

Miklós Horthy and the Allies, 1945-1946: Two Documents

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Few personal letters of Admiral Miklós Horthy, the Regent of Hungary from 1920 to 1944, have survived as historical evidence. Horthy was apparently not in the habit of writing personal letters, and such letters of this type that he did write did not survive the chaotic conditions in Budapest at the end of World War II. Yet, curiously, Admiral Horthy was a very prolific contributor to a more formal kind of correspondence: private letters addressed to heads of state, statesmen, and other prominent leaders. During his twenty-four year tenure as Regent, Miklós Horthy addressed such letters, which typically expressed his strongly held and often idiosyncratic views on Hungarian and world problems, to Benito Mussolini, King Edward VIII of England, Neville Chamberlain, Pope Pius XII, Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, and others.¹ From 1936 to 1944 he dispatched numerous such letters to the Führer, most of them handwritten and composed in a quaint, somewhat archaic German. Certainly no other European statesman deemed it proper or desirable to address Hitler in such a direct, personal way, even offering him advice on strategic issues and chiding him for his policy errors.²

Admiral Horthy's predilection for such letters persisted after his forced resignation in October, 1944 and the devastating defeat of Hungary in the war. Just before his resignation, Horthy yielded to strong German pressure and appointed as Prime Minister Ferenc Szálasi, the leader of the radical right-wing Hungarian movement. Horthy regarded Szálasi as a vulgar demagogue and a completely muddled thinker, and had until the German occupation of Hungary in March, 1944 refused numerous requests of Szálasi for an audience. As late as October 16 Horthy told Szálasi to his face that he was the last man in Hungary he would wish to appoint as prime minister. Horthy yielded to the Germans on October 16 only when the life of his only son, Miklós Jr., was threatened. Even then he signed the proclamation under protest, observing that the action was illegal and unconstitutional.

Admiral Horthy spent the last months of World War II in German custody in Bavaria, where, in April, 1945, he was liberated by American troops.³

To his chagrin, however, Miklós Horthy remained a prisoner of the American Army at various locations in Europe for more than a year, as the question was debated whether he was to be put on trial as a war criminal. The new Yugoslav government under Marshal Tito was vigorously pressing the case against the Hungarian Regent, arguing that he had been an accomplice of Hitler in the unprovoked attack on Yugoslavia in April, 1941, and was responsible for atrocities committed by Hungarian troops near Újvidék (Novisad) in 1942.

Reunited with his family, Admiral Horthy argued his case in a series of letters written between April, 1945 and May, 1946. His wife, daughter-in-law, and son (who returned from the concentration camp in Mauthausen only in 1946) no doubt assisted the 77 year old Horthy, but the sentiments expressed in these letters are clearly those of the former Regent, for they echo ideas and arguments to be found frequently in his pre-1945 conversations and correspondence. All the letters were written in English, a language Horthy had learned as a young naval officer but used only rarely during his regency. He had a good command of the language, but his style at times is somewhat awkward and his choice of words sometimes confusing. Short letters were sent to Winston Churchill, King George VI, and, perhaps, Stalin.⁴ More substantial letters, in which Horthy tried to exonerate himself from charges of war crimes and to plead Hungary's case at the planned peace conference, are those of May 19, 1945 to President Harry Truman,⁵ and of April 19, 1946 to Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary of the British government.⁶ These are published here for the first time.

What is perhaps most striking about these letters is the apparent sincerity with which Admiral Horthy disclaimed all personal responsibility for Hungary's cooperation with Nazi Germany and for any atrocities committed by Hungarian troops or gendarmerie during World War II. Contemporary observers and many later historians branded Hungary as Hitler's "last ally" and ascribed a good deal of the responsibility for the spread of anti-Semitism to Admiral Horthy, who after all had served as head of state right up to October, 1944. In these letters, however, Horthy insists that he writes with a "clear conscience" because he had never sympathized with the "German party-system" and had always favoured close ties with the Anglo-Saxon world. He insists that he was literally forced to cooperate in a reluctant way with Nazi Germany because the West had failed to see the importance of reconstituting Hungary in its historic frontiers. Even so, that Hungary ended up as Hitler's ally Horthy attributes to the evil machinations of men like László Bárdossy and the "Schwabian" (or German-Hungarian) generals, who were dazzled by Nazi Germany and thwarted his policies.

Horthy offers (especially in the letter to Truman) a long but one-sided account of the German occupation of Hungary in March, 1944. He glosses over the deportation of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz, mentioning only his last-minute success in protecting the Jewish community of Budapest. Indeed, one of the major omissions in both letters is a recognition of the anti-Semitism that pervaded society and government in the Horthy era. Horthy had often privately boasted that he had been the first European statesman to take action against the

Jews (a reference to the numerus clausus of 1920), but in 1945 and 1946 he wisely refrained from reminding others of the less praiseworthy elements of his tenure as Regent.

One of Horthy's major objectives in writing these letters was clearly to present his country's case at the peace conference that everyone assumed was imminent. Remarkably, Horthy asserts that he is still Hungary's legal head of state, because his resignation had occurred under German pressure and in violation of Hungarian law. He casts aspersions on the post-war government in Hungary, suggesting that "some of its members are not even Hungarian but Soviet subjects." Above all, Horthy was intent on persuading the British and American governments that Hungary had been unfairly treated after World War I and that it would be foolish, even criminal, to restore the provisions of the hated Treaty of Trianon.

Horthy repeats here all the myths and familiar arguments that had been mainstays of the interwar campaign intended to gain "Justice for Hungary." The old Hungary, with its "1000 year frontiers," had protected Western civilization against the Mongols and Turks. Contrary to those who tried to defame his country, Hungary had never mistreated its national minorities: Slovaks, Germans, and others could rise to the highest positions of the land. Just as Count Tisza had opposed Austria-Hungary's entry into World War I, he as Regent had not favoured Hungary's declaration of war on Soviet Russia in 1941, but was tricked into it by Bárdossy.

A major thrust of both letters is the argument that Hungary represented the most trustworthy ally of the Anglo-Saxon powers in East Central Europe. Horthy attempts to play on anti-Communist sentiments by asserting that the "ideas and methods of bolshevism are just as strange to the Hungarian people as those of National Socialism have been." He makes disparaging comments about Hungary's neighbours. Romania, he suggests, has no historical claim to Transylvania (he claims to own a map from 1696 proving this) and is a backstabbing, opportunistic country, witness the last-minute defection of Romania in the closing days of the war. The West, by contrast, could rely completely on Hungary. Once it had been restored to its traditional frontiers, with a common frontier with Poland in the North and access to the sea in the South, Hungary would be a force for stability in Europe.

No where in these letters does Admiral Horthy show any awareness of the forces that had already swept away the traditional order in Hungary. He seemed unaware of the sharp move to the Left that was occurring throughout Europe. Thus, he does not try to win the favour of the Anglo-Saxon powers by extolling democratic procedures or acknowledging any weaknesses of the interwar Hungarian social system or government. He fails to see that advocacy of certain progressive measures (such as land reform or cooperation with peasant and workers parties) might have been a useful tactic when pleading his case with the Western Democracies.

None of the letters Admiral Horthy wrote to various officials in 1945 and 1946 had any effect on the subsequent course of events. There is no evidence that anyone on the American side, including President Truman, even read Horthy's letter. The same could be said on the British side, where the only serious consideration of the letter to Bevin was that given by C. A. Macartney, who at the time was the Hungarian specialist in the Foreign Office. But Macartney, who in general had analyzed Hungarian affairs in a balanced and even somewhat sympathetic manner,⁷ concluded, with a bit of understatement, that the "Regent seems to be somewhat out of touch with modern developments...."⁸

Admiral Horthy was not, in the end, brought to trial as a war criminal, although he was called as a witness to the Nuremberg Trials. The decision not to prosecute Horthy was made by the Allies independently of any arguments presented by Horthy. Ironically, the balance was tipped by Joseph Stalin, who advised against prosecution of the man who had been one of Europe's most adamant and passionate anti-Communists. Horthy, Stalin suggested, was an "old man" who had at least tried, albeit clumsily, to make an armistice with Russia. He should not be considered a war criminal and should be allowed to live in peace in the West.⁹

Thus, as historical evidence, these two documents represent Miklós Horthy's last, somewhat pathetic, intervention in European affairs. What is perhaps most notable about the contents of the letters is that the views he expresses and the arguments he employs are virtually unchanged from those to be found in his conversations and memorandums as far back as 1920. The myths that he so fervently embraced about Hungarian history and the role of his country in European affairs were not altered by the traumatic events of his twenty-four year long regency.

NOTES

¹For details on these letters, see Thomas Sakmyster, *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklós Horthy, 1918-1944* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1994), pp. 186-87, 189-91, 217-19, 263-64, 303-04, 367-68, 451.

²See, for example, Horthy's letters to Hitler in the era of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, when the Regent attempted to convince Hitler of the perils of cooperation with the USSR. Miklós Szinai and László Szücs, eds., *The Confidential Papers of Admiral Horthy* (Budapest: Corvina, 1965), pp. 126-28, 130-32.

³For the best treatment of Horthy's life in exile, see Péter Gosztony, *Miklós von Horthy. Admiral und Reichsverweser* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1973), pp. 112-15.

⁴In mid-June, 1945 during an interrogation by U.S. Army intelligence officers, Horthy mentioned that he had drafted letters to Eisenhower and Stalin. Military Intelligence Records, RG332, ETO, G2 section, CCPWE, 321X-P12, National Archives (hereafter NA). No letter of Horthy to Stalin in 1945 has surfaced from Soviet archives.

⁵Records of the Department of State, RG59, 864.00/7-545, NA. The letter, as Horthy explains in his preliminary remarks, was intended for President Roosevelt, so it is clear that he had been working on it for several months prior to its dispatch.

⁶Records of the Foreign Office of the United Kingdom, FO371, vol. 59016. R7683/509/21, Public Record Office (hereafter PRO).

⁷See, for example, his comments attached to a record of his interrogations of Horthy: FO371, vol. 51043, C688/688/21, PRO.

⁸FO371, vol. 59016, R7683/509/21, PRO.

⁹Sakmyster, pp. 381-82. For a fuller discussion of this issue, see Eva Haraszti-Taylor, "Why was Admiral Horthy not Considered a War Criminal?" *New Hungarian Quarterly*, 30, no. 113 (1988), pp. 133-43.

Horthy's Letters

NOTE: The documents have been edited to correct typographical, but not grammatical, errors.

A. Miklós Horthy's letter to President Harry Truman dated May 19, 1945. Horthy prefaced the typed part of the letter with a brief handwritten note in two parts in which he complained that he was being treated like a "common criminal" and that he was unable to exercise his leadership "when the future of my country will be decided for centuries."

Excellency!

I beg to grant me a short half an hour of your very precious time in reading the following lines. As the fate of many generations has to be decided now and everybody's ardent desire is a longlasting and just peace. I take the liberty to tell your excellency the truth and only the truth about what hard and unfortunate circumstances our nation had to deal with. I feel this being my duty because in my opinion the reason of Hungary's catastrophe at the peace treaty of 1919 was that our situation has been falsely exhibited, without giving us a chance to remonstrate and to prove the truth. Quoting Poincaré's memoirs: "Clemenceau who hated the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (without knowing our country or nation) was most willing to please the claims of Serbia, Bohemia and Rumania."

After the first world war it was much discussed who was guilty of its outbreak. It is proven that the Hungarian Prime Minister Count Tisza opposed war in the Crown Council. Nevertheless our nation has percentually the heaviest losses and our country lost two thirds of its over a thousand year old territorial possessions. There is not a single nation in this part of Europe that did not fight

out of geographical reasons in one or both wars against the Entente. Czechs, Slovaks, Roumanians, Bulgars, Serbs, Austrians. And Hungary, who did absolutely the same, lost territory to them and this without plebiscite. An armed Austro-Hungary, with Switzerland, and if possible a trustworthy Rumania on its flank, would have been strong enough to declare a line of neutrality along Middle Europe. Mr. Clemenceau's disarmed and one-third Hungary surrounded by enemies was absolutely unable to do this.

Our ancestors were liberal enough not to oppose any immigration and strange nationalities entered because they found more safety, better administration, and better conditions of life. If it had not been so, they would have returned. It is not true that they were oppressed, which is proven by the fact that they kept their mother language throughout centuries, even in villages few miles from the capital. Every subject had the same right to achieve any position, if qualified for. Wekerle, of German origin was three times Prime Minister, Roeder Minister of War, Werth Chief of Staff and during the first World War the highest rank in the State, the Prince Primate was occupied by Cardinal Czernoch, son of a poor Slovak peasant. To a thousand families of Serbs we gave permission around 1400 to enter the country evading Turkish terror. We had most of the Germans settled by the absolutist Austrian government on Hungarian Crown Territory, most fertile ground.

The Rumanian infiltration was a slow one. Their propaganda wants to make the world believe that they were aborigin[al]s of Transylvania, but the truth is that before occupation of the country by Hungarians, the Rumanian Race was nonexistent. There is a map in my possession of the year 1696 drawn up by a deputy sent by the King of France to the Prince-Regent of Transylvania. On this map is written: "En des Saxons, des Moldaves et des Valaques, dont les deux derniers possèdent la moindre partie et sont peux connus."

In the last 50 years the Rumanian government opened a branch of the Albina bank in the capital of Transylvania with the instruction to buy all available land in the country and settle Rumanian peasants on it. The Rumanian State in its 80 year existence betrayed all its allies. They spread the tale that half of Transylvania was returned to Hungary as a gift of Hitler, whereas the truth is that not being able to stand any longer the lasting official provocations, as well as the ill treatment and ruin of our Transylvanian compatriots, we made arrangements to enter the country. As the majority of their troops were deep in Russian territory engaged in a war of conquest, they repeatedly asked Hitler for arbitration, to divide Transylvania. We consented unwillingly but only to spare blood and to save at least part of our compatriots as soon as possible of further ill treatment.

At the end of the year 1918 all troops returning from the front were disarmed on orders of the revolutionary government. The Peace Treaty of Trianon forbade us to hold an army, to produce armament, to drill officers and soldiers. The Little Entente, that kept an army of about 3 million well armed men, took good care to keep us in this state, to be able to enjoy the possession

of its newly acquired territories without trouble. In this second World War, unarmed, we did not have the possibility to remain neutral, because of our geographical position and on account of Hungary being of great importance to Germany. All transport of troops and war material to Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece, and all the very important transports of Rumanian oil had to pass our country. There is no question about it, that we would have been immediately invaded, had we declared neutrality with not a single gun in our possession. Partisan fighting was absolutely impossible on a dead flat and treeless country. We did not have any aspirations outside our old borders, even when Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia, we refused to accept it as part of Hungary. Our only ambitions were to keep the penetration of Bolshevism out of our country whose doctrines are rejected by our population. All armament we got from Germany were conscientiously paid, whereas most products delivered by us remained unpaid, so that their debts amounted to several millions.

Under the pretext to discuss the possibilities of recalling our four divisions standing in Russia, which I during many months urgently claimed by letters and through sending to Headquarters by turns the Minister of War and the Chief of Staff in vain, I was invited to Hitler, which invitation I accepted for this important reason. On my arrival, Hungary was unexpectedly invaded and occupied by German troops under the pretext that our intention was to join the enemy. As I was told this I protested against this unheard of action and wanted to leave at once, but they prevented my returning home to have time to finish the occupation. We hardly had any troops at home and so they could not think of resistance, especially because of my absence. Our most valuable leading men were arrested, they collected the Jews of the country and transported them under most inhuman conditions to Germany, requisitioned everything, bought up all the stocks with our money and took all our animals for breeding. I kept my position only on Hitler's binding promise that if I nominate a government he can trust, all troops will be withdrawn from Hungary and so our sovereignty restored. I appointed our Minister in Berlin who was officer as Prime Minister and though they declared themselves satisfied, never kept their promise.

Besides my remaining made the keeping of parliamentary form possible. As the Germans kept strong forces in and around our capitals to control us and not on the Carpathians, belonging to the Rumanians, the Russian and Rumanian army invaded Transylvania. Seeing the total annihilation of my country inevitable I asked for the German Minister and told him my decision to request armistice. At the same time I published an explaining manifesto, through wireless to the nation. I was convinced that this action meant my arrest sooner or later. The Germans were too ready to act and got immediately hold of the radio and telephone central, so that I was incapable of giving further orders. The Germans had about 600 tanks in town and as resistance was hopeless, I did not want to sacrifice the bodyguards. So the Royal Palace was occupied and plundered. I was taken to Bavaria, where I was in captivity till the American troops came. Hitler gave orders to shoot my whole family. My only remaining

son was lured into a trap and taken to Germany on a plane. He was carried to the concentration camp of Mauthausen near Linz (a camp of the worst reputation, where numbers of Hungarians were kept), and I still do not know if he is dead or alive. The only reason they had against him was his Nazi hatred, that he never had intercourse with any of them and foresaw the result of this war at its beginning. The man who was appointed Prime Minister by the German Minister immediately after my arrest, called Szálasi, an Armenian who as major lost his rank and was later sentenced by court of Justice for 4 years imprisonment. He was a National Socialist who founded a small party of the worst elements, mostly of strange origin, with the help of German funds. Getting to power with German help, his unwholesome function luckily did not last long.

Only a just peace can be of duration. Therefore I urgently ask to be listened to at the Peace Conference. We will answer all questions correctly, as we always did. Our ardent desire would be to get rid of the Hungarian subjects of German nationality, who behaved most ungratefully. All other nationalities (with the exception of the Slovaks) could also be exchanged with Hungarians. Never could there be a better opportunity for this, because all the neighbouring countries had severe losses and have need of their own people. For instance there were in 1919, 378,000 Serbian minorities living on the part of Hungary given to them and they lost throughout the last war manifold of this number. This would also help to accomplish friendly terms between us, which has always been my sincere and often officially expressed desire. Despair was great after Trianon, because not only had we lost two thirds of our country, everywhere with Hungarian majority, with historical towns where universities, theatres, etc. were all Hungarian culture, where minorities were mostly peasants on low standard of life, but the main reason of despair was that the remaining country was incapable of living, having lost all mines and woods and left without a grain of salt. We also lost our only port Fiume and it is impossible for a nation to live without being able to reach the sea. If all the forests of our lost mountains, sources of our rivers, would have been cut down (which devastation the new proprietors against the prohibition of the international Danube-Committee already begun) nothing would have been left but stony hills, with yearly inundation of our agricultural country in consequence. This nation left alone in defense of European culture, fought throughout centuries its wars against Mongols, Tartars, Turks, always weakened and nevertheless not giving up its duty, deserves a better lot. Everybody who knows our nation can see that a Hungarian as Minister never enriched himself. Corrupt people cannot get along in our atmosphere. I beg to lend an ear to our destiny and excuse my long letter.

Wishing your country lasting happiness and success in its great work for the world's welfare, I am yours sincerely

Adm. Horthy

Belgium, 19/V 1945

[handwritten postscript] Excuse the form!

B. Horthy's letter to Ernest Bevin, April 14, 1946

Your Excellency,

The preparations for the Peace Treaties having begun and the date of the Peace Conference approaching, I have to call the attention of your Excellency to Hungary and to a few problems concerning our country.

I feel it my duty to do this as I still have to consider myself the Regent of Hungary, having been unanimously elected in 1920 by the Hungarian Parliament the members of which were called together on basis of a democratic election representing the free will of the nation.

In order to refute such opinions that I, having resigned have not the right to appeal in the name of my nation anymore, I have to declare that in spite of the fact — when after the German occupation and my arrest by the Germans in middle of October 1944, after Ferenc Szálasi and his Government was nominated by the Germans, my resignation was proclaimed by way of advertisements, the press and the radio — I legally did not resign. My so called resignation was the result of a physical and moral pressure. I was forced to sign the document put before me facing the tommy-guns of SS soldiers and the German Minister in the presence of Prime Minister Lakatos giving me his word of honour, that in case I sign the resignation my only living child Nicholas Horthy, Jr. will avoid execution. I gave my signature fully conscious of all these circumstances and decidedly declaring its invalidity. According to the Hungarian Law then in force my resignation would have been valid only in case it had taken place according to the formalities prescribed by the Law. My signature therefore was invalid in any case, even if I had not been forced to give it.

What makes it all the more my duty to explain the situation of Hungary is that in consequence of the occupation the present government does not represent the will of the nation, and is not master of its decisions and acts. So at the coming Peace Conference it is hindered in the uninfluenced and free representation of the interests of the country for — as far as I know — some of its members are not even Hungarian but Soviet subjects.

And finally it is my rightful duty to raise my word in the interest of my country now, for I may state before the tribunal of history with a quiet conscience that I am one of the majority of those Hungarians who never sided with the German party-system, with its aims and methods, have done everything in my power to save my people from the horrors of this war and tried even during the war to get into contact with the Anglo-Saxon powers and to make the difficult situation of Hungary clear to them. I may declare with a clear conscience that Hungary was dragged into the war under the irresistible pressure of the Germans and in consequence of the activity of a responsible statesman who has since then been executed as a war-criminal. I firmly protested against the German occupation of our country and qualified it before Hitler and his statesmen as an unheard of atrocity and did all in my power to have the German

troops withdrawn from the country as it had been promised. In most respects my endeavors remained unsuccessful. So, e.g. troops sent out to the Russian front with the purpose to defend the frontier or maintain order were also used by the German High Command — in opposition to our agreement — in the front-lines.

The final demarcation of the Hungarian frontiers is a problem of great significance and importance from the point of view of World-Peace and the great principles that are to secure this Peace. Should the Peace Treaties decide the frontiers of Hungary to be the same as what the Peace Treaty of Trianon had decided upon — inspite of the fact that according to the opinion of distinguished Anglo-Saxon circles that was wrong and unjust, and was the source of newer frictions and troubles — it would again be the hothouse of possibilities extremely threatening a lasting World-Peace.

I would shortly like to deal with the question, whether — as a retaliation, or a punishment or on the basis of the principle of equal treatment — the dispositions concerning Hungary are to be stricter than those concerning the other neighbouring countries.

I should like to point to the fact, that with the exception of Yugoslavia, all our other neighbors who demand territory and partly even recompensation from us, have, as may be proved, more help to their German friends against the Allied Nations, than we did. In order to prove this I will relate the following facts:

Slovakia took part in the war against the Allied Nations with a relatively uncomparably larger force and to a much greater extent than we did. Her territory, her material and morale, military and financial, economical and political values were entirely in the service of the German interests. German troops drew up through Slovakia in the warfare against the Russians.

Bohemia surrendered to Hitler completely. Her factories and workmen worked for the Germans, her economy served the German war-interests and what's more she even increased the German's war industry by new factories. There was peace and order in the country all the time, there were no signs of any serious oppositions. Her army which had been made large and strong by the Allies let the German troops of occupation in without resistance.

Roumania was among the so called satellites the country which turned into the most complete Fascistic and Nazi state. Her significant forces were entirely drawn up and cast in against the Soviet. She incorporated large Russian territories and immediately introduced Roumanian administration. She gave her entire petroleum production as well as her agricultural products to the Germans. And all this was done by the Roumania which ever since the last War has been materially and morally supported by America, England, and France. And Roumania was not in the mouth of Hitler's empire, as we were, they had no common frontiers.

Yugoslavia, her army being well equipped by the Allies and the country being in a first-rate strategical situation, was in the position to fight a partisan

war against the Germans. In spite of the strong German pressure I was not willing to give Hungarian troops in the war against Yugoslavia and even after the towns of Szeged and Pécs had been bombed by them and the numerous Hungarian population of the Bácska had been molested by the Yugoslavs we occupied only the former Hungarian territory. On the basis of our historical rights, the majority of the Hungarian population, this territory may rightfully be claimed as ours.

It was an unprecedented injustice to give Burgenland to Austria after the last war. A conquered nation had been given a piece of land — and what's more, a piece of land which it had never claimed. As Austria joined Germany with great enthusiasm during this War fought with all her political and military strength for Nazism, I cannot understand, why and for what reason Hungary should be more guilty in the eyes of the Allies.

I have to call your Excellency's attention to the fact that Hungary is in a key position in the South-Eastern part of Europe. Hungary is wedged in between the mass of Germans breaking forth from the West towards the East and the Slavs breaking forth from the East to the South-West, and at the same time forms a wedge between the Northern and Southern Slavs. Hungary shuts down the Balkan peninsula to the North. The best passable continental roads and navigable rivers in this direction lead through Hungarian territory. Consequently Hungary is the defending bulwark of the Eastern part of the Mediterranean, that part which from the point of view of world economy is of great importance. For this reason she falls in the way of conquering nations who endeavour to expand their power towards the South-East and the West. It was Hungary who in the XIII. century held up the Mongols who broke into Europe and it was Hungary who in the XV. century defended the West against the plundering of the Turks with her own body. This is just how she fell into the line of expansion of some nations of our present age and it was for this reason that she was compelled to become a battlefield.

Hungary is in no racial or linguistic relationship either with the German or Slav people. The Hungarian folk does not understand their languages; its morals, customs, and culture are radically different. Hungary has for many centuries firmly withstood the endeavours for being conquered or incorporated by these nations.

Hungary, but especially the old Hungary with its 1000 years old frontiers, encircled by the Carpathians is exceedingly rich in agricultural products, minerals, and raw material, and these values are far from being completely used up. The up-to-date improvement of Hungarian economical life and the excavation of her treasures will be the task of that great power which draws Hungary into its sphere of interest. And this has got to be a Western great power, for the geographical position of the country, the vast chain of mountains forming a barrier towards the North and the East, the psychological structure of the people, as well as its cultural endeavours of the past centuries necessitate our orientation towards the West.

On deciding the problem as to which great power Hungary should turn to for support and friendship, there is but one logical solution. Hungary has none else but the Anglo-Saxon powers to turn to. This would be of political and economical advantage to the Anglo-Saxon powers, as in this way they could secure peace on the Balkan peninsula and the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean.

A Polish-Hungarian bloc with a common frontier would secure the peace in this part of Europe. Hungary has lived in close friendship with Poland for centuries and the two states have never fought a war with each other. We gave evidence of this friendly feeling at the beginning of the War, when we denied the Germans the permission to pass through our country against Poland, and an order was given for the bridges to be blown up in case the Germans tried carrying through their intention by force. During the war we gave large masses of Polish refugees a hearty welcome, helped and supported them in their further flight towards the West.

Besides the territories that had belonged to us for over a thousand years, Hungary has no other territorial aspirations. Could Hungary find support with a great power, which has no intention of oppressing her, she would become released of the immediate pressure of her political problems and could produce great results in economical life.

In the twenties of this century many efforts were made to gain the friendship of Britain and these efforts did not remain resultless as quite a number of the members of the English Parliament raised their word in the interest of Hungary. But British official circles — probably under the influence of the loud propaganda of the Small Entente based often on fictive facts — did not welcome our approaches and this is how our unfortunate country came to get under German influence again. Germany was only too happy to grasp the opportunity of making this valuable territory one of the bases of her political and economical aspirations. We were not able to defend ourselves against these endeavours, as according to the Peace Treaty of Trianon we were allowed only an army of 30,000 men for the purpose of maintaining order, and this an army lacking modern artillery, airforce, and armoured divisions.

The ideas and methods of bolshevism are just as strange to the Hungarian people as those of National Socialism have been.

Should my word be granted understanding and should the Anglo-Saxon powers draw Hungary into their sphere of interest, it is for the good of both parties for Hungary to become politically and economically as strong as possible.

The interests of the Anglo-Saxon powers demand therefore, that Hungary should not remain the mutilated country it was made by Trianon, but that it should regain its 1000 years old boundaries which alone form a natural line of defence towards the North and the East. In the interest of a strong Hungary and a healthy Hungarian economical life it is of essential importance to give her back Fiume, the port of which was built by our country at a great expense.

Firmly convinced that the above mentioned facts hold ground not only from the point of view of a sovereign who has ruled for 24 years and who is anxious about his country, but also from the point of view of right and justice which are to maintain World Peace, I repeatedly ask your Excellency and your Government to take these problems into serious consideration.

Sincerely Yours,
Horthy