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STATEMENT OF :- De HORTHY, Nicholas, Jr.,
Hungarian Minister to Brazil until May, 1942.

Institut f. Zeitgeschichte
München
ARCHIV

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I am the second son of ADMIRAL NICHOLAS De HORTHY, Regent of Hungary. Until May 1942, I was Hungarian Minister to BRAZIL. At this time relations were broken off between Hungary and Brazil, and in October of that year I returned to Hungary. From the date of my return to my country until 1st January 1944 I held no official position in the country. On 1st January 1944, I was given an appointment of Secretary of State to my father. On 19th March, 1944, the German Forces occupied Hungary. At this time I was residing at the Royal Palace, where my father was residing, in BUDAPEST. During 1944, I made various contacts, and one was with an Agent from the Yugoslavian Government. This Agent, I was informed, wished to see me, but owing to the German S.S. spies it was not possible for an interview to take place at the Palace. Accordingly arrangements were made that I should meet this Agent at the Villa of a friend of mine, MAJOR BORNEMISSZA, just outside the City. On the evening of the 5th October, 1944, I kept the appointment, but the Agent failed to turn up. On the 15th October, 1944, however, other arrangements were made and I visited the office of my friend in the centre of BUDAPEST to have an interview with the Yugoslavian Agent. I went with three personal guards, who remained downstairs, and I went up to the office on a floor above. The Agent and another man came in, and I was handed a document which was written in Croatian and I asked BORNEMISSZA to translate it for me. The door bell rang and my friend went out to answer it. Suddenly I heard, "Hands UP", shouted in German, and then about 10 or 12 German Gestapo men came rushing into the office. All were armed with either machine pistols or revolvers. I jumped up and stood against the wall and drew out my pistol. I then realised that resistance would be of no avail, and then they unarmed me. I was then held and my hands handcuffed behind me. One man then began to beat me over the head with a rubber truncheon, and gave me about eight severe blows, which badly cut my head, and shouting "Horthy Swine". Blood streamed over my face. I struggled violently against them but they continued to beat me - no doubt enjoying this, and to make me unconscious so I should not shout for help. They then took a large sack and pulled it down over my head and shoulders. I was carried out of the office and downstairs by five of the Gestapo. MAJOR BORNEMISSZA was also arrested. On the way down I heard a few shots, but naturally could not see anything. I was put into the back of a waiting lorry, and the sack was removed. I was held down on the floor. A big crowd had gathered, and were being held back by the Gestapo and S.S. I called for help but nobody came to my assistance. The lorry then drove through the city and turned and twisted, no doubt to make it impossible for me to recognise the route. After about 20 minutes we arrived at a field outside the City where there was a German J.U.52 transport plane waiting with engines running. MAJOR BORNEMISSZA and myself were put on the plane, which after manoeuvring came on to a landing strip and then took off. After a trip of about an hour, the plane landed at VIENNA Airport. We were taken away in another lorry and, after a wait of an hour or so outside a villa in VIENNA, we were taken to the Concentration Camp at MAUTHAUSEN, near LINZ. By this time one of the Gestapo had stolen my wallet with my money and papers. It appeared that they had been prepared for my beating as the man had gauze to wrap round my wounds, and put bandages around my head.

On arrival at MAUTHAUSEN I was put into Cell No.1 next to the S.S. Guards' office and BORNEMISSZA in cell No.5.

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I was kept at this camp six months until 15th April, 1945. About ten days later I was interrogated in an office of the Prison by a man - I do not know him - but he came from Budapest; he was in civilian clothes and may be from the Gestapo. The interrogation continued for two days and my statement was typed out. During the interview I was shown a newspaper in which it stated that my father, the Regent, had negotiated for an Armistice with Russia and a new Nazi Government was being formed. Apart from this interrogation I was kept in solitary confinement in my cell the remainder of the time. On some days I was allowed out for 20 minutes walk in the evening, after dark, always accompanied by two Gestapo men who were kept specially there to look after me. I was treated by the S.S. Guards and Kalfaktor as an ordinary prisoner. After some time in this solitary confinement, I became accustomed to hearing various noises and sounds and was able to interpret their meaning.

On several occasions I heard prisoners, whom from their language were Russian and some German, being interrogated in an alcove of the passage outside. There were always blows to be heard and groans from the victims.

About the end of January or the beginning of February, 1945, I came to realise that there were some Americans, and perhaps English prisoners in the cells. I never saw them but I often heard their voices.

I remember that two or three times some of these prisoners were interrogated in the S.S. Guard Room near to my cell. The interrogations were always late at night from about 11 pm. until 2 or 3 am. I used to try to listen to what was going on. Someone told me, I am not sure who, that the interrogator came specially from BERLIN. On some of these occasions I am sure that the prisoners were tortured. I did not hear beatings, but from the sounds I am sure they were being tortured in some other way, as I heard suppressed cries of pain. Once I heard one in a crying voice say, "I don't know, how could I know". His voice was broken and he appeared to be in pain. On these occasions I heard the voice of the Commandant, so I am sure he was present. I have the impression from what I was able to overhear at the interrogations, and from other little pieces of information, that these prisoners were members of the Air Force.

In March, 1945, one evening, I heard a number of people in the prison yard outside my cell. I could hear them moving about and from the different languages I heard spoken, they appeared to be a mixture of Germans, Hungarians, Russians and Slavs. They remained there all that night, and the next morning when my guards were not watching, I was able for a brief period to get up to my small cell window and look out. There were a large number of prisoners in the yard, all dressed in striped prison uniform. They remained the whole of that day and night. In the evening I could hear noises again and looked out of my window and saw that they were all jumping up and down on the spot to keep warm. The weather was bitterly cold and they looked frozen as their clothes were only thin prison uniforms. The following morning, about 10 am the Guards went into the Yard and I heard one shout in German, "120" (apparently the number of prisoners.) I was again able to look out and saw that all the prisoners were being undressed and were standing naked in the bitter cold. Shortly afterwards they were taken away. About two hours later, three or four Camp prisoners had collected up the uniforms and shoes etc. and put them in sacks, and then carried them away. There appeared to be no urgency in this, and I had the impression that the 120 prisoners had not gone for a bath, as if they had, their clothes would have been required much sooner, but they had gone elsewhere to be executed. I know from a friend of mine who had been a prisoner in KAUTHAUSEN, previous to my arrest, that there was a gas chamber in the bathhouse. I heard no shots, but this was just the impression that the whole incident gave me.

During March, and the beginning of April, 1945 I saw and heard two other similar incidents as this. On one occasion, there were about 70 prisoners and on the other about 50 prisoners. The second incident I think concerned S.S. prisoners.

From what I heard and saw at the prison, particularly when I was allowed to take my exercise after dark in the yard outside, with my Gestapo Guard, I am sure that below the prison was situated the crematorium. My reasons for this are as follows:-

On occasions I heard the telephone in the S.S. Guardroom, next to my cell, ring. When it was answered by the Guard I often heard him go outside his door and shout, apparently downstairs, "Crematorium" and someone would come up and answer the 'phone. I was, however, never able to hear the conversation over the 'phone. When I have been out for my exercise I have noticed that directly below my cell was a window of a cellar. I was able to look quickly through the window and saw rows and rows of caskets as used for putting ashes of bodies after cremation. I have also seen smoke belching and flames coming out of chimneys at the opposite side of the Prison Block. Near this side was a doorway with steps leading down. One evening when it was dark and I was exercising, I saw a prisoner pulling a small cart with a coffin on it through the yard. He went to the doorway of the crematorium and unloaded. Shortly afterwards I saw him come again with another coffin. I have also smelt a terrible smell of bodies and burning flesh. One day when I looked out of my ^{cell} window I saw a lorry pulled up outside, directly outside my cell. A man had a casket in his hands and was shaking ashes and bones into the lorry, which was then deep with ashes and bones. As he finished a casket he was handed another by his mate who was near the cellar window. This emptying of caskets went on for several days and I know that at least five or six lorry loads of ashes and bones were removed. As each casket was about 9" in diameter and about 12" high, and presumably contained the remains of one body each, the bones and ashes taken away must have amounted to some thousands of bodies.

I remember on the day I was removed from MAUTHAUSEN, 15th April 45, I heard the Commandant in the yard outside say to some prisoners, "You will all be shot", a little later, "We will examine the cases and the guilty ones will be shot". I did not see who the prisoners were.

On this day I, with two other political prisoners, was transported to DACHAU. I stayed here only ten days and therefore cannot give any information about this camp. On the tenth day, the political prisoners from DACHAU were taken to INNSBRUCK and then onwards to NIEDERBORN. We were in custody of the S.S. who it is believed had instructions to execute all of us, but from the events later, we came safely into the hands of the American Army.

PERSONALITIES AT MAUTHAUSEN

? ? STANDARTENFUHRER - Commandant at MAUTHAUSEN. Age about 50. 5'11", very well built; upright; good looking, grey-blue eyes, clean shaven, normal features, harsh loud voice. Native of BAVARIA.

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NIEDERMAIR OBERSCHARFUHRER. In charge of Prison. Age about 24. 5'9". Slim; black hair; clean shaven, dark eyes, thin legs, thin face, married to a girl in MAUTHAUSEN. Had bullet in his body near heart. Very brutal and a bully.

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(nickname "BOKSCH") UNTERSCHARFUHRER. Age 24 years. 5'7/8". Slim; dark brown hair; dark eyes; clean/shaven; married. CZECHOSLOVAKIAN.

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ROTTENFUHRER. Age 48, looked younger. 5' 6".
slim build, fair thin hair.

I have read over the above statement - I can understand the English language - it is correct and true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

NICHOLAS De HORTHY, Jr.

Statement taken down, signature witnessed by
CAPTAIN N.E.MIDDLETON, D.A.P.M., 78 Section
S.I.B., A.F.H.Q., on the 31st May, 1945.