated personally at Daka to have the castle, which stood empty for decades, and the surrounding buildings restored, and to ensure an

adequate water supply, mainly by cleaning out the unused wells. As a result of his local negotiatins, he named Dr. Sandor Szentimrey, chief constable, as commander of the camp and dr. Jozsef Neupor, chief town-clerk, as its manager. The work was not quite ready yet when on September 12, 1943 312 Italian refugees were sent over from Pecs. The army command decided to feed the camp, against compensation*[15].

On September 17th there was a conference at the IM about the camp at Daka where it was decided that it and the one at Ujszasz "will come under the supervision of the IM", whereas the other two will be supervised by the DM. On the other hand, the camp at Somloszollos also came under the supervision and care of the IM on September 29th. On September 18, 1943, the army commander of Szombathely named count Roderich Arz, First Lieutenant of the Reserve, as the commander of the camp at Daka. His activities, "until further instructions, are limited to the care and training of the guards who were mobilized on the 15th of the month."*[16] The guards were all reservists mobilized from Daka and surroundng villages. To cover the costs of the camp, the IM's IX. Division allocated 215,000 pengos.

The first inhabitants of the camp at Daka were not interned soldiers from the Balkans but soldiers on furlough who wanted to return to the front. When they left home the defection had already taken place; yet their orders to return to the front were still in effect. On their way, they presumably learned of the disarming and internment of the Balkan army which prompted them, one may asssume, not to return to their units. They could only ask Hungary for asylum which they did. Most of the soldiers in Budapest and Pecs were "soldiers on furlough". The existing documents speak of them first as "internees" then later the appellation of "refugee" was used. From its beginning, the camp at Daka figured as a "refugee camp"; its affairs were handled by the IM, as dr. Jozsef Antall informed the army commander of Szombathely. In mid-September 1943 310 (312, see above) Italians were sent here from Pecs followed in those days by 246 more. From Komarom, too, Italians were continuously shipped to Daka; most of these had escaped from the trains.*[17] In Budapest, the "Italians on furlough" were gathered at the Hotel Park and the Hotel Royal on the Svabhegy. According to reports, they numbered around 200.

On October 1, 1943, a memorandum was prepared for Defense Minister Lajos Csatay on the Italian soldiers who arrived here seeking asylum:

"At 10.40 AM of October 1st of this year, Col. Nannini, Italian air- and military attache, acccompanied by an interpreter, appeared at the office of the chief of the DM's 21. Division requesting information on the Italian internees. The chief received him in the presence of the Division's rapporteur, Col. (ret.) dr. Janos Pakozdy.

After mutual introductions, the attache, through his interpreter, asked for information on the situation of the Italian soldiers interned in Hungary. He received the following cautious reply:

1.- Those soldiers whose stay in Budapest is service-oriented were disarmed, are staying at their lodgings, and were, for a few days, under the supervision of a small military guard. However, since they were transferred to the care of the IM, its IX. (refugee care) Division can give them further information.

2.- Those that were arrested in the provinces were equally disarmed and put under the care of the IM.

3.- Those who arrived on furlough by train are presently interned in Daka, with military guard but are under the management of the IM.

4.- To maintain order and discipline in the land, a Hungarian guard was detailed to the German trains transporting the prisoners-of-war. In spite of this, a great many soldiers escape from the trains. These are collected in closed internment camps (at Ujszasz, Tetetelen, and Somloszollos). Later, they will probably be put to work or extradited to Germany. At this point, they are collected in temporary camps and shelters.

The military attache mentioned that some of the Italian soldiers in Budapest who are billeted in No. 24, Varosmajor utca (telephone center) behaved in an undisciplined fashion and refused to yield the room to him. He asked that steps be taken on this.

The 21. Div. replied that these soldiers also are under the IM's care and therefore he should turn to the IM for further information.

According to the general opinion of the Division, these soldiers are the adherents of the different governments and that, therefore, the steps to be taken should reflect this divergence.

Considering the political aspect of this situation, it would be best

to consult the Foreign Ministry. The IM too must be properly informed.

I expect the necessary orders.

Lt.-Col. v. dr. Pakozdy"*[18]

According to this memorandum, during the first days of October, there were great political differences among the Italian soldiers. the minority of whom remained faithful to Mussolini, which is why they chased the military attache from the telephone center. The Foreign Ministry took the viewpoint that the political divergence of the soldiers should, as far as possible, be taken into account when assigning them to camps with those who hold the same views put together. True, Mussolini's faithful did not show much zeal to return to the front. Hardly any volunteered to return to the fighting Italian fascist army as a result of the appeal of the Italian Socialist Republic's legation, the proclamation of which had to be allowed in the camps. The army unit of the incident at Varosmajor-utca was also transferred to Tetetelen from the Hotel Park in Budapest. In this camp were placed those who - though not keen on continuing fighting - were not followers of the Badoglio government. This unit is not to be confused with that Italian group of 50 that also lived in the Park Hotel but that the 102. rail command (#103, Kerepesi ut) transferred to Daka*[19].

Anyway, there were two military delegations functioning at that time in Budapest: the Italian military telephone center (Varosmajor utca) and the Italian radio station (Istenhegyi ut). The replacement of the telephone center was important because its personnel was sent by Mussolini's new fascist government and, according to the Badoglionists here, their loyalty was doubtful. The personnel of the radio station unanimously swore allegiance to Badoglio; however, the Hungarian authorities did not deem its functioning necessary. At the time the personnel was replaced, the Hungarian military leaders took steps to secure the news reports and deposit them in the army's storerooms and handed their report to the royal legation. After being disarmed, the two sets of personnel were sent to two different camps*[20].

After the arrival of the two groups of personnel and a number of soldiers transferred to Daka from the Park Hotel, the internees in Daka amounted to 562 Italians. The Batthyany-castle proved too

small to house them all, so the wings and the "small castle" in the farmyard also had to be used. But the Italians kept coming to Daka; several of them from hospitals.

A couple of typical incidents: the army commander of Szombathely reported that on September 22, at the station, Paolo Molinari, Italian foot-soldier "escaped from the German train coming from Salonika"; he was taken to Daka*22. The camp commander of Komarom reported that on September 23 two soldiers jumped off the train that started in Greece; they asked for asylum in Hungary. They were sent to Ujszasz*23.

On October 1st the army commander of Szombathely reported to the competent authorities at the DM that on September 23 "they took an Italian soldier with pneumonia to the army hospital #523 from a train with unknown destination."*24. He also mentions having collected that night 49 Italians.

The number of Italians "collected" during those days and placed in Komarom or other temporary camps amounts to about 1,000. The transport of the Italian soldiers went on continuously. The escapes off them depended partly on whether or not a Hungarian guard was asssigned to them. The escapes were always more numerous when the train crossed mountainous or wooded regions, where it slowed down, than in the flats.

On October 11, 1943, 276 escaped Italian soldiers were handed over to the camp at Komarom from ten different towns (Szekszard, Szekesfehervar, Gyor, Pecs, Szombathely, etc.). On October 13, 1943 they took 17 Italian sailors to Komarom from the station at Zalaegerszeg; but sent directly to Daka on November 20th Deamestri Antinio and his 21 companions*25. In most cases the escaped Italians were first sent to Komarom; but this was not a "system": they were often sent to collecting stations or directly to camps. According to the documents, 189 Italian soldiers were taken off the trains transporting the prisoners-of-war and sent to hospitals with pneumonia or neglected wounds. At first they were sent to various hospitals but later they were assigned to the following: the Mercy hospital in Papa, the Trinity in Gyor, the Franz Joseph in Szolnok, the County hospital in Szombathely, and the #523 Military Hospital. These were augmented by the military hospitals in Marosvasarhely, Nagykanizsa, Pecs, and Szeged. Of those sent to hospitals, only one, 20-year old Silvio Battaglierin, died on October 12, 1943 in

Szombathely, of malaria-induced heart failure*[26].

It is impossible to determine how many Italian soldiers left the camps; the Fascist Republic also moved some living in Hungary back to north-Italian destinations. What is certain is that by December 1944 the followers of Mussolini had all departed; those that remained were all adherents of Badoglio. But, because of the enmity between the two Italian legations, the Hungarian authorities allowed representatives of both to visit the camps.

Papal Nuncio Angelo Rotta visited the camps at the end of October 1944; he was accompanied by dr. Jozsef Antall and representatives of the International Red Cross and of various neutral countries' diplomatic missions. He repeated his visit in November and extended the protection of the Papal State to the Italian refugees*[27]. At this time, the camps were well-ordered; armed with their work-permits, many residents accepted agricultural jobs on the neighbouring estates. Few documents remain on the social and societal composition of the camps but the lists of names lead to some conclusions. In the Komarom camp commander's office a list was prepared of those who volunteered to work. On this list appear also the civilian occupations of 124 Italians: 70 agricultural workers, 15 industrial workers, 1 map-maker; the rest did not indicate his profession. An October 16th memorandum notes that of the 140 soldiers released for work there were: 60 agricultural workers, 16 wood-workers, 8 iron-workers, 12 stone-masons, 18 motor-vehicle drivers and 31 mechanics (totals 145). Primarily agriculture offered the most employment; therefore, many - though they knew nothing about agriculture - went out and took the jobs*[28]. In the autumn of 1943, in the wine regions of Transdanubia, it was mostly Italians who gathered in the wine harvest; in Somloszollos they are still remembered.

The Italian military camps filled up continuously; the numbers of soldiers was never "stable" as the 120,000 Italian Balkan prisoners-of-war were moved through Hungary in an unbroken stream towards German camps. From Komarom they kept sending Italians to the four Hungarian camps; although with the onset of bad weather the number of escapes decreased, 150 Italians were still newly registered in January 1944. The autumn-winter weather was not the only factor in the decrease of the escapes but - with the exception of one officer - the Germans dispensed with the Hungarian guards whom they considered too lenient and in collusion with the Italians. Furthermore, they put closed wagons on the trains which also made attempts at escape more difficult*[29].

The political differences among the Italians also played a role in the changing numbers at the camps. In October 1944 Military Attache Nannini sent a memorandum to the chief of the general staff stating that there were violent arguments in the Italian camps and therefore he asked that "those with Fascist views be released and sent to Budapest". This meemoradnum, as well as a written report of the oral communkication, were sent to the IX. Div. of the IM. As a result, Ministerial Counsellor Jeno Pinter issued a circular letter informing the camp commanders that "they are to ask the Italians of Fascist views for a declaration certified by two witnesses of their political opinions. To elimiate further friction, these, after their declaration was obtained, will not be sent to Budapest but will be put at the disposal of the Italian authorities."*30

After agricultural work and harvesting came to an end and there were fewer job possibilities in the provinces, the Italians' work-permit was extended in December 1944 to those enterprises that struggled with the lack of a labour force. A significant number of Italians came to Budapest to work in factories, in the textile industry, in commercial or transportation undertakings. Many also found employment in restaurants or institutions of the urban community. The Italians that came to Budapest were recorded on the registers of the camp at Zugliget. The IM and in part their employers took care of their lodging. At this time, some "disappearances" took place, though not in significant numbers; the "lost" Italians somehow returned to their country*31.

It is part of the history of these few months that sometimes the German, sometimes the Fascist Italian legation asked for the extradition of some prisoner by name. The 21. Div. of the DM spirited him from one camp to another, "sent him out to work" with false papers or had him hiding somewhere in the capital. Such prisoners were the two royal princes who were hidden as Transylvanian refugees in the castle at Somloszollos but were moved to another hiding place once the Germans discovered their whereabouts. At the time of the occupation, they were presumably in Daka whence, on March 20, 1944, "two Italian officers crazed by the events" were removed by ambulance*32.

The German occupation caused panic among the Italian camps; when, in Daka, units of the German forces appeared, the prisoners fled to the nearby forest afraid that they would be picked up. Their fear was justified: since the Fascist sympathizers were already removed, they were worried that the Germans came to take revenge

on the Badoglionists. Already then many did not go back to camp: they simply hid out with families. The camps' legal situation changed also: heretofore the IM took care of the camps, guarded by the army, and the protection of their rights and representation of their interests fell to the royal Italian legation.*33 Jozsef Antall was removed as head of the IX. Div. of the IM; the Gestapo had arresed him and he was their prisoner. Instead, the refugees' care was moved to the XXI. Div. where Deputy Minister Laszlo Endre, suspended all assistance to the refugees. The Royal Italian Legation was closed down officialy on May 1st but it was already barely functioning. Whoever could do so, escaped from the camps; the German military authorities "protected" those that remained, delivering them to the Fascists. For lack of documentation it is difficult to follow the day-to-day events but by April/May 1944 the Germans started calling to account the newly imprisoned prisoners-of-war. There are reports of their being returned to Italy, particularly the officers and those that volunteered were taken back to the front. As an alternative to German prison camps, many volunteered hoping to be able to escape again. The collecting of Italian soldiers that were employed presented some difficulties; it was virtually imposssible to supervise them. However, though it is true that on the basis of the name-lists at the Fascist Legation the Gestapo started to arrest those that lived in the capital, their efforts were mostly fruitless as the prisoners had ample time to go into hiding. According to the documents, on April 26, 1944 the Fascist Legation removed 18 soldiers from the camp at Zugliget and trannsported them back to Italy. On May 5, 1944 it took over custody from the collecting prison of 26 captured Italians and shipped them home also*34. The Italian military unit that operated at the Fascist Legation collected the captured Italian soldiers and collected them at the above mentioned camps until they had enough to start a transport leaving Hungary. Similar events occurred at the camps at Ujszasz and Tetetelen. It is interesting to note that 17 Italians were captured at Satoraljaujhely but these had escaped from Soviet captivity. It was their bad luck that they were caught again in Hungary and handed over to the Italian Legation to decide their fate. The real liquidation of the camps, the accusations and strict internment of those liviving there, started in May 1944. No date is available for the end of the camp at Daka; according to the notes in the church's "historia domus" of pastor dr. Antal Certoi, it was still functioning at Easter. However, there are documents at the DM that show that on June 13, 1944 they handed over from the hospital at Nagykanizsa two Italian foot soldiers to the by now strictly guarded camp at Daka. No numbers are available from that time but it is known that on several occasions

transports were sent out from Daka; not even the locals could recollect exactly when. This event, though, is still vividly remembered as all the available horse-drawn wagons were requisitioned. Many soldiers escaped off them on their way to the station. The camp at Daka ceased to exist at the beginning of August 1944 when the last prisoner was moved out*35.

It is difficult even to estimate the number of those who lived through the end of the war in hiding. 154 Italians that were hiding in Budapest boarded the train that left Tura for Italy at the end of April 1945. There are also records that as late as 1947 there appeared at the Italian Legation soldiers who asked to be repatriated to Italy. In the spring of 1944, about 4o-50 Italian soldiers who felt compelled to go into hiding went, together with some Frenchmen, to the Highlands and joined the Slovak partisans.

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SERB AND RUSSIAN REFUGEES

The Serb refugees constituted a distinct group among those who sought asylum in Hungary. In the Second World War, too, the Balkans remained an important territory where German/Italian and British interests clashed. Mussolini's Italy was the first to take up arms but his operations against Greece soon stalled; the Germans could only help them by carrying out the so-called "Marita-Plan". The essence of this plan was to execute a pincer movement against the Greek army by moving the German forces concentrated in southern Romania through Bulgaria and, with the cooperation of her army, join up with the Italians. It is a well-known fact that in the hope of avenging the defeat Bulgaria suffered in the Second Balkan war, her government joined the Tri-Partite Pact on March 1, 1941 which led her to allow the German forces to cross her territory against the Greek army. But in the "Marita-Plan" Yugoslavia was the unknown entity. To counter-balance this Plan, the British conceived the idea of a Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav alliance, the key country being again Yugoslavia. But here Turkey was the uncertain ally: she would only fight Germany if attacked directly by the Germans. On the other hand, she might adopt a neutral attitude in case of a German assault against Greece. The circle was effectively closed. However, the Yugoslav government was convinced that England is in no position to offer real help or to guarantee the country's independence. It took the case of Poland and Czechoslovakia as a fair warning. That is why she, too, signed the Tri-Partite Pact on March 25, 1941*[1].

Shortly thereafter, on March 27, 1941, the opposition under the leadership of General Dusan Simovic overthrew the government of Dragisa Cvetkovic which had signed the Tri-Partite Pact. The revolt of the Yugolav officers was bloodless but the days of Yugoslav independece were numbered anyway. Yugoslavia could not be eliminated from Germany's military plans. Hitler declared to his military leaders: "... without waiting for Yugoslavia's further actions, [I] will take all necessary steps to break Yugoslavia militarily. The assault will start immediately once the means and troops are ready."*[2] It did not take long; the war machine started rolling on April 5th with Hungary participating after Teleki's suicide. The assault was merciless, as Hitler ordered. Over 1,000

German planes bombed Belgrade in several waves whereas the Yugoslav air force could only strike the southern Hungarian cities sporadically. The in every respect technically superior German forces occupied Zagreb on April 10, 1941 already prompting the pro-German Croatian government to declare its independence thus fragmenting Yugoslavia into its component parts. Starting to re-possess part of the territories lost in 1918, the Hungarian army crossed on April 11, 1941 the former Hungarian-Yugoslav border thus nullifying the Hungarian-Yugoslav friendship pact signed on December 12, 1940.

On April 17, 1941 the Yugoslav government signed the truce agreement; the army, believed to be the strongest on the Balkans, was eliminated. Close to 350,000 Yugolav soldiers were captured. Aware of the strong anti-German feelings of the Serbs, the German army transported them as quickly as possible to German prisoner-of-war camps.

In addition to the 300,000 Hungarians living in the territories re-annexed to the Hungarian administration, there were 200,000 Germans, 300,000 Serbs, 200,000 Croats, 80,000 Slovenians, 40,000 Slovakians, 15,000 Ukrainians, as well as 15,000 Jews*3. The "reintegration" presented serious difficulties as not only most able administrators but also a great part of the male population was missing. At the same time, refugee care came into play: part of the Yugoslav administration, as well as masses of the so-called "dobrovoljac"(serb colonist) peasants chased away from their fields, fled onto Hungarian territory from the German-occupied country*4. These were the "Ur-Serbians" who were settled after 1918 on lands confiscated from their German and Hungarian owners and strengthened the Serb presence. The lands on the Hungarian-adminisrered territories were duly re-possessed but not as cruelly or brutally as before. Masses of Jews or people considered as such took refuge in Hungary where they had hoped to find more protection than in the German-controlled territory. Among the refugees were the ex-officers of the Yugoslav army and police, non-commissioned officers, and escaped soldiers who were not caught and who had not joined the partisans yet*5.

As per the registry of the IM, it took care of about 40,000 refugees concentrating the civilians on Bacska and Ujvidek. They were settled in abandoned houses, schools transformed to shelters; they were gradually introduced in the villages and settlements. Until their living onditions were finalized, they were helped with material

and financial assistance. Of particular worry was the great number of patients - particularly children - with tuberculosis which necesssitated the establishment of a hospital and sanatorium*6.

The situation was different relative to the Serb soldiers that sought asylum. Their numbers were insignificant: in July 1941 there were 210, in the autumn of 1943 453 that came under the care of the 21. Div. of the DM. They were placed in the interior of the country; they were settled at Siklos, Komarom, and Nagykanizsa, in military camps that were emptied of Poles. Those with families were directed toward villages and settlements where south-Slavs lived, such as Szentendre, Rackeve, etc.*7.

The civilian adminstration came up with the idea of liberating and bringing home those members of the Yugoslav army that came from Murakoz, Bacska, Baranya and, having been captured by the Germans, were placed in German and Austrian prisoner-of-war camps or forced-labour brigades. Therefore, on July 9, 1941 was established the Royal Hungarian Committee for the Ransom of Prisoners-of-War whose coordinating activity was entrusted to the 21. Div. of the DM*8. Forwarding the applications and maintaining contact with the administrative, military and police authorities also fell to the 21. Div. led by Zoltan Balo. Although the procedure seemed very lengthy (in case of Serbs, certification of his relationship to Hungarians, his behaviour in between the two wars, etc.) many people made the list of those to be repatriated even though they lived elsewhere in Yugoslavia. However, it is also a fact that the Hungarian authorities helped save several thousands of Yugoslav army prisoners-of-war of Serb origin in addition to the Hungarians.

Even the very specialized literature has not devoted much ink-and-paper to the life-saving activities and results of the Royal Hungarian Committee for Ransom of Prisoners-of-War in Vienna. Even the numbers were unknown. It appears from an internal report of the DM that by January 31, 1942 8,667 people were ransomed from the German prisoner-of-war camps; of these, 1105 were Serbs amd 3,861 Hungarians, the nationality of the rest was not indicated. The May 5, 1942 report was more detailed: of the 9,521 people they brought home, 4,282 were Hungarians; 1,688 Serbs, 1.195 Slovenian, 689 Bunyevac, 584 Vend 458 Romanian, 210 Ukrainian; 188 German; 85 Croatian; 42, Sokac 31 Jews; 30 Bulgarians; 20 gypsies; 12 Czechs; 4 Russians; 2 Slovakians; and 1 Turk. By November 1943, the number of those liberated had

increased to 15,561; of these 6,451 were Serbs, and 5,285 were Hungarians*9.

Together with the Hungarians and other nationalities, the liberated Serbs were sent by the Hungarian authorities to the fortress of Komarom whence they were let go. The Hungarians were no problem but the Serbs and other south-Slavs were. The majority of those liberated were not natives of the territories re-annexed to Hungary; they were included - by bending the rules - in Col. Zoltan Balo's list for truly life-saving motives. Many only settled in Bacska and Banat after 1918 when, as a result of the Yugoslav land-reform, they received land there which they lost after 1941. Equally a problem were those members of the Yugoslav professional army - officers and non-commissioned officers - who kept their oath to the Kingdom of Serbia-Croatia-Slavonia who were afraid to return to the southern counties, dreading Tito's partisans. Until their liberation, the DM took care of their official matters; it could no longer do so afterwards as their release was requested on the basis of being "natives". This resulted in an agreement between the DM and the IM whereby those Yugoslav prisoners-of-war (and their families) who could not or did not dare return to their place of origin would be declared civilian refugees and taken care of the by the IM*10. For this reason, a camp was organized at Sarvar where those with families were placed. The South-Slav officers and soldiers who were there alone were settled in Nagykanizsa, Siklos, and Komarom. They too had the right to work and live outside of camp; their health-care was also assured. The Orthodox Serbian bishop was of great help in obtaining work and lodgings for them.

The largest south-Slav camp was at Sarvar where 856 people were registered. Only 346 of them lived in the camp itself however; the rest had gained employment on the estates and in the enterprises of the region where they were allowed to live. Altogether 905 south-Slav officers, non-commissioned officers, policemen, border-guards, and soldiers were registered at the camps of Nagykanizsa, Komarom, and Siklos. Most of them availed themselves of the possibility to work but none dared return to Yugoslavia for the reasons mentioned earlier. In numerous cases after their liberation from German prisoner-of-war camps they advised their families of their arrival in Hungary; when the families joined them they received civilian status, were placed in Sarvar or in some employment that also offered lodgings*11

The Hungarians and south-Slavs liberated from German

prisoner-of-war camps returned to their homes in Bacska or Banat. For those who were left homeless or who lost their property, the Serbian Orthodox Church was of great help in settling them in Hungary. The number of inhabitants of these camps never exceeded 2,000; there was much fluctuation in these numbers as newly arrived refugees took the place of those who left the camps and were integrated into minority villages*12.

In the course of the rescue action of the prisoners-of-war it happened that through intermediaries some people got on the DM list that were asked for personally by the Yugoslav partisans. There is no archival proof for this and is based on allusions found in reminiscences. It is a fact, however, that shortly after their return, the south-Slav prisoners did join the partisan units, then still royal but following Tito.

From the end of 1943, the IM placed in the camp at Sarvar Soviet soldiers and women that escaped from German prisoner-of-war or forced-labour camps; they were registered as south-Slavs.

After Hungary's German occupation there were no deportations from the south-Slav camps although life there became very difficult after their provisioning was suspended. The majority of the south-Slavs in Komarom, Nagykanizsa, and Siklos fled as soon as the Germans appeared or went into hiding until the arrival of the Soviet troops. Most of the south-Slav soldiers returned to their native country by the end of 1944; many of the professional officers, expecting the front to sweep through. emigrated to the West.

Within Hungary's refugee care, the least important group. numerically speaking, was that of the Soviet soldiers and civilians that kept constantly arriving since 1941. One of the "oddities" of the situation was that, according to some German-Hungarian agreement, Hungarian troops could not take and keep Soviet prisoners-of-war; those they captured had to be turned over to the Germans. The prisoners-of-war were kept under Hungarian guard for a very short time only; the military authorities established no prisoner-of-war camps, either on the front or in the home territory. Thus, there could be no Soviet prisoners-of-war in Hungary. However, beginnig with the autumn of 1941, the German army transported a significant number of Soviet prisoners-of-war to camps in Germany and Austria. At the same time, the German troops began capturing civilians - men, women and adolescents - in the Soviet Union for forced labour in Germany. They were put to

work building roads or in labour-starved factories and were kept under military guard. The Soviet prisoners-of-war joined the French and Poles in escaping to Hungary from the camps in Germany, although their number never reached that of the others...

The first Soviet prisoners-of-war appeared in the autumn of 1941 and were placed in the camp at Komarom. Their presence caused a quandary: according to the German-Hungarian military agreement, they should have been extradited to Germany; in fact, the Hungarian border guards should have expelled them immediately. The competent divisions of the DM and the IM settled the question by registering them as civilian refugees from Transylvania or as south-Slavs - after all there were many among them who had Russian-sounding names*13. Their placement was problematic: they had to find a site, away from the larger towns, where they would not draw too much attention. The choice fell on Somloszollos. They were registered as Transylvanian refugees and found work primarily in agriculture. From 1943 the escapees from Austrian forced-labour camps arrived in a steady stream, mostly women, several with children. It became dangerous to place large numbers of Russians with fake IDs in Somloszollos so they put them in camps that already existed in Sarvar where there already were, anyway, lots of people with Russian-sounding names. The authorities figured there would be no conflict between the Russians and the south-Slavs so they considered the question settled.

In 1943 Captain Boris Csukovin. physical educaion teacher from Leningrad, arrived in Hungary. At first he was kept in the camp in Komarom, then later placed in the camp at Zugliget. In the summer of 1943, Jozsef Antall officially named him representative of the Soviet soldiers in Hungary but he had good relations with the 21. Div. of the DM too. In the summer of 1944, Col. Lorand Utassy initiated him into the planned International Police Force and asked him to organize the Soviet soldiers then living in Hungary. He also maintained contact with the Hungarian resistance movement and with the Polish and French exiles. No wonder the German occupying forces searched for him! They managed to arrest him in the autumn of 1944 and executed him at an unknown date.

The fate of the Soviet refugees turned into tragedy after the arrival of the Soviet troops. They came to no harm under the German occupation - the Germans could not care less about them and treated those at Sarvar as south-Slavs. The Soviet army's security forces, on the other hand, collected them all in the spring of 1945, took them under guard and considered them as traitors. Many

were executed when they were shipped home. The only souvenir of them is the list prepared before Christmas, 1943 when shoes and other gifts were distributed among the 154 of them*14. The Soviet Union acknowledged their existence in 1991 only when President Gorbachev gave an officer's dagger as a memento to Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, Jr., son of dr. Jozsef Antall, Sr.

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EXCERPTS FROM
"MY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE POLES"

of Colonel ZOLTAN BALO

(1892 - 1966)

Chief (1939-1943) of the 21st Division of

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

I was already retired in 1939.

In September 1939, a part of the Polish army, about 40,000 men - among them 13 generals and about 5,000 officers - entered our country. According to international agreements, these had to be disarmed and interned. In the Defense Ministry the 21st Division had to be established to "take care of the matters of the prisoners-of-war and internees" in case of a mobilization. The instructions stated that the chief of this division could only be a Staff Colonel.

This Division was part of the II. group of the Defense Ministry; its chief was Lieutenant-General Emil Barabas. It was his duty to nominate the Division's chief. As everyone had his assignment already, Barabas could not find the appropriate person "in house". Then he remembered me: I used to be commander of the 9th infantry regiment of Szeged when he commanded the 10th one of Bekescsaba. Later he went to Szeged as an Inspector of physical education. He knew my situation well: he, too, had suffered from the ill will of the commander of the mixed brigade but he had managed to get himself posted elsehwere. Barabas sent word to me to look him up urgently in his office...

It was a difficult start!

I was given temporary, then final office space in the "Prince Charles" (Karoly Foherceg) barracks in the Honved utca where some sections of the Defense Ministry were already lodged. This was quite far from the Defense Ministry proper in the Castle where I had to go frequently to report or for conferences, etc. I received shortly the use of a car as I also had to travel quite often to the

provinces. As personnel, I was assigned retired officers, several of whom I did not find suitable. So I looked for and found the proper help.

The Polish army crossed the border unexpectedly and quite suddenly. The internatinal agreements required the disarming and interning of its members. Special units were formed along the borders that would take care of the disarming tactfully, in the spirit of the traditional Polish-Hungarian friendship and then send the groups to various hastily erected camps. The Defense Ministry's III. group (materiel) took care of inventorying and storing the arms, war materiel, horses, vehicles, etc.

Registering the internees was quite a job. It took a long time for the forms to be printed and sent out to the camp commanders so that most of them did not get back to the 21. Div. of the Defense Ministry before November or even later. Then they were arranged and summarized there. The Poles started escaping fairly soon after they arrived so that by the time their registration forms reached the Defense Ministry and were counted, there were tens of thousands of fewer internees.

I had to go to a lot of conferences. There were conferences on the Polish question in the Defense Ministry; also at the Red Cross. It was here that I met Ministerial Counsellor dr Jozsef Antall who was chief of the Interior Ministry's IX. Division and with whom I collaborated through long and arduous years. From the first meeting, we became friends over the Polish question. There were conferences also at the "American Committee to Help Polish Refugees". There was hardly enough time to attend every conference. Where I could not go, I sent my deputy, Col. Sandor Geczy, or my adjutant, Captain Miklos Kormendy. The latter had the advantage of speaking Polish.

An agreement was reached between the Polish Legation in Budapest and the chief of the DM's II. group to nominate General Istvan Dembinski as Representative of the Polish Military Internees, even though he was the youngest of the 13 Polish generals that took refuge here. The Poles proposed him in the knowledge that the Dembinsky name is memorable here from the 1848/49 Freedom Fight; also, he spoke German fluently having served, until 1912, as a cavalry officer in the Austrian army. He also knew a smattering of Hungarian. I met him through Lt.-Gen. Barabas. That was when I learned that he was assigned to work with me as Representative of

the Polish Military Internees. He was a serious and pleasant man. He was very sad that his family stayed behind in Poland. Barabas promised to intervene at the German Embassy in their behalf but this was not successful as the family was in Soviet-occupied territory.

Dembinski asked that as his staff he be allowed to take on a Polish major and two older Polish civilians; furthermore, he asked to be allowed to keep for his use his own motorcar and chauffeur. The DM turned both requests down: as for the car, they suggested he should give it to the Legation as he will be travelling with the chief of the 21. Div. As for his staff, he should use the Legation's military office.

This remained so for a few difficult first days; subsequently I managed to obtain some staff for him which consisted of 5-6 officers of his choice, 2 secretaries and one messenger-subaltern. But where should his office be? At the Polish Legation, thought some, but that was not expedient. I suggested that they be given space in the immediate vicinity of the 21. Division which was done. Thus they were always at hand when needed and I had discussions with Gen. Dembinksi several times a day. Members of his staff received personal photo-IDs and were free to move about. All spoke German; there were even two who were of Hungarian origin and spoke Hungarian perfectly. At first, Lt.-Col. Emisarski, the Polish military attache, came frequently to call on me; he also spoke German well and even understood some Hungarian. Emisarski mainly came to ask us to allow the Poles escape en masse. The escapes were handled by a quickly-organized committee. Later I found out that the chief of his committee was Staff Lt.-Col. Kornaus who, in April 1940, reported to the Polish government in Paris, among other things, that until that day 18,000 Polish soldiers were transported out of Hungary. But they were not satisfied with this: they accused the Hungarian authorities of hindering the escapes. This report, or rather the certified copy of its translation, reached the 21. Division in early May 1940 after the 2nd group of the general staff had discovered the existence of the Polish Evacuation Office, had confiscated its papers, and after Dembinski's escape.

I replied to Emisarski that we have the best of will towards the Polish internees but that he, himself, knows well the international agreements; that the Germans are breathing down our necks and therefore we have to respect certain limits. I asked him that they help the internees escape in smaller groups and not by the hundreds. Of course the Germans learned that the Polish internees depart en masse from Hungary and protested repeatedly. The fact is that the Poles

organized the evacuations very well. Trucks arrived near the camps and escaped during the night; from Nagycenk for instance some 200 soldiers evacuated. The camp-guards noticed it and started shooting to prevent the escapes; some soldiers were wounded, the rest escaped.

The situation became worse when the Germans captured some Polish soldiers who admitted having escaped from Hungary to reach France. Naturally, the Germans protested. The Defense Minister summoned me and told me to draft an acceptable reply. This is, more or less, what I wrote: Hungary was caught by surprise by the flood of Polish refugees, therefore we were not prepared for such a crowd; we have no internment camps with electric fences. The refugees were settled in old castles, barnyards, barns, etc. Our army is small; we could only muster old reservists as their guards so escapes do occur. After all, even from Germany, where they were better guarded, some French and British prisoners escaped. The Minister accepted my answer and forwarded it to the Germans.

The Germans tried again and again and asked that we extradite to them the Polish refugees, mostly the younger generation, for labour. Again, I had to draft the reply which was as follows: According to international agreements (V. Agreement of 1907 The Hague, chapter II), alien but not enemy military persons who seek refuge in our country must be interned. This agreement was signed by both Germany and Hungary; we keep its stipulations, therefore we shall not extradite the Polish internees. The Germans used all kinds of stratagems to obtain the Poles: first. they asked for Polish refugees that were of German origin. These had to be kept separated from the rest as they were often maltreated. Then in early 1940 they issued a memorandum stating that they will take any Pole that volunteers for work in Germany. They even gave a written guarantee, except for the Jews. This had to be proclaimed. Several thousands volunteerd who had to be collected in Budapest and 2-3 provincial cities and handed over to the Germans.

But let me return to the visits Gen. Dembinsky and I made to the various camps. There was great need for these as the camps administratively belonged to the supervision of the regional army corps and not directly to the DM. In some cases, we found some shocking conditions where we had to take immediate action. In one camp the internees were treated like virtual slaves; guards with mounted bayonets accompanied them everywhere. In another (Komarom) the commander had numbers sewn on the the refugees,

as if they were in jail. The commanders were mostly elderly reserve officers, some recalled from retirement, who had to be instructed in proper behaviour. I had replaced those that were wholly unsuitable for the job. The situation improved rapidly; the more so that with the massive escapes I could eliminate the worst camps.

Unfortunately I also had to tighten the rules. These instructions usually came about on German pressure and emanated from the chief of general staff. So I had to issue the appropriate instructions; however, in the course of our camp visits I confidentially told the camp commanders that I had to issue the rules but they could apply them loosely. But within a couple of months these instructions could be either invalidated or softened.

In the spring of 1940, some parts of the country were hit by floods. The Poles offered their help: Bishop Radomski, Gen. Dembinski, and the Polish Civilian Committee issued a proclamation asking for assistance. Their aid came either in the form of monies collected or by work rendered. Regrettably just about that time the Germans demanded tighter controls; therefore, the Poles could not live up to their plans of help.

At the end of 1939 Dembinski told me that they would like to pay regular wages to their soldiers, as the pay we gave them was not enough. This was true; but Dembinski himself did not much hope for success. They obviously wanted a hold over the soldiers thus assuring the evacuation. After brief consideration, I told him that I have no objections to this but that, of course, it was up to the DM to decide and that I would ask for the ministry's agreement. The DM consented.

Early in 1940 the deputy foreign minister of the Polish government-in-exile in France spent a few days in Hungary. I do not remember his name. Dembinski told me that the deputy minister wanted to meet me. Accompanied by Dembinski, I called on him. He received me very cordially; he was well informed on everything and thanked me specially for my attitude towards the Poles.

In May, 1940 Dembinski left the country through Yugoslavia. He was replaced by dr. Mariam Steifer, a staff colonel. Steifer did not come to Hungary with the army but arrived later, in civilian clothes. When he reported to me, he told me that during the 1914/18 war he served as an Austrian officer under Karoly Bartha, then a staff colonel, and asked to be announced to him. Bartha remembered

him well, received him, and named him Dembinski's deputy. When the General left, he became, upon Bartha's wishes, Representative of the Polish Military Internees and tried, like his predecessor, to protect their rights. But he had many enemies among the refugees who intrigued against him. They accused him of trying to establish contact with the Germans although there never was any proof of this. I had the feeling that he was afraid of the Germans since he had previously worked in counter-intelligence. Once the Polish Civilian Committee asked for his removal, he resigned. Their nominee, a general, spoke only Polish and had to use an interpreter; so Minister Bartha named Lt.-Col. Aleksander Krol, Steifert's deputy, as his replacement. The Poles were pleased with this and he did an excellent job.

I have to remember captain Miklos Kormendy who was my adjutant during the first two years. Having lived in Poland for some time, he spoke excellent Polish. Several times, maybe 8-10 times, he went secretly to Poland and undertook to bring here members of some refugees' families. I told him to bring no more than 9-10 people at one time as a larger group might draw attention and would be more dangerous. The last time he went, though, he brought more than 20 people; somewhere near Kassa the 2nd group of the general staff stopped them and Kormendy came back alone. Instead of coming straight to me, he went to the relevant general staff group and there asked an acquaintance, a lieutenant-colonel, for help. He, rather than helping, made a report and we got into even more trouble. He only told me all this afterwards. It was a dangerous situation; fortunately I knew the chief of the group well, we used to be in the same regiment in the 1920s. I called on him, told him abut the incident; he promised to help. The next day we burned the report; what is more, he helped Kormendy to fetch the Poles detained in Kassa. But I had to promise not to send Kormendy out again.

There was an aftermath to this matter. When the Poles arrived in Budapest, among them a woman and her two grown-up daughters, they came to my office and wanted to see me whom she considered their saviour. This was unpleasant and dangerous since I knew I was being observed but I had to receive them. They stepped in, fell on their knees and insisted on kissing my hand. I had trouble asking them not to create a sensation, that we were closely watched. So they left. They were the wife and daughters of a Jewish reserve officer.

In the summer of 1942, the Germans tried to recruit Ukrainian

soldiers for their planned Ukrainian army. They entrusted this mission to an ex-tsarist general called Sulgin who was to travel to the larger military camps to induce the Ukrainians to volunteer. I received the order to accompany general Sulgin on his visits to the Poles. I confidentially informed the Representative of the Polish Military Internees of the visits' purpose; he, in turn, told the senior officers of the camps. Needless to say, there were no volunteers.

A year later, in the summer of 1943, Angelo Rotta, the Papal Nuncio in Budapest, expressed his intention to visit the Polish camps. Dr. Jozsef Antall and I accompanied him. Everywhere there were festivities and he was very cordially received. He bestowed his blessing and gave out presents. He was highly appreciative of the order, cleanliness and treatment in every camp. After his travels, the Nuncio received dr. Antall and me for lunch in his palace in the Var and gave us both - me, a protestant - the Commemorative Papal Medal. Also in 1943, came M. Chapuisat, the representative of the International Red Cross, to visit the Polish camps, as well as the French camp at Balatonboglar. Everywhere he expressed his approval.

My dismissal was unexpected and ugly. The brief order was not addressed to me, personally, but to the division; thus my administrative assistant read it first then brought it in to me. After handing the Division over to Col. Lorand Utassy, I went to report. Unfortunately Defense Minister Csatay did not receive me as I had hoped to find out the reasons for my abrupt dismissal and to justify my actions. Thus, I had to report to Deputy Minister Ruszkiczay-Rudiger about handing over the division. "Thank you, Colonel. You may step down" These were the last words the army spoke to me after 40 years of service...

In the spring of 1945 I asked to be reinstated in the army. They made me chief of the newly established office of Public Relations of the Defense Ministry. At the end of 1945 or beginning of 1946, Defense Minister Jeno Tonbor summoned me; there were three Poles there with him. I knew one of them, Col. Rudnicki, very well. The Poles greeted me warmly, and praised me to Tonbor who jokingly remarked: "Of course Col. Balo is a great man! After all, I was his professor!" (He was, in fact, my professor during one of the higher education courses.) The Poles asked that I be assigned to their Repatriation Committee. I went regularly to their legation where I negotiated with Michael Kobiela, chief of the Consular Division, and Minister Piotr Szymanski. We had to deal with

various personal and financial matters, so Kobiela and I often travelled to the provinces. The Minister asked me to make a list of those camp commanders who treated the refugees better than average as the Polish government wanted to decorate them. This meant a lot of work as I had to search them out. This took several weeks but I never heard of anyone being decorated... The Poles did consult me a couple more times, then it all came to an end in early 1947.

In early 1946 upon demand of the group preparing the peace negotiations I provided several documents, "thank you" letters, photographs, etc. in the hope of these being returned to me after the peace negotiations. They were never returned; but I admit that I did not ask for them very strenuously. I was permanently retired in 1946; my pension ceased in 1950 and not renewed even after petitioning for it. I worked in a hardware store; then, for years, as a night guard. My pension was reinstated in 1955 but only half of it.…

Colonel JAN EMISARSKI

Military Attache at the Legation of the

Republic of Poland in Budapest

(1938 - 1940)

Katonai Attache voltam Budapesten
(I Was a Military Attaché in Budapest)
(Excerpts from his Memoirs)

(W. Sikorski Polish Institute and Museum, London.

Exceprts from the memoirs of Lieutenant-Colonel Jan Emisarski, military attache at the Legation of the Republic of Poland in Budapest (#270, book 4-5)

The outbreak of the Second World War plunged us into deep gloom: it seemed we shall never get the better of Germany's military might but we hoped against hope in France's military attack coming from the West. But this hope died also when she so dismally abandoned us. Instead of French bombs, flyers fell on the German tanks.

The French Army which was routed despite its wondrous superiority of armoured and air forces, did not wish to take up arms again; its absence was a disaster and the agreement signed before the war with France became so much paper blowing in the wind. Furthermore, the Soviets attacked our eastern borders on September 17th thus deepening our country's tragedy to measures hitherto rarely seen in her history. Our government, together with State President Mascinski and the military leadership -unheard of event! - fled to Romania where they were interned while some 40,000 soldiers and 10,000 civilians fled to Hungary. There were about

6,000 officers among them, mostly of an older generation, many field-officers. The Hungarians interned every military person in camps spread out over the country. The Minister and the military attache found themselves in a difficult situation as they had very little money. Szeniewski was sent over from Switzerland; he carried with him $ 8,000.- worth of currency to help the civilian refugees. They set aside 6,000 passports for use by our legations in Budapest and Belgrade. Budapest was full of Poles and Polish vehicles most of which were brought over the frontier by their owners. Many people did not even feel as if they were in a foreign land. I remember, one day, in broad daylight general Wieczerowski arrived in front of our legation, by car adorned with his flag of army corps commander, accompanied by his aide-de-camps. In the next street was the building of the German Legation. Our horror-stricken minister quickly made the general change into his own civilian clothes. The general departed for France within a few days.

During the first few days, making good use of the chaos that reigned, many people left individually for Italy and France. The Hungarian authorities helped them where they could, even offering up their own apartments and sending masses of clothes and linen to our Legation and to my office.

Upon the urging of the president of the Hungarian-Polish Society, count Charles Szechenyi, the Committee for Refugee Care was formed; it offered material assistance to the military internees in the name of the Hungarian-Polish Society during the whole war. Also, thanks to his personal influence, the Hungarian authorities took such measures that the Polish Legation culd no longer take. Equally of great help was the Hungarian Red Cross, as well as the YMCA whose director, Ferenc Luprerer established the halls of culture in the camps.

The passports that were set aside and the money made the evacuation, which started in some confusion, possible. We learned tha President Mascinski wanted to pass his position over to General Wieniew-Blugoszewski, our Minister in Rome, but he refused. So Roczewski became the President.

In Paris, general Sikorski started organizing his government and establishing a wide range of administrative offices. In February 1940 I travelled to Paris and reported to Sikorski in Angers. At Professor Kot's I met Col. Bielecki, President of the People's Party, and Mikolajczyk. The latter accused the Polish Legation in

Budapest of impotence; I replied that this was the result of complete lack of mandate. In our present situation "you either leave through the kitchen door or you stay"; you cannot establish official relations. Professor Kot suggested that the gentlemen do not blame me; after this the conversation was more amicable and they listened to my arguments. The two-hour-long debate truly depressed me. When I left Kot's study, one of the chief of state's collaborators - I believe it was Col. Kanski - told me that my ideas made the professor ponder...

The Hungarian Defense Ministry sanctioned the establishment of the Office of the Reprsentative of Polish Military Internees in the Kingdom of Hungary under the leadership of general Stefan Dembinski. The general rented some office space and organized his staff with respectable officers most of whom I had sent to him. This peculiar organization helped the attache's work a great deal as it collected the data concerning the camps. The Polish Consulate slowly changed its character too by becoming the Evacuation Office. Col. Jozef Zaranski, coming from Vienna, took the place of the then Connsul.

Whenever individual departures proved difficult, we organized evacuations en masse with our truck units, led by Adam Konopka and Andrzej Kowerski, both reserve lieutenants. My whole Budapest apartment became a shelter for the conspirators where sometimes 60 people were put up. Many relay stations for the conspirators were organized by the Association of Hungarian Legionnaires. The route of the evacuation went by train from Budapest to Nagykanizsa, then from Zagreb to Medion,as far as the border town of Midane. The soldiers received clothes, passports, railroad tickets, pocket money in dinars and dollars, and naturally some food. Many went by car as far as Paris. Barclay, the British military attache, handed me $ 10.000 with the request that I recruit pilots for their Air Force as about 300 members of our air force had fled to Hungary. They left for France in the first wave, but - as I found out later - they were not deployed there but were sent to South Africa whence, with great difficulties, they dribbled back to England in the course of the war.

The Minister and the Military Attache by now turned into "earners of money"; I, myself, became host, chauffeur, and valet. My father often replaced me as a truck-driver and carried out secret missions for me. After the disaster, I put up general Kortowski and colonel Krzyz. Before leaving, the general gave me his car together with his excellent driver who served me in Egypt as a subaltern.

The Green Border

From the beginning of the evacuation, we were pondering the creation of a safe "passage" across the Yugoslav-Hungarian border - which we called the Green Border- that would have made possible the escape of a great many people. My colleague, Lt.-Col. Tadeusz Waslewski, Military Attache in Belgrade, established excellent relations with the Chetniks (Royalist partisans of general Mihajlovits, who was later executed by Tito. Publisher) and, with their help, we created five exits along the border. He also obtained an exact map of the border. Aside from following their directions, I had nothing to do but organize the route to these exit places. In this respect, the Hungarian-Polish Society gave invaluable help by establishing civilian camps in the border region along the Green Border. These camps were then used as temporary shelters by the Evacuation Office.

The Green Border also simplified the evacuees' life in that they did not have to travel to Budapest to pick up their passports. These were sent by diplomatic pouch to the military attache in Belgrade. There were close to 200-300 escapees a day.

In 1939 the Czech officers of the German-created Czech province received secret help from us: they escaped to our country (Poland) in significant numbers. This assistance did not stop even after the French debacle in September: we evacuated to the West via Hungary a certain number of Czech officers with Polish passports. Minister Masaryk officially thanked general Sikorski for our activities.

Hungarian society showed a great deal of sympathy and good will towards our refugees. In my opinion, only a quarter of the evacuations or of our other achievements would have ben successful if the competent persons had shown any hostitlity towards Poland. This is primarily thanks to Admiral Horthy and to count Teleki, the prime minister. We caused a lot of unpleasantness to Hungary, particularly after the fall of France when Hungary had to fend off increasing German pressure. According to instructions from the High Military Command, the post of military attache was allowed to stay in operation so long as it was able to function.

The establishment of general Dembinski's office created excellent relations with the Hungarians. The Hungarian-Polish

Society, by helping the civilian refugees, secretly supported the cause of the evacuation. Many Hungarians took the Poles to the border in their own cars, thus assuring their travel and the border-crossing. It is possible that my story will be considered too long and boring but - as a perpetual memorial - I would like to mention those Hungarians who gave decisive help to the evacuation: Countess Karolyi. Princess Klara Odescalchi, Countess Erzsebet Szapary, Tamas Salamon-Racz and his wife, Countess Edit Weiss, as well as Ilona Sacellary and Countess Ilona Andrassy.

The Hungarian General Staff gave a lot of trouble so the military attache had to decide to leave Hungary in September 1940. With the Defense Ministry, we coordinated my departure for September 14th. I decided to take this step as the evacuation was more or less over; with our cooperation our army was 90% replenished.

It is difficult for me not to mention the representatives of our high command who had considerable power and often played a decisive role but did not always serve our best interests. The worst of these was Lt.-Col. Karnaus, alias Dohnal industrial counsellor, who, despite my warnings, extended his stay in Hungary and got arrested. But that was only part of the problem: during a search of his hotel room, the Germans found copies of Karnaus's reports to the High Command, as well as the key to our code and notes on the evacuation from its beginning until May 1940. Briefly, all our Hungarian activities were discovered. In strict confidentiality, the Hungarians gave me the documents to peruse.

When, in Novembr 1939, general Sosnowski went through Hungary to France, general Sikorski entrusted to me the activities throughout the country. We had secret military stations in both Hungary and Romania, the one in Hungary being mostly restricted to Budapest. In my apartment in Budapest secret alternative courses for officers were held; it served as a depot for explosives; as a starting point for the couriers leaving for Paris; as a way-station for those going home from London. Throughout the country, the encryptors were at the attache's disposal. The chief of the station was Col. Krajewski, followed by Captain Mazurkiewicz who returned to our country with the name of Radoslaw. In 1980 he was promoted to general and kept in close contact with the security forces led by general Moczar. The military station often gave me missions that could only be handled orally; so, about once a month, I travelled to Belgrade where the two military attaches coordinated their collaboration.

Right from the beginning I kept in close contact with the camps and their commanders. They received their orders about storing with me their service moneys, arms, regulations, orders, military maps and their personal arms. At the time of my departure for France, about 100 flags, and several complete military maps of Poland were stored at the Hungarian Institute of Cartography, as well as 1,000 regulations, 100 cars and 5 million zlotys received by the station. For purposes of the evacuation - personal payments - I handed over $ 360.000 to general Dembinski's office.

Through my efforts, about 26,000 soldiers left Hungary; among these were the 1,200 experts who went to work in the French war industry. About 6,000 soldiers left by train, 20,000 through the Green Border.

Before leaving Hungary, the military attache handed over to Jozef Zaranski all his couriers, his treasury and the encryption code's key. I took with me to Belgrade my service car and the table silver that belonged to the Ministry of Defense. About two months later, my colleague in Bucharest, Lt.-Col. Tadeusz Zakrzewski helped my secretary, who spoke excellent Hungarian and German, escape to Istanbul.

Arriving in Belgrade, I reported to the High Command. After a week's stay in Dubrovnik, I returned to Belgrade where I received the cable that I was assigned to a post at the Middle-East....

POLISH LEGATION
BUDAPEST

To overcome the reigning disorder and to avoid the circulation of misinformation among the military units that crossed the border and are now the guests of the Hungarian state and in agreement with the Military Attache, I, as Minister of the Republic of Poland in Budapest, advise [all] of the following:

1.- According to international agreements, the soldiers that crossed the state's frontiers are no longer part of the war. Therefore, they are obliged to hand over to the military authorities functioning in the border region all their arms and other military instruments with the proviso that, by permission of the Hungarian military authorities, the officers may keep their side-arms and the soldiers their military belts.

2.- The handing over of the arms will take place in an organized fashion and they will be registered. According to the Geneva agreement, the Hungarian military authorities will take care of the arms that were handed over and these will remain in their possession until the end of the war.

3.- To ensure order and obedience to the regulations, as well as to maintain military discipline, two officers or volunteers are needed for every military unit.

4.- The Hungarian military authorities have already designated sites where they can put up some units and ensure their provisioning, their money supply and their medical care.

5.- The civilian refugees or the soldiers' families must accept the regulations imposed upon them by the Hungarian and local authorities; this remains in effect for the duration of their living separately.

6.- As minister of the Polish Republic in Hungary, I urge all the officers and soldiers to maintain discipline and our national dignity the upholding of which is in our national interest on the friendly soil of Hungary. We also have to obey the regulations that spring from international law and are now necessary.

7.- I asked the Hungarian authorities and institutions to re-establish as fast as possible postal communications to enable you to inform your families of your whereabouts.

8.- I shall try to meet with every individual or representative of his unit to find out personally what their most pressing needs are.

Budapest, September 23, 1939

Lon Orlowski
Minister of the Polish Republic

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