

Name: VEESENMAYER, Dr. Edmund Dt. Ges. in Budapest SS-Brif.	ZS Nr. 1554	Bd II	Vermerk:
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		
katalogisiert Seite: Sachkatalog:	Personen:		

25-155412-2
CONFIDENTIAL
WAR DEPARTMENT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
WAR DEPARTMENT GENERAL STAFF
HISTORICAL BRANCH ,G-2

Veessenmayer

Return to
Historical Branch *Dio*
G-2 58741

INTERROGATION REPORT

SOURCE : Dr. Edmund VEESENMAYER, German Minister
Plenipotentiary in Hungary, 1944-45
DATE : 5 September 1945
PLACE : MISC - USFET
INTERROGATOR : Lt.Col. O.J.Hale

Institut für Zeitgeschichte ARCHIV	
Akt. 4637/71	Best. ZS1557
Rep. /	Kel. /

HUNGARIAN-GERMAN RELATIONS

C O N T E N T S

- I. Personal Data
- II. Fall of the Kallay Ministry
- III. Political Developments, March - Oct 1944
- IV. The Fall of the Horthy Regime, Oct 1944
- V. The Szalasi Government
- VI. Appointments to Diplomatic Posts
- VII. Wartime Industrialization of Hungary

I. PERSONAL DATA.

Source is communicative and cooperative, but the general impression produced of his attitude and his replies to questions is one of evasion, coloration and self-justification. He is obviously a pliable character and a willing tool of Nazi foreign policy. His statements, where his own actions are in question, must be assigned a high coefficient of unreliability.

Source holds a doctorate in economics from the University of Munich, having specialized in foreign trade, finance and economic history. He served as a lecturer in the Handelshochschule in Munich until 1933 when he went to Berlin as an assistant to Wilhelm Keppler, who at that time was attached to the Reich Chancellery as Economic Plenipotentiary of the Führer (Wirtschaftsbeauftragter des Führers). Out of Keppler's office developed the Four Year Plan organization. From 1933 to 1935 source taught part-time in the Berlin Wirtschaftshochschule, but thereafter he was fully occupied in Keppler's office. There he specialized in the financial and industrial affairs of American enterprises in Germany - National Cash Register, Remington Typewriter Company, International Telephone and Telegraph Company. Source claims that he promoted

75-15812-3
the formation of a joint enterprise of the National Cash Register and the Krupp concern in which National Cash Register held 80 per cent of the stock. Source claims he was a member of the board of the "Standart" company, a German subsidiary of IT and T.

In 1938 Keppler was transferred to the Foreign Office, having been thrust aside by Göring and the more vigorous personalities of the Four Year Plan. Source continued on Keppler's staff although he claims he was not assigned to the Foreign Office until his appointment as Minister to Hungary in March 1944.

In the interim from 1938 to 1944 he did special work for Keppler in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia and Hungary. He is vague about his activities and duties during this period, describing himself as an observer preparing politico-economic studies and reports on these countries which were forwarded to Keppler in the Foreign Office. The reports were classified "Geheime Reichssachen" and the distribution was made by the Foreign Office. He cultivated relations with state officials, leading industrialists and political circles. An excellent source of information, according to Veessenmayer, were the representatives of the Schenker-Transport Concern, a commercial shipping and forwarding subsidiary of the German Reichsbahn with agencies throughout Southeastern Europe. These representatives were in close contact with business, industry and transportation and were in a position to acquire a vast amount of information, which they communicated to Veessenmayer. Source was a member of the board of directors of the Schenker Company.

II. FALL OF THE KALLAY MINISTRY

Source stated that he had been in Budapest twice before his appointment as German Minister; once in March 1943 and again in Nov 1943. Each visit was of three weeks duration. On these occasions he was sent to study and report on the German-Hungarian economic and political relations.

Hungarian food reserves were important for Germany as was Hungary's oil and bauxite. Hungarian oil fields had been developed under German pressure until they were producing 800,000 tons annually. This, together with the new fields in Austria, which produced over one million tons in 1944, was one of Germany's safest sources of supply. Bauxite had formerly been procured from France, Croatia and Hungary, but the French and Croat sources failed because of transport and Hungary became almost the sole supplier. As Hungarian policy tended toward economic hoarding rather than contributing to the joint war effort greater pressure had to be applied. This was one of the considerations in demands made upon Admiral Horthy during his visit to Hitler's Hq on 18 March, 1945.

Von Jagow, who had held the diplomatic post in Hungary since 1941, was regarded as too weak and too sympathetic to Horthy and his circle to execute a tough policy. Source states that Dr. Jury, Gauleiter of Lower Danube was originally designated to replace von Jagow. Source states that Himmler and Bormann were opposed to his (Veessenmayer's) appointment. It was not until he arrived in Salzburg on 19 March, where Horthy was visiting the Führer, that he was told by Ribbentrop that the post was his. He returned to Budapest with Horthy, having been instructed by his chief to work for a new cabinet that would cooperate with Germany.

The background of the fall of the Kallay government was described by source as follows: A large proportion of

78-155112-4

Hungary's leading politicians, industrialists and intellectuals were pro-Ally and anti-German. With the reverses on the Eastern Front, the Kallay cabinet began to draw away from the alliance with Germany. Economic collaboration slackened and only a great anxiety with regard to Russia held Hungary on Germany's side. The Kallay government then sought and established contact with the Western Allies seeking a way out of the war in this direction. These maneuvers and the general situation were well known in Berlin and when Horthy was summoned to the Führer Hq he was presented with a list of 12 complaints and charges which had been prepared in the Foreign Office by Ambassadors Gaus, Ritter and von Rintelen. Source states he did not draft the document or see it.

It was on the bases of this bill of complaints that Horthy was forced to dismiss Kallay and appoint a government faithful to the alliance with Germany. In the event that Horthy proved recalcitrant the "Operation Margarete" for the occupation of Budapest, had been planned. This proved unnecessary, however, and source returned to Budapest with the Regent and began negotiations for the formation of a new government. Kaltenbrunner had come to Budapest to direct police and security operations and, according to source, sought to direct the political solution of the crisis. The first choice of the Germans for Minister President was Bela Imredy but Horthy was opposed. Source contacted the Hungarian nationalist leaders such as Racz and Fay. He insists that he did not negotiate with the Arrow Cross group at that time. Kaltenbrunner wanted a National Socialist government with Count Palffy and Backy at its head. Source states that he opposed this because he wanted a broader party basis for the new ministry, including such technical and administrative specialists as Jurcsik and Remeny-Schneller, former members of the Kallay government. The deadlock was finally broken by Horthy's proposal of Sztojay as Minister President. The proposal was referred to Hitler's Hq and accepted and the ministerial list was then made up with source's "cooperation."

Interrogated on specific incidents of the crisis in Budapest, source made the following explanations and excuses.

1. German Police Action. This was directed by Kaltenbrunner and the Higher SS and Police Leader Winkelmann, who occupied this new position on 19 March 1944. As soon as Kaltenbrunner left Budapest, the German authorities returned to a basis of "cooperation" with Hungarian police. About 40 leaders in Hungarian political, business and intellectual life were arrested. Source insists that he only learned later who these people were when the Sztojay government requested their release. A special release list was subsequently established by the Legation and between 20 and 25 requests were granted by higher German authority.

2. Shooting and Arrest of Interned Polish Officers. These persons, who had fled to Hungary in 1940, had been well treated and although technically interned were allowed almost complete freedom by Hungarian authorities. About 900 were rounded up and sent to Germany as PWs and about 1000 were sent to Poland as laborers.

3. The Dampierre Incident. Source explained that Countess Dampierre, wife of the former French Minister, who broke with Vichy, was not thrown into a concentration camp but was placed under arrest for one or two days and then released with her husband.

4. Arrest of Bajcsy-Zsilinsky. Bajcsy-Zsilinsky, the left-ist Peasant Party leader was not murdered by the SS, but only received a minor wound in the arm when he resisted arrest.

CONFIDENTIAL 75-155612-5
5. Draining of Hungarian Commodities. Finally SS troops did not rush the Budapest shops and buy them out, as charged in foreign press, because no special German military currency circulated in Hungary and German pay was so low and the exchange rate so unfavorable that German soldiers could scarcely buy anything in Budapest.

6. Occupation of Southern and Western Hungary. On 18-19 March, 9 German divisions (under-strength and training units) entered western Hungary from the military districts of Graz and Vienna and one entered southern Hungary from Belgrade. The bulk of these forces withdrew in three days and all were withdrawn in three weeks. This military action was taken because it was not certain that Horthy would keep his word upon returning to Budapest from the Führer Hq.

III. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, March-October 1944.

After the formation of the Sztojay Ministry German-Hungarian delivery and clearance arrangements were revised and Hungarian economic cooperation improved. However, transport difficulties prevented the realization of the full benefits of the new arrangements.

During these months the war came to Hungary. Reverses on the Eastern Front, the withdrawal of Rumania and Bulgaria from the war and the Allied bombing attacks produced extreme pessimism and a desire to get out of the war on the part of the Hungarian people.

The Sztojay Ministry disintegrated as the military situation became more critical. Sztojay was an ill man and the Deputy Minister Racz was not equal to the task of holding the Government together. A severe blow was dealt the Ministry by the German SS and SD authorities when they forced Imredy and two of his associates from the Cabinet. This was one of the results of the Manfred Weiss scandal, which brought source into serious conflict with Himmler and the SD.

Under the Jewish laws introduced by Sztojay the property of the Manfred Weiss armaments and industrial enterprise, employing 40,000 workers, should have reverted to the Hungarian state. However, the German SS authorities stepped in and made an agreement with the Jewish owners whereby they received several millions (source does not know the exact amount) for the controlling shares in addition to transportation by air to Portugal for the families of Weiss, Kollin, and Goldberger. This was a gross breach of Hungarian sovereignty and Imredy, as Minister of Economy, protested vigorously through diplomatic channels. It was then that the HSSPF Winkelmann circulated in Budapest documents discovered by the SD in Prague proving Imredy's Jewish ancestry. As a result he was forced to withdraw from governmental and political life. Source states that he took the matter up direct with Himmler who finally replied that Hitler had decided in favor of the SS.

With the disintegration and weakening of the ministry the War Minister Csataj and the Chief of Staff Szombathelyi gained in influence, which signified a strengthening of the power of the Burg -- Horthy and his circle. Lakatos, who succeeded Sztojay as Minister President, was appointed by the Regent, although source had a part in making up the ministerial list. He again insisted on the retention in the cabinet of the technically qualified ministers such as Jurczek, Minister of Agriculture. Lakatos' policy emphasized the sovereignty of Hungary and he took a stronger line against Winkelmann and the SD. He also demanded more German troops for the defense of Hungary and more arms and equipment for Hungarian forces. In this connection source stated that after 19 March 1944, Hungary provided two or three additional divisions for the Beskid front, but with the Russian advance these were withdrawn to

04

CONFIDENTIAL

75-155412-6

the area of Warsaw and later returned to Budapest. Later Hungary placed 6 or 7 divisions on the front defending the homeland. Hungary was never in a position to equip, clothe and arm its own forces. She never mobilized more than 600 or 700 thousand men for military service because of exemptions and the unreliability of the minority national groups under Hungarian rule. Source states that Hungarian economic, labor and military power was never fully mobilized.

IV. THE FALL OF THE HORTHY REGIME, Oct 1944.

With the advance of the Russian armies into old Hungary a new crisis developed in Budapest. Under the impulse of the Burg clique, Hungarian representatives got in touch with Russian and British authorities and the Regent's son contacted agents of Marshal Tito. Source states that all these moves were known to the Germans and were freely gossiped about in Budapest cafes. It was not difficult for anyone to get desired information as all Hungarian officials, because of their poor economic position, were open to bribery. "It was never a question of who, but of how, and how much." The Hungarian bureaucracy was the most corrupt he had ever encountered, according to source.

German mistrust of Lakatos and Horthy grew as reports of double dealing came in. Source thinks that Farago and Hatz were sent to Russia by Horthy as was also the representative to Egypt. Source now is of the opinion that Lakatos was loyal. An attempt to form a new national bloc that would include all parties -- Imredy and Palfy National Socialists, Government Party, and Arrow Cross -- failed. Lakatos expressed willingness to negotiate with such a bloc, but Horthy refused to consider it. Instead he proposed a ministry of administrators, but the proposed list was almost entirely anti-German and pro-Ally. Berlin rejected the proposal.

By 10 Oct the situation was moving toward an extreme crisis and, as usual, German measures were concerted well in advance. Von dem Bach-Zelewski, most ruthless of the old SS leaders and the suppressor of the Warsaw revolt, arrived in Budapest. Ambassador Von Rahn also arrived on 12 Oct with a special mandate to supervise and direct the political action. On Sunday 15 Oct Horthy's son was arrested by SD agents who tricked him into negotiating with pretended agents of Marshal Tito ("Operation Mouse"). Under the covername "Operation Panzerfaust" the military occupation of the Burg and the removal of Regent Horthy was planned and given to Von dem Bach to execute.

On Sunday afternoon, 15 Oct, source called on Horthy who was enraged over the arrest of his son. The Regent told source that he intended to appoint a new government and enter into negotiations with the Allies for Hungary's surrender. To gain time source requested Horthy to delay action until Berlin could be informed. As he left the Regent's apartment source found himself locked in the court and unable to return to the legation. He protested and was permitted to go after a delay of 30 minutes. Von Rahn then went to the Regent and while he was conversing with him the radio announcement of Horthy's decision to quit the war went on the air. (Presumably a recording made in advance). Von dem Bach then occupied the radio station and Szalasi read a counter declaration. Source had come to an agreement with the so-called National Bloc (Arrow Cross Party) in the preceding days and Berlin had ordered that the leaders, including Szalasi, be taken into the German legation for protection. (Ed: Also to have them ready to step into their assigned roles).

Source returned to the legation and learned shortly thereafter that the Burg area, including the German legation, had been blocked off for defense by Horthy troops. Source spent the night negotiating with Lakatos who acted as an intermediary for Horthy. About 02:00 hours Horthy agreed to withdraw his measures, admit the appointment of a "nationalist government," resign the regency and go into exile. Operation Panzerfaust was scheduled to begin at 06:00 hours and at 05:40 Horthy

CONFIDENTIAL

ordered government troops not to resist while the German Comdr, Von dem Bach, was notified not to launch the scheduled attack upon the Burg. Source insists that there was only some desultory firing by outposts which had not received the official order in time. Not more than 4 or 5 men were killed.

On the following day, 16 Oct, negotiations were resumed, with Horthy, Lakatos, Von Rahn and source participating. The Regent concurred in the appointment of the Szalasi ministry and gave his resignation in writing. He made one condition - the release of his son. Source accepted the condition but was later disavowed by Berlin. He insists that he acted in good faith and that he formally protested to the Foreign Office and requested he be relieved, but both requests were refused.

V. THE SZALASI GOVERNMENT.

With regard to the Szalasi ministry, source insists that originally it was not an exclusive Arrow Cross cabinet, only seven of its members being of that party while the remaining 7 members were administrative specialists and representatives of nationalist parties. He states that before the crisis he tried to get Bardossy and other national leaders to come back into the government but they refused to assume responsibility.

Source admits that the government placed in power by this coup was a shadow government and that authority was exercised by the German Army. By agreement between Beregfy and the German MA, Greiffenberg, 100,000 Hungarians were removed to Germany for equipment and training, but they never saw action. The proposed Hungarian SS divisions, likewise, never saw action.

As for the decree and legislative measures of the Arrow Cross government they were largely paper laws and actions. The orders for the evacuation first of Buda and then of Pest of all men of military age, was a military security measure. First, there were an estimated 10,000 deserters in the city and they wanted to get them out and back into the army. Second they wanted to clear the front area, fearing sabotage. Third, manpower was needed in what remained of the national territory.

Szalasi, according to source, was no disappointment to the German authorities because they expected little from him. As far as they could determine, it was Szalasi or nothing. Analyzing Szalasi's character source pointed out that he was one quarter German, one quarter Slovak, one quarter Hungarian and one quarter Armenian. By training he was a General Staff Officer and Gombos had described him as one of the ablest and most promising. He had resigned from the Army because he felt that the Army could never be reformed without a complete reform of Hungarian government and society. Gradually his social reform program became his primary objective and because it was revolutionary he met with bitter opposition from Horthy and the aristocracy, the large property owners, the church and the privileged bureaucracy. His foreign policy was comprehended in the slogan "Danube Mission", which envisaged a solid bloc of 20 million people inhabiting the Danube basin. Hungary of course would lead (dominate) the Randstaaten. Dr. Hoettl, the SD Chief in Hungary, attacked source for supporting a movement with a program so detrimental to German interests in Southeastern Europe. Source states that he had to work with Hungarians and not against them. He could only operate on practical grounds and not on future possibilities.

75-185612-8

CONFIDENTIAL

VI. APPOINTMENTS TO DIPLOMATIC POSTS.

In 1941 all posts in Southeastern Europe were cleared of career diplomats and to effect the more vigorous policy required in a wartime situation non-career Party men were appointed to the vacancies. The influence of Dr. ~~Hans~~ Luther, who was an SA Leader, was at that time paramount in the matter of appointments, hence the assignment of the SA Gruppen- and Obergruppenführers to the vacancies. Kasche went to Zagreb, Beckerle to Sofia, Killinger to Bucharest, and Jagow to Budapest.

Dr. Luther was in a sense a protege of Frau Ribbentrop and as long as he remained on good terms with her exercised considerable influence. Frau Ribbentrop took great interest in foreign service personnel appointments and she was feared in the Foreign Office because of her influence over her husband. When a rift developed between her and Dr. Luther it was soon followed by a break with Ribbentrop. Later as a result of Ribbentrop's enmity Luther was thrown into a concentration camp.

VII. WARTIME INDUSTRIALIZATION OF HUNGARY.

Asked if the wartime industrialization program had been exaggerated in the Hungarian press, source stated that he thought the publicity was overdone. In his opinion Hungarian industry had been developed beyond the country's requirements. A restive industrial proletariat had developed in such enterprises as the Manfred Weiss works, employing 40,000 workers. Moreover, 10 per cent of Hungary's population had become concentrated in the city of Budapest. It would have been economically wiser to have developed Hungarian industrial resources in proportion to Hungarian agriculture, which together with bauxite and oil were her greatest assets. Because of the forcing of industrial development, protected by tariff walls, Germany and other importers were unable to acquire Hungarian agricultural surpluses. Hence in the years before the war and during the war Hungary moved from one agricultural export crisis to another. At the beginning of the war Hungary began to develop an artificial fiber and buna industry. This forcing of industry was economically unsound.

---END---

DISTRIBUTION:

2- USFET, G-2
2- Historical Branch, WD, G-2
1- MISC-USFET
1- Historical Commission File

CONFIDENTIAL

Interaktionell-Kr. 1. 1933 a.

Institut für Zeitgeschichte ARCHIV	
Akz. 5237/74	Bast. 281554
Rep. /	Kat. /

Vernachung von Dr. Edmund VERMANN
Gesandter,
am 2. April 1947 von 11 Uhr bis 12 Uhr,
durch Hr. Rudolph FLEISCH.
Stenografen: Helga Dornth, Herta Braniel.

1. Fr. Sie sind dasselbe Dr. VERMANN den ich bereits am 1. April
vernommen habe?
- A. Ja.
2. Fr. Sie wissen, dass Sie noch unter Bild stehen?
- A. Ja.
3. Fr. Ich möchte gerne etwas über Ihre Tätigkeit in Ungarn wissen.
Wann sind Sie nach Ungarn befohlen worden?
- A. Das erste Mal im März 1943 auf etwa 3 Wochen, das zweite Mal
im November 1943 ebenfalls auf 3 Wochen.
4. Fr. Was war Ihre Mission dort?
- A. Die Aufgabe war, die Lage zu studieren in Hinblick auf die Kriegs-
entwicklung und die sich aus der Kriegsentwicklung ergebenden
zunehmenden Verschlechterung der Beziehungen zwischen Ungarn und
dem Reich. Es war eine rein kritisch berichtende Aufgabe, die sich
zu erstrecken hatte sowohl auf deutsche Blätterstellen, als auch auf
ungarische Kreise, wobei insbesondere Freilichberücksichtigt werden
sollten, die des Reich positiv gegenüber standen, sowohl aus der
Opposition, sowohl aus der damaligen Regierung. Ausdrücklich aus-
genommen aus der Beobachtung waren die Bewegung, die
sich in Opposition zu der damaligen Regierung stand und eine Unter-

hing mit ihr nicht gemacht war von der Reichsregierung.

5. Fr. Was war ihr Titel?

A. Gesandter erster Klasse.

6. Fr. War das eigentlich eine Botschaft?

A. Es war immer eine Gesandtschaft. Wir hatten in Salzen nur Gesandtschaften.

7. Fr. Auf Ihrer beschriebenen Weise, war da schon ein deutscher Gesandter in Budapest?

A. Ja, ein Gesandter von JAWA. -

8. Fr. Welche Begründung hat man gegen die ungarische Regierung gegeben?

A. Es wurde keine besondere Begründung gegeben.

9. Fr. Hatten Sie Konferenzen mit Ungarn?

A. Ja, eine ganze Reihe von Besprechungen mit Herren wie HATZ, HENZEL, das war der Präsident der Deutsch-ungarischen Handelskammer, der mit dem damaligen Staatssekretär und späteren Minister JÄGER.....

10. Fr. Und dann?

A. Das waren die 2 kurzfristigen Aufträge und dann kam ich wieder nach Ungarn am 19.3.

11. Fr. Waren Sie bei Besprechungen dabei, welche Abschiebung von Juden nach Ungarn?

A. Die Judenfrage war eine Frage, die ausdrücklich in meinem Fuhrerauftrag ausgedrückt war. Für die Judenfrage war laut Fuhreraussweisung die SS bzw. der höhere SS- und Polizeiführer, wie ich dann später erfahren, zuständig.

12. Fr. Aber Sie wurden vorher die Sache unterrichtet?

A. Ja, teilweise. Die erste Besprechung führte KUTSCHERA selbst, der am 19.3. nach Ungarn kam und etwa 3 Tage dort war.

13. Fr. 1944?

A. Ja.

14. Fr. Sowie die Juden wurden nach Ungarn abgeschoben?

A. Die genaue Zahl ist mir nicht bekannt. Schätzungsweise 300 000.

15. Fr. Wurden Sie was mit den Leuten gemacht sollte?

- A. Nein. Man hat mir mitgeteilt, dass sie zur Arbeit, hauptsächlich in Österreich zu Zwecken eingesetzt werden sollten, was auch meistens der Fall war.
16. Fr. Als Zwangsarbeiter und ohne Bezahlung?
- A. Das kann ich nicht sagen in solchen Verhältnissen.
17. Fr. Wann haben Sie weder die Ausrottung gehört?
- A. Minimal habe ich etwas von BERTY.
18. Fr. Wann war das?
- A. Das erste Mal 1944 im Juli oder Juni.
19. Fr. Erinnern Sie sich an den Wortlaut von BERTY?
- A. Es war eine ganz flüchtige Andeutung die nichts Bestimmtes enthielt. Er teilte mir mit, dass er die Fortsetzung der Judenverfolgung nicht mehr wünschte.
20. Fr. Und er begründete das?
- A. Er begründete es damit, dass er von Ausland darauf hingewiesen worden wäre, dass mit den Juden unrechte Dinge geschehen sind, dass die Leute beim Transport zu sehr zusammengepfercht werden.
21. Fr. Was haben Sie darauf getan?
- A. Ich habe es pflichtgemäss nach Berlin gemeldet.
22. Fr. Aber die Transporte?
- A. Die Transporte wurden sofort eingestellt. Die Transporte wurden durch die Ungarn selbst durchgeführt.
23. Fr. Wann war es das erste Mal, dass Sie mit Transporten von Juden zu tun hatten?
- A. Mit Anschluss an diese Mitteilung BERTY's, die ähnlichen Inhalte war, hat er den Auftrag gehabt, die Dinge abzustellen. Die ungarische Regierung wünschte grössere Judenmengen nach Schweden und

der Schweiz und später auch nach der Türkei zu transferieren. Dazu war ein Ausreisefinanz notwendig für das Reisegeld. Ich habe die Summe weitergeleitet und es wurde ein Visa für 3 000 Juden ausgestellt. Die Ungarische Regierung sagte, das wäre zu wenig, es müsste für 3 000 Familien sein. Nach längerer Zeit ist das bewilligt worden. Ich habe mich sehr für diese Sache eingesetzt gehabt.

24. Fr. War es die einzige Judenangelegenheit, mit der Sie zu tun hatten?
- A. Ja. Sonst hatte ich mit der Judenfrage nichts zu tun, denn nach dem Aufruftrag war die Judenfrage ausschließlich aus meinem Bereich herausgenommen.
25. Fr. Ich meine, außer Ungarn, hatten Sie andere Angelegenheiten in diesem Gebiet?
- A. Einmal hatte ich eine Besprechung mit TISO. 1943 hatte sich BREITENBURG beauftragt TISO zu bitten, er möge doch zustimmen, in starksten Masse von der Slowaki Arbeitskräfte zur Verfügung zu stellen. Es handelte sich nicht nur um Juden, es handelte sich um Arbeitskräfte überhaupt.
26. Fr. Erinnern Sie sich noch an diese Besprechung über Juden in Balkan?
- A. Nein.
27. Fr. Ist es möglich, dass noch andere dort waren?
- A. Nein. Das besten Willen nicht.
28. Fr. Haben Sie jemals etwas über jugoslawische Juden gehört?
- A. Nein.
29. Fr. Kennen Sie Herrn EISENBERG?
- A. Ich war einige Wochen bei ihm, aber ich habe über Judenfragen haben wir nichts gesprochen.
30. Fr. Sie haben nie ein Telegramm oder eine Nachricht an das Auswärtige Amt

geschickt, in das Sie die Abschließung von Juden in Jugoslawien mit-
teilten?

A. Nein, daran kann ich mich nicht mehr entsinnen. Ich hatte kein Recht
ein Telegramm zu schreiben.

31. Fr. Nachden Sie 1941 dort waren?

A. Nein, das ist ausgeschlossen. Ich habe im Gegenteil zusammen mit
BENZLER dagegen scharf protestiert, wenn Arbeitsverchiebungen über
Slowenien, Kroatien über Belgrad in's Reich liefen.

32. Fr. Als Bevollmächtigter in Ungarn, war Ihnen die SS unterstellt?

A. Die SS war mir genauso wenig unterstellt, wie irgendwelche andere
Wehrmachtverbände. Die SS unterstand dem HIMMLER.

33. Fr. Hatten Sie ein Wohnungsrecht?

A. Nein, nicht im geringsten. Ich konnte, wenn etwas Wichtiges vorge-
kommen ist, den auswärtigen Amt Bericht erstatten.

34. Fr. Haben Sie jemals über die Massnahmen der SS in Ungarn protestiert?

A. Sehr scharf. In der Eigenschaft als Gesandter in Ungarn wurde fuer mich
durch die selbständige Tätigkeit in der SS ein Arbeiten unmöglich
gemacht. Der erste Fall war der sogenannte Abschuss IMREDI's. IMREDI,
nachdem er von Horthy abgelehnt worden war zum Ministerpräsidenten, mit
der Begründung, dass er Jude sei - was aber nicht stimmte - war er
von der Reichsregierung als sogenannter Vizewirtschaftsminister vor-
gesehen. Der Vorschlag stammte von mir. Der Grund dafür war, dass in
Ungarn 4 Wirtschaftsminister tätig waren:
ein Versorgungsmister, ein Landwirtschaftsminister, ein Industrie-
minister und ein Verkehrs- und Handelsminister. Da nun deutsche Stellen,
deutsche Delegationen mit ihnen verhandeln sollten, so mussten sie
praktisch von einem Minister zum anderen laufen. Aus diesem Grunde

62
25

war es zweckmässig die ungarische Regierung zu bitten, die wegen doch einem verantwortlichen Mann ueber diese 4 Minister setzen. STÖJA hat einen Vorschlag im Kabinett beraten und den Reichsverweser vorgebracht, und hat seine Zustimmung gegeben. Einige Zeit darauf wurden die Manfred WILSON-Werke, die grossen Rüstungskonzerne in Ungarn durch die SS uebernommen (ohne meines Wissens). Als Gegenleistung wurden die reichen Besitzer mit guten Mitteln ausgerüstet, etwa 33 an der Zahl, und mit 2 Sonderflugzeugen nach Portugal geschickt und dort in Freiheit gesetzt. Die Ungarn protestierten scharf gegen dieses Vorgehen. Durch das Gescheh war das juedische Eigentum bedroht.

35. Fr. Wer leitete diese Verhandlungen?

A. Kurt BUCHHEIM.

36. Fr. War er ^{ein} hoherer SS- und Polizeifuehrer?

A. Er war Sonderbeauftragter des Reichsfuehrers-SS.

37. Fr. Wo ist er jetzt?

A. Er ist hier.

Diese Dinge, wie ich betonte, sind ohne mein Wissen abgeschlossen worden und erst als der Vertrag fix und fertig war, wurde er mir vorgebracht, ohne dass ich jedoch Einsicht nehmen konnte in den Vertrag. Bekam lediglich von Auswertigen Art die Weisung bei STÖJA einzutreten, dass dieser Vertrag akzeptiert wird.

Klarer will dadurch ungarisches Eigentum in ausländische Hände kam. 2. will die Ungarische Regierung einmal eine Genehmigung hatte, dass keinerlei irgendwelche Beteiligung oder Erwerbung durch Übernahme ungarischer Industrie stattfinden durfte. Dies wurde auch strengstens und heftig eingehalten.

EXTRACTED

62
26

Es wurde auch das Vertrauen der Ungarn erworben.

38. Fr. Sie sagen, die Besitzer wurden freigesetzt?

A. Ja.

39. Fr. Von was wurden sie festgehalten?

A. Von HIMMLER.

40. Fr. Wo?

A. In Deutschland. In der Nähe von Wien.

41. Fr. Man hat somit den Besitz gegen die Freiheit getauscht?

A. Ich möchte bitten, dass ich darüber nicht beurteilen muss.

42. Fr. Die Leute wussten doch schließlich, entweder wir werden frei oder ins Jenseits befoordert.

A. Es wäre unethisch zu widersprechen.

43. Fr. Aber eines war klar, diese Juden hatten den Betrieb nie wieder bekommen.

A. Das glaube ich auch nicht. HIMMLER hatte ungetragene Monopolbestrebungen.

Die Funktionen waren jedenfalls fuer mich als Gesandter untragbar. Meine Demissionen wurden nicht angenommen.

44. Fr. Nun, fuer heute möchte ich abschliessen.

A. Jawohl.

.....