

Mihály Fülöp

THE UNFINISHED PEACE

THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN
MINISTERS AND THE HUNGARIAN
PEACE TREATY OF 1947



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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Mihály Fülöp's five decades of scholarly work have been devoted to research and teaching of diplomacy, peacemaking, and the history of Hungarian foreign relations. His professional contributions have left a lasting impact on several universities in Hungary and abroad. In 2014, he joined the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies of the Ludovika University of Public Service as a research professor and later held the Zoltán Magyar Chair. Currently, he is Professor Emeritus of the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy. Through his research and publications, many previously unknown and/or unpublished historical and diplomatic sources have been brought to light, becoming integral parts of the historical record.

The monograph now in the reader's hand, was previously published in Hungarian, French, and Romanian. The first English edition was released 14 years ago in the United States by the Center for Hungarian Studies and Publications as part of the East European Monograph series. It was translated from the original Hungarian by Thomas and Helen Kornfeld. This well-reviewed volume remains relevant and is now being republished by the Ludovika University Press with notable enhancements, including both print and e-book formats. This new edition makes the monograph more accessible to a general audience interested in the history of diplomacy, negotiations, and foreign policy.

The conclusion of World War II and the subsequent Paris Peace Treaties – signed on February 10, 1947, by the victors and the former Axis allies Italy,

Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Finland – marked a pivotal shift in global politics, laying the foundations for the contemporary rules-based world order. The devastation caused by the war and the desire to prevent future conflicts led to the establishment of a new international system aimed to create a stable, predictable, and just framework for international relations, and to maintain peace and security through diplomacy and international law. The Charter of the United Nations set forth principles such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the peaceful resolution of disputes, which became the cornerstones of the emerging international system.

At the same time, the peace project remained essentially unfinished. World War II did not result in a comprehensive settlement comparable to the 1919 Peace Treaty of Versailles. At the Potsdam Conference, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union had established the Council of Foreign Ministers, giving it sole responsibility for drafting peace treaties with the former Axis countries that had switched sides and declared war on Germany during the war. Consequently, the crucial issue of German and Austrian reintegration into the European political landscape was postponed. The Paris Peace Treaties imposed significant territorial changes, reparations, and restrictions on the defeated states. Unfortunately, further negotiations between the parties stalled due to the emerging Cold War, leaving the European peace settlement incomplete. The long era of bipolar power balance that followed failed to achieve a comprehensive and positive conclusion to the peace process in Europe, and led to the rise of the *pax sovietica*.

The aftermath of World War II gave rise to several issues that continue to provoke debate within Hungarian intellectual circles and dominate public discourse to this day. These include the victors' failure to restore Hungary's independence and sovereignty, the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the suppression of the 1956 revolution by the Soviet armed forces, and the lack of protection and self-government for Hungarian minorities in neighboring states. After the collapse of Soviet rule in Central Europe, these unresolved issues were not put back on the table but were instead relegated to an unsuccessful resolution through the European integration process.

Considering these circumstances, it is clearly essential to revisit and re-examine the precedents of the European peace settlement with historical

accuracy, impartiality, and open-minded debates. This re-examination should focus on the pivotal circumstances, motivating factors, and issues that were ultimately excluded from the settlement. The present scholarly monograph offers a comprehensive account of the Central European – and particularly Hungarian – perspective on this international peace settlement, elucidating both its positive elements and shortcomings. The author demonstrates that, despite the rhetoric of fairness and reconciliation in the long run, no effective negotiations or bargaining were possible between the victors and the defeated states. The decisions affecting the peoples of Central Europe were made by the great powers without input from the defeated states. This monograph places the history of great power disputes and decisions pertaining to the 1947 settlement within the broader international context of the victors' diplomatic actions and negotiations concerning the region. Consequently, the defeated countries were left to present only extenuating circumstances in their defense. Moreover, the victors determined Hungary's position in Europe without being able to respond to any of the pivotal questions of peace in the Carpathian Basin. Consequently, the monograph not only elucidates the fundamental issues of Hungary's peace illusions but also sheds light on the multitude of challenges stemming from the incomplete European peace settlement.

The present volume offers a synthesis of the author's earlier work and the results of Hungarian historiography to date. It provides an account of the prehistory of the 1947 peace agreement, the course of the negotiations in the Council of Foreign Ministers regarding the Hungarian Peace Treaty, and the international processes leading to the conclusion of peace.

The book offers a comprehensive account, meticulously documented with an extensive array of footnotes referencing a multitude of archival and printed sources from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Russia, Hungary, and Romania. Professor Fülöp's ability to integrate this extensive body of documentation into a compelling narrative is a particular strength. His balanced interpretation of the European peace process demonstrates his ability to transcend the traditional approach of national historiography.

A classic and straightforward work of diplomatic history, Professor Fülöp's book clearly explains why some countries allied with Germany fared

better than others in the postwar settlements. The author elucidates how and why the interests of the two superpowers shaped postwar Europe, often with little regard for principles or the populations of the affected countries. This work shows the intricate details of the negotiations and disagreements that ultimately led to the Cold War in Central and Eastern Europe, and is a must for anyone who wants to understand the origins of that conflict.

Péter Krisztián Zachar
Ludovika University of Public Service

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Allied Control Commission
CAB	Cabinet Papers
CFM	Council of Foreign Ministers
CMAE	Conseil des Ministres des Affaires Etrangères
DBPO	BUTLER, Rohan – PELLY, M.E. eds. (1984): <i>Documents on British Policy Overseas</i> . Ser. I, vol. 1: <i>The Conference at Potsdam, July–August 1945</i> . London: HM Stationery Office.
Dove–Braithwaite Report	COS (47) 67. <i>Report by the Service Advisers to the United Kingdom Delegation at the Paris Conference on the Peace Treaties with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland on 29 May 1947</i> .
FRUS 1943/I	US Department of State (1963): <i>Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1943</i> . Vol. 1: <i>General: The United Nations</i> . Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
FRUS 1944/III	US Department of State (1965): <i>Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1944</i> . Vol. 3: <i>The British Commonwealth and Europe</i> . Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
FRUS 1944/IV	US Department of State (1966): <i>Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1944</i> . Vol. 4: <i>Europe</i> . Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

- FRUS 1945/I US Department of State (1967): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945*. Vol. 1: *General: The United Nations*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1945/II US Department of State (1967): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945*. Vol. 2: *General: Political and Economic Matters*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1945/III US Department of State (1968): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945*. Vol. 3: *European Advisory Commission, Austria, Germany*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1945/IV US Department of State (1968): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945*. Vol. 4: *Europe*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1945/V US Department of State (1967): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945*. Vol. 5: *Europe*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1945/Malta–Yalta US Department of State (1955): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers. Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1945/Potsdam US Department of State (1960): *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers. The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference), 1945*. Vols. 1–2: Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1946/II US Department of State (1970): *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946*. Vol. 2: *Council of Foreign Ministers*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1946/III US Department of State (1970): *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946*. Vol. 3: *Paris Peace Conference: Proceedings*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
- FRUS 1946/IV US Department of State (1970): *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946*. Vol. 4: *Paris Peace*

	<i>Conference: Documents.</i> Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
FRUS 1946/VI	US Department of State (1969): <i>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946</i> . Vol. 6: <i>Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union</i> . Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
FRUS 1947/IV	US Department of State (1972): <i>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947</i> . Vol. 4: <i>Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union</i> . Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.
KÜM BÉO	Külügyminisztérium Békeelőkészítő Osztály [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Peace Preparatory Department]
MAE AD	Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Archives Diplomatiques
ME	Miniszterelnökség [Prime Minister's Office]
NA	National Archives
PRO FO	Public Record Office, Foreign Office
RDCP I	<i>Recueil des documents de la Conférence de Paris, Palais du Luxembourg, 29 juillet – 15 octobre 1946</i> (1951). Vol. 1: <i>Comptes rendus sténographiques des séances plénières: Procédures de la Commission Générale</i> . Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
RDCP II	<i>Recueil des documents de la Conférence de Paris, Palais du Luxembourg, 29 juillet – 15 octobre 1946</i> (1951). Vol. 2: <i>Elaboration du règlement de la Conférence</i> . Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
RDCP III	<i>Recueil des documents de la Conférence de Paris, Palais du Luxembourg, 29 juillet – 15 octobre 1946</i> (1951). Vol. 3: <i>Organisation de la Conférence</i> . Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
RDCP IV	<i>Recueil des documents de la Conférence de Paris, Palais du Luxembourg, 29 juillet – 15 octobre 1946</i> (1951). Vol. 4: <i>Travaux des commissions</i> . Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
RDCP VI	<i>Recueil des documents de la Conférence de Paris, Palais du Luxembourg, 29 juillet – 15 octobre 1946</i>

- (1951). Vol. 6: *Séances des Commissions*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
- RDCP VII *Recueil des documents de la Conférence de Paris, Palais du Luxembourg, 29 juillet – 15 octobre 1946* (1951). Vol. 7: *Séances des Commissions, 43–45^e séance*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
- ÚMKL Új Magyar Központi Levéltár [New Hungarian Central Archives]

THE UNFINISHED PEACE

INTRODUCTION

On February 10, 1947, in Paris, the Hungarian peace treaty was signed. It determined Hungary's post-World War II international position and designated its position in Europe. At the same time as the Hungarian peace treaty, treaties were signed with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, and Finland. The victorious Great Powers negotiated the peace terms with the former German satellite countries jointly and simultaneously. This fact by itself justifies the presentation of the history of the preparations for the peace treaties and of the negotiations on the basis of an international comparison and from the perspective of the great antifascist coalition.

When the time arrived to settle the fate of the vanquished countries, the wartime alliance of the victors had already begun to unravel. The history of the peace negotiations is thus inextricably interwoven with the genesis of the Cold War and with the negotiations which took place during the brief transitional period that lasted from the end of the war to the spring of 1947, when the cooperation of the Great Powers, which had defeated Germany, came to an end. The World War II conflict remained partially unresolved because no peace treaty was ever signed with Germany.

Following the war, the preparatory negotiations about the peace treaties with the vanquished countries conducted made by the CFM, established in Potsdam, and it was the CFM which drafted the final text of the treaties rather than the Allied representatives in Paris at what was generally considered to be the peace conference. The stipulations of the Hungarian peace

treaty were decided by the three Great Powers, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States of America. In the present work, I summarize the negotiations of the CFM concerning the Hungarian peace treaty and examine the goals the three Allied Powers wished to achieve in the peace negotiations with Hungary. I will limit my discussion of the Hungarian preparations for the peace treaty to those essential points that are necessary in order to understand the Allied policies vis-à-vis Hungary. The Hungarian peace negotiations were not conducted between Hungary and the Allied Powers because the terms of the treaty were strictly a matter for negotiations between the three Great Powers.

This study analyzes the Three Power decision-making process from the beginning of the CFM in May–June 1945 to the drafting of the final version of the peace treaty in December 1946. The critical preliminaries and the discussion of the signing, ratification, and implementation of the Hungarian peace treaty are not directly part of this study. The Allies drew up the essential outlines of the treaty on the basis of Hungary's war record during the last phases of the European conflict in 1943–1944. My dissertation is concerned primarily with the sessions of the CFM where the issues previously left open and unresolved were settled. The formulation of the armistice conditions was not part of the study even though, in retrospect, they proved to be highly significant. The issues discussed by the CFM in 1945–1946 were most important for Hungary. They included Hungary's independence and sovereignty, withdrawal of the Soviet troops of occupation, the amount of reparation, resolution of the Hungarian–Romanian territorial dispute, transfer of the Hungarians from Slovakia and the demand of the Slovaks for the Pozsony (Bratislava) bridgehead. Most of these issues led to a confrontation among the Allied Powers.

The postwar plans of the Allies for Europe were first drafted at the end of 1942 when there was a turn in the military situation in Russia and when the North African landings changed the situation in the Mediterranean basin. The Great Powers of the antifascist coalition expected to maintain their wartime unity in postwar Europe, and it was not anticipated that after the war Europe would be divided into two opposing military alliances. In the spring of 1943, the Foreign Office (the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

recommended to the Soviet Union and to the United States that a European directorate be set up, and this was reflected in the October 1943 Moscow declaration of the foreign ministers and also in the declaration issued at the end of the Yalta Conference. The original spring 1943 recommendations of the Foreign Office envisaged the preservation of Three Power cooperation, the establishment of a United Nations European Commission, and the equal participation of the three Allies in the postwar control of the former enemy countries. The British endeavored to make sure that the armistice negotiations, important preliminaries of the peace treaties, did not designate unilateral, exclusive spheres of interest because this would inevitably lead to the dissolution of the great coalition. Soviet policy, however, was permeated with the idea of creating a reverse *cordon sanitaire* around Germany. The Americans wished to avoid the British–Soviet spheres of interest and instead wished to replace the Europe of fractious small states with some appropriate form of federation based on dignified cooperation. The antifascist coalition was not able to accomplish this in 1943–1944. Because of strategic developments, Italy came under the exclusive control of the Anglo-American powers, while Eastern Europe came under complete Soviet control, thus preventing the adequate coordination of the postwar plans of the three Allies. This task was assigned to the CFM after the termination of the European armed conflict.

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Allied Powers started preparations for the peace treaty with Hungary almost from the very beginning of the war. The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the British Foreign Office, and the United States Department of State established organizations during the spring and summer of 1942 which were made responsible for making plans for the postwar settlement and for long-range foreign policy. There was the Soviet Peace Treaty Planning Committee (Komitet Poslevoennogo Ustroistva) under Maxim Litvinov, the Economic and Reconstruction Department established in June 1942 by the Foreign Office and placed under the leadership of Gladwyn Jebb, and the American Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, under the direction of Leo Pasvolsky. The British, Soviet, and American diplomats participating in the CFM debates on Hungary in 1945–1946 had studied the Hungarian problems during the

past several years of the war. Other than the members of the CFM, these largely unknown Foreign Service officers, who were instrumental in drafting postwar diplomatic strategies and making plans for the peace of Europe, are the stars of this chronicle. The plans for the Hungarian peace treaty, the first drafts and the final form of the individual provisions, the memoranda and summaries, the *aide memoirs*, and analyses as well as all ideas about Hungary were the cooperative efforts of the negotiating committees of the CFM and of the officials of the London, Washington, and Moscow Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

The British delegation to the CFM was led by Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin with the assistance of Undersecretaries of State Ronald Nigel and, after the beginning of 1946, Gladwyn Jebb. All pertinent documents about Hungary were also submitted to the Minister of State for Political Affairs, Philip J. Noel-Baker, and to Permanent Undersecretary of State, Alexander Cadogan and his assistant, Orme Sargent. The Reconstruction Department, responsible for planning the peace treaties, was led by James G. Ward. The Peace Treaty Section, charged with preparations for the Hungarian peace treaty on behalf of Great Britain, was under the leadership of Viscount Hood, James A. Marjoribanks, and C.L. Silverwood-Cope. Hungarian territorial issues were handled by the Heads of the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, Christopher F.A. Warner and William G. Hayter, assisted by Michael S. Williams. The Hungarian–Romanian experts were Christopher F.A. Warner and A.C.W. Russell. Carlile Aylmer Macartney, a well-known expert on Hungary, was frequently consulted on all matters pertaining to that country. The British Political Representative in Budapest, A.D.F. Gascoigne and, after the summer of 1946, the British Minister A. Knox Helm also had significant input into the formulation of the conditions of peace with Hungary.

James F. Byrnes, the United States secretary of state, played a dominant role at the meetings of the CFM. He relied on a small circle of associates, Ben Cohen, H. Freeman Matthews, Director of the Office of European Affairs, Charles Bohlen, an expert on the Soviets, James C. Dunn, the assistant secretary of state, responsible for the peace negotiations, and J.F. Dulles. Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson, in charge of the State

Department in Washington, and the staff of the State Department were practically excluded from participation in the negotiations. An important role in the preparations of the Hungarian peace treaty plans was played by Cavendish W. Cannon, the chief of the Division of Southern European Affairs, by experts John C. Campbell and Philip E. Moseley, and by the secretaries of the American Mission in Budapest, Merrill and Leslie Squires. Minister Schoenfeld's dispatches sent from Budapest were considered seriously in formulating positions relative to Hungary.

Andrei Vyshinsky, responsible for the peace negotiations and for the affairs of liberated Europe, replaced Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov at the sessions of the CFM. At the sessions of the deputy foreign ministers in London, the Soviet delegation was chaired by Ambassador Fedor Gusev. He had served as Soviet representative on the European Advisory Commission during the war. The Hungarian, Romanian, and Bulgarian peace treaty plans were drawn up under the guidance of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vladimir G. Dekanozov. Alexander A. Lavrichev, the chief of the Southeast European Division, and Georgy Pushkin, the Soviet minister in Budapest, participated in planning and implementing policy regarding Hungary.

The text of the Hungarian peace treaty was prepared during enormously complex negotiations by the Soviet, American, and British delegations during the three sessions of the CFM. The territorial and political studies relative to Hungary, prepared during the war by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the three Great Powers, were evaluated and reformulated at the sessions of the CFM. The wartime cooperation of the Allies against Hungary was continued during the peace until the final settlement of Hungarian affairs. The stipulations of these arrangements were developed during the Hungarian peace negotiations by the CFM.

GENESIS OF THE CFM AND THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE: START OF THE HUNGARIAN PREPARATIONS FOR THE PEACE

In their declaration of November 1, 1943, the ministers of foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, and Great Britain declared that “their united action, pledged for the prosecution of the war against their respective enemies, will be continued for the organization and maintenance of peace and security.”¹ On May 8, 1945, 18 months later, Germany surrendered unconditionally and the European conflict was over. Following the defeat of the common enemy, cracks appeared almost immediately in the “strange alliance” of the Big Three.² The moment of victory came unexpectedly to the Allies, and other than the principles announced in the Atlantic Charter, they had no specific plans for European peace arrangements.

The British, American, and Soviet diplomatic discussions during the war, the armistice negotiations, the surrender documents, and the Yalta Declaration on “Liberated Europe” were not concerned with the final peace settlement but rather with provisional measures for the period of time between the surrender and the implementation of the peace treaties. The armistice satisfied the requirements of stopping the fighting and limiting the sovereignty of the defeated countries. Allied organizations controlled the domestic and foreign policy of these countries. The reparations to be paid as well as the maintenance costs of the occupying forces limited the options for economic recovery. The victorious Allied Powers considered the

¹ FRUS 1943/I: 756.

² DEANE 1947.

reestablishment of peace a bonus that eased the situation in the defeated countries and recognized the fact that, in the end, the satellites had turned against Germany.

Questions about the process of settling the peace were divisive for the Allies in May and June 1945. There were lengthy diplomatic battles over the modalities of the peace negotiations. Should the peace terms be discussed with the former enemies or should they simply be imposed upon them? Should the victors adopt a punitive attitude or a lenient one? Should the final decision be handed down by the three Great Powers or should there be a general European peace conference with the other allies participating in the decision-making? What should be the order of the negotiations? Should the central issue, Germany and Austria, be dealt with first, or should the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish peace treaties, considered second order, take precedence?³ Where, when, and at what level should the peace treaty preparations be made, and whose recommendations should be accepted as the basis for the negotiations?

The victorious powers endeavored to avoid the mistakes made after World War I. They fought the antifascist war under the banner of “democracy” and therefore the defeated countries could hope for permission to participate in the negotiations. Announcements were made about a “just” peace with the assumption that issues would be handled on their merits. Proclamations also referred to a “lasting” peace which should have meant that the interests of both victors and vanquished would be considered in a serene way when the conflict was ended. The settlements at the end of World War I were regarded critically, particularly by the United States and the Soviet Union, but Great Britain and France also wished to avoid a Versailles-type peace conference. The victorious powers did not follow the procedures of the previous arrangements, and the intent of carefully and thoroughly preparing the peace treaties led the Allies down new paths. Even the techniques for terminating the two conflicts are not comparable. In 1919, in Versailles, Germany signed the peace treaty dictated by the victors. In 1945, because of the total defeat of Germany and the ensuing Four-Power Allied occupation, Germany, as a state, ceased to exist and all powers devolved on the victors.

³ BYRNES 1947. It is in this book that Byrnes referred to the five peace treaties as “second order.”

GENESIS OF THE CFM

The procedural questions concerning the peace settlements were first raised by the Foreign Office in May 1945, when the Italian peace treaty plans were being elaborated. The British recommended that a four-power agreement be reached about the Italian peace treaty prior to any peace negotiations with Germany. They also recommended that the other countries at war with Italy express their views at separate, smaller gatherings. The Italians would be asked to participate only at a later stage of the negotiations. They could make their comments at that time, but would be “compelled to sign the peace agreement without any significant changes in its clauses.”⁴

The British document faithfully reflected the thinking of the day about the peace process. It seemed that the signing of the peace treaties, including the German one, was not far off. In January 1945, the Foreign Office rejected an American proposal to make a “preliminary” peace treaty with Italy, but by May it was willing to sign a treaty with Italy before the German one.⁵ The British recommendation rank-ordered the participants. The Great Powers had the right to make decisions, the other allies could suggest amendments, and the defeated country would only be listened to. According to this proposal, the “former enemy country” had to be made to accept the stipulations of the peace treaty, with force if necessary. It was thus a peace treaty dictated by the victors, and not one that was the result of negotiations with the vanquished. The British proposal later served as a model when the other peace treaties were negotiated.

On June 7, 1945, the Foreign Office discussed the preparation of the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian peace treaties. Because of the same general character of the three, it was considered desirable to conclude them at the same time. The Foreign Office was not opposed to the Soviet Union’s recommendation of Moscow as the site of the negotiations, and even saw the advantages of having the British Embassy in Moscow participate. This embassy gained considerable experience during the armistice negotiations with Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, and Hungary, that were held in Moscow. The British preferred this to a neutral site, like Vienna, since the latter would

⁴ WOODWARD 1961–1971: I. 538.

⁵ WOODWARD 1961–1971: III. 468–477.

have required the organization of a complete and new delegation. London also wished to give the Dominions, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia an opportunity to express their position.⁶

The Foreign Office viewed the three Balkan peace treaties separately from the Italian one. It granted precedence to the Soviet Union because it was the latter that had determined the stipulations for the armistice agreements. The Foreign Office first discussed the proposal with the Department of State, and wished to discuss it with the Soviet Union at a meeting of the Three Great Powers. The smaller allies were given no other role but to accept the decisions made jointly by the Great Powers.

The British War Cabinet was endeavoring to establish a joint British–American policy prior to the Potsdam Conference, but the mission of Harry Hopkins to Moscow suggested that President Truman was trying to settle differences with the Soviet Union without consulting the British. It was this visit that opened a window on the Soviet ideas about the peace settlements. At a meeting on May 26, 1945, Stalin urged the establishment of a peace conference in order to bring the European war to an end. Stalin stated that “the question was ripe and, so to speak, knocking at the door.” Hopkins viewed the approaching Potsdam Conference as preparatory to the peace negotiations. It was Stalin’s opinion that “the uncertainty as to the peace conference was having a bad effect and that it would be wise to select a time and place so that proper preparations could be made.” He added that “the Versailles conference had been badly prepared and, as a result, many mistakes had been made ... the Allies were not properly prepared at Versailles and ... we should not make the same mistake again.”⁷ Stalin was even more insistent than the British prime minister that the principle of the three major allies making decisions jointly had to be preserved. He was alarmed. “It was his impression that the American attitude towards the Soviet Union had perceptibly cooled once it became obvious that Germany was defeated, and that it was as though the Americans were saying that the Russians were no

⁶ Reconstruction Dept. office meeting, June 7, 1945, PRO FO [at present: National Archives, Kew, UK], 371.48192 R 10051.

⁷ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I, 30–31, 160–161.

longer needed.”⁸ It was for this reason that Stalin considered the Potsdam Conference to be particularly important.

The State Department first prepared the peace plans for Italy. The main trends of the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian peace treaties were determined only after the Potsdam Conference. The State Department, in its “Briefing Book for Potsdam,” was striving for an early and final peace treaty, so that the troops could be withdrawn and Italy’s future could be settled. It wished to avoid “a hasty solution, dictated by animus toward an ex-enemy, territorial ambitions or contingent political situations rather than by serious evaluation of the interests of future peace.” It wished to avoid a “dictated,” as opposed to a “negotiated” peace, by allowing the Italians themselves to come to the negotiations and present their case before every term became crystallized through a process of discussion, disagreement, and, finally, irreducible compromise among the victorious powers – all of whom, except the United States, would have booty of some sort to claim. Italian participation would remove any future pretext for an Italian repudiation of the treaty on the ground that it was dictated. The State Department recommended that the Italian peace terms be discussed at the first meeting of the CFM.

In the view of the State Department, the CFM was the forum for the preparations of the peace treaties, and that, until the Charter of the United Nations came into effect, the CFM would function as the Interim Security Council. The role of the CFM as the preparatory forum for the peace treaties was recommended on June 19, 1944, by Edward Stettinius, the deputy secretary of state under President Roosevelt. Stettinius felt that a general Versailles-type peace conference made decisions too slowly and too circuitously. When a year later, on June 9, 1945, President Truman asked his secretary of state whether he wished to conduct the European peace negotiations as a series of conferences or as a Dumbarton Oaks-style general conference, Stettinius, the acting secretary of state, cautioned the president on June 19, 1945, against calling for a slow and unwieldy, full, and formal peace conference. Recalling the recommendations made a year earlier, Stettinius proposed the establishment of a CFM with a permanent

⁸ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I, 32.

headquarters in Brussels or Vienna. It would be the responsibility of the CFM to conduct individual peace conferences. After the Potsdam Conference, the CFM would include, in addition to the three major powers, France and China. The CFM would have the right to call a conference, e.g., to arrange a peace treaty with Italy, or to question the interested parties about a specific issue, e.g., the Italian–Yugoslav border. Stettinius wished to limit the membership to the permanent members of the Security Council, in order to prevent the Soviet Union from including Poland and Yugoslavia, as it did for the Committee of Reparations, and also to avoid the addition of other members who would always support Great Britain or the Soviet Union. The dissolution of the European Advisory Commission, which was established in October 1943 for the negotiation of the armistices, and the creation of the Allied control mechanism for Germany and Austria also justified the arguments for the establishment of the CFM and the exclusion of the other Allied Powers.⁹

American diplomacy was based on Roosevelt's postwar plans, according to which the Grand Alliance would remain active in peacetime, the peace treaties could be concluded promptly, and the American participation in the United Nations Organization would guarantee international security. The State Department Memorandum of June 27, 1945, indicated that the CFM would be the most suitable body for implementing the peace treaties and the territorial settlements, because otherwise the "existing confusion, political uncertainty and economic stagnation will continue to the serious detriment of Europe and the world." The Department of State also indicated that at the Versailles peace conference after World War I the sessions were held in a "heated atmosphere of rival claims and counterclaims and that the ratification of the resulting documents was long delayed." Contrary to an earlier view, the State Department now emphasized that the opinion of the other Allies should be sought, in order to avoid the accusation that the Great Powers were running the world without consideration for the interests of the smaller nations. James F. Byrnes, who took over the Department of State from Stettinius on July 3, 1945, recommended to President Truman that the CFM should first negotiate the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian,

⁹ The "Briefing Book" reference is from FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 684; see also WARD 1981: 9–10.

and Hungarian peace treaties, because these were less controversial, and should turn to the German treaty only afterward. The new secretary of state believed that the determination of the general principles of the European peace settlements was the responsibility of the CFM, while the drafting of the peace treaties would be performed by the deputy foreign ministers. Byrnes wished to submit the peace treaty proposals to the general peace conference of the United Nations.¹⁰

The recommendations of the State Department clearly reveal the dual purpose the Americans had in establishing the CFM. Until the ratification of the UN Charter, they wished to use it as the forum for drafting the peace treaties and as a temporary security organization. They also wished to prevent the establishment of exclusive spheres of interest in Europe. According to the State Department, the CFM would tend to reduce the possibilities of unilateral Soviet or British actions, and the United States would use it as an intermediate measure to eliminate the existing spheres of interest.¹¹ At this time, the Americans were trying to smooth out the British–Soviet conflicts, because they considered tripartite cooperation necessary for the establishment of a lasting peace.¹²

In preparing for the Potsdam Conference of the heads of state and heads of government, the American secretary of state sent his proposal for the establishment of the CFM to the British and Soviet governments. On July 11, 1945, Molotov, the Soviet commissar for foreign affairs, responded to the American note, indicating that the overall European reorganization required a comprehensive peace conference. Molotov took exception to the inclusion of China in the CFM, particularly for European matters, because China did not participate in the European Advisory Commission and thus the issues were completely strange to her. At the same time, Molotov considered it possible for China to participate in the final peace conference. Molotov also inquired whether the Americans wished to discuss their Italian peace treaty proposal at the Potsdam Conference.¹³ At the July 14, 1945, British–American meeting, in preparation for the Potsdam

¹⁰ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 285–287; WARD 1981: 10–12.

¹¹ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 262–263.

¹² FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 264.

¹³ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 236, 190.

Conference, Alexander Cadogan, the British permanent undersecretary of state, supported the establishment of the CFM and the inclusion of China, but expressed reservations concerning the termination of the European Advisory Commission. The Foreign Office recommended that the CFM and its permanent secretariat be headquartered in London, although the FO did agree that the CFM might meet in other locations as well. In any case, the British considered the discussion of the German peace treaty to be much more important than the establishment of the CFM. James Clement Dunn, the American deputy secretary of state, recalling that the Soviet Union objected to France's participation in the German Reparation Commission, considered it preferable that the membership of the CFM be modeled on the Security Council of the UN with its five members.¹⁴ Alexander Cadogan agreed with the American proposal that a peace treaty be signed with Italy, but was not enthusiastic about its being negotiated by the CFM. The Foreign Office endeavored to secure a British–American understanding on this issue prior to meetings of the CFM.¹⁵

In the procedural debates about the establishment of the CFM, the Soviet Union wished to limit the number of participants, while the United States wished to enlarge it and allow the other victorious nations to participate in the discussions. The Soviet government rigidly insisted that the wartime decision-making by the three Great Powers be preserved in peacetime as well. The “anti-sphere-of-interest” stand of the United States made it difficult for Great Britain to support the United States and balance the Soviet Union and the Slavic bloc – Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. It was precisely this US–British cooperation on which the entire Foreign Office European policy was based. The British diplomats wished to include France in the CFM, mainly because of the increasing differences of opinion that arose on tactical issues between the United States and Great Britain. The Quai d’Orsay, learning from the failures of the peace settlements after World War I, preferred to seek an agreement among the small countries rather than a dictate imposed by the victors. France therefore tried to bring the three Great Powers together, but in order to prevent the future revival of the German threat, France also endeavored to establish good relationships with

¹⁴ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 295–296.

¹⁵ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 700.

Moscow, Prague, and Warsaw. Yet, France was not invited to the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences, even though German issues were discussed, which were of direct concern to France.

The CFM was designed to maintain three-power cooperation and to coordinate the interests of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the former enemy nations. The American intention, however, to eliminate the spheres of interest, immediately clashed with the tacitly accepted principle according to which easing the international situation of a former enemy country was the primary responsibility of the power or powers that liberated that particular country and dictated the terms of surrender. The Italian peace treaty was urged by the United States and Great Britain, while the resumption of diplomatic relations with Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, and, at a later date, with Hungary was proposed by the Soviet Union on May 27, 1945.¹⁶ Diplomatic recognition was a necessary precondition of any peace negotiation, since peace could be concluded only with a recognized government. Great Power cooperation, in principle, excluded unilateral actions, and the Yalta Declaration proclaimed the concerted policies of the Big Three in assisting the countries liberated from German rule and in proceeding toward the former European satellites of the Axis.¹⁷ Yet, the fact that during the last phases of the war the British and Americans were in charge of the armistice negotiations with the Italians,¹⁸ and that the Soviets determined the conditions of the Romanian, Bulgarian, Finnish, and Hungarian armistices, and particularly the Soviet interpretation of the concept of Allied control, was clearly contrary to the ideas of the joint action demanded during the war and to the "Concerted Policy" proclaimed at Yalta. The debates about the interpretation of joint policies were not limited to the conflict between the positions of the Anglo-Saxons and the Soviet Union. The preparations for the Italian peace treaty highlighted the differences between Great Britain and the USA in regard to the nature of the proposed peace treaty.

¹⁶ FEDOR 1958: 268; see also the message from Stalin to Truman, May 27, 1945, in SSSR Komis-siya po izdaniyu diplomaticheskikh dokumentov 1958: II. 239.

¹⁷ "Declaration on Liberated Europe," in FRUS 1945/Malta-Yalta: I. 977.

¹⁸ ARCIDIACONO 1984.

BRITISH, AMERICAN, AND SOVIET DEBATES
ABOUT THE PREPARATION OF PEACE TREATIES
WITH THE FORMER ENEMY COUNTRIES

By the end of May 1945, the Foreign Office had drawn up the plans for the Italian peace treaty. The territorial and political clauses were submitted to the War Cabinet on July 12. The British started with the assumption that by assuring the economic progress of a democratic Italy, a turn toward Communism could be prevented and manifestations of Soviet influence could be thwarted. Great Britain wished to establish friendly relations with Italy, which was regarded as a future member of the European system. At the same time, Great Britain wished to block the revival of any Italian "great power" pretenses and wished to prove to Italy and to the world that aggression did not pay and that Italy had to pay reparations for its past behavior and for its participation in the war on the side of Germany. It would have to surrender the disputed territories and the former Italian colonies, but this could not be allowed to affect domestic policies and economies adversely. Because of Italian susceptibilities and also in order to encourage Italy, Great Britain wished to facilitate its entry into the United Nations.¹⁹ In her Italian policies, Great Britain wished to see constitutional parliamentary elections as soon as possible and did not propose to withdraw the British and American troops until that time.

As we have already seen in the discussion on procedural questions, the Foreign Office did not have a lenient attitude toward Italy. The territorial settlements were considered to be punishment for aggression, but these were counterbalanced to some extent by concessions in other areas, such as the admission to the UN. During the last months of the war, and immediately thereafter, the State Department moved from assumption to conviction that while the United States wished to help the Italians, the British War Cabinet wished to keep Italy down.²⁰ The British believed that the United States never really considered itself to be in a state of war with Italy, and Sir Alexander Cadogan told his American colleague that "Italy ... should

¹⁹ WOODWARD 1961-1971: III. 478-480, 486.

²⁰ WOODWARD 1961-1971: I. 471.

not receive better treatment than our liberated allies.”²¹ According to the British: “Our own public opinion and that of our European allies would not understand a policy which brought to Italy the benefits of a formal conclusion of peace without its attendant penalties.” Yet, in the Trieste crisis, occasioned by Marshal Tito’s territorial demands, Winston Churchill adhered to the decision made previously by the Allies that “no transfer of territory can be settled except at the Peace Conference or by an interim agreement between the parties.”²² The British prime minister believed that if they yielded in the Trieste matter, the Italians would interpret it as though Great Britain bowed to the demands of the Soviet Union, and this would strengthen the tendency toward Communism in Italy. The Foreign Office was aware that without American assistance, it could not resist the Yugoslav and Soviet pressure. Consequently, the British were prepared to yield the leading role in Italy to the United States, particularly in economic matters.

The State Department, like the FO, wished to keep the Soviet Union, and its ally Yugoslavia, as far as possible from all Italian matters, and it also opposed the drive for power of the Italian Communist Party. The United States did not consider Italy to be exclusively in the British sphere of influence because Italy’s strategic position and economic links to the Danubian countries made her an obvious link between East and West in the future. The United States wished to achieve its peace goals with a lenient and not punitive or dictated peace treaty. The Americans wished to conclude the peace negotiations within a few months, with the participation of France, Greece, Yugoslavia, Ethiopia, and the vanquished Italy in addition to the Big Three. The United States indicated that it was willing to soften the armistice control preparatory to the peace negotiations, proposed Italy’s admission to the UN, and wished to make Italy into the “bastion of democracy” in Southern Europe by assisting it in its recovery.²³

The Foreign Office considered it a reward for Italy that a peace treaty would be drafted with her prior to any settlement with Germany and thus Italy’s fate would be totally separated from Germany’s. The Italians would

²¹ WOODWARD 1961–1971: I. 473.

²² WOODWARD 1961–1971: I. 477–478.

²³ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 681–713.

not have to face as stringent conditions as the Germans.²⁴ In contrast, the Americans were looking for a formula that would recognize Italy's co-belligerent status against Germany, and while this would not grant Italy the status of an ally, it would prevent Italy from being treated like the other defeated countries. The American Department of State and Department of Defense did not wish to grant any other country a dominant influence in Italian matters and wanted the United States to be the "senior partner" vis-à-vis the weakened Great Britain and agreed with the British that the Soviet Union could have only a nominal role, excluding it from the decision-making. The American ambassador in Rome, Alexander C. Kirk, believed that Italy could be used as a test case of the Allied policies vis-à-vis the vanquished and what was learned in Italy could be applied elsewhere as well, particularly in Germany.²⁵ Implementation of the Italian model, in effect, took place not there but in the eastern part of Europe.²⁶ Soviet diplomacy never failed to use the Italian policies of the Anglo-Saxons as justification for excluding its allies from all matters pertaining to the Balkan countries. The question of the Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish peace treaties was taken up in May 1945 when British Eastern European policies were being revised. This revision was triggered by the Soviet Union unilaterally imposing on Romania the government of Petru Groza on March 6, 1945, and by provoking the expulsion of Nikola Petkov's Peasant Party and the Kosta Lulchev Social Democrats from the Bulgarian government. This was done without consultation with Great Britain or with the United States. Invoking the Yalta Declaration, the United States requested a tripartite discussion to create a Romanian government that would be representative of all democratic parties.²⁷ Great Britain joined the United States in this request. The Soviet government did not agree to the consultation, which could thus not take place. Consequently, the Foreign Office reached the conclusion that in the case of the Eastern European countries, it could no longer invoke the Yalta Declaration because this would not enable them

²⁴ FRUS 1945/IV: 993.

²⁵ FRUS 1945/IV: 1007.

²⁶ ARCIDIACONO 1984: 10–11.

²⁷ FRUS 1945/I: 510–519.

to reach their goal. The chief reason for the Foreign Office's "unheroic course is that it surely is out of all proportion that we should endanger our fundamental policy of postwar cooperation with the Soviet Union for the sake of an issue which, even if it is not entirely academic or quixotic, is at any rate not vital to British interests in Europe."²⁸ The Foreign Office officials believed that Moscow's point of view concerning the Eastern European countries in question was such an integral part of general postwar Soviet foreign policy that they would not lightly abandon it. It was also recognized in the Foreign Office that they were attacking the internal order of countries that were viewed by the Soviet government as essential parts of its security because they formed a part of the reverse cordon sanitaire that the Soviet government wished to establish around Germany. For this reason the Foreign Office recommended that it would be best if these governments were accepted and if it were understood that "elections, if they ever take place, will be clearly neither free nor unfettered."²⁹

Foreign Secretary Eden summarized the contentious British–Soviet issues for Churchill on May 25, 1945. These included, among others, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. According to Eden, the aim of the British foreign policy was to secure the withdrawal of the Red Army and the establishment of independent governments. In the areas liberated by the Soviet Union, the British and American military missions served only as observers on the ACC, while the implementation of the armistice clauses was entirely in the hands of the Soviet military authorities who controlled the ACC. In Italy, the situation was precisely the reverse, with the British and Americans in full control and the Soviet military mission as observers with no input into the Allied political decisions. Eden acknowledged that during the war the British and American military missions had no legal standing for participating in the armistice control in Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary but, according to the Hungarian and Bulgarian armistice agreements, there seemed to be a possibility to assure the Western military missions' active participation after the end of the war. On this basis, the Foreign Office recommended three possible political courses for consideration:

²⁸ Note of Sir Orme Sargent, March 13, 1945, PRO FO, 371.48194 R 5063/5063/67.

²⁹ Note of Sir Orme Sargent, March 13, 1945, PRO FO, 371.48194 R 5063/5063/67.

- (1) We could ask, as the Americans suggested, for an improvement in the status of our Missions in Bulgaria and Hungary. The Russians would not agree, and we should merely be continuing our present unsatisfactory and undignified bickering.
- (2) We could withdraw our Missions, on the ground that there was nothing for them to do and leave the protection of our interests in the hands of our political representatives. This course of action would make little practical difference in Hungary and Bulgaria but would be disadvantageous in Romania, where our Military Mission was giving some measure of protection to our oil and other commercial interests. It would also be an obvious acknowledgement of defeat and would ruin any prestige left to us in the three countries concerned.
- (3) We might propose the conclusion of the peace treaties with the three countries concerned. If the Russians agreed, they would then have to reveal their ultimate policy, i.e. they would have to say whether they intended to keep permanent garrisons in the three countries. We could also withdraw our Missions with good grace, and might be able to intervene more effectively with the Governments for the protection and advancement of our commercial and economic interests once our relations were on a normal peace basis.

In the end, the British government decided in favor of early peace treaties in order to achieve the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the eastern half of Europe. Instructions were sent to the British ambassador in Washington on May 29, 1945, to convey the British position to the State Department.³⁰ It was in this context that the British government considered the May 27 Soviet proposal concerning the diplomatic recognition of the four enemy countries, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland. On May 29, 1945, Churchill tended to agree because in his view the exchange of ambassadors and the reestablishment of amicable relationships between the affected countries would not make the situation worse. The British prime minister wrote that “we should have to raise at the tripartite meeting the

³⁰ Quoted in WOODWARD 1961–1971: III. 587–588.

great question of police government versus free government, it always being understood that the intermediate States must not pursue a hostile policy to Russia." Eden did not wish to limit himself to diplomatic recognition. According to him, "since we should still be leaving intact the armistice regime through which the Soviet government controlled them," he wished to use the opportunity granted by the Soviet initiative "to put the British peace proposal on the table."³¹

By June 1945, the State Department had formulated a Central and Eastern European plan that differed from both British and Soviet foreign policies. It recommended a reorganization of the governments and free elections as a precondition for the resumption of diplomatic relations and for signing the peace treaties. In a message conveyed to Moscow on June 7, 1945, President Truman indicated his preparedness to resume diplomatic relations with Finland but not with Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. The president again recommended a tripartite consultation on the basis of the Yalta Declaration.³²

The State Department notified the Foreign Office at the end of June that it would support the recommendation for the early conclusion of the peace treaties only with qualifications. The State Department would not engage in peace negotiations with the present Romanian and Bulgarian government, even if this would accelerate the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. After consultation with its representatives in Sofia, Bucharest, and Budapest, the Department of State doubted that the Soviet troops would be withdrawn even after the peace treaty was signed, "especially if real political authority remains in the hands of the Communists."³³ The Foreign Office also considered it inevitable that the Soviet Union would demand military bases and the maintenance of troops in the respective countries, but considered it advantageous if these Soviet demands were not met on the basis of Soviet–Romanian, Soviet–Bulgarian, and Soviet–Hungarian negotiations alone, but be regulated by stipulations in the peace treaties

³¹ WOODWARD 1961–1971: III. 587–588.

³² SSSR Komissiiya po izdaniyu diplomaticheskikh dokumentov 1958: 271–272.

³³ Grew's telegram no. 5517 from Washington to Winant, July 6, 1945, PRO FO, 371.48192 P 10742, 10; 766, 10767, 10768/81/67 R 11658/5063/67; FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 381, 399–400.

because then, at a later date, there would be a legal basis for raising questions about it. The British government wished to maintain military bases in Italy even after the peace treaty and realized that this might be a precedent for similar demands in Southeast Europe by the Soviet Union.³⁴

Stalin considered the American position discriminatory, setting preconditions to the peace negotiations including a reorganization of the governments and free elections. He immediately protested against the distinction made between Finland, and Romania and Bulgaria because the latter two had participated in the destruction of Hitler's Germany. He also objected to the differentiation between the Romanian and Bulgarian political systems and the Italian one.³⁵ The Foreign Office assumed that the Soviet Union would not agree to the tripartite consultation recommended by the Americans or to give equal status to the American and British military missions in the ACC because the Kremlin no doubt anticipated that in that situation the British and American representatives could make the Soviets the minority and could outvote them. On July 12, 1945, the Foreign Office again explained that, contrary to the American position on postponing the peace treaties and diplomatic recognition, truly democratic governments could be established in these countries only if the peace treaties were signed before the present unsatisfactory governments became firmly entrenched. The Foreign Office was concerned that the pointless debate with the Russians would delay the peace settlements and thereby weaken the British and American position because in the meantime the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian governments would consolidate their control by intimidating the opposition.³⁶ The British delegation departed for Potsdam with the idea that it did not have to wait until the American illusions were dispelled and that it could submit its proposal at the first opportunity even if this would mean that Britain agreed with the Russians against the Americans.³⁷

At the last British–American meeting before the three-power summit conference, Alexander Cadogan urged that the signing of peace treaties take

³⁴ Summary of the Foreign Office debate, June 7, 1945, PRO FO, 371.48192 R 10059.

³⁵ SSSR Komissiya po izdaniyu diplomaticheskikh dokumentov 1958: II. 273–274.

³⁶ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 409–410; PRO FO, 371.48193 R 95879.

³⁷ WOODWARD 1961–1971: III. 595.

precedence over implementation of the Yalta Agreement. He stated that Great Britain could not establish diplomatic relations with countries that she was technically still at war with but that a peace treaty with Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary would resolve this problem. James Clement Dunn then told the British that the United States was strongly against peace negotiations with Romania and only less so with Hungary and Bulgaria.³⁸ The State Department wished to make the peace negotiations conditional on the creation of more representative governments. Eden, in contrast to the FO opinion, was eventually forced to accept the American line and took the British proposal about the urgent need for peace settlements off the agenda. The Foreign Office thus yielded the initiative to the United States not only in Italy but also in the reorganization of the Southeast European governments, elections and reorganization of the ACC.³⁹ So far as the ACC was concerned, the Soviet government wished to accommodate the American request even before the Potsdam Conference. It made a recommendation to change the plans of action of the Romanian, Bulgarian and Hungarian ACC and to relinquish the limitations imposed on the American and British military missions during the war.⁴⁰

THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CFM

The CFM was established at the Three Power Potsdam Conference held between July 17 and August 2, 1945. On July 28, 1945, the Conservative Prime Minister Churchill was replaced by the Laborite Clement Attlee. At the first plenary meeting, on July 17, Truman submitted the State Department's recommendation on the CFM. Stalin wished to have only the representatives of the three powers meeting at Potsdam participate in the CFM and he objected to China's presence at the European settlement negotiation. According to him, the creation of the CFM made

³⁸ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 295–296, 700.

³⁹ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 295, 320, 417, 700.

⁴⁰ WOODWARD 1961–1971: I. 53, 539.

occasional meetings of the ministers of foreign affairs unnecessary and also obviated the need for a continued European Advisory Commission. Churchill wished to preserve the two organizations in parallel with the council. He agreed with keeping China away from European affairs because he felt that "it was easy to set up bodies that look well on paper, but which do little in practice." As far as procedures were concerned, the British prime minister recommended that the members of the council be present at the meetings only when questions of interest to them were discussed. According to Stalin, the council would determine the time for establishing the European peace conference, while Churchill deemed the task of the council to be the submission of the peace treaty proposals to the three heads of government and the respective governments. At the end of the first plenary session, Truman agreed to the exclusion of China from the CFM.⁴¹ The three ministers of foreign affairs met regularly in preparation for the Meeting of the Heads of Government and Heads of State. On July 18, 1945, Byrnes again argued for membership for the Chinese but limited to discussions on Far Eastern matters. Molotov questioned the participation of the French at the peace conferences, other than the Italian and German ones, because France did not participate in the armistice negotiations with the other countries. In a counterargument, Byrnes cited the American example and stated that the United States was never in a state of war with Finland and thus would not sign any peace treaty with that country but would participate in the CFM discussions on Finland. It was the British foreign secretary who came up with a solution, namely that only those powers should participate in the Council that were signatories to the armistice agreements. "There would be three members for some purposes, four for some and five for others." Molotov objected to France's membership and wished to limit the council to the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States. Eden urged France's membership but was willing to bow to the opinions of his Soviet and American colleagues. In the end, Molotov recommended that the three of them should get started and "later see what will happen." The only

⁴¹ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I, 56–63.

thing the ministers of foreign affairs agreed on was the termination of the European Advisory Commission.⁴²

At the afternoon plenary session of July 18, 1945, Stalin, Churchill and Truman accepted the recommendation on the composition of the council which eliminated China from the European peace settlement and France from all peace negotiations except the German one. Churchill considered it unnecessary to submit the peace treaty proposals to the United Nations because this would cause problems and delays. Stalin considered it unnecessary to submit the proposals to the other allies because the three Great Powers represented the interests of all.⁴³

On July 19, Byrnes again defended the appropriateness of French participation in the Italian peace negotiations because France fought against Italy. Molotov agreed to the French participation but asked if France should take part in the formulation of the peace treaty with Romania. The Soviet commissar of foreign affairs did not consider this appropriate and opposed it. The American secretary of state declared that since France had not been at war with Romania it could participate in the discussions but not in the decision-making. Even though the *aide mémoire* of the State Department recorded this as an agreement, the wording was never included in the Protocol of the Potsdam Conference and the issue served as a cause for argument among the Great Powers and for procedural delays for almost a year prior to the peace settlement.⁴⁴ Churchill and Attlee were successful at the July 20 meeting in getting an agreement that London be designated as the permanent site of the Secretariat of the CFM and the site of the council meetings. The following day agreement was reached that the council have its first meeting no later than September 1.

The American ideas about the role of the CFM were discussed by Byrnes with Molotov on July 24, 1945. They wished to avoid calling a general peace conference that might generate unproductive and prolonged debates, and they also wished to listen to the small countries not directly involved with

⁴² FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 67–70; “The Dissolution and Final Report of the European Advisory Commission,” FRUS 1945/III: 539–558.

⁴³ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 89.

⁴⁴ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 101–106.

European affairs. The council would work out the directives to be followed by the ministers of foreign affairs in London, within 7–10 days. The three governments would harmonize their peace plans through diplomatic channels prior to September 1, with the Italian one being considered first. Molotov agreed with the American recommendations, which assumed that peace with the former allies of Germany could be made before the end of 1945.⁴⁵

The Potsdam Declaration about the establishment of the CFM reflected this agreement and also the temporary suspension of the debates. “As its immediate task, the Council shall be authorized to draw up, with a view of their submission to the United Nations, treaties of peace with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland, and propose settlements of the territorial questions outstanding on the termination of the war in Europe. The Council shall be utilized for the preparation of a peace settlement for Germany to be accepted by the government of Germany when a government adequate for the purpose is established.”⁴⁶ It was evident from the discussions at the meeting that the Great Powers considered the submission of the peace treaties to the United Nations as a formality and wished to reserve the right for final decisions to themselves. At the Potsdam Conference, the question of a general European peace conference was repeatedly discussed, but nothing came of it, just as it was never determined precisely what was to be the role and authority of the CFM. Would it be limited to the preparations for peace, or would it be the final decision-maker? The procedure agreed upon eliminated the possibility of a repetition of a Versailles-type peace conference. The significant decisions were prepared by the ministers of foreign affairs of the three Great Powers. The order of peace negotiations determined in Potsdam was fixed. Drafting the Italian peace treaty was given priority throughout the entire process. The logical sequence of European peace settlements was upset, and instead of discussing the German and Austrian treaties, the negotiation of the other treaties, defined by Byrnes as less controversial and secondary, was put to the fore.

The charter of the CFM determined the circle of those who would draft the peace treaties. “For the discharge of each of these tasks the Council will be composed of the Members representing those States which were signatory

⁴⁵ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II, 354–355.

⁴⁶ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I, 56–63.

to the terms of surrender imposed upon the enemy State concerned. For the purposes of peace settlement for Italy, France shall be regarded as signatory to the terms of surrender for Italy. Other Members will be invited to participate when matters directly concerning them are under discussion.”⁴⁷ On this basis, the Italian peace treaty would be negotiated by the British, American, Soviet, and French foreign ministers. The Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian treaties would be handled by the Soviet, American, and British ministers and the Finnish peace treaty would be the responsibility of the British and Soviet ministers. The 4–3–2 formula became a basic tenet for the peace settlements. The charter left it open that the CFM “may invite to an official conference those countries that are primarily interested in the resolution of a certain problem.”⁴⁸ The participants of the Potsdam Conference scheduled the first meeting of the CFM no later than September 1, 1945, with China and France to be included.

THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE AND THE DEBATE ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

The three heads of state and government reached agreement about the establishment of the CFM relatively easily, because this decision postponed the need for substantive discussions. The debate about the peace treaties and admission to the United Nations lasted from July 20, 1945, until the very last meeting of the conference on August 1. The reconciliation of the interests of the Allied Powers vis-à-vis the former enemy countries proved to be considerably more difficult than agreements about procedural issues related to the peace process.

The United States delegation in Potsdam pressed for an Italian peace treaty, revision of the armistice system, and Italy’s admission to the United Nations. Stalin agreed, but saw no grounds to single out the question of Italy in considering the other satellites, because Romania and Bulgaria turned their armies against Germany on the first day after their surrender, Finland conscientiously fulfilled its obligations, and the same thing applied

⁴⁷ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 401.

⁴⁸ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 56–63.

to Hungary. For this reason the Soviet head of government, Stalin, recommended at the July 20, 1945, session that if Italy's position was improved, the same improvements should be granted to the other countries as well, and all of them should be negotiated with at the same time. According to Churchill, the CFM should begin to prepare the Italian peace treaty, but it should not be completed until Italy had a democratically elected government. The British prime minister said that he did not wish to give up the control granted by the armistice agreement, because if the enforcement of the peace treaty were delayed for a longer period of time, "we would have no power to enforce our rights, except by the use of force." He added that no one wanted to use force. Stalin viewed the situation of Italy and of the other countries as questions of high policy. His words were translated into some awkward English the following way:

The purpose of such policy was to separate these countries from Germany as a great force. This method had been successfully applied by the Allies in Italy and by the Soviet forces in other satellites. But the use of force alone was not enough to separate the satellite states from Germany. Therefore, it was expedient to supplement the method of force by the method of improving the position of the satellites. These seemed to him the only means to rally the satellites around them and to detach them, once and for all, from Germany. Compared with these considerations of high policy the questions of revenge and complaints lapsed.⁴⁹

It was Stalin's opinion that the American proposal about Italy was in full harmony with this concept, and recommended a similar approach to Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland. "These countries," he said, "were defeated. The Control Commissions of the Three Powers started functioning to keep these countries under control. It was time now for a different policy and for easing the position of these countries." Stalin proposed the immediate resumption of diplomatic relations, and not the immediate

⁴⁹ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 172.

peace treaty, or the easing of the armistice clauses. According to the Soviet leader, it should not be a problem if these countries did not have a freely elected government, because neither did Italy, and yet diplomatic relations were established with her.⁵⁰

After the end of the European war, the Soviet Union endeavored to entrench the position of the governments established by it in its sphere of interest, and to gain diplomatic recognition for them from Great Britain and the United States. On July 18, Stalin tried to convince Churchill that “in the countries liberated by the Red Army, Russian policy wished to see strong, sovereign, independent states and that he, namely Stalin, opposed the Sovietization of any of these countries!” The Soviet leader promised free elections, from which he wished to exclude only the fascist parties. Stalin protested vigorously against an American proposal submitted on the first day of the conference, that questioned the representative nature of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments and demanded their reorganization. Referring back to the so-called percentages agreement with Churchill made in October 1944, the Soviet leader claimed that they had not interfered in Greek affairs, and therefore it would be unjust to expect that they would yield to the American demands for changing the Romanian and Bulgarian governments. Churchill voiced his concerns that Russia was forcing its way toward the West. Stalin tried to prove the opposite. The Soviet Union had withdrawn its troops; within four months, 2 million soldiers had been demobilized, and further demobilization was only waiting for railroad transportation capacity.⁵¹

During the British and American negotiations on that same day, July 18, 1945, Churchill questioned whether the countries under Soviet control could be free and independent. He considered it obvious that these countries could not adopt any hostile policies against the Soviet Union. Truman stated forcefully that he wanted very much for these countries to become truly independent by free and fair elections. The American president also

⁵⁰ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 172–173.

⁵¹ Record of a private talk between the Prime Minister and Generalissimo Stalin at dinner on July 18, 1945, at Potsdam, PRO FO, PREM 3/430/6.

agreed with Churchill that these matters had to be arranged jointly and not independently.⁵²

On the basis of the first few days of negotiations in Potsdam, the American delegation reexamined its recommendations, and substantially reduced its demands for the implementation of the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe in the Balkans. Byrnes, differing from his president, emphasized at the July 20 meeting of the three ministers of foreign affairs that the United States was concerned in the matter of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments only to the extent that they represented the will of the people, and that American representatives and newspapermen had free access to information. Otherwise, the American delegation was following Roosevelt's policies that assumed that the countries neighboring the Soviet Union would be friendly toward it. The American proposals submitted on July 21 no longer demanded that the Romanian and Bulgarian governments be urgently reorganized, and that there should be a tripartite consultation based on the Yalta Declaration. The proposals did insist, however, on the international supervision of the elections, prompt and effective procedures to facilitate the entry of representatives of the press, and equal participation in the Allied control of Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. The influence of the Soviet position of trying to separate diplomatic recognition and preparations for peace is manifest in the American proposals concerning Allied policy vis-à-vis Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland. According to the Americans, the goal in these countries, just as in Italy, was the urgent reestablishment of political independence, the onset of economic reconstruction, and elections, so that the people could choose their governmental system. According to the American proposal, therefore,

(1) The preparation of peace treaties with Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland, as in the case of Italy, are the early achievement of political independence and economic recovery and the exercise of the right of the respective peoples ultimately to choose their own form of government.

⁵² Note of the Prime Minister's conversation with President Truman at luncheon July 1945. PRO FO, PREM 3/430/8.

- (2) The three governments will make such public declarations on matters of joint concern with respect to these countries as may be appropriate.
- (3) The three governments recommend to the respective Control Commissions that the steps to be taken for the progressive transfer of responsibility to the Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Finnish Governments, respectively.
- (4) The three governments agree to the revision of the respective terms of armistice with these countries as clauses thereof may become inoperative.⁵³

In its recommendations concerning Italy, the American delegation went even further. They included an early peace treaty, economic assistance, early elections, expedited transfer of government responsibilities by the three Great Powers, and a report on the review of the armistice agreement by September 1. At the morning conference of the ministers of foreign affairs, on July 21, Molotov accepted the American memorandum about Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland as a reasonable basis for discussion, but asked that the five memoranda be combined into a single document to facilitate the discussion of the affairs of the five countries as a single issue.⁵⁴

At the afternoon session, on July 21, 1945, the American president came back to his original, July 17 recommendations, and rejected the Soviet proposal as a supplement to the American one, which, in Stalin's words, projected the resumption of diplomatic relations at a given moment. Stalin demanded that Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland receive the same treatment as Italy, and considered their "artificial distinction" an attempt to discredit the Soviet Union.⁵⁵

In the debate about the Allied policy in regard to the Central and Eastern European countries, Stalin and Molotov exploited the interest of the United States in making peace with Italy, to solidify the position of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments. When, on July 24, 1945, the outlines of an American-Soviet understanding appeared, Churchill took the step that converted the peace negotiations from a settlement between the victors and the vanquished to a treaty agreed upon by the victors. It was at this session that

⁵³ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 699.

⁵⁴ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 194, 646, 699, 1085.

⁵⁵ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 207, 358.

he asked Truman whether in his opinion the representatives of the present governments of Romania, Bulgaria, and of the other countries might appear before the CFM, and whether the three allies could discuss peace terms with them. In his answer Truman declared that “only a government we recognize may send representatives to the Council.” The British prime minister concluded that “they would make treaties with governments which they recognized, but that they did not intend to recognize these governments.” Stalin disagreed and said: “There was no reference to the conclusion of the peace treaties but only to their preparation. Peace treaties could be prepared even if governments were not recognized.” On this basis, then Churchill replied: “Naturally, we can prepare the peace treaties ourselves but in that case let us not say that the peace treaties are with Romania, Bulgaria, etc., but that the peace treaties are for Romania, Bulgaria, etc.”⁵⁶ At the Potsdam Conference, the Three Great Powers decided that the peace treaties would be prepared without the participation of the vanquished, and exclusively by negotiations among the victorious powers. If we consider that the charter of the CFM limited the preparatory activities to the Great Powers that signed the armistice agreements with the former enemies, we can conclude that the utility and efficacy of the peace preparatory activities of the five vanquished countries were limited from the very first.

In order to bring the debate about peace treaties with the former enemy countries to an end, the American secretary of state was prepared, on July 27, to give up his recommendation to admit Italy to the United Nations. During the last days of the Potsdam Conference, a joint American–Soviet effort managed to separate the preparations for peace treaties from diplomatic recognition. This was done within the framework of the agreements concerning German reparations and the western border of Poland. Accordingly, the three governments considered it desirable that the presently anomalous position of Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, and Romania be brought to an end with a peace treaty. In addition to the Italian peace settlement, which was to have priority, the CFM prepared the other four as well. It was relative to these four that “the conclusion of peace treaties

⁵⁶ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 324–328, 357, 364.

with recognized democratic governments in these states will also enable the three governments to support applications from them for membership in the United Nations. The three governments agree to examine each separately in the near future, in the light of the conditions then prevailing, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Finland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary to the extent possible prior to the conclusion of peace treaties with those countries.” On the basis of the July 12 Soviet recommendation, that the ACC in Hungary be reorganized, the three governments agreed to review the work of the ACC in Romania and Bulgaria, and also that representatives of the Allied press would enjoy full freedom to report.⁵⁷

At the Potsdam Conference, the leaders of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, and Great Britain, making some concessions, reached agreement on the settlement of postwar European problems. Despite serious disagreements, political cooperation among the Allied Powers survived until the end of the peace negotiations regarding the five former enemy countries. All three delegations departed from Potsdam with the feeling that, in the agreements relative to the peace negotiations, they had appropriately defended their interests. The Soviet delegation could consider it a success that the preparations for the peace treaties could begin independently of diplomatic recognition, that agreement was reached to treat Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, and Hungary equally, and that the five negotiations would be handled jointly. Further, that the United States’ recommendations to have the Romanian and Bulgarian governments reorganized, that the elections be under international control, and that there be a tripartite consultation, did not prevail. The Soviet Union could establish diplomatic relations with the respective countries, and hope that, sooner or later, the British and American governments would change their minds and send at least political representatives to these countries. At the same time, the American delegation considered it a major step forward that its recommendation for the establishment of a CFM was accepted readily by its allies, that the primacy of the Italian peace negotiations was accepted, that the three governments would support Italy’s admission to the UN,

⁵⁷ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 1510.

that the Southeast European ACC become tripartite, and that American journalists be allowed free access and travel in these countries, after the wartime restrictions had been lifted. According to the assessment of the Foreign Office, remarkable success was achieved by the agreement on the revision of the procedures of the ACC in Hungary extended to Romania and Bulgaria, because this meant the end of a large number of complaints. From the British side, the agreement concerning diplomatic relations was interpreted to mean that Great Britain would not have to revise its policies. Thus, the Potsdam Conference seemed to show promise for the peacetime cooperation of the three Great Powers.⁵⁸

The tripartite agreement, by setting the procedures for the peace settlements and rejecting a Versailles-type peace conference, was unable, however, to resolve the problem of the participation of the other allies and of the former enemies in the preparations for peace. In spite of the firm conviction and statements of the United States, the creation of the CFM again limited decision-making to negotiations between the three victorious Great Powers. The procedural issues, left unresolved in the charter of the CFM, contained the seeds of the future conflicts. American foreign policy used two yardsticks. In order to reach a peace agreement with Italy, it was willing to adopt a lenient attitude toward that country, while at the same time using the preparations for the peace treaties as a tool to reorganize the governments on the Balkans. In Soviet foreign policy, the announced goals and the measures taken in Southeast Europe were diametrically opposed. While Stalin, in Potsdam, promised the British prime minister the withdrawal of the Red Army, free elections, strong, independent, and sovereign states, and the rejection of "Sovietization," the local Soviet military authorities did everything possible to consolidate the Romanian and Bulgarian governments, intimidate the opposition, and limit British and American influence. British skepticism concerning the Stalin–Churchill October 1944 "percentage" agreement, and the Soviet implementation of the Yalta Declaration on "Liberated Europe" proved to be justified. In spite of this, there were significant similarities between the Soviet and the British concepts about the nature of the peace treaties. Both allied powers wished to

⁵⁸ Draft Cabinet Paper, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, PRO FO, 371.48217 P 13 686.

punish the smaller countries guilty of aggression, the peace terms had to be imposed upon the vanquished, by force if necessary, and no input into the major decisions would be granted to the minor allies. The former enemy countries would have no role, but had to accept the peace terms elaborated by the victorious Great Powers.

BEGINNINGS OF THE HUNGARIAN
PREPARATIONS FOR PEACE,
SUMMER 1945

The Hungarian government, limited in its international relations by the armistice agreement, knew nothing about the discussions of the victorious Great Powers during the spring and summer of 1945. The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs started to prepare for the peace treaty at the end of May 1945, when Minister of Foreign Affairs János Gyöngyösi entrusted István Kertész with the direction of this effort.⁵⁹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Peace Preparatory Department was established on June 1, 1945. Kertész looked beyond the immediate goal of the peace treaty, and stated in the charter of the Department: "The precise definition and clarification of certain issues are not solely for use at the peace conference but, primarily, so that we may see them clearly ourselves," because, "without realistic awareness and self-criticism we cannot represent our views to the world with appropriate pride, consistency and conviction." He wished to deal with *Realpolitik* and emphasized the Hungarian–Slavic commonality of interest. "In the absence of sister nations the future of Hungary can be seen only in committed economic and political cooperation with the largest continental power, Soviet Russia."⁶⁰ The charter of the Peace Preparatory Department was in tune with the Hungarian foreign policy endeavors. Gyöngyösi wished to gain the goodwill of the Allied Powers in the expectation that the Red Army would leave Hungary after the peace treaty was signed.⁶¹

⁵⁹ KERTESZ 1953a: 163–164; 1984: 79.

⁶⁰ KÜMBÉO I/1, in XIX-J-I-a, ÚMKL. ÚMKL is now called Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives].

⁶¹ KERTESZ 1953a: 163.

Kertész organized an interdepartmental committee that met regularly between June 1945 and May 1946, and coordinated all the detailed activities of the Prime Minister's Office, of the other ministries, and of the research organizations. The political parties united in the Independence Front appointed delegates to work with the department. The Smallholders' Party appointed Pál Auer and Viktor Csornoky, the National Peasant Party appointed István Borsody, the Hungarian Communist Party appointed József Révai, and the Social Democratic Party, at a later date, appointed Sándor Szalai.

The Hungarian preparations for peace began at a time when the country was totally isolated. It was for this reason that, on July 2, 1945, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs addressed a memorandum on its preparations for peace to the Budapest representatives of the Great Powers that had arranged the armistice agreement. Kertész justified the necessity of transmitting the position paper of the Hungarian government by stating: "It is likely ... by the time of the peace conference the views of the Great Powers on most issues will be set and thus, at the conference only diplomatically correctly prepared recommendations can be made with any hope of success."⁶² The first memorandum was addressed to the Soviet Union, but subsequently, the position papers were sent to all three Great Powers.

By July 2, 1945, the Peace Preparatory Department determined the ideological basis for the preparations for peace, and on July 25, the Council of Ministers approved it. The memorandum was prepared from the perspective of the postwar international negotiations, and particularly of the territorial settlement, and was based on the fact that "in accordance with the requirements of the armistice agreement, Hungary *de facto* and *de jure* can exercise its sovereignty only in the areas determined by the Trianon peace treaty, concluded with Hungary on June 4, 1920. Consequently, at the postwar negotiations, our policies and comportment can be realistic only if we start with the given of the Trianon territory, and base our arguments on that fact." It was emphasized in the document that the present democratic government represented an entirely different ideology and conducted policies entirely different from the Hungarian regimes of the last few decades.

⁶² KÜMBÉO I/1, ÚMKL.

Revisionist propaganda must be consciously and completely eliminated from our political vocabulary. Hungarian interests coincide with the demands of social progress and, in harmony with this, coincide with the appropriately interpreted interests of the other Central European peoples and of the Great Powers. The community of fate of the Central European nations requires economic cooperation. Peace of mind can be created only if the European settlement takes the interests of the Eastern European peoples, as a group, into consideration. The democratic world should offer some credit, goodwill and support to democratic Hungary.⁶³

In territorial questions, the document recommended the greatest caution, political restraint, and modesty, but considered preparedness to be very important, because “territorial demands can be made not only by us but against us as well.” The starting assumption was that “it would be most suitable for international justice, human progress, the ideals of democracy and socialism, and the clauses of the agreements reached by the Allies if the Central European borders were drawn according to the right of self-determination proclaimed by President Wilson and the nationality principle emphasized so strongly in the works of Lenin.”

The Peace Preparatory Department considered this to be consistent with the principles of the Atlantic Charter, because its signatories had committed themselves to the proposition that “no territorial changes that are not consistent with the freely expressed desires of the people concerned.” From this, it followed *a contrario* that “members of the United Nations may strive for territorial changes that are consistent with the freely expressed wishes of the people.” According to the document, “there were numerous signs indicating the validation of the nationality principle and therefore we are entitled to ask that it be applied in Hungarian matters.” According to István Kertész, “the diplomatic cards can be shuffled so that the territorial issues around the Trianon borders arise spontaneously when the principles generally applied in the peace treaties are being applied in practice.” If necessary, population exchange combined with territorial compensation could be acceptable. In

⁶³ For the document, see BALOGH 1988: 144–145.

case of the large blocks of Hungarian population, their choice of country could be settled by plebiscite, in accordance with the practice of national self-determination. In case of scattered nationalities, a mutual exchange of population might be acceptable. "If, however, the Trianon borders or a similar arrangement were maintained we must ask the elimination of ensuing anomalies in the areas of the economy, transport, travel, water rights, and culture through international agreements. ... In the new settlement, the borders should lose their significance and should not trigger despair in the people but should promote the pacification of the soul."

The guiding principles of the Hungarian preparations for peace were a complete rupture with the foreign policy of the Horthy regime. Minister of Foreign Affairs János Gyöngyösi believed that the most important tenet of the new Hungarian foreign policy was a complete disavowal of the preceding reactionary and bellicose governments, and that the concept of historic Hungary came to an end with the armistice agreement. Consequently, the Peace Preparatory Department took the Trianon borders as a given, hoping that implementation of the plans for settlement, announced by the Great Powers, would inevitably reopen the issue of ethnic borders. This hope was based on the assumption that Hungary could expect an examination of the issues on their merit, and that the peace would be a negotiated one. It was hoped that the vanquished would be listened to, and that peace settlements would be made according to the principles of international justice and overall human progress. These were the thoughts that set the direction for the assessment of territorial modifications vis-à-vis the neighboring countries.

According to the Peace Preparatory Department,

In many respects Hungary is in a similar political situation as Romania. In fact, Romania's war record was much worse. It participated in the Russian campaign with much larger forces, proved unreliable to the Western Powers to whom she was heavily indebted, served the Third Reich 100% and did not resist German pressure in domestic and foreign policy issues as much as Hungary. Yet this could not be taken as a decisive factor in judging the foreign policy status of the two countries. A more important factor could be that Romania had serious differences of interests with Russia that are

based on political realities completely absent from the Hungarian–Russian relationship. Nevertheless, during the past years Romania had again demonstrated the amazing flexibility and adaptability of its policies and it could probably eliminate her disadvantages at least toward us who because of our rigidity and slowness have failed to take advantage of our position. The Romanian switch to the Allied cause can not be compared to our activities and both this and the successes achieved since then all demonstrate that the Romanian political genius is an adversary not to be underestimated.

The Peace Preparatory Department worked out proposals for the resolution of the territorial issues, for population exchange, for an independent or, at least, largely autonomous Transylvania, and for potential Romanian territorial demands. “It seems certain that the armistice agreement with Romania gives some hope for the reattachment of at least a part of North Transylvania. Holding on to this hope, what should we ask, when and how? These are questions of political expediency that will be decisively influenced by the relationship of the two countries to the Soviet Union at a given moment and also by the relationship of the two countries to each other.” The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was relying on the territorial studies made by the Államtudományi Intézet (Political Science Institute) prior to the Second Vienna Award. The Peace Preparatory Department envisaged an independent, or, at least, largely autonomous Transylvania under the trusteeship of one or several Great Powers. Plans were prepared for a population exchange, with or without the exclusion of the Székely (Szekler) Counties. Because the Romanian national policy since 1916 viewed the line of the Tisza River as Romania’s natural western border, preparations were made for this, although it was not considered likely to occur. It was the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that,

The conciliatory policies of the Groza Government toward the Hungarians and toward Hungary were in perfect harmony with its territorial aspirations. It seems that Groza and his small group honestly wished to engage in friendly cooperation with the Hungarians. Yet it can be safely assumed that the very experienced leaders of Romanian foreign policy supported

this trend as the cleverest strategy under the present conditions. If Groza indeed succeeds in apparently improving the Hungarian–Romanian relationship, then Romania could come forward with the thesis that there was no Hungarian–Romanian border problem because the relationship between the two countries had improved to the point where the borders were no longer important factors. They do everything to further improve the Hungarian–Romanian friendship and if the Hungarians in spite of this still demanded the revision of the Trianon borders this had to be viewed as the renewal of the old revisionist “kilometer disease.”

So far as the Hungarian–Czechoslovak relationship was concerned, the Peace Preparatory Department started with the assumption that Beneš's accomplishments in Moscow, along with the fact that Czechoslovakia was on the side of the Allies when the war broke out, put Hungary into an inferior political position vis-à-vis the Prague government. Even though the Hungarian–Czechoslovak border could be defined easily according to the nationality principle, Czechoslovak policies, fueled by Slovak chauvinism, would object to such a settlement, even though it agreed with Tomáš Masaryk's large-scale concepts. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs hoped for the return to Hungary of the Csallóköz (*Žitný ostrov*) and of the Western Hungarian border strip, assuming that the Great Powers, and particularly the Soviet Union, would be supportive of such a move. The Peace Preparatory Department was also prepared for the possibility that Czechoslovakia would demand areas in excess of the Trianon borders – e.g., the so-called corridor connecting Czechoslovakia with Yugoslavia.

The situation of Hungary vis-à-vis Yugoslavia was most difficult, because of the violation of the Eternal Friendship Pact, concluded in December 1940 and violated by Hungary in April 1941, and the atrocities in Újvidék (Novi Sad) in January 1942. Yugoslavia would reject the nationality principle in the northern part of the Bácska and in the Baranya triangle. In fact, Hungary would have to defend itself against Yugoslav territorial demands in the Pécs basin. Minor territorial adjustments with Austria were considered in the Sopron area. Finally, the document assessed the effects of Transcarpathian Ruthenia being incorporated into Soviet Russia. The Peace Preparatory

Department did not consider it appropriate that the Bodrogeköz – the region between the Bodrog and Tisza Rivers – to belong to Czechoslovakia, and it hoped that the Russian empire of 200 million people would not cling to the tiny but exclusively Hungarian-inhabited territories on the edge of Ruthenia. The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered the ceding of the Transcarpathian Ruthenia to the Soviet Union to be an opportunity to tactfully raise certain territorial questions.⁶⁴

How realistic were the Hungarian ideas about applying the nationality principle to the territorial debates between Hungary and its neighbors during the spring and summer of 1945? How did the Allied Powers assess the relationships between Hungary and the victorious neighbors, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, as well as with the former enemy Romania, during the last years of the war and prior to the first session of the CFM? To what extent did the conflicts of interest between the Great Powers, outlined above, influence their ideas about territorial settlements? We will address these questions to show the contradictions between the initial principles of the Hungarian preparations for peace and the goals of the Great Powers, contradictions that strained the relationship right from the start.

THE GREAT POWERS AND THE HUNGARIAN–ROMANIAN BORDER DISPUTE

In the spring of 1945, the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute became subordinated to the evolving conflict among the victorious Great Powers over the imposition of the Groza government on Romania. The Romanian government crisis, which followed the forced resignation of General Nicolae Rădescu, was resolved one week later by Soviet intervention. Andrei Y. Vyshinsky, the Soviet deputy commissar for foreign affairs, who moved to Bucharest to execute Stalin's order, threatened King Michael with political and military intervention, and forced him to appoint Petru Groza, the president of the Ploughman's Front, to form a government with representatives

⁶⁴ "A béketárgyalások ideológiai alapjai" [The Ideological Basis of the Preparations for the Peace Negotiations, July 2, 1945, KÜM BéO I/1 Bé. res. Bé, ÚMKL.

from the National Democratic Front and from the Tătărescu neo-liberal party. Iuliu Maniu and Dinu Brătianu did not accept the portfolios offered to the National Peasant Party and the National Liberal Party, and thus the two historical parties that governed “Greater Romania” between the two wars became the opposition. On March 3, the king rejected Groza’s proposed government. As he later told the American representative in Bucharest, he changed his mind during the night of March 5, under the influence of two messages that were delivered to the Royal Palace. According to the king, Vyshinsky urged Groza’s appointment, because otherwise he (Vyshinsky) could not be responsible for the continuance of Romania as an independent state. Groza advised the king of Soviet promises that North Transylvania would be returned to Romania and that the transportation network would be returned to Romanian control if the National Democratic Front government was appointed.⁶⁵

The installation of the Groza government produced a crisis between the Great Powers that lasted until the end of 1945, when the ministers of foreign affairs met in Moscow. The Soviet Union supported the left-wing government, and, in order to solidify its position, returned North Transylvania to Romanian administration.

The hitherto international status of this area had been established by a letter from General Vinogradov – written in the name of the ACC in Romania, on November 12, 1944, to General Sănătescu, the Romanian head of government at the time –, in which Vinogradov demanded that the Romanian administration and the Maniu guards be removed from North Transylvania by November 17, and that the commander of the guard be placed before a military court. On November 28, the chairman of the ACC informed the Romanians that the matter of administering the area had to be negotiated by the Soviet and Romanian governments, in keeping with the mandates of several clauses of the armistice agreement.⁶⁶

Prime Minister Groza and Minister of Foreign Affairs Gheorghe Tătărescu, aware of these events, did not turn to the ACC, but appealed directly to Stalin and, in a telegram dated March 8, 1945, promised that “the Romanian

⁶⁵ FRUS 1945/V: 503.

⁶⁶ FRUS 1945/V: 269–270.

government and administration in Transylvania will make certain that the rights of the minorities in Transylvania are protected and that all activities there are directed on the basic principles of equality, democracy, and right-ful cooperation of the entire population.” Thus, because the government assumed the responsibility for the good order and peace of Transylvania and for the protection of the rights of the nationalities, Stalin agreed to the appointment of a Romanian administration.⁶⁷

The Groza government viewed the regularization of the administration issue as the settlement of the border issue as well.⁶⁸ Minister of Justice Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, as chairman of the Romanian Armistice Commission, announced in his speech in Kolozsvár (Cluj) on June 13, 1945, that even though some clauses of the armistice agreement might have raised some questions, there was one question that had been decided from the first moment on: the final inclusion of North Transylvania within the borders of Romania. He emphasized that the firm and generous will of the Soviet government permanently returned North Transylvania to Romania.⁶⁹ The American Department of State did not consider the transfer of administration a bilateral Soviet–Romanian issue, but rather an issue affecting the implementation of Article 19 of the armistice agreement, which could be decided by the Soviet-led ACC only in consultation with the American and British representatives, because decisions about a final territorial settlement concerned all three Allied governments. Even though the State Department questioned the exclusive rights of the Soviet government, it did not wish to protest, because the Soviet government did not even inform its own ACC delegates about the time and method of transferring the administration to Romania, making it a unilateral decision of the power primarily responsible for an area under martial law. Consequently, Secretary of State Stettinius, in his press conference on March 12, 1945, stated only that the transfer of

⁶⁷ CSATÁRI 1949: 461–462.

⁶⁸ Groza declared before a Hungarian governmental delegation on March 24, 1945, that “the problems causing conflicts between the two governments and two nations may be considered eliminated.” Quoted in LIPCSEY 1984: 96–97. Her sources can be found in KÜM BÉO 40024/Bé. 1945, ÜMKL.

⁶⁹ *Universul*, June 17, 1945.

administration in North Transylvania to the Romanian authorities did not change the international status of the territory, and that this did not represent a regular transfer because, under Article 19 of the Romanian armistice agreement, this was possible only as part of the final peace treaty.⁷⁰ Article 19 declared that the Allied governments regarded the Second Vienna Award of August 30, 1940, which gave Northern Transylvania to Hungary, null and void, and agreed that Transylvania (or the greater part thereof) should be returned to Romania, subject to confirmation at the peace settlement. It was the State Department's view that Article 19 did not commit the three Great Powers to the restoration of Romanian sovereignty over the whole of Northern Transylvania, but that this article would have to be considered at the final territorial settlement. The State Department also did not commit itself to the restoration of the prewar Trianon Hungarian–Romanian border. The State Department's view was that the precise location of the final boundary was a matter which should be given detailed study. This would minimize the potentialities of the territorial issue as a disturbing factor in Hungarian–Romanian relations at the time the peace treaties were to be signed with these countries.⁷¹

Soviet diplomacy was still careful to refer the final settlement of the Hungarian–Romanian border to the peace negotiations, under Article 19 of the armistice agreement. In the same vein as the American Secretary of State Stettinius, Ivan Z. Susaykov, the deputy chairman of the Bucharest ACC and Vinogradov's replacement, also denied that the restoration of Romanian administration in North Transylvania changed the international status of the area. The Soviet counsellor and Pushkin's deputy, B.P. Oshukin, told Minister Gyöngyösi in Debrecen that the introduction of Romanian administration in North Transylvania was not binding in any way on the peace treaty.⁷² The Soviet government respected the principle of tripartite decision-making, and thus this matter could not be formally closed. As foreseen by István Kertész in his guide, "The Ideological Basis of the Preparations for the Peace Negotiations," the Soviet views, however, prevailed at the Paris

⁷⁰ FRUS 1945/V: 527–528; see also FÜLÖP 1988a: 90–91 concerning the analysis of John C. Campbell.

⁷¹ FRUS 1945/V: 527–528.

⁷² KÜM BÉO 146/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

Peace Conference. In fact, the views of the Soviet government were formed in connection with the armistice negotiations and prior to the recent Soviet coup in Romania. Molotov, in a letter on June 7, 1943, written on behalf of his government, advised the British ambassador in Moscow that they “could not consider entirely acceptable the German-dictated so-called Award in Vienna on August 30, 1940, that gave North Transylvania to Hungary.”⁷³ This position was interpreted by the officials of the Foreign Office to mean that North Transylvania, or some parts of it, would be given to Romania, although Soviet principles regarding the return of occupied territories would not obligate Great Britain to have all of Transylvania returned to Romania.⁷⁴ With consideration of the British and American points of view, the Soviet government, on April 12, 1944, established the conditions for the armistice and transmitted them to Prince Barbu Știrbey, the representative of the Romanian opposition. The document described the Vienna Award as unjust, and prescribed joint Soviet–Romanian armed action against Germany and Hungary, “with the object of restoring to Romania all of Transylvania or the major part thereof.”⁷⁵ The latter wording was included on Churchill’s insistence, and the State Department was in agreement. The American government wished to delay all postwar territorial arrangement decisions until the general peace conference.⁷⁶

The Soviet Peace Preparatory Committee, under Litvinov’s leadership, summarized the Transylvania problem for Stalin and Molotov on June 5, 1944.⁷⁷ In the position paper, they did not consider the Vienna award a solution, because it deepened the antagonism, strengthened German hegemony, and increased German pressure on both Hungary and Romania. They considered Transylvania to be an area where

⁷³ JUHÁSZ 1978: 159.

⁷⁴ Notes by Geoffrey W. Harrison on June 14, 1943, and Frank K. Roberts on June 16, 1943, in JUHÁSZ 1978: 160–161.

⁷⁵ MacVeagh’s April 8, 1944, cable in FRUS 1944/IV: 170–172; Lord Moyne’s telegram from Cairo on April 14, 1944, no. 948, PRO FO 371.40732.

⁷⁶ FRUS 1945/V: 526.

⁷⁷ The summary, entitled “Spravka o Transylvanii”, was also sent to Voroshilov, Manuilsky, Lozovsky, Maisky, and members of the Litvinov committee (poslevoyennogo ustroystva). See ISLAMOV–POKIVAILOVA 2000: 233–237.

There are no clearly defined ethnic borders and where the various nationality settlements are intermingled. While the claim for Transylvania is justified on both sides, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to reach a solution that would be acceptable to both Hungary and Romania and would not trigger dissatisfaction in one or the other. The division of Transylvania along ethnic lines is impossible because the population is intermingled everywhere and the number of Hungarians is much less than the majority Romanians. The 500,000 "Hungarian Székelys" [*sic*] live in a compact block in the eastern part of Transylvania. The unacceptability of the present (June 1944) situation is due to the division mandated by the Vienna Award and the intermingling of the population is also due to this. The Award, given at the beginning of this war by Germany and Italy, is politically impossible to maintain and furthermore, Hungary was the only one that benefited from it.

The analysis of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (Narkomindel) concluded by saying that the incorporation of the whole of Transylvania into Hungary – i.e., the reestablishment of the pre-World War I situation – was even less acceptable.

The Soviet reservations about Hungary were due, according to the document, to

Hungary having been the first country to join the Anti-Comintern Pact. Furthermore, Hungary showed no inclination toward any rapprochement with the Soviet Union and, on the contrary participated in every Polish intrigue against the Soviet Union. ... It entered the war against the Soviet Union without any warning and did not even have the demands from the Soviet Union that Finland and Romania had. Relative to the number of its forces Hungary helped Hitler's Germany militarily more than even Italy. To give Hungary an award under these conditions would be worse than foolishness.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ The document's argument echoes Molotov's letter of June 7, 1943, in JUHÁSZ 1978: 158–159. Stalin offered Eden in December 1941 similar reasons for punishing Hungary. See RZHESHEVSKY 1996: 11. For prewar Hungarian Soviet relations, see PASTOR 2004: 731–750. See also JUHÁSZ 1989: 15.

The Narkomindel saw the unification of Transylvania with Hungary as a possibility only if "this would create a situation that would assure Hungary's close and lasting cooperation with the Soviet Union." Such cooperation would be possible only after a complete change in the country and the removal of the entire current ruling class. Without such a change, the Soviets saw no elements on which such cooperation could be based. According to the document, during the past 25 years, every legal political party, including the Smallholders' Party and the Social Democratic Party, competed with each other in their hostility toward the Soviet Union. The summary also mentioned that "in addition, Hungary maintains her hostility toward us, toward friendly Czechoslovakia that should have Transcarpathia returned to her, and toward Yugoslavia that should get back all the territories occupied by Hungary."

In the concluding section, the summary on the Romanian side of the issue was discussed. "Romania is also an enemy country deserving punishment and not a gift. Yet the transfer of Transylvania to her is a possibility, provided there are solid guarantees and a close and lasting cooperation with the Soviet Union and the complete renunciation of all demands for Bessarabia and Bukovina. In this way, Romania would be fully compensated for Bessarabia and Bukovina and would have to depend on the Soviet Union's support against a Hungary that would never agree to the permanent loss of Transylvania." The authors of the document added, as justification: "In contrast to Hungary, there were parties in Romania before the war that were willing to cooperate with the Soviet Union. In case of regaining Transylvania, such cooperation may be likely from the National Peasant Party with Maniu at its head." Furthermore, the incorporation into Romania would be in accordance with the right to self-determination, and this would be welcomed by the United Nations. The Soviet government had other reasons for this sudden sponsoring of, and understanding for, the right of nations to self-determination, namely Poland, because Poland buttressed its demand for West Ukraine and Byelorussia with historical arguments. Litvinov recommended that in the solution of every territorial problem, the ethnic arguments must be favored over the historical ones.

The Peace Preparatory Committee of the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs considered the creation of an independent Transylvania to be favorable for the Soviet Union, provided it was not part of a federation or alliance.

Transylvania would be a buffer between Hungary and Romania and could not survive without the support of a Great Power, which in this case would be the Soviet Union. Such a decision would be even more in line with the concept of self-determination. Compared to other solutions this would have the advantage for us that it would strengthen neither Hungary nor Romania, control of the new country would make it possible for us to exert greater pressure on the other two and would be an impediment for them to join any combination hostile to us. Such control would increase our influence over the other Balkan countries, particularly Yugoslavia which borders on the Banat.

The final conclusion of the study was that “the decision, so far as we are concerned, is that we must grab Transylvania, at least temporarily, until the likelihood of cooperation with Hungary or Romania has become clear.”

Both the April 1944 initial armistice clauses and the June “Spravka o Transylvanii” left open certain possibilities for the revision of the Trianon borders. In the summer of 1944, Soviet policy had not yet crystallized vis-à-vis the two enemy countries, and the decision to seize Transylvania temporarily and using the territorial issue to exert political influence on Hungarian and Romanian policies was due to this lack of resolution. In fact, at the earliest possible moment, in November 1944, Soviet military administration was imposed on North Transylvania. Moscow’s actions were based on her demands for Soviet territorial adjustments and the establishment of lasting cooperation, i.e., influence. It was the difference between the two countries’ behavior during the war, and the readiness of their political parties to cooperate with the Soviet Union that tipped the balance against Hungary. Soviet foreign policy wished to exploit the Hungarian–Romanian antagonism, opposed any plan for a confederation, and wished to weaken both countries.

The successful about-face on August 23, 1944, lined up the Romanian army on the Soviet side and hastened the liberation of Romania. Consequently, Molotov informed the Allies, on August 26, that he considered the clauses of the April armistice conditions binding with one exception. He omitted the British amendment and recommended the reestablishment of the prewar Hungarian–Romanian border. The Foreign Office did not consider the concessions to Romania justified, and, on August 28, again recommended that the modifications requested by Great Britain, in April 1944, be accepted. The Department of State also repeated its earlier stand, and Hull wished to postpone even the consideration of the Bessarabia–Bukovina issue to the peace negotiations. It was only somewhat later that he accepted the Soviet formula, included in the April armistice clauses, of attaching these areas to the Soviet Union.⁷⁹ Taking the views of her allies into consideration, the Soviet government agreed to the wording of Article 19 of the Romanian Armistice Agreement, signed on September 12, 1944, in Moscow. There was another matter that impelled Soviet foreign policy to leave this issue open: the possibility of Hungary getting out of the war. As we will see, the Soviet commissar of foreign affairs alluded to this in September 1945, at the London negotiations.

The American government had a different opinion about the territorial settlements. Even though the official American policy did not wish to deal with territorial matters during the war, there were several government departments studying this issue.⁸⁰ The Transylvania matter was discussed by a State Department advisory committee in February 1943, and recommendations were drafted in August of that year. The Balkan–Danubian Interdepartmental Committee of the State Department and the Committee on Postwar Program submitted recommendations between April 19 and July 26, 1944, according to which “the United States would favor, at the least, a revision of the pre-war frontier on ethnic grounds, transferring to Hungary a small strip of territory given to Romania at the end of the

⁷⁹ Telegram nos. 2263–2264, August 25, 1944, and telegram nos. 185–186, August 28, 1944, from Clark Kerr, the British ambassador in Moscow. PRO FO 371.40732; Telegram no. 2073, August 27, 1944, from Cordell Hull, FRUS 1944/IV: 200.

⁸⁰ JUHÁSZ 1986: 82.

last war.”⁸¹ After the Romanian turn-around, the same recommendation was made to Roosevelt prior to the Second Quebec Conference.⁸² The American opinion did not change even after Hungary’s unsuccessful attempt to get out of the war. A proposal by the Office of Strategic Services on October 23, 1944, stated:

Revisionism could be reduced by a new Hungarian–Romanian border that was 30–50 miles east of the Trianon border. But because even this would not create true ethnic borders, the OSS considered the possibility of organized population transfer with the Székelys and the other Transylvanian Hungarians moved to the west of the Királyhágó [Bucea], and the Romanians into the areas vacated by the Hungarians.⁸³

During the preparations for the Yalta Conference, in January 1945, the State Department recommended a resolution of the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute that “would to some extent satisfy Hungary’s rightful demands.”⁸⁴

After such preliminaries, it is understandable why the British and American military and diplomatic representatives were not present at the mass meeting in Kolozsvár on March 13, 1945, celebrating the “return” of Transylvania. Those present included the Groza government, the king of Romania, A.Y. Vyshinsky, and the French political representative, Jean Sarret. Their purposeful absence suggested to the French diplomat that the British and Americans refused to recognize the “return of North Transylvania.” Sarret was also barely able to contain his annoyance that French flags were absent at the meeting, and that the speeches and articles omitted any mention of the role of France in 1918.⁸⁵ In fact, the State Department notified its representative in Bucharest, on March 29, that it had not committed itself to the reestablishment of the prewar Hungarian–Romanian borders. They wished to delay the final decision about borders until the signing of the Romanian

⁸¹ FÜLÖP 1987b: 147; ROMSICS 1992: 17–21, 125–132.

⁸² ROMSICS 1992: 53.

⁸³ JUHÁSZ 1986: 82.

⁸⁴ Memorandum of John D. Hickerson, Deputy Chief of the European Division, FRUS 1945/ Malta–Yalta: 247.

⁸⁵ Telegram no. 155 from Sarret in Bucharest on March 14, 1945, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

and Hungarian peace treaties. The intent was to have the territorial debate cause the least possible upset in the Hungarian–Romanian relationship.⁸⁶ The State Department was ready to engage in preliminary discussions on the Romanian borders prior to the Berlin Conference, but a meritorious discussion could take place only at the first meeting of the CFM.⁸⁷ The American decision was made independently of the war record of the two former enemy countries, Hungary and Romania.

On June 7, 1945, the British point of view was drafted at the peace preparatory discussions in the Foreign Office. It stated: “It would be difficult to oppose the confirmation of the provisional return of Transylvania to Romania for which the Armistice had provided.” The reference to armistice was, however: “Transylvania or the greater part thereof, and the pre-war frontier has not been regarded as entirely satisfactory. ... It was felt that we should at least clarify our own views on the optimum frontier more with the idea of putting these views forward if the Russians had themselves reached no confirmed conclusion than of supporting our own view energetically against any Russian decision.” In general, the Foreign Office considered “that the territorial disputes between any of the three satellite countries were more the concern of the Russians than of ourselves since they are in effective control of all three countries.”⁸⁸

While Soviet foreign policy endorsed the left-wing Romanian government, it could not ignore the fact that – unless it wished to make a separate peace with Romania, a step it did not consider seriously – it needed Anglo-American concurrence for a peace treaty. When American diplomacy, referring to the Yalta Declaration, urged a tripartite consultation and wished to achieve the removal or, at least, the reorganization of the Groza government, this presented a serious challenge to the Soviet Union, which wished to strengthen the position of its future ally while strengthening its own position as well. This could have been seriously impeded by the State Department linking the attack against the Groza government with the demand of keeping the Romanian–Hungarian border dispute open until the peace negotiations. Concerning the modification of the European

⁸⁶ FRUS 1945/V: 527.

⁸⁷ Telegram no. 1257, June 8, 1945, Grew to Harriman in Moscow, FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 373.

⁸⁸ PRO FO 371.48192 R 10059.

borders, the State Department took a position on May 12, 1945, namely that decisions about the assignment of debated territories had to wait until the final peace settlement, at which time all interested parties would be heard. Such a complete resolution of the territorial difficulties could not be effected by the unilateral actions of countries demanding the territories in question.⁸⁹ While this notice was intended to put a stop to the unilateral Yugoslav action in Trieste, it can be stated that it was in accordance with the point of view elaborated by the State Department during the war, and equally applicable to the Hungarian–Romanian dispute. The Department of State distinguished between the border established by the armistice agreement, considered to be temporary, and the principle of ethnic fairness, and minimal change to be achieved at the peace conference in making the final territorial settlement.⁹⁰ In the policy of the State Department, keeping the Transylvanian question open became just as much a weapon in shaking the position of the Groza government as the question of diplomatic recognition or the refusal to begin the peace negotiations.

The leaders of Romanian foreign policy, and particularly Prime Minister Groza, felt that the issue had not been settled irreversibly, and they endeavored to be prepared for all eventualities. Romania hoped that the Soviet perspective would prevail at the peace conferences. Minister of Foreign Affairs Tătărescu explained to the interim French representative in Bucharest on May 20, 1945, that “Romania had to accept the dominant role of the Soviet Union as a reality whether Romania was assigned to the Soviet sphere of interest or not. Romania could improve her situation and reclaim her sovereignty only if it pursued a policy of honest cooperation with the Soviet Union.” The Romanian minister considered any participation in a regional pact, like the Little Entente or the Balkan Entente, impossible, because the Soviet Union would consider these as a bulwark between herself and the Western powers.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Telegram from Grew to the American envoy in Budapest on May 15, 1945. State Department Decimal File 740.00119 Control (Hungary) 5–1545, NA.

⁹⁰ ROMSICS 1992: 41.

⁹¹ Telegram no. 157 from Sarret in Bucharest on March 21, 1945, Série Z, Europe, Roumanie, vol. 8, MAE AD.

The concepts of the Romanian minister of foreign affairs were tailored to Soviet expectations. In this light, it is understandable that Petru Groza's ideas of a unified bloc extending from the Leithe River to the Black Sea (of which the kernel would be a Romanian–Hungarian union, where the customs borders would disappear, where there would be a single currency and the most complete political cooperation) could not be raised to become official Romanian governmental policy.⁹² In the spring of 1945, Groza considered it possible that the two countries could reach an agreement prior to the peace conferences, and indicated that he would visit Hungary as a “private citizen.” In contrast to the prime minister, Tătărescu considered the clearing up of certain pending issues as a condition for the resumption of Romanian–Hungarian political relations.⁹³ Thus the views of Groza and of his minister of foreign affairs differed in their assessment of the possibilities of a Hungarian–Romanian Union. So far as the Hungarian–Romanian territorial dispute was concerned, Groza and Tătărescu were in full agreement. As one of the officials in the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs put it, “Groza’s friendship for Hungary stops at the border issue. It is the basis for existence of the Groza government that it acquired and held Transylvania for Romania. Groza knows this and this is why he has to hold on to Transylvania’s western borders.”⁹⁴

In adjudicating the border dispute between Hungary and Romania, the Allied Powers decided on the claims made by two “former enemy” countries towards each other. Czechoslovakia, however, was one of the victorious powers, and tried to implement her demands against Hungary even at the time of the armistice negotiations. On January 15, 1945, however, the Americans and British rejected the Czechoslovak principle of the expulsion of the Hungarians, and were not willing to coerce the Hungarian government to accept the displaced Hungarians.

⁹² LIPCSEY 1984: 96–97; FÜLÖP 1987b: 149.

⁹³ *Népszava*, May 20, 1945; KÜM BéO 40.024/Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

⁹⁴ Note of Ministerial Councillor István Gyöngyössi, about a discussion with an expert on Hungary in the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, about the possible solutions for the Transylvania question, December 14, 1945, KÜM BéO 27/Be/1946, ÚMKL.

THE ISSUE OF THE EXPULSION OF HUNGARIANS
FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND OF GERMANS FROM
HUNGARY: CESSION OF TRANSCARPATHIA

Czechoslovak diplomacy worked consistently and with different methods, between December 1943 and summer 1946, to create a national state of Czechs and Slovaks. This was considered to be feasible only with a complete removal of the minorities. Initially, Beneš in his discussions with Stalin, in Moscow in December 1943, and again at the 1945 January Moscow armistice negotiations, endeavored to gain the support of the victorious Great Powers for inclusion of the principle of minority resettlement in the armistice agreement. The Americans, and to a lesser extent the British, considered that such a complex question could be discussed only after the end of the war, at the peace negotiations, and therefore the Czech request was not granted.⁹⁵

The January 16, 1945, draft of the State Department concluded that, in the matter of population resettlements, not only Czechoslovakia's demands should be considered, but the future peace and security of Europe as well. The transfer of the Sudeten Germans must not be allowed to add to the problems of the Allied occupation forces in Germany. Resettlements must be made only under international agreement and supervision, gradually and in an orderly fashion. Unilateral action was not acceptable.⁹⁶ Consequently, in case of Hungarians, the State Department insisted that Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia could act only in agreement with the Allied Powers, and opposed the forced transfer of the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia.⁹⁷ Zdeněk Fierlinger, the Czechoslovak ambassador in Moscow and future prime minister, thus was not able to have his demands for the expulsion of the Hungarian "Nazi collaborators" accepted.⁹⁸

It was during Beneš's visit in Moscow, between March 17 and 30, 1945, and in his discussions with the Soviet government, that the Czechoslovak

⁹⁵ BALOGH 1988: 103–131; VIDA 1989: 161–160; KERTESZ 1984: 139–159; JUHÁSZ 1979: 334–335.

⁹⁶ VIDA 1989: 142.

⁹⁷ Telegram no. 92, from Grew to Harriman in Moscow, January 15, 1945, FRUS 1944/III: 972.

⁹⁸ Telegram no. 142, from Harriman in Moscow to Washington, January 15, 1945, FRUS 1944/III: 977, quoted in VIDA 1989: 142.

document, later known as the Košice (Kassa) Program, was drafted. Beneš and his minister of foreign affairs, Jan Masaryk, wished to return to Czechoslovakia's pre-Munich borders. According to his report to Averell Harriman, the American ambassador in Moscow: "At the peace conference they wished only for minor territorial adjustments at the cost of Germany and Hungary. The question of Ruthenia would also be settled after the war, depending largely on the will of the people." According to the Czechoslovak president, "Stalin further agreed with Beneš's proposal that about 2 million of the 3 million Germans within Czechoslovakian territory should be transferred to Germany and similarly about 400,000 of the 600,000 Hungarians." At the Soviet–Czechoslovak meeting, they confirmed the provision in the Hungarian armistice agreement that Hungary would pay reparations to Czechoslovakia.⁹⁹

Czechoslovakia was trying to assure the validity of her borders by expelling the Germans and Hungarians, i.e., by forcefully changing the ethnic composition of her population. In order to accomplish this, Beneš was even prepared to agree to the cession of Ruthenia.¹⁰⁰ On June 29, 1945, the Russians and the Czechoslovaks agreed about the cession without consulting the other two Great Powers. Stalin considered Czechoslovakia to be one of the bastions of the alliance system he wished to erect for mutual security against Germany. Stalin authorized the return of the government-in-exile in London to Czechoslovakia. He deluded Beneš, by saying that he had given up the tsar's Pan-Slav policies and that he had no intention to "Bolshevize" the eastern part of Europe.¹⁰¹

On April 4, 1945, the Czechoslovak government, with the backing of the Soviet Union, proclaimed that Czechoslovakia was the national state of the Czechs and Slovaks. The program, which excluded the Germans and Hungarians from the new state, directed that those who had settled in Czechoslovakia after 1938 and any citizen found guilty of any crime against the majority would be expelled immediately.¹⁰² Beneš put it even

⁹⁹ Telegram no. 866, Harriman to Washington, March 22, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 427–428.

¹⁰⁰ Annual Political Review, PRO FO 371.56085. Also in ULLMANN 1983.

¹⁰¹ Telegram no. 993, Harriman to Washington, March 31, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 431.

¹⁰² KÚM BÉO I/1, ÚMKL.

more plainly on May 9, 1945: "The Czechs and the Slovaks have decided irreversibly that under the present circumstances they cannot and will not live in the same country with Germans and Hungarians. After this war, there will be no minority rights like the ones established after World War I. After every criminal has been punished, the great majority of the Germans and Hungarians must leave this country."¹⁰³ In his speech in San Francisco on June 12, 1945, Jan Masaryk tried to limit the scope of the proposed expulsion to those who fought with Nazi Germany and to the Hungarians who conspired against Czechoslovakia, but the words of the Czechoslovak president left no doubt that his country believed in the collective responsibility of the Hungarians.

On June 12, 1945, Arthur Schoenfeld, the American representative in Budapest, in expanding America's stand on the Sudeten Germans, advised János Gyöngyösi that the Hungarian residents of the neighboring countries could be transferred only on the basis of agreements conforming to international justice, in an orderly fashion, gradually, and with the exclusion of unilateral actions. The American government considered it unjustifiable to hold the members of a national minority collectively responsible.¹⁰⁴ Gyöngyösi wished to obtain the agreement of the Great Powers to halt the indiscriminate expulsion of the Hungarians.¹⁰⁵ The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs informed Alvary Gascoigne, the head of the British Political Mission, that 20,000 Hungarians had been put across the border from Slovakia and 35,000 from Yugoslavia. He tried to convince Gascoigne that the Allies had to endeavor in the future to create unified countries and not tear apart nationalities that belonged together. This was true particularly for Czechoslovakia, where this problem could be resolved very favorably for Hungary, in view of the fact that the Hungarians there were living in a geographic continuity with the Hungarian nation.¹⁰⁶

The Hungarian proposal was also based on bringing the ethnic and political frontiers into harmony, but by rejecting forced transfer, this was not

¹⁰³ *Pravda* (Bratislava), May 12, 1945.

¹⁰⁴ KÚM BÉO 16/res./Bé, June 3, 1945, ÚMKL.

¹⁰⁵ Telegram no. 143, Schoenfeld to Washington, June 12, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 931.

¹⁰⁶ Gyöngyösi's notes on his talk with Gascoigne on June 16, 1945, KÚM BÉO I/1, ÚMKL.

possible without some concessions from Czechoslovakia. Yet, at the same time, the Czechoslovak government advised the Allied Powers that, in addition to insistence on the pre-Munich borders, it would, in agreement with the Allied governments, submit demands for the modification of the borders that would benefit the Czechoslovak Republic at the expense of the former enemy countries.¹⁰⁷ In their preparation for peace during the war years, when there was still an opportunity for the assessment of the issues on their merit, the British and the Americans believed that the Czechoslovak–Hungarian territorial debate could be resolved with minor adjustments to the benefit of Hungary, if possible, with bilateral agreement.¹⁰⁸ This appears in the July 18, 1944, summary of the State Department, which states that Czechoslovakia would get back the areas forcefully transferred in 1938–1939, but that in the final arrangements consideration should be given to the return of the Csallóköz and the Hungarian Kisalföld (Little Hungarian Plain) to Hungary, either by direct Czechoslovak–Hungarian negotiations, or by appropriate international actions.¹⁰⁹ After the end of the European war, however, Czechoslovakia, with Soviet assistance, wished to get rid of her minorities, wished to have the Czech and Slovak ethnic borders coincide with the political ones, and made demands exceeding the pre-Munich territory. It is thus understandable that, prior to the Potsdam Conference, the State Department considered only one option. Czechoslovakia would receive her 1937 borders, and all other recommendations made by the Czechoslovak government for all other minor territorial adjustments, on ethnic considerations, vis-à-vis Germany and Hungary, should be part of the larger European question of territorial change and frontier readjustments.¹¹⁰ At the preparatory debate in the Foreign Office, on June 7, 1945, no firm conclusion was reached on the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak territorial claims. In general, however, it was felt that “the pre-war Yugoslav–Hungarian and

¹⁰⁷ Note from the Czechoslovak Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Vlado Clementis, on May 31, 1945, to the American Charge d’Affaires in Prague, FRUS 1945/IV: 513.

¹⁰⁸ JUHÁSZ 1979: 274; 1978: 246–297.

¹⁰⁹ “Memorandum by the Committee on Post-war Programs. Policy Toward Liberated States: Czechoslovakia,” FRUS 1945/IV: 422–424; see also ROMSICS 1992: 41–53; KERTESZ 1984: 105–106.

¹¹⁰ FRUS 1945/IV: 515.

Czechoslovak–Hungarian frontiers had tended to err in favor of the two Allied powers and that further cessions to them were unlikely to be justified.”¹¹¹ The British and Americans wished to postpone a debate on the Czechoslovak territorial demands, and did not wish to support them. At the same time, they irrevocably declined to even consider the Hungarian proposals based on ethnic arguments. They did not wish to support the demands of a vanquished country against their own ally.

On July 3, 1945, the Czechoslovak government addressed a note to the Allied Powers requesting approval of the transfer of 2.5 million Germans and approximately 400,000 Hungarians. The removal of the majority of the Hungarians was to be discussed with the ACC in Budapest, because, according to the Czechs, there were 345,000 Slovaks living in Hungary who wished to be moved to Slovakia through a population exchange.¹¹² The matter of the transfer of the Germans and Hungarians from Czechoslovakia was presented to the Great Powers prior to the Potsdam Conference. Because the two matters were related right from the beginning, we are now going to present the Hungarian position relative to the transfer of Germans from Hungary.

The matter was raised for the first time in the Soviet–Hungarian context in February 1945, at the time of the deportation of the Germans from the Szatmár area.¹¹³ Citing the recommendation of Ferenc Erdei, the minister of internal affairs, Gyöngyösi wrote to Envoy Georgy Pushkin on May 16, 1945, estimating the number of Germans to be transferred at 300,000. In a note on May 26, the number was reduced to 200–225,000, and in a note to the ACC on July 5, it was further reduced to 200,000.¹¹⁴ While, according

¹¹¹ PRO FO 371.48192. For the Yugoslav demands and for the State Department’s plans for Hungarian–Yugoslav territorial arrangements, see ROMSICS 1992: 204–211, 228–231. According to these Yugoslavia demanded an area of 50 square miles North of the Dráva River. See also KERTESZ 1984: 105, 112.

¹¹² Clementis’s note no. 7359/II/S/1945 to the American Charge d’Affaires in Prague, July 3, 1945, FRUS 1945/Potsdam: I. 646–647.

¹¹³ Összefoglaló [Summary]: “A németek kitelepítése Magyarországról” [The Resettlement of the Germans from Hungary], KÜM BéO I/1, ÚMKL. For all details see FEHÉR 1988; see also BALOGH 1988: 77–102.

¹¹⁴ KÜM BéO 41/res. Bé. 1945, and 30986/pol. 1945, and 100/M.K. letter no. 1945, ÚMKL.

to the May 26 memorandum, they wished to transfer the Germans who betrayed Hungary to Soviet occupied territory, a verbal message on July 5 advised that, on the basis of the government decree ordering the internment of the “Volksbund, SS, Arrowcross and antidemocratic” elements, all “Nazi and Fascist Germans” should be transferred to Germany by the Allied Powers.¹¹⁵ At the session of the ACC on July 17, 1945, Marshal Kliment Voroshilov stated that the transfer of the Germans was endorsed by all five Hungarian political parties, and that he considered it to be very important that the “weak Hungarian government” be assisted in this manner.¹¹⁶

On July 25, 1945, at the Potsdam Conference, Anthony Eden – who, together with Prime Minister Winston Churchill, was leaving the conference that very day to yield their place to Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin –, brought up the message from Czechoslovak President Beneš requesting a discussion on the transfer of the Germans and Hungarians from Czechoslovakia. Stalin suggested that the Czechoslovaks should be summoned to the Potsdam Conference. Churchill said he would be very glad to see his old friend Beneš, but ultimately the matter was referred to the ministers of foreign affairs. At the meeting of the ministers on the same day, Alexander Cadogan announced that, similarly to Czechoslovakia and Poland, Hungary had a request albeit a more modest one. It wished to resettle a certain number of people from Hungary to Germany. The ministers appointed a subcommittee to investigate the matter.¹¹⁷ We only know the final report of the discussions of Cavendish Cannon, Geoffrey Harrison, Alexandr A. Sobolev, and Vladimir S. Semyonov. According to this, the Allied Powers did not agree to the transfer plans of the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia, but did agree to the transfer plans of the Germans from Hungary. Cavendish Cannon, the State Department expert, tried to convince President Harry Truman not to accept the sudden demand for the transfer of the Germans from Hungary, but his request was not successful. According to the Potsdam

¹¹⁵ KÜM BÉO 41/res. Bé. 1945, and 30986/pol. 1945, and 100/M.K. letter no. 1945, ÚMKL. On August 16, 1945, Zoltán Gombó and Kertész were concerned to talk about “Germans betraying Hungary” in view of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian relations.

¹¹⁶ PRO FO 371.48464.

¹¹⁷ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 387, 398–400.

Declaration: "The three governments, having considered the question in all its aspects, recognize that the transfer to Germany of German populations, or elements thereof, remaining in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, will have to be undertaken. They agree that the transfers that take place should be executed in an orderly and humane manner."¹¹⁸

Interpretation of the above caused a several months long debate between the Hungarian and Czechoslovak governments, and the members of the ACC. Beneš tried to claim that, even though it was not specifically mentioned, the Great Powers approved the transfer of the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia.¹¹⁹ The Hungarian government rejected this interpretation. At the same time, the Hungarian government emphasized that the August 13, 1945, position was taken on request of the Soviet government, and that the criteria for transfer were not ethnic origin, but documented treason. The government respected the American request and dismissed the principle of collective guilt. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs summary stated: "If Hungary were to act, *sponte sua*, on the principle of collective responsibility this would create a precedent that could be used in the neighboring countries against the Hungarian minority. If, however, the Great Powers gathered in Potsdam would consider that the transfer of the Germans be done on the basis of ethnicity and not on the basis of individual guilt, the Hungarian government requested that the Allied Powers specifically so order it."¹²⁰

The Hungarian government wished to avoid setting a precedent and wanted to share its responsibilities with the Allied Powers. The American reluctance, evident since the beginning of 1945, and the British dislike of population exchanges and transfers, expressed repeatedly during the war, and the pertinent portions of the Potsdam Declaration made it unmistakably clear that the Western Allies did not make transfer a mandatory requirement.

¹¹⁸ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 1511.

¹¹⁹ KÜM BÉO I/1, ÚMKL. Conversation between Gyöngyösi and Dalibor Krno, Czechoslovak Ambassador on September 3, 1945. Krno stated that agreement with the resettlement of the Germans implied agreement with the resettlement of the Hungarians. See also KERTESZ 1984: 145.

¹²⁰ KÜM BÉO I/1 42/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

In fact, they wished to convert the unilateral Polish and Czechoslovak expulsion of the German population into an organized and humane transfer, thereby lessening the burden on the occupying forces and reducing the number of Germans they had to accept into their zones.¹²¹

Returning to the Potsdam Declaration that had rejected approval of the resettlement of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia, Vlado Clementis, the Czechoslovak undersecretary of state for foreign affairs, addressed a memorandum to the Great Powers on August 16, 1945, that started with the assumption that the Allies agreed to the population exchange of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia and the Slovaks in Hungary. He asked for approval from the ACC in Hungary, noting that the ACC in Germany had already approved a similar request. Prague was prepared to send a delegation of experts to Budapest for this purpose.¹²² The Czechoslovak undersecretary of state promised Keller, the French *chargé d'affaires* in Prague, that, in accordance with the Potsdam Declaration, not a single German would be expelled without the approval of the ACC. He then tried to explain that the expulsion of the Hungarians differed from the expulsion of the Germans. Clementis viewed the former as a population exchange because, "the Slovaks in Hungary would be coming home and simultaneously the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia would be expelled." He also said that the transfer of the Hungarians was not dependent on the approval of the three Great Powers, but that it required only the permission of the Russian military authorities responsible for law and order in Hungary. "The Czechoslovak government would shortly send a delegation of experts to Budapest, just as they will send a mission to Berlin." The conditions of transport would be determined jointly with the Soviet commissions and, as soon as the Soviet approval is obtained, the Hungarian government will be informed about the time and location of the transfer and the destination of those to be expelled. Clementis wished to go to Budapest to arrange the transfer of the Hungarians in the framework of "good neighbor policy." The Czech undersecretary wished to raise the issue of the modification of the Slovak

¹²¹ FRUS 1945/Potsdam: II. 1511.

¹²² Note from Clementis to Steinhardt, August 16, 1945, FRUS 1945/II: 1269–1270.

border at the same time.¹²³ The Czechoslovak diplomatic action makes it obvious that they clearly understood that their plans for the transfer of the Hungarians did not receive the approval of the three Great Powers in Potsdam. In spite of this, they tried to work through the ACC in Budapest and the Soviet military authorities to implement the “solution” of what they called a population exchange, which in reality was the forceful expulsion of the Hungarians and the voluntary emigration of the Slovaks. They also wished to impose this decision on the Hungarian government. On August 2, 1945, Beneš deprived all Germans and Hungarians of their citizenship and, on September 17, ordered their obligation to forced labour.¹²⁴

The territorial changes and the intolerable burdens weighing on Hungary caused serious tensions in Hungarian–Soviet relations. The cession of Ruthenia on June 29, 1945, and the cession of 13 additional communities by Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union meant that Hungary became the neighbor of the greatest continental power in Europe. On the request of Pushkin, the Soviet minister in Budapest, the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially welcomed this fact in a proclamation.¹²⁵ Pál Sebestyén, its secretary-general, on July 3 raised the need for an agreement with the Soviet Union, allowing for “the possibility of the Hungarian residents in Transcarpathian Ruthenia to return to Hungary.”¹²⁶ According to Kertész, Gyöngyösi transmitted a memorandum to Pushkin about the transfer of the area inhabited by Hungarians, using as an argument that the Soviet Union might consider the transfer of this narrow strip of land as a friendly gesture toward Hungary. Pushkin advised the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs not to raise the issue because, if he did, the same thing might happen in Ruthenia as was happening in Czechoslovakia, from where thousands of Hungarians were expelled.¹²⁷ Pushkin’s threat was followed shortly by actions of the Red Army. It occupied a number of villages in the Tisza region,

¹²³ Keller’s cable no. 77.17, August 25, 1945, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 126, MAE AD, cited in KERTÉSZ 1984: 136.

¹²⁴ BALOGH 1988: 108–109.

¹²⁵ KERTÉSZ 1984: 107–108.

¹²⁶ KÚM BéO 40035/Bé, July 7, 1945, OL.

¹²⁷ KERTÉSZ 1984: 108.

and Marshal Voroshilov, the president of the ACC, withdrew them only after vigorous protest by the Hungarian government.¹²⁸

Hungarian public opinion viewed the annexation of Transcarpathia to the Soviet Union – much like the occupation of the Baltic States in 1940 – as “the result of imperialist expansionist policy”, and this sharply raised a “panic psychosis” in Hungarian society worried about becoming a “member state” of the Soviet Union. According to the above quoted summary from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “the present policy-makers ... want the end of the Soviet military occupation of the country,” although they considered that “orientation toward the Soviet Union was long lasting.”¹²⁹ The extension of lasting Soviet influence was hastened by the Potsdam decision on German reparations. Accordingly, the governments of Great Britain and the United States renounced their claims for shares in German property located in the eastern zone of occupation, and against German properties located in Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Romania, and Eastern Austria.¹³⁰ On August 27, 1945, a five-year Soviet–Hungarian economic cooperation treaty was signed, on the basis of which Soviet–Hungarian joint companies were established.¹³¹ The Hungarian reparation shipments seriously curtailed the country’s economic independence, and the occupation and reparation costs limited Hungary’s production potential.

Following the October 1944 discussions between Stalin and Churchill in Moscow, and after the Hungarian armistice negotiations, reparations¹³² became one of the ongoing sources of disagreement between the victorious Great Powers.¹³³ In Moscow, the British were able to reduce reparations from \$400 million to \$300 million. The Americans also tried to moderate

¹²⁸ KERTESZ 1984: 108. See also “17 tarpa-vidéki község kérelme a miniszterelnök úrhoz” [Request of 17 Tarpa Area Villages to the Prime Minister], KÜM BéO 52/Bé, ÚMKL; “Les Frontières de Hongrie,” August 29, 1945, *Série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie*, vol. 26, MAE AD.

¹²⁹ KÜM BéO XXVI/L, ÚMKL.

¹³⁰ DBPO: 410.

¹³¹ SIPOS–VIDA 1985: 102–103; BALOGH 1988: 66–67; BEREND 1974: 141; KERTESZ 1953a: 153–162.

¹³² KOROM 1981: 480. The reparations were set at \$200 million for the Soviet Union and \$100 million for Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

¹³³ Stettinius’s telegram to Kennan in Moscow on Hungarian reparations, no. 2584, November 2, 1944, FRUS 1944/III: 922–924.

the reparation payments to the Soviets and place the entire matter under three-power control.

The Soviet Union had a dominant voice in the questions of Hungarian sovereignty, such as the refusal to withdraw the Soviet forces, the continuation of Allied control, and reparations. She also had a dominant position in the question of Hungary's political borders, such as the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute and the Bratislava bridgehead. Throughout the peace negotiations, these provoked arguments between the Americans and the Soviets.

The United States recognized that the Soviet interests in Hungary were more immediate than the American ones, and yielded to the Soviet Union for armistice negotiations and in the control of the armistice until the German capitulation. The United States did not, however, consider the Soviet Union to have any special privileges and/or a dominant position in Hungary.¹³⁴ After the conclusion of the European war, the Americans wished to participate as equal partners in Allied control, and did not consider that the Soviets had a legitimate leading role at the peace negotiations. In contrast to Romania and Bulgaria, the United States urged a peace treaty with Hungary as soon as possible.

American and British diplomatic papers, prepared during the war, suggested that the illusions of the Hungarian preparations for peace were not based entirely on the *naïveté* and idealism of the Hungarian politicians. There was an expectation that the Great Powers would seriously consider the justifiable adjustment of the political and ethnic borders, regardless of whether the country in question was a victorious or a vanquished one. At the end of the war, however, there was an inevitable delay between the Hungarian preparations for peace and the Great Powers taking a concrete stand on these issues. By the summer of 1945, the United States gave up on the border adjustments in Hungary's favor and based on ethnic fairness. The reasons for this are well known. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia not only firmly rejected any territorial concession to a former enemy country, but Czechoslovakia even made demands for territory beyond the Trianon

¹³⁴ FRUS 1945/Malta–Yalta: 245, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 106.

lines. So far as the United States was concerned, territorial adjustments in Hungary's favor were possible only vis-à-vis Romania.

On August 14, 1945, following the closure of the Potsdam Conference and in accordance with the guidelines, the Hungarian government submitted its position concerning the peace negotiations to the three Great Powers. The memorandum urged the economic and cultural cooperation among the nations in the Danubian basin. As far as territorial matters were concerned, it requested the "application of the ethnic principle" to its fullest extent, because until the national borders lost their meaning, "international peace and cooperation could be served best if the nationalities living in adjacent areas could live in the same country." It did realize, however, that presumably "regardless how the borders are drawn, national minorities will remain in all states and therefore their protection must be attended to through the United Nations." The government also expressed its hope in this memorandum that "peace based on justice and morality, taking legitimate demands into consideration, will make it possible to pacify the spirits and prevent another world catastrophe." Subsequently, until April 1946, the parties participating in the government failed to agree on the Hungarian goals for peace and the drafting of the demands. This was a function of the turns taken by the debate between the Great Powers on European peace settlements.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ KÜM BéO 44/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL. For Hungarian territorial arrangement ideas see Artúr Némethy-Benisch, "Javaslat Magyarország határainak megállapítására" [Proposal for the Delimitation of Hungary's Borders], August 10, 1945; Artúr Némethy-Benisch, "A trianoni határ módosítása" [Adjustment of the Trianon Border], August 16, 1945; Béla Demeter, "Hozzászólás a békeelőkészítő elgondolásokhoz" [Comments on the Peace Preparatory Considerations], August 1, 1945, KÜM BéO 48/res. Bé. 1945. Reported by FÜLÖP 1989a: 12–13.

FIRST SESSIONS OF THE CFM IN LONDON AND THE PEACE TREATY PLANS OF THE ALLIED POWERS VIS-À-VIS HUNGARY

In the months following the Potsdam Conference, the varying interpretation of the jointly agreed upon decisions caused tension between the Allied Powers. The eastern part of Europe once again became the stage of conflicting interests. There was great cooperation during the war and consensus at the meeting of the heads of state and heads of government, but subsequently the internal conflicts within the antifascist coalition became manifest. On August 6, 1945, the Soviet government recognized the Romanian and Finnish governments, and on August 14, it did the same for Bulgaria. Simultaneously, permission was granted via the local ACC for the dispatch and accreditation of diplomatic representations. Stalin, reconfirming his statements at Potsdam, assured the Americans that units of the Red Army would be withdrawn from Central and East-Central Europe. He told the deputy head of the US mission in Moscow, George Kennan: "Tell your fellows not to worry about those Eastern European countries. Our troops are going to get out of there and things will be all right."¹ Soviet foreign policy was endeavoring to strengthen the governments they brought to power, ease their international isolation, and arrange peace treaties at the earliest moment.

The only country the United States recognized on August 17, 1945, was Finland. In preparing the general guidelines for the Romanian, Bulgarian,

¹ Discussion of Stalin with Kennan on September 14, 1945, in FRUS 1945/V: 883.

and Hungarian peace treaties, the State Department took into account the Yalta and Potsdam decisions, and differentiated between Germany and her former satellites. Accordingly, the peace treaties with the three former satellites could not be punitive. War guilt clauses, unjustifiable territorial amputations, and undue military, economic, and political restrictions were not to be included in the peace treaties. This policy justified the hope that the Central European and Balkan area would not be divided into irreconcilable groups of “status quo” and “revisionist” states. This is what had happened after World War I, and was one of the reasons why in the 1930s Southeastern Europe fell so easily under German domination. Now it was foreseen that the security of the Danubian–Balkan area would be guaranteed by the UN and regional agreements rather than by military and armament industry restrictions. They also did not wish to impose heavy economic burdens on these states, because this would have not only impeded overall European economic recovery but would have ultimately increased the costs to the United States, which was granting economic assistance to the countries in this area. The Department of State did not wish to impose “harsh” peace terms, but it also wished to avoid the impression that the former enemy nations were rewarded for having fought on the side of the Axis, or that they were favored over the nations which resisted Germany and fought on the side of the Allies.²

The Foreign Office differed in this from the State Department, and made the peace treaties conditional on whether they were in Great Britain’s interest or not, rather than on the character of the governments in question.³ The British Labor government, largely for economic reasons, was forced to withdraw its troops from Italy and Greece, and, therefore, it endeavored to have Soviet troops withdrawn from the Danubian area on a basis of *quid pro quo*. The result would be a form of self-denying ordinance under which the Great Powers would not maintain troops or secret police in these countries, but would leave them to work out their salvation without external control or influence. In return for this, the Great Powers might require that the Danubian states, as well as Italy and Greece, accept two

² KERTESZ 1985: 70.

³ Notes of William G. Hayter on Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, PRO FO 371.48194.

obligations: firstly, that they should pledge themselves to allow all their citizens the fundamental human rights, and secondly, that they should never settle their mutual differences by force of arms. The Foreign Office wanted to make every effort to counter Russian influence and prestige, urging the Danubian countries to reestablish the broken economic and cultural ties with the West, and generally turn toward the democratic Western countries. Because Britain lacked the necessary resources, the Foreign Office wanted to promote the industrialisation of the Danubian area with American assistance.⁴ This was precisely where the weakness of the British plans became manifest. Without American assistance, they were unable to implement their ideas. It was for this reason that Bevin proposed on August 24, 1945, that when Byrnes arrived in London, the situation of the Danubian and Balkan areas be discussed and the British and American policies be brought into harmony. The Central and Southeastern European peace process was further complicated by the fact that on August 7, the French government joined in the Berlin (Potsdam) decisions and announced its interest in the negotiations concerning Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland.⁵

During the weeks preceding the meeting of the CFM in London, the Great Powers failed to bring their plans for the five peace treaties into any kind of harmony in spite of the agreement between Molotov and Byrnes mentioned above. American diplomacy returned to the views elaborated prior to the Potsdam Conference and again raised the argument about the representative nature of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments. The views of the Great Powers clashed first about the matter of postponing the Bulgarian parliamentary elections scheduled for August 26. In a radio address on August 9, President Truman stated that Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary “are not to be spheres of interest of any one power.”⁶ Simultaneously, the British government protested in Sofia against the Bulgarian election law. In

⁴ Note on policies in the Danubian countries, August 28, 1945, PRO FO 371.48224 R 15122.

⁵ Potsdam and France, telegram from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, no. 121, August 9, 1945, série Y, *Internationale 1944–1949*, vol. 126, MAE AD.

⁶ Radio Report to the American People on the Potsdam Conference, August 9, 1945, Public Papers of the Presidents, Harry S. Truman, 1945–1953, document 97, Truman Presidential Museum and Library.

a memorandum, dated August 11, Byrnes informed the Bulgarian government that he would not recognize it as being democratic and representative, and questioned whether this government would hold free elections where all democratic political forces could be assured of participation. On August 14, the day Soviet–Bulgarian diplomatic relations were resumed, Nikola Petkov, a minister from the Agrarian Party, resigned. Following this, four other ministers resigned from the Bulgarian government and became representatives of the opposition.

In his speech in the House of Commons on August 20, Bevin emphasized that in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, “one kind of totalitarianism was replaced by another one.”⁷ The British foreign secretary gave the impression that he had adopted a hard line, yet, in a memorandum submitted to the Labor government, he admitted, that

in accordance with the agreement reached in Moscow last year we began by allowing the Russians a free hand in local politics in Roumania and Bulgaria in return for tacit recognition of our predominant position in Greece. We could not continue to do so after the Yalta Declaration under which we promised to secure for ex-satellite countries democratic and representative governments. Three weeks later the Americans protested vigorously against the forcible imposition of the present, unrepresentative Roumanian government and we felt bound to support them. The protest had no effect whatever. We had given no encouragement to the opponents of the present Governments in these countries since we are not in a position to protect them from the consequences of opposition.⁸

The American and British members of the ACC in Sofia recommended the postponement of the elections. The Bulgarian government, hoping for an early peace treaty and for recognition by the American and British governments, was prepared to do so. On August 24, the Soviet vice chairman of the ACC agreed to the request on behalf of the Soviet government. The new date for the Bulgarian elections was set for November 18. Renewing

⁷ WOODWARD 1961–1971: I. 569.

⁸ Bevin's memorandum on Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, Berlin, August 1945, PRO FO 371.48217.

its promise of May 22, the American government was willing to receive an unofficial Bulgarian envoy in Washington, and thus, at least for the time being, desisted from its demand for the immediate reorganization of the Patriotic Front government.⁹

During the weeks following the Potsdam Conference, American foreign policy hoped to implement the principles of the Yalta Declaration and reverse the trends of domestic policies in Romania rather than in Bulgaria. The National Peasant Party of Iuliu Maniu and the National Liberal Party of Dinu Brătianu, the so-called historic parties, formed a joint political platform, prepared for the removal of the Groza government and planned a four-party government, in which the Romanian Communist Party would have been in the minority. The opposition parties viewed the August 11 memorandum of the American secretary of state as the last opportunity for breaking up the National Democratic Front government. Byrnes had told the Romanian king, the government, and the opposition parties that the American government hoped for the establishment of a more representative Romanian government – through the efforts of the Romanians themselves or, if necessary, with the assistance of the three Allied governments, as provided in the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe –, and that the US government looked forward to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Romanian government in which all important democratic parties were represented or which issued from free elections.¹⁰

King Michael, encouraged by the American *démarche*, asked for the Groza government's resignation on August 19, claiming that because the American and British governments did not recognize the Groza government, Romania could not be properly represented at the preparatory discussions for the peace conference. Groza rejected the king's request and declared that his government was now in a stronger position than ever before, and that he was convinced that "it was in the best interests of the Romanian people and of the king himself for the Groza regime to remain as the governing body of Romania." Groza assured the king that his government was a strong one and that, because he could count on full Russian support, his worries in connection with the conclusion of the Romanian peace treaty were groundless.

⁹ FRUS 1945/IV: 279–312; LUNDESTAD 1975; BOLL 1984: 142–151.

¹⁰ FRUS 1945/V: 565.

He added: "The question of American recognition of his government was of little significance and that the Soviet Union would eventually secure Anglo-American agreement to a peace treaty."¹¹

According to the Foreign Office, the timing of the king was bad, and his step would have been more effective if it had coincided with the CFM meeting in London. The British representative in Bucharest warned the king that although the British government did not consider the Groza government to be democratic or representative, it did not wish to give the king any advice or encouragement because it would be impossible to protect him from the consequences of an overthrow of the government. Paul-Boncour, the French political representative in Bucharest, also warned the king and the opposition representatives to refrain from "adventures" that could lead them into a *cul-de-sac*.¹² Yet, on August 20 King Michael, hoping for American support, again asked for the resignation of the Groza government, and when this was rejected, turned to the representatives of the three Allied governments, and asked them to help in establishing a government that could be recognized by the United States and Great Britain. The king also refused to countersign any further decrees by the Groza government. On August 21, the American secretary of state requested a tripartite consultation with the British and Soviet governments. Colonel General Susaykov, speaking for the Soviet government, advised the king that his government thought very highly of the Groza government because it had made good progress in the payment of reparations and in the other stipulations of the armistice agreement, implemented necessary domestic reforms, made peace with all its neighbors, and signed an agreement of collaboration with the Soviet Union. At the August 23 meeting of the Romanian ACC, the Soviet general told Brigadier General Schuyler, the chief United States representative, and Air Vice-Marshal Stevenson, the British commissioner, that his government definitely opposed the resignation of the Groza government and that he considered the actions of the British and the Americans as a circumvention of the Allied unity.

¹¹ FRUS 1945/V: 579; quoted in QUINLAN 1977: 142–143.

¹² FRUS 1945/V: 574–589; Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 124 and 126, September 9, 1945, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 8, MAE AD.

The Americans were forced to retreat to some extent, realizing that “it is vital to secure Soviet cooperation at any conference concerning Romania.”¹³ On August 25, Byrnes instructed the American representative in Bucharest: “We hope no action will be taken which might seem to give ground for Soviet suspicion that the crisis was brought about by Anglo-American intervention.” He banned any contact with Romanian leaders for the time being. He also advised the king that measures which might further provoke Soviet officials be avoided.¹⁴

On September 1, the Soviet commissar for foreign affairs rejected the American charges against the Groza government. Molotov, at the same time, indicated that he was willing to discuss the Romanian political situation after the London meeting.¹⁵ In both the Bulgarian elections and the Romanian crisis, the Soviet government endeavored to reestablish Allied agreement and tried to get the British and Americans to accept the Soviet point of view. The American secretary of state wished to place the Romanian question on the agenda of the CFM meeting in London, and was willing to agree only to Groza remaining acting Prime Minister until the government could be reorganized.¹⁶ The State Department recommended to the Foreign Office that they should send a committee of investigation to the Balkan states. The Foreign Office was not enthusiastic about this American initiative. Instead of introducing a new “weapon,” such as a committee of investigation, it preferred to hone the old weapons, namely increasing the authority of the ACC and calling for consultation based on the Yalta Declaration. At the Anglo-American discussions, on September 15, Bevin refrained from making independent suggestions, because it became evident that Byrnes wished to take a hard line at the London meeting, and Bevin considered it more prudent from a tactical perspective if the Balkan issues were raised by the Americans.¹⁷

¹³ Telegram from Melbourne on August 21, 1945, ACC Romania joint meeting no. 575, August 23, 1945, FRUS 1945/V: 584–591.

¹⁴ Byrnes’s telegram no. 457, August 25, 1945, FRUS 1945/V: 594–595.

¹⁵ Molotov note of September 1, 1945, FRUS 1945/V: 603–604.

¹⁶ Byrnes’s telegram no. 7566, September 4, 1945, FRUS 1945/V: 606–608.

¹⁷ Politics in the Danubian countries, note of William G. Hayter on September 12, and note of Pierson Dixon on September 16, PRO FO 371.48224.

On August 31, 1945, Gheorghe Tătărescu addressed a letter to the Soviet government and asked that it receive a Romanian delegation before Molotov's departure for London to discuss the peace plans. The Romanian minister of foreign affairs wished to discuss the Anglo-American diplomatic moves, Romania's point of view about the peace treaty, the border problems, the implementation of the armistice agreement, and Soviet–Romanian economic cooperation. Tătărescu hoped that Molotov would appear at the London meeting of the CFM as a spokesman for Romanian interests and as a proponent of a preliminary Soviet–Romanian peace treaty.¹⁸ On September 3, the Soviet government announced officially that it was willing to receive the Romanian delegation. Between September 4–13, 1945, Prime Minister Groza and Minister of Foreign Affairs Tătărescu signed a number of Soviet–Romanian agreements that improved Romania's economic situation. The Soviet government assured the Romanian head of government of its full support, and thus strengthened his political position prior to the London conference. At the same time, the Soviet government advised Groza that the Soviet Union was taking the opinion of its Allies seriously. Consequently, at the meeting of the Romanian government on September 14, Groza emphasized not only the continuation of his political direction but declared: "We must behave vis-à-vis the other Allies in such a manner that leaves nothing to be desired."¹⁹

Because of the agenda accepted in Potsdam, namely the sequence of Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland, and because of the disagreements concerning the recognition of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments, discussion of Hungarian matters was very much on the sidelines at the first session of the peace negotiations in the autumn of 1945. The Great Power debates about Romania, however, indirectly affected Hungary's international situation. When the Department of State announced on May 22, 1945, that it was willing to receive an unofficial Hungarian political representative in Washington, this was done with consideration of the effects the step might have on the Romanian government. At the Potsdam Conference, the United States delegation demanded the reorganization of

¹⁸ Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram no. 122, September 22, 1945, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 8, MAE AD.

¹⁹ LACHE-ȚUȚUI 1978: 188–192.

the Romanian and Bulgarian governments, but not of the Hungarian one.²⁰ The peace treaty to be signed with Hungary and the question of diplomatic recognition was discussed at the London negotiations only in the context of the negotiations concerning the Romanian peace treaty.

HUNGARIAN PEACE TREATY PROJECTS OF THE GREAT POWERS

The most important task of the first session of the CFM in London (September 11 – October 2, 1945) was to discuss the peace treaties to be established with the five former enemy countries. The Soviet, British, American, French, and Chinese ministers of foreign affairs agreed on September 11 that every delegation might participate in the discussion, but that only the signatories of the armistice agreements could share in the decision-making. As a basis for discussion, the British recommendation, containing 108 articles, and the American guidelines were accepted for Italy, while in the case of Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland the Soviet peace proposals were accepted. On Molotov's recommendation, the latter four were discussed by the members of the council as a single agenda item.²¹

In the discussions on the Italian peace treaty plans, the United States delegation was successful in referring the British proposal to the deputy foreign ministers, while the American guidelines were discussed by the four ministers of foreign affairs. The State Department and the American ambassador in Rome considered the proposals of the Foreign Office to be "unduly harsh" and reminiscent of the Versailles peace treaties. The Department of State believed that if the British proposals were accepted, the Italians would continuously agitate to have the terms modified and would also begin to look for ways toward secret rearmament.²² Byrnes recommended that

²⁰ SIPOS-VIDA 1987: 421–467; Romania and Bulgaria as well as diplomatic relations between other countries, telegram by Lord Halifax from Washington no. 4246, June 19, 1945, note by Stewart on June 22, 1945, PRO FO 371.48214.

²¹ CMAE (45) 1^{ère} séance, série Y, Internationale, vol. 135, MAE AD; FRUS 1945/II: 116–117.

²² State Department telegram no. 8478, September 26, 1945, FRUS 1945/II: 135; Telegram from Alexander C. Kirk no. 3489, September 26, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 1032; the British proposal, FRUS 1945/II: 135–147.

signing the peace treaty should fully reestablish Italy's sovereignty and that, other than the stipulations of the treaty, the Allies should have no further rights to interfere with Italian affairs. Bevin wished to assure the implementation of military directives and maintain supervision over the most important transportation routes in Allied hands.²³ The foreign ministers debated for almost one week on the disposition of the Italian colonies, on the amount of the reparation payments, and on the Italian borders. In the Trieste–Istria matter, the Soviet delegation supported Yugoslavia, while the British, American, and French delegations supported Italy's view. In addition to the Yugoslav delegates and to the delegates from the British Dominions, the council heard the Italian minister of foreign affairs at its September 18, 1945, session. This did not create a precedent for the hearing of the opinions of the other former enemy countries, because Italy, in contrast to the other four vanquished countries, had been designated during the war as a “co-belligerent” and given the status of a country fighting against Germany. The members of the council reached an authoritative ruling on the position of the Yugoslav–Italian border. The ethnic line was accepted as a basis and drawn so that the fewest possible nationals were left under foreign rule. To resolve the Trieste questions, placing the port and transport facilities under international control was considered appropriate.²⁴ This decision was published in an official announcement by the council on September 19, 1945. In spite of the agreement in principle, the Trieste problem became a central issue in the European peace settlement because of the conflicting views of the Allied Powers. A year and a half elapsed before it was resolved, and it became evident that reconciling the interests of the victorious powers was much more difficult than anticipated.

The Soviet delegation submitted its proposals for the Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish peace treaties to the council on September 12, 1945. The Soviet proposals were based on the armistice agreements and on the decisions of the Potsdam Conference. The proposals of the Soviet delegation for the peace treaty with Hungary were as follows (the numbered items in parentheses refer to the respective articles of the armistice agreement):

²³ FRUS 1945/II: 256.

²⁴ FRUS 1945/II: 255.

(1) The Soviet Delegation considers it desirable to take as a basis for the future treaty of peace with Hungary the existing Armistice Agreement signed on 20th January, 1945, between the USSR, the United Kingdom and the United States, on the one hand, and Hungary on the other. The Soviet Delegation thinks that Articles 1(d), 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 19 of the above mentioned Armistice Agreement and the Annex to Article 12 could, with necessary drafting changes and additions, be incorporated in the peace treaty as its basic articles.

(2) Article 19 of the armistice agreement dealing with the frontiers of Hungary should be amplified to indicate that the whole of Transylvania will be restored to Romania.

(3) Article 8 of the armistice agreement should be deleted and replaced by an article under which Hungary undertakes to hand over to the Soviet Union, in conformity with paragraphs 1 and 9 of the decisions of the Berlin Conference on reparations from Germany, the German assets located in Hungary.

(4) The Allied Powers will support the candidature of Hungary for membership of the United Nations Organization. Hungary shall cooperate with the Allied Powers and shall give effect to such measures as they may adopt for the maintenance of world peace.

The articles in question concerned: (1) Ending the war with the Allies and declaring war on Germany as well as the participation of Hungarian troops. (2) Withdrawal of the Hungarian troops and officials to the pre-December 1937 borders. (4) Release of allied prisoners of war and internees. (5) Release of UN nationals and all persecuted people, and rescinding discriminatory legislation. (6) Restitution of the properties of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and other UN members. (7) German war booty. (12) Payment of \$300 million in reparations. (13) Restoration of the properties and rights of citizens of the Allied countries. (14) Punishment of war criminals. (15) Disbanding the pro-Hitler and fascist organizations. (19) Invalidation of the two Vienna Awards. Supplement to Article 12: consideration of the January 20, 1945, dollar–gold parity in calculating reparation and restitution payments.²⁵

²⁵ FRUS 1945/II: 147–148.

Soviet diplomacy was actually trying to implement the agreements made by the Allies. From the above plans, only those articles of the armistice agreement were omitted which were valid only for the duration of the war. According to the recommendations of the Soviet delegation, the countries at war with the Allies were to lose all territories acquired during the European crisis, starting with the annexation of Austria and all territories conquered during the war. South Dobruja – attached to Bulgaria by the September 7, 1940, Craiova Agreement – was an exception to this rule, because it came about on the basis of a bilateral Romanian–Bulgarian agreement and was considered a territorial cession approved after the war by the Allies.

According to the peace treaty proposals submitted in London by the Soviet delegation, Hungary would return to her December 31, 1937, borders, which were the borders determined by the 1920 Trianon treaty. The Soviet delegation justified the transfer of the “whole” of Transylvania to Romania under the Romanian peace treaty proposal, in view of the assistance rendered by Romania to the cause of the Allies in the war against Germany.²⁶

The British delegation submitted its peace treaty proposal for Romania and Bulgaria to the CFM on September 17, 1945, and for Hungary on the following day. The British proposals made essentially the same comments about the September 12 Soviet proposals in all three cases. The United Kingdom delegation agreed with the Soviet delegation that the relevant articles of the Armistice with Hungary, signed at Moscow on January 20, 1945, provided a basis for the drafting of certain parts of the peace treaty with Hungary. The United Kingdom delegation suggested that the action already taken by the Hungarian government under Article 15 of the armistice might make it unnecessary to repeat in the peace treaty the whole substance of Article 15.²⁷ The United Kingdom delegation proposed that the peace treaty should lay down the character and numbers of the armed forces which Hungary would be allowed to retain; should impose the necessary limitations upon the manufacture of war material in Hungary; and

²⁶ FRUS 1945/II: 149–150.

²⁷ CMAE (45), 1^{ère} séance, série Y, Internationale, vol. 135, MAE AD; PRO FO CAB 133. The British proposals are contained in the CFM, for Romania in CFM (45) 21, for Bulgaria in CFM (45) 22, and for Hungary in CFM (45) 24; FRUS 1945/II: 227.

should provide for a small inter-Allied military inspectorate to supervise the execution of the military clauses of the treaty in succession to the ACC, which would be dissolved upon the treaty's entry into force. The British delegation assumed that on the conclusion of the peace treaty all Allied forces would be withdrawn from Hungary (except as may be provided for the maintenance of the lines of communication of the Red Army with the Soviet zone of occupation in Austria). Similar wording was provided for Romania as well. The United Kingdom delegation considered that the provision in Article 9 of the Armistice, governing the return of Allied vessels to their owners and compensation for their damage and destruction, should be included in the peace treaty. In accordance with the British proposal for the peace treaty with Romania with reference to paragraph 3 of the Soviet delegation memorandum, the United Kingdom delegation considered that the question of whether the whole of Transylvania should be returned to Romania cannot be decided only on the basis of Romania's war record. It was felt to be very important to obtain a Romanian-Hungarian frontier which would be equitable in itself. Before taking any final commitments, it was thought that this question should be carefully examined in an expert subcommittee.²⁸ It would also be necessary to include provisions on certain consequential questions. The British delegation wished to include articles of a political nature in the Hungarian, as well as in the Romanian and Bulgarian, peace treaties. As a general guideline, the British delegation recommended that its economic and financial proposals for the Italian peace treaty be accepted. The United Kingdom delegation agreed that consideration should be given to the recommendation of the Soviet Union about Hungary's admission to the United Nations.

Even though British diplomacy emphasized that agreements made during the war were not necessarily binding for the peace treaties, the British and Soviet proposals created a direct link between the capitulation documents and the peace treaty plans. In fact, they continued the Allied negotiations that began during the war and that related to the former enemy nations. The United States did not consider the agreements made during World War II

²⁸ FRUS 1945/II: 182–183.

decisive obligations vis-à-vis the terms of the peace treaties, and strove for a renegotiation of the armistice clauses. In London, the Eastern Europe experts of the State Department advised the secretary of state to reject the Soviet proposals because, according to them, the proposals on Hungary, and the similar proposals submitted in case of Romania and Bulgaria, would “eliminate American participation in the reconstruction of the Balkans, and would guarantee to the USSR an even more important role than her physical position and power would insure.” Cavendish W. Cannon summarized the expert opinion in a memorandum, dated September 14, 1945, and stated: “It is hard to find in this project anything which meets our ideas of what a peace treaty should be. ... In effect it reserves to the Soviet government, and gives a permanent character to, all the advantages of the surrender instruments, thus substituting, particularly in the case of Hungary, bilateral arrangements (economic topics) for the present method where at least some small measure of joint Allied participation exists.”

The American diplomats were concerned that – in presenting a document which, in appearance, would simplify the preparation of the treaties – the Soviet government hoped to obtain earlier and more expeditious handling of the Balkan treaties with priority over the more elaborate procedure contemplated for Italy. From this point of view, the presentation of these proposals was a manoeuvre rather than a serious set of principles for permanent good relations with these states. Maynard Barnes, the American political representative in Sofia, put it even more bluntly: “The Soviet government will try by every means to force early elaboration of a peace treaty for Bulgaria. Even if at the present time they accomplish no more than discussion of the treaty provisions between the Big Three, the effect in Bulgaria will be to bolster the present government and further to cow the opposition.” The State Department experts assumed that: “Presumably the Soviet troops would be withdrawn and military control terminated as inherent in the acceptance of a treaty. There is no definite provision for this, and the continuance of Soviet organs of control, for the fulfillment of reparations obligations or supervision of disarmament, for example, may account for an undercover control not much less effective the open presence of troops.” Barnes considered that

There is a further consideration of importance that weighs against the early negotiation of a treaty of peace with Bulgaria, namely the problem of the Straits. One of the major objectives of concluding peace with Bulgaria should be the withdrawal of the Russian troops of occupation, variously estimated at the present time from 115,000 to 200,000. This figure is not an accurate estimate of Russia's immediate potential in Bulgaria against Turkey. Moreover, from the viewpoint of direct American economic interests, the Soviet proposals would make no effective provision for the settlement of substantial claims and debts owed to us by these countries, including those arising from Soviet removal of American property.

The American delegation objected to the proposals, lacking any restriction on the number and armament of the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian armies. Cannon summarized the opinions of his colleagues and said: "The acceptance of anything along these lines would have the effect of confirming the present situation under which these countries are under effective Soviet domination and would mean the abandonment of the opportunity for establishing democratic governments in these countries."²⁹

Leslie A. Squires, the secretary of the American Mission in Budapest, argued along similar lines, but wrote in his memorandum of September 15:

While the conclusion of the peace treaty along the lines of the current Soviet proposals would not be as disadvantageous in Hungary as in Bulgaria and Rumania, it would serve to make improbable the early development of a realistically democratic national government. The American and British declarations in recent weeks have served to strengthen the position of those Hungarian political leaders opposed to the Communization of Hungary. ... This favorable trend is directly attributable to the recent American and British declarations on Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. It would indeed be unfortunate if, at a moment when the non-Communist Hungarian political leaders are finally gathering sufficient strength and courage to take effective action, their hands were to be tied and their spiritual isolation

²⁹ FRUS 1945/II: 182–185; Barnes memo, September 14, FRUS 1945/IV: 327–329.

renewed by American acceptance of a peace treaty which would strengthen the Communist position in Hungary. The effect of replacing the present Armistice Agreement by a treaty of peace based on a rewording of pertinent provisions of the armistice would also produce the unfortunate result of eliminating, through the abolition of the ACC, an important agency for the presentation of the American viewpoint within Hungary.

If such participation was discontinued American diplomacy would lose the principal point of pressure for a free election and the development of a democratic government will be removed. While this consideration is not so vital in the case of Hungary as in Bulgaria and Rumania, it retains sufficient validity to make the signature of peace along the lines of the Soviet proposals an illogical step.

According to him, the proposals represented “a bilateral peace treaty between Russia and Hungary in which other Allied nations would have little or no part and that would grant the Soviet Union an exclusive position.”³⁰ The Eastern European expert of the State Department also commented on the Transylvania question: “We should prefer to leave certain border districts within Hungary, for which excellent arguments can be adduced.”³¹

Between September 16–20, 1945, Molotov and Byrnes held several conversations in London, trying to bring into harmony the Eastern European interests of the Soviet Union and of the United States. The secretary of state recognized that the Soviet Union was within her rights in demanding a friendly government in the countries adjacent to her but was unwilling to sign a peace treaty with Romania and Bulgaria without a prior “Poland-type” restructuring of the governments. Byrnes desired to see friendly governments in these areas adjacent to the Soviet Union, and added that when the question of the Romanian and Bulgarian treaties came up at the council, he would be forced to say that the United States could not conclude treaties with the existing governments of those countries, since it did not regard them as sufficiently representative. Molotov could not convince

³⁰ FRUS 1945/II: 182; FRUS 1945/IV: 869–872.

³¹ FRUS 1945/II: 184.

Byrnes that there was no self-respecting government that could tolerate the existence of a hostile government in a country which it had defeated. In case of the Bulgarian elections, the Soviet government met the demands of Great Britain and the United States. Molotov held that restructuring the Romanian government would be possible only after the elections. The Polish precedent was not applicable to Romania because Romania did not have two governments, like Poland in the spring of 1945, that the Allies had to bring to a common denominator. Molotov also stated that in exchange for his government's cooperation in the Italian peace treaty, it could expect that the United States not interfere with the peace process in the Balkans. In order not to complicate matters, the Soviet government had agreed to meet the wishes of the British and Americans in hastening the conclusion of the peace treaty with Italy, and that it did not see any reason, except an artificially induced one, for delaying the peace treaties for Bulgaria, Romania, Finland, and Hungary. The Soviet government had suggested turning the armistice arrangements into peace treaties and proposed no new clauses or conditions in this connection. This should simplify the matter since all three governments had signed the armistice terms.

Byrnes rejected the Soviet arguments, demanded the restructuring of the Groza government, and insisted on the maintenance of the "non-recognition" policy, even though the British and French ministers of foreign affairs doubted the effectiveness of such a move, as did his own advisors, Charles Bohlen and John Foster Dulles. Molotov stated flatly that if the United States did not sign the peace treaty with Romania and Bulgaria, the Soviet Union would not sign the treaty with Italy. These differences of opinion brought work on the Italian peace treaty to a standstill.³²

It was after these preliminaries that the United States government submitted its proposals about Romania and Bulgaria on September 19, and about Hungary on September 21. They were entitled: "Suggested Directive to the Deputies from the Council of Foreign Ministers to Govern them in the Drafting of a Treaty of Peace." This document stated: "This suggested directive is submitted by the United States Delegation with the

³² FRUS 1945/II: 195–201, 243–247.

understanding that the United States will not negotiate a treaty of peace with Bulgaria (and Romania) until there has been established a government broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of a government responsive to the will of the people, which can be recognized by the United States.”³³

Molotov immediately protested to Byrnes about the American preconditions that he defined as a challenge directed against the Soviet Union and to which he would be forced to reply. If these attacks on the Romanian government were made by the United States delegation, he would be forced to answer. He repeated his suggestion that the secretary withdraw the note and “confine himself to an oral statement that our participation in the drawing up of the treaty should not be construed as recognition.” Instead of withdrawing the memorandum, Byrnes engaged in an argument with Molotov. An open conflict became inevitable.

The American directives were developed as an alternative to the Soviet proposals by James Clement Dunn, the deputy secretary of state, Maynard Barnes, the American representative in Sofia, Burton Berry, the representative in Bucharest, Leslie Squires, the secretary of the mission in Budapest, and Cavendish W. Cannon, the Southeast Europe expert of the State Department. If we ignore the territorial and reparation requirements, the directives for all three countries were similar. For Hungary, they required the return to the 1938 pre-Vienna Awards borders. “The frontier with Roumania shall be, in general, the frontier existing in 1938, except that, as regards Transylvania determination regarding the whole or the greater part to go to Roumania shall be made after examining the respective claims of the two states.”³⁴ Hungary was expected to maintain a Bill of Rights along the stipulations already accepted for inclusion in the Italian and Bulgarian peace treaties. By the treaty, Hungary should voluntarily undertake to maintain a Bill of

³³ FRUS 1945/II: 253–267. The suggested directives for Bulgaria differed from the Hungarian ones in political and economic clauses dealing with educational, philanthropic and human rights. The Romanians differed only as far as control of the Danube was concerned.

³⁴ FRUS 1945/II: 252, 311–312.

Rights which would guarantee freedom of speech, religious worship, language, political belief, and public meeting, and confirm the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the United Nations Organization.

The American delegation proposed that the maintenance of armaments for land, sea, and air should be closely restricted to the necessities of a) maintenance of order; b) local frontier defense; c) such military contingents, if any, in addition to the foregoing as may be required by the United Nations' Security Council. It urged that appropriate provisions be made, preferably by separate protocol, to deal with war criminals and the return of prisoners of war. The treaty was to include provisions for the delivery to the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia of reparations in kind as stipulated in Article 12 of the armistice. It was also to provide for the determination of the reparation payable to other countries, and for completing the restoration of Allied property in Hungary to its owners or payment thereof, when the property is not returned in good order, as required by Article 13 of the armistice. According to the American delegation, the supervision of Hungary's execution of the treaty provisions – with regard to reparations, restoration of Allied property, and compensation for damage – were to be vested in an Allied commission, composed of representatives of the USSR, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The satisfaction of claims against Hungary on the part of countries other than the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were to be covered primarily from Hungarian assets abroad. Consequently, the Hungarian government was expected to authorize any member state of the United Nations to take over and apply to their respective reparation claims the assets of the Hungarian government (excluding diplomatic and consular premises) and of Hungarian nationals. Similarly, the Hungarian government was to compensate the member states of the United Nations, other than the USSR, with Hungarian government and private property in the neutral countries. Any country of the United Nations could use the money received from Hungary to compensate its state or its citizens and cover its debts. The American guidelines agreed that the Hungarian government should be required to recognize the transfer to the USSR, in accordance

with Paragraphs 1 and 9 of the Potsdam Declaration on German reparations, of German assets in Hungary. (This transfer should be made by the Allied Control Council in Germany.) Provisions should be included in the treaty implementing the United States proposal, which was accepted in principle in Article XXI of the Potsdam Protocol, including guarantees to Allied nationals of access, on equal terms, to Hungarian trade, raw materials, and industry. Similar provision should be made for equality of access to the use of Hungarian waterways and aviation facilities. These provisions might be limited in their duration for a period of five years. The American delegation recommended that the treaty provide for the restoration of Hungarian sovereignty, and the nations' party to the treaty should have no rights or controls within Hungary except as may be specifically provided in the treaty.

France also prepared comments on the Soviet proposal but this document was never formally submitted to the CFM. The European Division of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared an internal document, on September 6, 1945, on "The Borders between Hungary and Romania." It considered such matters as the return of all of Transylvania to Hungary or to Romania, autonomy for Transylvania, and ethnic borders. Instead of "ethnic" borders, it recommended as a final solution that the Transylvanian plateau be given to Romania, that the Banat come under Romanian sovereignty, but that the eastern part of the Hungarian Plain (Partium) be returned to Hungary. Accordingly, the border would start 30 kilometres west of Máramarosziget (Sighetu Marmăției) and, following the Szamos (Someș) River and the Bihar Mountain Complex (Munții Bihorului), would reach the Maros (Mureș) River 40 kilometres before Déva (Deva), and then follow the Maros to the present border. The proposal of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs was supplemented with a recommendation for an exchange of minority populations under international supervision. In the view of its drafters, this solution could be implemented only if the Allies imposed it on Hungary and Romania, eliminating the possibility of further debate.³⁵

³⁵ CMAE (45), série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 37, MAE AD; série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, MAE AD; série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

THE TRANSYLVANIA DEBATE
AT THE LONDON MEETING OF THE CFM

The first session of the CFM had reached a turning point when the discussion of the Soviet proposal was put on the agenda. At the morning session on September 20, 1945, at the 13th meeting of the council, the British and Soviet ministers of foreign affairs discussed the peace treaty with Finland in the presence of their American, French, and Chinese colleagues. Bevin argued in favor of arms limitation for Finland and for the other small countries, while Molotov distinguished between the former enemy allied powers, Germany and Italy, and the small countries adjacent to the Soviet Union. Concerning these, and in spite of the fact that they did fight against the Soviet Union, he felt that their sovereignty did not need to be limited in this manner and that their national pride should not be affronted by regulations reducing their armament. In accordance with the Potsdam Declaration, Molotov wished to limit the debate to the signatories of the armistice agreement, the Soviet Union and Great Britain. At the 14th session, that same afternoon, the Romanian peace treaty proposal was debated. The American secretary of state called attention to his reservations concerning the representative character of the Romanian government but, having done so, was willing to participate in discussing the proposals. On Molotov's suggestion the Soviet proposal, complemented and modified by the British proposals, was taken as the basis for discussion. The American guidelines were to be discussed later and would serve as the basis for discussions on military restrictions. The Soviet–Romanian border, the return of Allied shipping, the indictment of war criminals, the disbanding of the pro-Hitler, pro-fascist organizations, and the withdrawal of the Allied armed forces were first reviewed. Then the matter of concern to Hungary, the Transylvania question, was put on the table for the first and last time.

(In the following, the verbatim transcript of the British delegation will be presented, with the French and American notes only shown [in brackets] when they differ significantly from the British text. The British text is shown in standard script, the French, the American, and Soviet, in *italics*).³⁶

³⁶ PRO FO 371.48219; série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24 (Z. 366), MAE AD; FRUS 1945/II: 27, 179–182. For the Soviet position, see ZHIGNYA 1981: 54–65.

The British and United States Delegations proposed that the frontier with Hungary should be, in general, the frontier existing in 1938, except that as regards Transylvania determination regarding the whole or greater part to go to Roumania should be made after examining the respective claims of the two States.

M. Molotov said that the task of the Council was to liquidate the Vienna Award, and restore the award of the Treaty of Trianon. He thought that this decision could be taken without further enquiry. *The Allies decided the fate of Transylvania after the First World War. Changing Hitler's Vienna Award, the Allies can restore that situation, and to give back to Romania the Northern Transylvania. This question is so clear, that the Allies can decide without hesitation. (Reestablishment of the border drawn by the Great Powers after the Great War and the return of all of Northern Transylvania are decisions that the Conference can reach immediately.)*

Bevin recalled that Article 19 of the Armistice Terms provided that "Transylvania (or the greater part thereof) should be returned to Roumania, subject to the confirmation of the peace settlement." *The British Delegation considers the return of Transylvania to Romania as unjust, but in case of the return of Transylvania to Hungary, the Allies can make also an unjust decision.* All that the British Delegation wanted was to get a just and equitable frontier so that future conflict might be avoided *like after the First World War. He asked Molotov if he wanted to propose a kind of middle way, or wanted to return the whole Transylvania to Roumania? (Molotov specified that he recommended that all of Transylvania be returned now.)*

(Bidault reminded the Council that France was neutral in this matter. Bidault suggested that in this matter the Council should follow the policy which they had adopted with regard to the Yugoslav-Italian frontier and seek, after investigation on the spot, an ethnic line which would leave as few Hungarians as possible in Roumania and as few Roumanians as possible in Hungary. Special provisions were required to protect national minorities. Since the territorial distribution of the Hungarians was in the middle of an area inhabited by Romanians only a partial solution of the above was possible and that there was now an opportunity to strengthen and improve the rights of the minorities.)

Molotov said that the bulk of the population of Transylvania was Roumanian, though there were many Hungarians and some Germans. These nationalities were closely intermingled, and it was impossible to draw a line which would not leave many Roumanians in Hungary and many Hungarians in Roumania. He quoted the letter which M. Millerand, then Chairman of the Paris Peace Conference, had addressed to the head of the Hungarian Delegation in April 1920, to the following effect, "The frontiers established for Hungary by the Trianon Peace Treaty are the result of painstaking study of ethnological conditions in Central Europe and of national aspirations." It was common knowledge that the transfer of Transylvania to Roumania in 1919 had the approval of the United States (*of President Wilson*), British and French Governments. *It was their decision. (Between the European governments presents hereby, only the Soviet Union did not approve. Mister Molotov was now empowered to state that the Soviet Union agreed to the transfer of the territory. Only Hitler opposed the 1920 decision. Should we not agree to wipe out Hitler's decision?)* The Soviet Government agreed with that decision. Hitler did not agree with that decision and invalidated it. Their duty was to reverse Hitler's decision and restore their own. The wording of Article 19 of the Roumanian Armistice Terms had been careful (*because this was Russia's wish...*) so as not to tie their hands in case any new circumstances should arise. But nobody had suggested that new circumstances had arisen, and he recommended that the Trianon decision should be approved. *The Soviet Delegation is considering this clause is entirely reasonable. New circumstances have not arisen to change this decision after the war. This is why the Allies have to reestablish their decision of the First World War liquidating entirely the decision of the Vienna Award. That's all.*

(Bidault shared Molotov's opinion that the Vienna Awards had to be rescinded and that whatever was reasonable in the 1919–1920 decisions should be reinforced. He agreed with the spirit of the conclusions drawn by the leader of the Soviet delegation.)

Byrnes exposing the American Delegation views said that the first declaration of the French Delegation is coinciding with the American views. (Byrnes believes that Hitler's decisions were already negated by the armistice agreement the conditions of which everybody approved. In determining this border the

American delegation would like to see the same system accepted that was used for Istria.) Byrnes said that in 1919 the United States had tried for several months to secure a different line from that which was ultimately adopted; and, at that time when M. Millerand's letter was written, the United States had only an observer present at the Conference. *This is why the United States of America is not tied by the position of 1919. The United States preferred some rectifications of the Hungarian–Romanian frontiers leaving the smallest number of Hungarians on the Romanian territory, but obviously, this is not feasible. However, Byrnes wanted to know if small rectifications of frontiers would be possible for not to leave some Hungarians under foreign rule.* He thought that by a slight change in the Transylvania frontier it would be possible to restore half a million Hungarians to Hungary. When Millerand wrote his letter, the United States had only one observer at the conference. He believed that with a very small modification of the border 500,000 Hungarians could be returned to Hungary. *(He asked the Conference that the issue be studied carefully because the life and happiness of thousands of human beings were at stake. If the changes cannot be made, the American delegation would not insist.)* In the area he had in mind there was a considerable Hungarian population, whose railway connections were almost entirely with Hungary, and to put them into Roumania would contribute neither to their happiness nor to the happiness or prosperity of Roumania. The total area of Transylvania was 39,600 square miles and the change which he had in mind would not affect more than 3,000 square miles. Where the lives of individuals were concerned, he would feel happier if the decision could be made after a detailed examination on the ground. [The American minutes differed from the British in the following]: *After further discussion, Molotov asked Mr. Byrnes to give him a proposal in writing. He would study it and discuss it in a few days. Bevin was prepared to accept the second paragraph of the American proposal (it was here that the border recommended by the American delegation was shown to Molotov on the map), Molotov declared that the American map gives an exact account of what Byrnes showed him and Byrnes promised him to send yesterday. Byrnes beating his culpa, apologized not to send him in time the promised map. Molotov expressing his conviction that the map Byrnes promised to be sent him is a good one, but he would prefer*

it to study the question and return to it in two days. Bevin said, maybe in two weeks? Molotov was ready even to discuss the American proposal at the next day. Byrnes agreed that the debate should be postponed until language can be found that would express the American view more effectively on the Transylvanian frontier. Byrnes handed in the following revised draft of Paragraph 2 of Section 1 of the United States memorandum [C.F.M. (45) 36]: "The frontier with Hungary shall be, in general, the frontier existing in 1938; however, as regards Transylvania, the entire situation shall be examined with a view to determining whether the award of a small part to Hungary would materially reduce the number of persons to be subject to alien rule."³⁷ The following day, on Bidault's recommendation, the second paragraph of the American proposal was accepted. The territorial question, however, was not formally closed.

The debate of the CFM on September 20, 1945, dealing with the Romanian–Hungarian border issue, departed from a discussion of the behavior of the respective countries during the war, even though this had been a feature of the Soviet proposal about Romania. Molotov's arguments show the theses elaborated in the peace preparatory documents prepared during the war. Molotov justified the return to the Trianon borders and to the 1920 position of the Western powers, and the nullification of the Vienna Awards on the basis that Hungary failed to switch sides during the war. Yet Molotov was willing to study the American proposal. The American proposal was based largely on the Istria precedent, namely on the ethnic principles that the CFM applied to the resolution of the Yugoslav–Italian border dispute. The preliminaries of the American proposal went back at least as far as 1943. The State Department directives proposed to the council did not refer to these and only suggested that the demands of the affected countries be investigated. In submitting the proposal, Byrnes was obviously trying to put indirect pressure on the Soviet Union, defending the Groza government, and Molotov certainly was of this opinion. Yet Byrnes did not hold rigidly to his proposal on readjusting the borders when he declared: "If

³⁷ FRUS 1945/II: 281.

modification of the borders is impossible the American delegation will not insist on it." While on the map shown to Molotov only a narrow stripe was shown to belong to Hungary, Bidault's recommendation to apply the ethnic principle and protection of the minorities, seemed to go well beyond the American proposal. As is known, this was not the case. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs also wished to return only the so-called Parts (Partium) to Hungary and was not thinking about Transylvania at all. The British foreign secretary yielded the initiative to his American colleague and did not specify what he meant by a "reasonable, just and equitable border" that would prevent conflicts in the future. The Great Powers which rendered the Trianon decision showed some delayed feeling of guilt when, in the autumn of 1945, they admitted that the Romanian-Hungarian border was not "logical, just, and equitable." Molotov did not immediately reject the minimal territorial adjustment proposed by the United States, but his promise to return to it in a few days could not be realized. The question of determining the Romanian-Hungarian border became swallowed up in the whirlpool of a much larger political confrontation and became a function of the resolution of the Romanian political crisis. Meaningful discussions could be resumed only after a delay of several months, after the conflict over the representative status of the Romanian government and diplomatic recognition was concluded.

THE DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION
OF ROMANIA AND BULGARIA:
FAILURE OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE

At the 15th and 16th meetings of the CFM, on September 21, 1945, the American reservations about the Romanian and Bulgarian peace negotiations became the center of debate. Molotov believed that the reason for the anti-Groza government position of the United States was the Romanian government's friendship policy toward the Soviet Union. He rejected the notion of removing the Groza government and of replacing it with a government that would be unfriendly toward the Soviet Union. Byrnes tried

to convince Molotov of the opposite. The United States recognized the Polish and Finnish governments, even though they were friendly toward the Soviet Union, and, unexpectedly, announced that he had instructed the American representative in Budapest that “if the Hungarian government would pledge itself to hold free elections in accordance with Yalta, the United States would recognize Hungary.”³⁸ Byrnes had considered this move already on September 18, in connection with the answer to be given to the Romanian and Bulgarian peace treaty proposal. By bringing it up at the September 21 meeting, he wished to strengthen his negotiating position, and in making the announcement considered the effect that Hungary’s diplomatic recognition would have on Romania and Bulgaria. His Soviet counterpart, realizing the intent behind the American move, was not convinced. Molotov favored the unified assessment of the former enemy countries’ war record and considered the responsible enforcement of the armistice important as the representative nature of the government. In this regard, he saw no difference between the Hungarian and Romanian governments. He did not consider the Greek or Italian governments to be more democratic than the Romanian one. He doubted whether American recognition would be governed by the democratic nature of the government because the United States maintained diplomatic relations with the Spanish, Greek, and Argentine governments.³⁹

Jumping ahead of the United States, the Soviet Union announced on September 25, 1945, that it intended to resume diplomatic relations with Hungary.⁴⁰ In order to reach an understanding, the Soviet delegation in London was prepared, in the spirit of the Yalta Agreement, to have a consultation about the Romanian political situation. They wished to base this on the reports of the Allied political and military representatives in Bucharest. The British and French ministers of foreign affairs, however, lined up behind the American position and demanded an independent investigation. Discussion of the Bulgarian issue was just beginning on September 21, 1945, with the Bulgarian–Romanian border and the internationalization of the Danube

³⁸ FRUS 1945/II: 293.

³⁹ FRUS 1945/III: 296.

⁴⁰ FRUS 1945/II: 489.

being in the center of the debate, when the peace preparations temporarily reached a dead end. On September 22, 1945, Molotov, on Stalin's direct instructions, recommended a return to the procedures originally accepted at the Potsdam Conference that excluded the possibility of the French and Chinese representatives participating in the debate about Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish matters, because they were not signatories of the armistices with these countries. A direct exchange of telegrams between the three heads of state or government did not resolve the problem.

Several attempts were made by the Soviet and American delegations to avert a complete collapse of the London negotiations. On September 26, the United States delegation proposed entrusting the preparation of the peace treaty plans to the deputy ministers of foreign affairs of the countries which signed the capitulation documents. According to the American plan, these would have been discussed at an international peace conference starting on November 15, 1945. The Soviet delegation believed that a peace conference in London with Italy, and separate peace conferences in Moscow with Finland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, were necessary, if possible, still in 1945, with the participation of the countries that signed the armistice agreements and other particularly interested states.⁴¹ This was because the American proposal included an invitation to the peace conference of all the United Nations member states, including those outside Europe who did not participate in the European war with significant military forces. Accordingly, even countries that were not at war with the five former enemy countries would participate in the discussion of the peace treaties as full members. Discussion of the German peace treaty was postponed, even though the majority of the European United Nations members, and the countries outside Europe which participated in the war with significant forces, were really interested only in the German peace treaty issues. On the basis of the American recommendation, these countries did participate eventually in the debates on the five peace treaties, even though they had little, if anything, to do with them.

⁴¹ FRUS 1945/II: 385. For the September 26, 1945, American proposal, see FRUS 1945/II: 383–384, for the September 27, 1945, American proposal, see page 427, and for the Soviet proposal of the same date, see 427–428.

The fate of the London conference was decided not by procedural questions but by the argument about recognition. On September 28, Molotov again asked his two negotiating partners: "Why could not the American and British Governments do in regard to Rumania and Bulgaria what they had done in regard to Hungary?"⁴² He would have accepted it even after the elections scheduled for the autumn of 1945. He referred to the fact that in the spring of 1945, Finland held elections without any outside interference. Molotov considered it certain that the elections in Romania and Bulgaria would be more democratic than those in Greece or Italy. The perspectives came somewhat closer to each other when the American secretary of state voiced readiness to discuss the list of politicians who could be included in the Romanian government, much as they did in Poland, and the British foreign secretary recommended that the three Great Powers send delegates to Romania and Bulgaria to study the situation. Molotov endeavored to find a solution to the problem by having bilateral meetings with the Americans, on September 30, and with the British, on October 1. Molotov told Byrnes that the primary difficulty was the rejection of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments by the British and American governments. The Soviet government was prepared to wait in order to solve the problems which emerged at the London meeting, namely the peace conference, control of Japan by the Allies, and diplomatic recognition. Molotov announced that summoning the peace conference was a secondary matter, but if the American government insisted on it, they would have to try to find a common view on the question of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments. If not, they could speak only about the appearance of an agreement, even though there was no agreement between them. This was unacceptable to the Soviet government.⁴³

Molotov used the same arguments with Bevin, and reminded him that the Soviet government did not interfere in Greek and Italian affairs. Bevin defended France's participation in the Balkan matters. Molotov was willing to agree to this after a period of time, but asked for patience in this matter

⁴² FRUS 1945/II: 437-438.

⁴³ Minutes of the September 30 meeting, FRUS 1945/II: 487-488.

so that France, having no army, could be rebuilt and regain her strength.⁴⁴ The American and British ministers of foreign affairs did not abandon their policy of “non-recognition,” and thus there could be no agreement on the procedure of determining the composition of the peace conference or on the actual summoning of the peace conference. The London meetings were adjourned on October 2, 1945, and no joint communiqué was issued.

The failure of the first meeting of the CFM led to an interval of several months between meetings. In the absence of an agreement between the Great Powers, no peace treaty could be prepared, signed, and implemented. Understandably, there was worldwide disappointment after the London meeting, for public opinion everywhere expected peace treaties in the near future and it seemed that the peaceful cooperation of the antifascist Great Powers fell apart over a minor procedural matter. They failed in Potsdam to clarify the composition of the CFM and its rules of procedure. The September 11 London agreement on who participated in the debate seemed to contradict both the letter and, according to the Soviets, the spirit of the Potsdam Agreement, because the participation of France and China in the Balkan debate was agreed upon, even though neither signed the capitulation document nor actively participated in the war in the area. Even Bevin agreed that, in a strictly legal sense, the Soviet government was correct.⁴⁵ On the basis of their own Potsdam minutes, the Americans considered France’s presence to be legitimate, but they forgot that their recommendation was not included in the charter of the council.

The Soviet Union based its postwar policies on continued Soviet–American–British cooperation. Before and during the council session, it tried to take the wishes of its negotiating partners into consideration. In London, the Soviets saw, with increasing disillusionment, that in the Romanian matter, important for the Soviet Union, they were confronted with a united front of the Western delegations. The United States, having exclusive control over Japan, refused to have even preliminary discussions about Allied control in that country. The American delegation returned to

⁴⁴ ROSS 1984: 246–247.

⁴⁵ FRUS 1945/II: 516; CAB 128/3, September 25, 1945, CAB 129/3, September 23, 1945, PRO FO 371.48220.

its pre-Potsdam policies, and attached new conditions to the peace conference and to the recognition of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments. The Department of State took a negative stand vis-à-vis the Soviet peace treaty plans, even though these were based largely on the armistice agreements that had been accepted by the United States as well. *Stalin* came to the conclusion, therefore, that the United States and Great Britain had departed from the path of mutual understanding established during the war, *and ordered his foreign commissar to break off the negotiations*. Molotov did not hide his disappointment from his negotiating partners. He stated to Byrnes that the present policy of the United States deviated from the friendly policies of President Roosevelt toward the Soviet Union, and that the United States was assisting Great Britain in a number of dubious and dirty businesses.⁴⁶

Molotov reminded Bevin, that: "During the war we argued but managed to reach agreement while the Soviet Union was suffering enormous losses. At that time the Soviet Union was needed. As soon as the war was over His Majesty's Government has seemed to change its attitude. Was that because the Soviet Union was no longer needed? If this were so, it was obvious that such a policy, far from bringing us together, would separate us and end in serious conflict."⁴⁷ The comportment of the Soviet commissar of foreign affairs changed from this day on. After Stalin and Molotov saw that the United States opposed the Soviet peace treaty plans for the four countries in the Soviet sphere of interest, they decided to stubbornly defend their proposal for the peace treaties, thereby assumed most of the responsibility for the delay of the peace negotiations. The melding of Soviet and American interests in Central and Southeastern Europe proved unexpectedly difficult, and for this, American diplomacy also had to shoulder part of the blame.

The United States foreign policy at this time was controlled by Byrnes, who made his decisions autonomously. Relying on American military and economic strength, he believed that his recommendations would be followed, that European peace arrangements could be made promptly, that American troops could return home, and that the unity of the victorious powers could

⁴⁶ September 19, 1945, FRUS 1945/II: 247.

⁴⁷ ROSS 1984: 259.

be maintained through the United Nations. He learned at the meetings of the CFM that he could not impose rapid decisions and could not make his ideas acceptable to the Soviet Union. Prior to the meeting, Byrnes had not make arrangements for basic understanding through the traditional diplomatic channels, even though this was precisely what he recommended to Molotov in Potsdam. At the London meetings, decision-making rested entirely with Byrnes and his advisers. He did not consult the White House, Congress, or the Department of State; deciding the details would be left to the deputy ministers of foreign affairs because Byrnes believed that any further delay would make agreement impossible.

Secretary Bevin was concerned about the increasing hostility and uncertainty between the United States and the Soviet Union, but was even more concerned because, in his opinion, both Great Powers ignored British interests and treated them as subordinates. His American colleague did not consult with him, even though he made recommendations that directly affected British interests. Byrnes recognized the Soviet security sphere in the eastern part of Europe but still insisted on the United States' non-recognition policy of the Romanian government and on refusing to discuss Japanese control issues.⁴⁸

France was primarily interested in the German matters. The Potsdam Agreement entitled her to participate in the preparations of the Italian peace treaty as a member of the CFM. French participation in the discussion of the Finnish, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian peace treaties had no justification because France was never in a state of war with these countries. At the London meeting, the United States and Great Britain jointly expanded the Potsdam Agreement and wished to include France with the Great Powers. They believed that by calling the smaller powers to the peace preparations, these countries would side with them, and thus would facilitate their views to prevail. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, considered the strengthening of the solidarity of the Great Powers and the renewal of their wartime cooperation as the principal goal.

⁴⁸ September 21, 1945, FRUS 1945/II: 301; Bevin's message to Byrnes, September 30, 1945, FRUS 1945/II: 516.

The recommendations for the Hungarian peace treaty plans were not discussed at the council meetings in London. The discussion of the Hungarian peace treaty was postponed to April 1946. Yet, the debates about the recommendations submitted in London strongly affected the subsequent Hungarian peace negotiations. Because of the difficulties in finding a common denominator for the differences in the interests of the Great Powers, any question agreed upon became a precedent for any similar problem in the future. In some respects, the evaluation of the territorial debates became separated from the evaluation of the war record of the respective countries. In drafting the stipulations of the peace treaties, the antifascist Great Powers considered their own security, and political and economic advantages above anything else. In adjudicating the debates between the smaller Allies and the defeated countries, or the debates between two defeated countries, the decisive issue was always the role and positions of the affected country vis-à-vis the political considerations of an individual Great Power or the relationships between the Great Powers. In the autumn of 1945, the Allies considered the Romanian and Bulgarian matters much more important than the Hungarian ones. This is the reason why, when the Hungarian peace treaty was drafted, with respective differences taken into consideration, those guidelines were taken as a basis on which the three Great Powers agreed in September 1945, relative to Romania and Bulgaria, even though Hungary's diplomatic recognition and the November 4, 1945, Hungarian election sharply separated Hungarian affairs from the question of recognising the Romanian and Bulgarian governments.⁴⁹

IMPACT OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE ON ROMANIA AND HUNGARY

The Soviet Union informed the Groza government about all the debates between the Great Powers in London concerning Romania, and by the end of 1945, the views of the Great Powers on the Hungarian–Romanian

⁴⁹ Memorandum of November 1, 1945, série Y, (52.5), vol. 134, MAE AD. See also BALOGH 1984.

border issues rapidly spread throughout Romanian political life and became well-known throughout the country.⁵⁰ The obstinacy with which Molotov defended the democratic nature of the Groza government in London and made it possible to maintain the Romanian political status quo surpassed all of Minister of Foreign Affairs Tătărescu's expectations. In his speech in Galați on October 12, 1945, he stated openly that at the meeting of the CFM in London, the Soviet Union represented the interests of Romania and not only those of the Romanian government.⁵¹

In contrast, the Hungarian government was not familiar with the peace treaty plans proposed in London, as the Americans, the Brits, and the French did not inform it about the dispute over the postwar borders. The American government considered its recommendations for the resolution of the Romanian–Hungarian border dispute as bearing no relation to any political steps taken by the Hungarian government or its peace preparatory guidelines.⁵²

During the autumn of 1945, the drafting of the Hungarian political objectives at the peace conference was impeded by both international and domestic problems. The peace negotiations were conducted, to the very end, exclusively amongst the victorious powers. Until the middle of January 1946, even the possibility of the five vanquished countries' views being heard was not mentioned. At the council meetings in London, during the debate about the peace conference and of the separate peace negotiations, there was talk only about the participation of the victorious powers. The Hungarian political parties were preoccupied with the election campaign,

⁵⁰ Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 177 and 178, October 18, 1945, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 8, MAE AD; Paul-Boncour's telegram about Minister of Foreign Affairs Tătărescu's speeches no. 42, March 27, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 8, MAE AD; "Groza Péter dr. miniszterelnök 1945. november 1-i beszélgetése a Nékám Sándor vezette magyar menekültügyi bizottság tagjaival" [Prime Minister Petru Groza's Conversation with Members of the Hungarian Refugee Affairs Committee under Sándor Nékám's Chairmanship], KÜM BéO 41065/Bé. 1945, 5, ÚMKL.

⁵¹ Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 177 and 178, October 18, 1945, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 8, MAE AD.

⁵² Leslie A. Squires, the secretary of the American Legation in Budapest advised an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 1945 about the Transylvania dispute, implying that this is what caused the failure of the meeting of the CFM. Information provided by Aladár Szegedy-Maszák to the author.

and Hungarian foreign policy had to confront one of the most difficult problems of postwar Hungary: the expulsion of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia and of Germans from Hungary.

The Peace Preparatory Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs endeavored to gain support – or at least understanding – from the Great Powers and from those countries interested in the Hungarian peace treaties. For this reason, it tried to muster adequate arguments for peaceful coexistence between Hungary and her smaller neighbors, and gather documentation to buttress this endeavor. In his September 19, 1945, summary, István Kertész stated: “Hungary is a defeated country and we have lost this war militarily, politically, economically and, to some extent, morally. In spite of the change of regime, Hungary cannot count on any particular goodwill because the identity of the state is such a fundamental legal principle and such a political fact that it cannot be eliminated even by the most far-reaching internal changes and can, at best, be counterbalanced to some extent.” Knowing the peace plans of the Allies, he hoped that the peace treaty would not be openly punitive and that the primary political importance of Southeast and East-Central Europe would be considered. Consequently, he hoped that it would be possible, in conformity with the goals of the victorious Great Powers, to win support for Hungary’s national interests. He reasoned that

It was given to the democracies of the neighboring countries both in 1918 and presently that they be able to realize their internal democratic goals and the maximum of their national demands. ... In the defeated countries the peace treaties will not be signed by the governments that started the war. ... The present democratic government of Hungary will have to carry the burden not only of all the grave consequences of the war, but the odium of the peace treaty as well. Everything must be done, therefore, that the national sacrifice, represented by the peace treaty, be as small as possible and that the government do everything humanly possible in the defense of the national interests, perhaps even at the cost of the ideologies of the coalition parties. Any appearance of indifference or impotence of the present Hungarian government vis-à-vis the national interests have to be avoided. This was the accusation against the 1918–1919 democratic experiment and was one of the principal arguments of the antidemocratic propaganda.

Kertész viewed the realization of the Hungarian peace goals, elucidated in his memorandum of August 14, 1945, as a “decades-long” process. He did not hope for a true understanding between the affected countries and believed that the maintenance of peace in Southeastern Europe was possible only with the continued, institutional cooperation of the victorious Great Powers – perhaps by establishing a regional forum of the CFM.⁵³ Kertész counted on Realpolitik possibilities and wished to build on them. He could not have known that, at the same time he was writing his memorandum, the Great Powers were drifting farther apart regarding the harmonization of their interests in Southeastern Europe. The idea of basing the peace of the Danube valley on some form of federation could not be used in the preparation of the peace plans because Gyöngyösi considered this so unrealistic that he did not even submit it to the government. The concept of bilateral Romanian–Hungarian negotiation and of a customs union was raised,⁵⁴ but the Peace Preparatory Department, in its instructions to the Hungarian delegation going to Bucharest, stated the principle that “according to the Soviet–Romanian armistice agreement, the territorial and population problems of Transylvania had to be resolved at the peace conference” and, therefore, the delegation should not engage in the discussion of any problem that could give the Romanians the potentially very useful impression that Hungary considered the territorial issues settled. Only those issues could become the subject for discussion that would not be prejudicial for any decision to be made by an international forum.⁵⁵

The CFM debates in London caused Groza considerable anxiety as well. On November 1, 1945, he explained to Sándor Nékám, the leader of the Hungarian delegation and the future Hungarian political representative in

⁵³ Kertész's memorandum of September 19, 1945, 77/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

⁵⁴ “Románia és Magyarország közötti viszony” [Relations between Romania and Hungary], August 29, 1945, KÜM BéO 41.095/Bé. 1945, ÚMKL; “A Magyar–román vámunió vázlata” [Draft for a Hungarian–Romanian Customs Union], September 18, 1945, KÜM BéO 41.095/Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

⁵⁵ Note by Domokos Gyallay Pap, “A Békeelőkészítő Osztály szempontja a Bukarestbe utazó Magyar Bizottság tárgyalásaival kapcsolatban” [Views of the Peace Preparatory Department Relative to the Upcoming Negotiations of the Hungarian Committee in Bucharest], October 11, 1945, KÜM BéO 40705/Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

Bucharest, that in forging a Romanian–Hungarian relationship, the first step should be the maintenance and deepening of friendship rather than the border issue, because raising the question of the borders would again waken the chauvinist and revisionist spirits. Changing the border by a county or two had no significance. But through the tiny gap of a 20-metre border adjustment, chauvinism and revisionism would enter, and instead of calming tensions, the conflict between the two countries would be reignited. With reference to his negotiations in Moscow in September 1945, Groza stated that the spiritualization of the Hungarian–Romanian border, the issue of the customs union, and the resumption of diplomatic relations had been completely approved by Stalin himself. He, Groza, was aware that certain circles would prefer the Romanian–Hungarian matters to be decided by the Great Powers and not by the two interested parties. “It was enough for us when two Great Powers decided for us in Vienna. We don’t need the decisions made by *three* Great Powers now.” [Emphasis in the original.] The ones insisting on Great Power decisions are “fascists and chauvinists.” On saying goodbye, Groza had the following to say about the border issue: “If Hungary were to demand a readjustment of the borders then probably Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia would also make demands for Hungarian territory and final peace and tranquility would never come. It could even get worse ...”⁵⁶

In the autumn of 1945, Petru Groza repeatedly and publicly alluded to Romanian–Hungarian brotherhood: “The border question is a second order issue that the two nations will settle between themselves. The goal is the strengthening of democracy and the peaceful coexistence of the nations in the Danube valley. We are adult nations. Let them leave us alone and it is my firm conviction that, sooner than anyone can hope, we will build one of the happiest communities in the Danube valley. The first step on this road is a customs union.” Groza also declared: “I am a firm enemy of population exchange. You should not rip the heart from the body. You must not make the people rootless. Everywhere in the world there can be only one purpose,

⁵⁶ “Prime Minister Petru Groza’s Conversation with Members of the Hungarian Refugee Affairs Committee under Sándor Nékám’s Chairmanship,” KÜM BéO 41065/Bé. 1945, 5, ÜMKL.

equal rights for the nations, stopping all racial and national persecution, brotherhood and peace.”⁵⁷

The Peace Preparatory Department noticed the restlessness caused by the CFM meeting in London but also noted that Romanian politicians wished to consider the Romanian–Hungarian border final. “There is no party that would be willing to yield even a little,” with the possible exception of the young liberals grouped around the King. Groza’s declarations about the border were strikingly similar to Maniu’s rigid stance. On the basis of the negotiations between the Romanians and the Allies in Cairo and of the armistice agreement, Romanian public opinion was convinced that the Transylvania issue would not appear on the agenda at the peace conference. However, after the London meeting, the confidence of Romanian public opinion in the immutability of the Romanian–Hungarian borders, as set at Trianon, was shaken. It was also due to the London conference that the Romanians concluded that the Hungarian–Romanian border problems and the Hungarian–Romanian peace treaty could be resolved only by negotiation between the two interested countries and not by the Great Powers – “about us but without us.” The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs assumed that, because Romania declared war on Hungary in September 1944, Hungary would have to make a separate peace arrangement with Romania and that, therefore, Romania could rightfully demand reparations from Hungary. The Peace Preparatory Department received information from several sources that “the Romanians are doing everything possible to prove to the Soviet Union that the Transylvania issue must not be raised again because the slightest border adjustment in Hungary’s favor would totally alienate the Romanian masses from a people’s democracy.” The Hungarians in the department also learned that “the Romanians were telling the Anglo-Saxons that after World War I, it was the Anglo-Saxons who gave Transylvania to Romania, and if they would now change that, they would not only admit

⁵⁷ Conversation between Miklós Vásárhelyi and Petru Groza. *Szabad Nép*, December 20, 1945. For declarations about the closure of the border issue, see *Népszava*, May 20, 1945, and the speeches of Groza and Tătărescu in *Népszava*, August 23, 1945.

that their original action was wrong but would lose the currently strongly pro-Anglo-Saxon masses.”⁵⁸

Plans were made regarding the Hungarian–Romanian relations,⁵⁹ but domestic policy and considerations of party politics, combined with Hungary’s unfavorable international standing, prevented correct action. The coalition government, set up on November 15, 1945, under Zoltán Tildy, the head of the Smallholders’ Party, made no progress in defining the Hungarian peace goals and did not appoint expert delegates to prepare for the peace conference. The head of the Peace Preparatory Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs addressed a memorandum to the prime minister on December 28, 1945, in which he summarized the most important steps the government needed to take. According to Kertész, “Hungary has to take up the battle against countries much better prepared and in a much more favorable political situation. ... It is the basic intent of every neighboring country to maintain the status quo, to prove our guilt of the greatest war crimes and to make the widest possible economic and political demands from us. In some areas they are even preparing territorial demands from Trianon Hungary.” The situation of the Hungarian government was even more complex: “We must prepare for peace with every one of our neighbors but each peace treaty will have to be different. Our preparation for peace must show that we are ready for friendly cooperation and that we are determined to democratize the country. Along these lines we must make evident that in spite of reactionary governments, there was a spontaneous resistance to German penetration and to the ideology of Nazism in the Hungarian people. We must also be prepared for the demands made from

⁵⁸ Report of December 30, 1945, KÜM BéO 38/Bé. 1946, 33030/pol., ÚMKL.

⁵⁹ Béla Demeter, “Hozzászólás a békeelőkészítő elgondolásokhoz” [Comments on the Peace Preparatory Ideas], August 1, 1945, KÜM BéO 48/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL; László Makkai, “Az erdélyi kérdés megoldásai” [Solutions of the Transylvania Question], August 23, 1945, KÜM BéO 40.368/Bé. 1945, ÚMKL; Zoltán Tóth, “Magyarország igényjogosultsága a Partiumhoz” [Hungary’s Right to the Parts], September 14, 1945, KÜM BéO 40.385/Bé. 1945, ÚMKL; “Javaslat a Románia és Magyarország közötti viszony rendezésére” [Recommendation for the Settlement of Hungarian–Romanian Relations], October 3, 1945, KÜM BéO 64/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

us and for the political attacks of the neighboring countries.” Regarding Czechoslovakia and Romania, the department devised plans that were supposed to “institutionally guarantee the rights of the Hungarians left in the neighboring countries and a life free of fear and misery.” This was considered the primary task of the new democratic government because “the right to existence of the present system would be shattered in the eyes of the Hungarian masses if we would fail to do so.”⁶⁰

⁶⁰ “Excerpts from the Memorandum Addressed by Stephen Kertész to Prime Minister Zoltán Tildy on December 28, 1945, Concerning the Hungarian Peace Preparations,” in KERTESZ 1953a: 266–269. For the original memorandum, see KÜM BÉO XIX. J.I.a 1–5/151/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL. In print, see FÜLÖP 1990a: 72–78.

THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE
OF THE MINISTERS OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE
HUNGARIAN-CZECHOSLOVAK
NEGOTIATIONS IN PRAGUE

While the Hungarian coalition parties were still in doubt about the Hungarian goals for the peace treaty, the United States re-evaluated its Central and Southeast European policy and the three Great Powers resumed their discussions about the European peace settlements. The center of gravity of American diplomacy increasingly shifted to the Far East, and the United States also began to realize that, by interrupting the working out of the peace proposals, it lost the only lever it had to exert influence on the domestic policies of the Southeast European countries as they endeavored to regain their economic and political position lost during the war. The necessity to revise the American point of view elaborated in London became inevitable. Byrnes had announced already on October 10, 1945, that a Far East Advisory Commission was being established. By doing this they involved the Soviet Union in the Japanese problems. That same day, Byrnes invited Mark Ethridge, the publisher of the *Louisville Courier Journal*, to go on a fact-finding tour to Romania and Bulgaria. About the same time, Molotov announced to Averell Harriman, the American ambassador in Moscow, that the London conference failed because the three Great Powers did not make adequate preparations for it in informal discussions.

On Byrnes's initiative, Harriman began to negotiate with Stalin in Sochi about the American peace plans. At a conversation on October 24, 1945, the Soviet leader recommended that at a forthcoming meeting of the

CFM, a list of the countries to be invited be prepared and that decisions about a peace conference, or several peace conferences, should be made thereafter. According to Harriman, the president of the United States would agree to a new meeting of the CFM only if a prior agreement had been reached about calling a peace conference. The following day Stalin suggested that the Japanese matters and the European peace procedures not be separated, but that joint decisions should be made in both areas. According to Stalin, the ministers of foreign affairs could work out the peace treaties on the basis of the Potsdam 4-3-2 formula. Subsequently, the countries that actually fought against a particular former enemy should summon the peace conference. The peace treaty with Bulgaria would be discussed by the "Big Three," Greece, and Yugoslavia, while the Hungarian peace treaty would be discussed by Soviet, British, American, Czechoslovak, and Yugoslav representatives. Following these discussions, peace treaties could be signed between the defeated country and the countries that fought against it. In this sense, Stalin finally accepted the need for peace conferences. Harriman saw the European war as a single event and not the sum of a number of separately fought wars and therefore did not see how decision-making could be limited to the three Great Powers. The "one war – one peace conference" principle was expected to be accepted at the next meeting of the CFM. Harriman did not have the authority to debate the simultaneous discussions of the European peace conference and the Japanese matters in which the United States had a particular interest. Consequently, he could not agree with Stalin's proposal to summon the CFM to a new meeting. Bevin, the British foreign secretary, immediately objected to the final decision being limited to the three Great Powers because this could lead to accusations of Great Power dictate. According to the Potsdam Agreement, the peace treaties had to be submitted to those members of the United Nations who were actively engaged in the war and they would not sign the agreements if they had no part in discussing them.¹

¹ Harriman's telegram no. 3512 from Moscow, FRUS 1945/II: 567-575, 577.

RE-EVALUATION OF THE AMERICAN CENTRAL
AND SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN POLICIES

By the end of October, the American Department of State moved to re-evaluate its Eastern European policies. Charles Bohlen, the leading expert on the Soviet Union, wished to convince his colleagues that “geographic proximity gave a Great Power justifiable privileges vis-à-vis the smaller countries.” Cloyce K. Huston, the head of the Southern European Division, recommended that the American government declare its active support for the endeavors of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe. In contrast to his London position, Byrnes, in a speech in New York on October 31, 1945, recognized the special security interests of the Soviet Union, as stated in the armistice agreements with Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, and appreciated “the Soviet people’s determination not ever to tolerate a policy that was directed against the security and life of the Soviet Union.” Byrnes added: “America would never deal with groups in these countries that were engaged in hostile intrigues against the Soviet Union.”²

Mark Ethridge and leading officials in the Department of State opposed the change of direction of American foreign policy toward Eastern Europe. In his summary report on December 7, 1945, Ethridge recommended that free elections be held in Romania and Bulgaria, following the example of Finland, Hungary, and Austria. John Hickerson, the deputy chief of the European Division of the State Department, urged that the Italian and Hungarian peace negotiations be started independently of the others. In recognition of the results of the Hungarian elections, he recommended that a peace treaty be signed with the Hungarian government without delay and that a moratorium be placed on reparations in order to ease the economic situation.³ The leaders of the State Department realized that the Soviet Union was unlikely to negotiate the Italian peace treaty if the Americans refused to participate in the preparation of the Balkan peace

² MARK 1979: 211. He cites Byrnes’s speech. For Charles Bohlen’s report of October 18, 1945, see MESSER 1977: 302. The article includes Huston’s report of October 24, 1945.

³ Ethridge’s report, FRUS 1945/V: 636–640; John Hickerson’s report of December 10, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 408.

treaties. Consequently, Byrnes settled the dispute among the State Department officials in favor of those who recommended accommodation with the Soviet Union. The secretary of state relinquished his procedural plans elaborated in London and urged the return to cooperation between the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain.

On November 22, 1945, Byrnes “discovered” in the text of the Yalta Declaration the legal basis for the regular meetings of the ministers of foreign affairs of the three Great Powers (USA, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union) without offending France and China. The Yalta agreement mandated regular meetings of the three foreign ministers, and this was confirmed in the Potsdam Declaration. He avoided any mention of the procedural difficulties that led to the failure of the London meetings and thus the negotiations could continue. The conference of the three foreign ministers being called into session was discussed. In his telegram to Molotov, dispatched the following day, Byrnes referred to the San Francisco, Yalta, and Potsdam precedents and recommended that a conference be called into session in December in Moscow. Bevin learned about this unilateral action not from his American counterpart, but from the British ambassador in Moscow. Bevin doubted the usefulness of such a meeting because he felt that the various positions had not changed since the London conference. He also resented that the Americans did not consult with him. Byrnes rejected any proposal for a British–American preliminary discussion in London and decided to go to Moscow with or without Bevin. The latter did not wish to leave these critically important negotiations with Stalin to the Americans and hence, on December 6, decided to agree to the meeting of the three ministers of foreign affairs.⁴

The Foreign Office was always aware of the disadvantages of refusing to recognize the Romanian and Bulgarian governments and of rejecting the initiation of peace conferences. It concluded on the basis of the events of the last nine months that, in spite of the overt diplomatic pressure, largely on American initiative, the Soviet government had not changed its stand and that the British and American tactics accomplished nothing. It even

⁴ FÜLÖP 1985: 134–135.

admitted that “whatever the reason for the recent satisfactory developments in Hungary, we have little ground for claiming any credit for them.” On the basis of Ethridge’s recommendation, the Department of State wished to make one more attempt by putting a broadening of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments on the agenda. The Soviet government took every opportunity to publicly endorse the Romanian and Bulgarian governments, and therefore, according to the Foreign Office, it was futile to expect any meaningful concessions in this area. It considered it possible, however, that the Soviet government would consent to the inclusion of one or two opposition politicians in the Romanian and Bulgarian governments, provided that this did not make any substantive changes in the policies of those governments.⁵

By December 1945, the Foreign Office considered their recent tactics not only unsuccessful but downright harmful. The negative approach in their policy toward Romania and Bulgaria prevented them from reaching a peace agreement with Italy, Finland, and Hungary, and in realizing the British goals in Eastern Europe. For this reason, they recommended “to accept the inescapable fact that there is no chance of a material reorganization of the Roumanian and Bulgarian Governments in present circumstances.” In their view, the conditions for the emergence of a representative government could be achieved only gradually and over a period of time. By signing the peace treaties, it would be possible to remove the foreign troops from Finland and Bulgaria and “should allow the Soviet Government no more than the right to station a small fixed number of troops in Roumania and Hungary to guard the lines of communication.” Great Britain therefore returned to her position established in the spring of 1945. In order to influence a change in the negative stance of the United States, proclaimed publicly by President Truman after the November 18 Bulgarian elections, the Foreign Office presented its recommendation as though they were only minor tactical changes rather than a major shift in policy. The Foreign Office expressed its hope that if it was to agree to the Soviet demands on Bulgaria and Romania, in return the Brits and the Americans could expect a satisfactory international

⁵ ROSS 1984: 266.

use of the Danube.⁶ This time it did not take any major effort on the part of British diplomacy to convince the American secretary of state. Byrnes tried to correct his London mistakes. For this reason, Byrnes was forced to amend President Truman's declaration of December 6, 1945, according to which there would be no further tripartite meetings and that the forum for the peace negotiations was the United Nations. Byrnes explained this statement to mean that there would be no meeting of the heads of state of the three Great Powers and that official American policy urged the calling of peace conferences. On December 7, Byrnes announced the date for the next meeting of the three foreign ministers.

THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

At the conference of the ministers of foreign affairs in Moscow (December 15–17, 1945), the first item on the agenda was the question of whether to call the CFM into session to discuss the peace treaties. The Soviet delegation continued to insist that the plans for the peace treaties had to be drafted by the powers which signed the armistice agreement and only those powers would be signatories of the peace treaty. Countries which were at war with that particular former enemy country could participate in a conference summoned sometime between the two above events, and only they would be allowed to sign the peace treaty. Thus the draft of the Hungarian peace treaty would be prepared by the three Great Powers, but Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia could participate in the conference. On December 18, the Americans accepted that, in Byrnes' words, the signatories of the armistice agreements would be the "judges," but he wished to enlarge the number of "witnesses" at the conference. Bevin supported this because listening to the other allies also meant that there would be additional partners who agreed with the peace terms and were willing to take a part in their implementation.

In his meeting with Stalin the following day, Byrnes stated emphatically: "In the last analysis we will be the judges, and it is possible therefore, without

⁶ "Policy toward Romania and Bulgaria," notes of W.S. Williams no. R 21263, December 4, 1945, PRO FO 371.48220.

any harm to our interests, to let the little nations speak.”⁷ Thus agreement could be reached about the participants. On December 24, as a Christmas present, Byrnes published the announcement by the three Great Powers about the procedures to be followed and asked that France and China join the group. According to the announcement, the drafting of the peace treaties would be done by those members of the CFM who were signatories to the armistice agreements and those other members who were so designated by the Potsdam Agreement. Other members of the council could be invited to discussion on subjects that directly affected them. The Italian treaty would be drafted by four Great Powers, the Hungarian, Romanian, and Bulgarian by three, and the Finnish one by two. According to a decision by the CFM at the first session in London, the deputy ministers of foreign affairs would immediately begin their work in London. When the plans were completed, no later than May 1, 1946, the council would summon a conference to discuss the five peace treaties. The five members of the council and the 16 member nations of the United Nations that had actively participated in the European war with substantial forces would attend. With full consideration of the discussions, the countries that signed the armistice agreement would finalize the text of the peace treaties. In Italy’s case, France would be one of these. The treaties so drawn up would be signed on behalf of the states represented at the conference, which were at war with the enemy state in question. The text of the respective peace treaties would then be sent to the other Allies, which were also at war with the enemy states in question. The peace treaties would come into force immediately after they have been ratified by the respective Allied states signatory to the respective armistices. France was being regarded as such in the case of Italy. These treaties were subject to ratification by the enemy states in question.

At the Moscow conference, the situation in Central and Southeastern Europe was also discussed. At his discussion with Molotov on December 18, Bevin urged the removal of all allied forces from the area and a reduction in the number of troops in Austria. This was in agreement with Byrnes’s recommendation made prior to the Moscow conference on December 8,

⁷ FRUS 1945/II: 610–671; WARD 1981: 55–57.

according to which all Allied troops would be removed from independent countries except Germany and Japan. Molotov did not consider this to be an urgent matter. In his response, Molotov stated his reservations about a complete withdrawal of troops from Austria and reminded Bevin that it was on Soviet initiative that the troops were withdrawn from Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary were occupied under the terms of the armistice agreements. He said that at the London conference the Americans recommended – in fact, it was the British – that the Red Army remain in Romania to secure the lines of communication with Austria. Molotov reminded Bevin that the presence of the Red Army in these countries in no way hampered the expression of prevailing public opinion. The Red Army refrained from any pressure, as shown by the very different outcome of the Hungarian and Bulgarian elections. In summary, Molotov stated that in Bulgaria, Hungary, Austria, Finland, and Persia, they left the people to settle their own affairs. Using the example of Hungary as an argument, Stalin assured Byrnes and stated that

In Hungary there were Soviet troops and in actual fact the Soviet Union could do pretty much what it wanted there, but that nevertheless, the elections had resulted in a victory for the party other than the Communist party. This demonstrates that the Soviet Government was exercising no pressure through its troops in these countries. Such action would be regarded as unworthy of the Soviet Union and as interference in internal affairs. He said that all the Soviet Union asks of these border states or states in proximity to the Soviet Union was that they should not be hostile. What parties should run these countries were a matter for the people themselves to decide. In the view of the Soviet Government other parties beside the Communist party could be friendly. He said this was a natural desire on the part of the Soviet Union since they had suffered much during the war from Finland, Hungary and Romania. Hungarian troops had reached the Don River and Romanian troops the Volga. That is why the Soviet Government was interested in seeing friendly, loyal governments in these countries.⁸

⁸ Molotov–Bevin negotiations on December 18, 1945, and Stalin–Byrnes discussions on December 23, 1945, PRO FO CAB 133; FRUS 1945/II: 753–754.

After debates lasting several days, the American and British ministers of foreign affairs bowed to the Soviet arguments. After the Stalin–Byrnes discussion on December 23, the three ministers of foreign affairs agreed that the three Great Powers would advise the king of Romania to broaden the government with one member from the National Peasant Party and one member from the Liberal Party who could work loyally with the government. The government should organize elections as soon as possible, with the participation of all parties and guarantee the freedom of the press, of speech, religion, and association. Vyshinsky, Harriman, and Clark Kerr were charged to implement this task using the Polish model as an example. After completion of their Bucharest mission, the American and British governments were willing to recognize the Romanian government if there was evidence that the advice given to it would be followed. Thus, at the last moment, the obstacles were removed.

On December 23, the three Great Powers asked France to organize the conference. In her agreement on January 3, 1946, the French minister of foreign affairs wished to clarify the precise role and the real functions of the CFM in drafting the peace treaties, the methodology of inviting the interested allied countries, the weight of the recommendations brought by a conference that did not have decision-making power, the hearing of the representatives of the former enemy countries, and the Moscow modifications of the Potsdam Agreement, according to which the final decision belonged not to the United Nations but to the powers which drafted the peace treaties. Byrnes, responding in the name of the three Great Powers on January 14, 1946, confirmed the Potsdam decisions relative to the CFM's role in the peace process and also that the allies having a direct interest in these peace treaties would be invited to the proposed conference. He assured the French government that there would be a broad and thorough debate at the conference and that the recommendations, including the views of the country with which the peace was being concluded, would be taken into account. "Full opportunities will be given these states to discuss the treaties and to present their views both in the formulation of the drafts, as was permitted in the earlier meetings in London, and also at the May [1946] conference."⁹ On this basis, the French

⁹ Jefferson Caffery's letter to Francisque Gay no. 1066, Paris, January 14, 1946, série Y, (52.5), vol. 127, MAE AD.

government accepted the Moscow procedural decisions on January 17, 1946. The Great Powers could finally begin a meaningful preparation for the peace treaties and reconcile their views and interests at the Central and Southeast European peace negotiation.

THE FIRST PRAGUE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE RESETTLEMENT OF THE ETHNIC GERMANS FROM HUNGARY

With the agreements reached at the Moscow meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs, the peace treaty negotiations reached a critical point. Even before the peace treaty drafts could be agreed upon by the Great Powers, the Prague government wished to create a *fait accompli* by having the forced transfer of the Hungarians from Slovakia accepted. After Potsdam, the Czechoslovak government reluctantly realized that the victorious Great Powers were unwilling to coerce Hungary into accepting the transfer of the Hungarian population from Czechoslovakia to Hungary. Byrnes informed the Hungarian and Czech governments through the American representatives in Budapest and Prague that he disapproved of any unilateral action but was willing to support a plan for the solution of the minority problems arrived at by mutual agreement.¹⁰ The Hungarian government, in accordance with its preliminary ideas about peace, and hoping for the benevolent understanding of the Great Powers, endeavored during the autumn of 1945 to have an international investigation into the conditions of the Hungarian population in Slovakia and to put the areas inhabited by Hungarians under international supervision.¹¹ The American response, many months later, on February 9, 1946, and the British response on March 19, 1946, were both negative.¹²

The representative of the Czechoslovak government in Budapest, on September 3, 1945, officially initiated discussions in order to transfer the

¹⁰ Byrnes's telegram to Steinhardt and Schoenfeld, October 19, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 895–896.

¹¹ KÚM B&O 61/res. Bé, September 12, 1945, and 120/res. Bé, November 20, 1945, ÚMKL; see also BARANYAI 1947b: 13–17.

¹² BARANYAI 1947b: 53–55; KERTESZ 1984: 140.

Hungarians, who “continuously imperilled Slovakia,” to Hungary, first through a population exchange and then to expel the “remnants.” The Czechoslovak diplomat emphasized that, relative to the exchange or transfer of the Hungarians, the Trianon borders had to be considered inviolable. Gyöngyösi disapproved of the population exchange and was willing to consider it only if coerced to do so by an international mandate. In view of the fact that 600,000 Hungarians would have to be exchanged for 60,000 Slovaks, such a disproportionate “exchange” would logically imply an exchange of land as well. Gyöngyösi emphasized that he would not raise the border issue but, if Slovakia wished to get rid of the Hungarians to ensure the security of the country, then all they had to do was redraw the border, and there was no need to inhumanely moving hundreds of thousands of inhabitants from their homes. Dalibor Krno made it clear that his government wished to get rid of all the Hungarians and that, during the discussions on the exchange, it would not allow any mention of the border. The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs thereupon declared: “Under such conditions, there is no possibility for further discussion and, much to our regret, the matter will have to be referred to the Great Powers for a decision.”¹³

Following the *démarche* of the Soviet Union and the United States in October–November 1945, the Hungarian government changed its position. The Prague government renewed its invitation to Gyöngyösi on October 9, and this invitation was forwarded to the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs on October 20 by Marshal Voroshilov, the chairman of the ACC.¹⁴ Schoenfeld saw Gyöngyösi on October 29 and reinforced the earlier position of his government. It was willing to consider Hungarians and Germans differently but considered it desirable that the affected states negotiate with each other directly and submit a joint recommendation to the Allies for the resolution of the matter.¹⁵ Gyöngyösi attributed the claim by the Slovak Communists that the expulsion of the Hungarians was endorsed by the

¹³ Notes by Gyöngyösi on the visit by Dalibor Krno, the Czechoslovak political representative in Budapest, KÜM BéO 65/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL.

¹⁴ BARANYAI 1947b; VIDA 1989: 153–154; KERTESZ 1984: 141.

¹⁵ Gyöngyösi notes of November 1, 1945, KÜM BéO 1945 107/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL; Schoenfeld's telegram no. 979, November 27, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 941.

Soviet Union to the Slovakian supporters of Pan-Slavism, although this claim was not publicly endorsed by the Soviet representatives in Budapest. At the same time, the Soviets were inclined to link the expulsion of the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia with the fate of the Germans in Hungary. Schoenfeld also stated that the Potsdam Agreement did not pertain to the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia.

Following the formation of the Zoltán Tildy government in Budapest, Gyöngyösi accepted the invitation to Prague and justified his change of position to the officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by saying that the population exchange would create a condition of appeasement and would put an end to the offenses against the Hungarians.¹⁶ In his letter of November 28, 1945, Tildy protested against the deprivations of civil rights, imposed by decree on the Hungarians, and indicated that by doing so, the Czechoslovak government was trying to create a more favorable position for itself at the negotiating table.¹⁷ There was no way of avoiding the trip to Prague. By accepting the recommendation for the Prague negotiations, the Hungarian government made a commitment to the Great Powers concerning a population exchange but, according to Gyöngyösi, the exchange had to be on a voluntary basis, and assigning collective guilt to all Hungarians and expelling them from the country was not acceptable.

Gyöngyösi arrived in Prague on December 3, 1945, and negotiated with Vlado Clementis, the undersecretary of state for foreign affairs, at the Czernin Palace for four days.¹⁸ The Czechoslovak proposal included the so-called transfer of the remaining Hungarians after their assets had been expropriated after the population exchange, which was voluntary for the Slovaks but mandatory for the Hungarians. Clementis accused the Hungarian government of

¹⁶ Information provided by Sándor Vájlók, earstwhile delegate and senior expert of Czechoslovak affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 11, 1977, Budapest; Schoenfeld's telegram no. 979, November 27, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 941.

¹⁷ BARANYAI 1947b: 30–41; KÜM BéO 41098/Bé, ÚMKL; VIDA 1989: 154.

¹⁸ For the negotiations see BALOGH 1988: 112–113; Informational memorandum of December 11, 1945, KÜM BéO 133/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL. The memorandum is reproduced in BARANYAI 1947b: 34–53. The members of the Hungarian delegation were: János Gyöngyösi, István Kertész, Sándor Vájlók, Kristóf Kállay, Ferenc Rosty-Forgách and Lehel Farkas. See also KERTESZ 1984: 142–145; VÁJLÓK [s.a.].

failing to live up to its obligations under the armistice agreement, particularly in the area of reparation and compensation. The Czechoslovak official also emphasized that the problem of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia was not handled the same way as that of the Germans. The latter were simply expelled from the country. He considered it evident that the solution to the Hungarian minority issue could not and would not be achieved with an adjustment of the border in Hungary's favor.¹⁹ Gyöngyösi did not approve of the population exchange, considering it incompatible with the principles of democracy and humanity but, in order to ease the tensions between the two countries, he consented to an exchange under certain conditions. The Hungarian government wished to place the population exchange under Anglo-American and Soviet supervision, wanted the discriminatory deprivations of civil rights rescinded, wanted the expropriated assets returned, and asked for compensation. Gyöngyösi considered the forced transfer of the remaining Hungarians to Hungary unacceptable and demanded that their status be appropriately regularized.

The Czechoslovaks repeatedly declared that because Czechoslovakia wished to be a national state of Czechs and Slovaks, the great majority of the Hungarians, left behind after the population exchange, would be transferred to Hungary and that the Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia would not have their minority rights guaranteed. The Hungarian delegation insisted that human rights be restored to the minority with personal, legal, and economic conditions as they existed prior to November 1, 1938, at least until the fate of the Hungarians was determined by direct negotiations, an international decision, or the peace treaty. Because it was a temporary arrangement, the Hungarian government did not insist on political rights. Contrary to the Hungarian position, Clementis considered the minority protection agreements signed with Czechoslovakia's allies on September 10, 1919, null and void and also stated: "After the resettlement we make no legal claims whatever regarding the Slovaks remaining in Hungary. We assume that they will become Hungarians. Czechoslovakia gives up on

¹⁹ BARANYAI 1947b: 35–38. After the negotiations Gyöngyösi commented: "The tone of the discussion was the coarse declaration of the victor and winner. Even at the armistice negotiations where he was really talking to victor the tone was milder." VÁJLOK [s.a.]: 5.

these Slovaks. This is the basic principle that we wish to establish after a 150-year fight for our nationality.”²⁰ Gyöngyösi conveyed his conviction that if the Czechoslovak government wished to implement the resettlement of the Hungarians, it must make some sacrifices. “Without land, people cannot exist, and we cannot speak about a resettlement but only about a transfer of Hungarians with the land that they live on.”²¹ He argued that “deprivation of citizenship and decrees permitting forceful resettlement ‘sentenced’ the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia, without any moral or legal justification, purely on a national basis, to a collective punishment in order to eliminate them.”²² With this, the negotiations reached a dead end.

When the Hungarian delegation saw that the Czechoslovak side was adhering rigidly to the preservation of the disenfranchisement legislation, it wished to refer the entire matter to an international forum or to the peace conference.²³ Instead of the Allied Powers, Clementis wanted to involve the ACC in Hungary to supervise the population exchange and stated that “Hungary could make room for the Hungarians by resettling the Germans.” According to the Hungarian delegation, this was completely out of the question because the two matters were totally unrelated to each other. As a final statement, Gyöngyösi declared that there had to be either minority rights or transfer with land and that the Hungarian government would not accept the transfer of population and the total disenfranchisement unless these were forced upon Hungary by an international mandate.²⁴

²⁰ BARANYAI 1947b: 18, quoted in BALOGH 1988: 113.

²¹ “A prágai tárgyalások ki nem javított jegyzőkönyve: A csehszlovák–magyar bizottság prágai tárgyalásainak második, 1945. december 4-ei ülése” [The Uncorrected Minutes of the Prague Negotiations: The Second Meeting of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian Committee’s Negotiations on December 4, 1945], 15, KÜM BÉO 134/respol., ÚMKL; BALOGH 1988: 113.

²² KÜM BÉO 133/res. BÉ. 1945, ÚMKL.

²³ “A prágai tárgyalások ki nem javított jegyzőkönyve: A csehszlovák–magyar bizottság prágai tárgyalásainak harmadik, 1945. december 4-ei ülése” [The Uncorrected Minutes of the Prague Negotiations: The Third Meeting of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian Committee’s Negotiations on December 4, 1945], 7, KÜM BÉO, ÚMKL. It was at the third session that Gyöngyösi raised this issue.

²⁴ “A prágai tárgyalások ki nem javított jegyzőkönyve: A csehszlovák–magyar bizottság prágai tárgyalásainak negyedik, 1945. december 5-i ülése” [The Uncorrected Minutes of the Prague Negotiations: The Fourth Meeting of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian Committee’s Negotiations on December 5, 1945], KÜM BÉO 134/respol., ÚMKL.

The Hungarian government thus failed to restore the hoped-for state of tranquillity between the two countries at the Prague negotiations. Clementis had announced to Kertész that Czechoslovakia was certain of the support of the Soviet Union and of the Western powers and would inevitably expel the Hungarians. President Edvard Beneš told Gyöngyösi that he was amazed by the Hungarian “obstinacy,” for the Great Powers had agreed in Potsdam to the principle of the Hungarian “transfer.” Clementis revealed the real goal of the Czechoslovak government to the American ambassador in Prague, Laurence Steinhardt. Instead of the 345,000 Slovaks spoken of in Potsdam, there were only 250–300,000 Slovaks in Hungary. Of these, he expected to take 100,000 if, in exchange, he could get rid of 350,000 Hungarians.²⁵ The Prague government had an array of means to force a population exchange and a transfer, including internal actions – e.g., dispersement, expropriations, and forced Slovakization – and external actions such as additional demands from Hungary, like the Bratislava bridgehead.²⁶ It also indicated that with Soviet support, the transfer of the Germans from Hungary could make room for the Hungarians from Slovakia.

The plan for implementing the transfer of the Germans from Hungary was approved at the November 20, 1945, session of the Allied Control Council in Germany. Accordingly, 1.75 million Germans from Czechoslovakia and 500,000 Germans from Hungary were given a “preliminary informational assignment.”²⁷ The plan was submitted to the Hungarian government on November 30, and it responded with a memorandum on December 1. In this, it objected to the expulsion of Germans on a purely ethnic basis and to any kind of collective punishment. The number of

²⁵ For the Beneš–Gyöngyösi discussion see Schoenfeld’s telegram nos. 144 and 145 from Budapest, in FRUS 1945/IV: 945; Steinhardt’s telegram no. 678 from Prague, State Department Decimal File 760F. 64/12–545, NA.

²⁶ KERTESZ 1984: 144–145. Clementis suggested to Kertész that the Hungarian Coat of Arms be changed; “Határbővítés Pozsonynál” [Border Revision at Bratislava], KÜM BéO 643/Bé, October 8, 1945, ÚMKL; Caš, November 24, 1945: “A pozsonyi nemzeti bizottság a pozsonyi hídfő kiterjesztését követeli” [The National Committee at Bratislava Demands the Expansion of the Pozsony Bridgehead].

²⁷ KERTESZ 1953b; KÜM BéO 130/res. Bé and 41/47/Bé, December 14, 1945, ÚMKL; FEHÉR 1988: 76; December 28, 1945, session of the Allied Control Council, PRO FO 371.58965 BMM 975.

Germans to be expelled was set at 200,000.²⁸ Marshal Voroshilov, the chairman of the ACC in Budapest, urged the setting of an implementation date for the final Hungarian governmental plans for the expulsion of the Germans, in accordance with the ruling of the Allied Control Council. The implementation plan was drafted by the legal section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The plan extended the expulsion to all whose mother tongue was German and, contrary to an earlier position, did not reject the concept of collective guilt and punishment.

In addition to the protests of the Hungarian College of Bishops and the Prince Primate,²⁹ the Hungarian public intellectual István Bibó prepared a memorandum that he sent to the non-Communist members of the Council of Ministers. Bibó objected to the inclusion of those whose mother tongue was German, the simplicity of the decree of expulsion, and the absence of the conditions of implementation. Bibó considered it impossible that the implementation could be accomplished humanely. He pointed to the deportation of the Hungarian Jews in 1944 and also indicated the similarity between the planned transfer of the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia after the failure of the Prague negotiations and the transfer of the Germans from Hungary. Bibó emphasized

From a national perspective the gravest consequence will be that everything that happened to the Germans in Hungary *would serve as a precedent and model for the fate of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia*. I consider the position that because of the failure of the Prague negotiations the expulsion of the Hungarians will take place and therefore we would be advised to make room for them, most grave and unconscionable. The Potsdam decisions, presumably for good reasons, insisted on the transfer of the Germans but until a similar decision is not handed down for the Hungarians it is not only unnecessary but inexcusable to facilitate the work of those who are preparing catastrophic plans for the *Hungarians in Czechoslovakia*. Regardless how much certain signs seem to indicate that this action by Czechoslovakia, while not actively supported by the ACC, is at least to

²⁸ KÜM BéO 130/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL; FEHÉR 1988: 77; BALOGH 1988: 77–103.

²⁹ KÜM BéO 116/res. Bé, October 17, 1945, ÚMKL; KÜM BéO 109/res. Bé, October 31, 1945, ÚMKL; Archbishop József Mindszenty's letter to Prime Minister Zoltán Tildy, December 26, 1945, KÜM BéO 7/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

some extent tolerated, we must not abdicate our responsibility to prevent any *fait accompli* that would create an irrevocable situation for us even before the peace agreement.³⁰ (Italics in original.)

István Kertész went even further and considered the expulsion decree being prepared for the transfer of the German population from Hungary as being a serious potential threat that might in the future be reciprocated in Romania and Yugoslavia.³¹ In his letter to Prime Minister Tildy he pointed out

It was overwhelmingly important for a small country that has lost the war, and might even be a question of survival, to consistently hold on to certain fundamental moral, legal and political principles. In spite of the fact that we have repeatedly and solemnly declared to the foreign powers that we will implement resettlement only on the basis of individual guilt and not on the basis of collective responsibility, the government has decided to issue a decree that is directly contrary to our previous position. This decision is even more regrettable because the acceptance of the principle of collective responsibility may act as a boomerang on the Hungarians living in the neighboring countries. Henceforth we will lack the solid basis that has given us even at the Prague negotiations such a moral superiority that the Czechoslovak delegation could not tear it down. If the Hungarian Government demonstrated such a vacillating and inconsistent behavior we really have no fundamental basis on which to build and our entire peace preparatory work may prove to be a wasted effort. In any case, with this decision the government has opened the floodgates for the arguments that can be raised against us and has accepted a historic responsibility that today cannot even be measured.³²

³⁰ "Emlékirat a magyarországi németiség kitelepítésével kapcsolatos helyzetről" [Memorandum on the Situation Relative to the Expulsion of the Germans in Hungary], KÜM BÉO 41, 176/Bé, December 15, 1945, ÚMKL. For the genesis of the alternative plan see BIBÓ 1986: 352–353.

³¹ KÜM BÉO 147/res. Bé, December 21, 1945, ÚMKL.

³² KÜM BÉO 151/res. Bé, December 28, 1945, ÚMKL. The valid reasons for Kertész's concern can be seen in Steinhardt's telegram no. 721 to Washington, on December 11, 1945: "The striking inconsistency in the Hungarian position which should not be lost sight of is the determination to expel the German minority from Hungary while objecting to the expulsion in Czechoslovakia of the Hungarian minority. This German policy unquestionably results from Hungarian territorial aspirations against Czechoslovakia." FRUS 1945/IV: 947.

Kertész's protest was without result and so was the démarche of Nándor Keszthelyi.³³

The Council of Ministers accepted the original text of the decree.³⁴ The interpretation of the decree and the number of Germans to be transferred remained for months a subject for debate between Hungary and the Allies.³⁵ The number of Germans to be transferred was set by the Allied Control Council in Germany at 500,000 on November 20, 1945. On December 10, 1945, William S. Key, the head of the American delegation at the ACC, reduced it to 300–400,000. Then, responding to Gyöngyösi's December 15 memorandum, Schoenfeld, the American minister in Budapest, denied on January 2, 1946, that all Germans had to be transferred from Hungary. The American note stated just the opposite: "Reduction of this number on the initiative of the Hungarian government would be received favorably in the United States because there would be a corresponding decrease in human suffering and economic collapse associated with the extensive movement of people. Reduction of the number of the expelled people would be welcome to the armed forces of the United States because the reception and settlement of the Germans expelled from Hungary would be their responsibility."³⁶ The Soviet chairman of the ACC asked on January 25, 1946, that the decree be amended to make it clear that the Hungarian government had asked for "the expulsion of the Germans from Hungary" on July 5, 1945.³⁷ The Soviet representatives at the ACC urged the acceleration of the slow and unsatisfactory progress of transferring the Germans.³⁸ When Gyula Szekfű, the Hungarian minister in Moscow, made his introductory visit to the Soviet

³³ Comments by Nándor Keszthelyi on the draft of the Ministry of the Interior ordinance, December 20, 1945, KÜM BéO 163/respol., ÚMKL. At the Council of Ministers meeting on December 22, 1945, only the five Smallholders' Party ministers voted against the ordinance. See KERTESZ 1985: 174.

³⁴ The document is printed in FEHÉR 1988: 202–204. First published in the *Budapesti Közlöny*, December 29, 1945, ME, 12 330/1945, ÚMKL.

³⁵ FEHÉR 1988: 76–84.

³⁶ FEHÉR 1988: 84.

³⁷ KÜM BéO 395/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL. The Hungarian request was actually initiated by Voroshilov and Pushkin in May 1945 when the government was asked to expel all Germans. See KERTESZ 1985: 164.

³⁸ KÜM BéO 795/Bé, April 14, 1946, ÚMKL. Statement of Deputy Chairman Sviridov at the Allied Control Commission session of January 11, 1946, PRO FO 371. 58965 R 1488/14/21.

deputy commissar of foreign affairs, Vladimir G. Dekanozov, the Soviet diplomat emphasized that “every German had to be expelled.”³⁹ The Soviet intent for a complete resettlement and the contrary stand of the Americans made it clear to the Hungarian government that there was a significant difference of opinion between the Great Powers on the matter of transfers. With regard to the Hungarian–Czechoslovak situation, this meant that the Hungarian government could entertain the hope that Czechoslovakia’s expulsion plans beyond the population exchange and the total disenfranchisement would not have the support of the United States.⁴⁰

THE SECOND PRAGUE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE SO-CALLED POPULATION EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

From the beginning of December 1945, the Department of State urged both governments to do everything possible “to reach agreement on a realistic solution of the problems raised by Czechoslovak measures against the Hungarian minority and by the desire of the Czech Government to bring about an exchange of minority populations between those two countries.”⁴¹ The American secretary of state endeavored to convince the Prague government that it was most important for the two countries to reach a good understanding and create friendly relations and that the inhumane treatment of the Hungarians and their subjection to unnecessary trials and tribulations was impermissible. Byrnes wished to advise the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs that it was his hope that a direct Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement would be reached and that the Hungarian minister would not, by reason of an unjustified expectation of outside support for the Hungarian position, neglect the opportunity to make a realistic settlement with the Czechs.⁴²

³⁹ KÜMBÉO 1103/Bé, April 14, 1946, ÚMKL. The Soviet position in this matter did not change since the spring of 1945. According to Ferenc Erdei and Gyöngyösi, Voroshilov asked the Hungarian government in August 1945 to resettle 400,000 Germans. See KERTESZ 1985: 165.

⁴⁰ Schoenfeld’s telegram to Washington no. 1060, December 10, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 946.

⁴¹ Byrnes’s telegram to London no. 10634, December 7, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 943.

⁴² Byrnes’s telegram to Steinhardt no. 433, FRUS 1945/IV: 943.

After the failure of the first Prague negotiations, Byrnes, through his representative in Budapest, urgently reminded the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs that it would be a mistake for Hungary to count on outside support for its unyielding position in the controversy with the Czechoslovaks on the question of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia, and that postponement of settlement would be of no benefit to either country and would be unfortunate for the people who were the subject of the dispute. The secretary of state also stated unmistakably that the acceptance of the Hungarian government's request for an international commission and supervision was unlikely to be accepted and, therefore, everything had to be done to reach a direct agreement between the two countries.

The Americans still left a ray of hope for the Hungarians. In December, Steinhardt stated to Ferenc Rosty-Forgách, the Hungarian representative in Prague, that if there was a border revision in Hungary's favor, Czechoslovakia could be compensated with some of its historic territory in Lausitz and Sultschin. The British ambassador doubted the realism of this concept.⁴³ It was at this time, according to Kertész's report, that Pushkin explained to Gyöngyösi that "the clumsy Czechoslovak politicians had made a serious mistake when they did not immediately expel the Hungarians from Slovakia as soon as the war was over. This *fait accompli* would have resolved the main difficulty between Hungary and Czechoslovakia and the negotiations between the two countries would have become much simpler."

Pushkin made it very clear to Gyöngyösi: "Because Czechoslovakia proved to be a loyal friend in the past, it enjoys Moscow's unconditional support." Hungary should accept the Czechoslovak proposal and should rather make demands against Romania because "that country was in the same boat as Hungary." The cynicism of the Soviet proposal, the American

⁴³ Byrnes's telegram to Schoenfeld no. 799, December 7, 1945, and Schoenfeld's telegram to Byrnes no. 1060, December 10, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 944-945. For the debate between the Prague and Budapest American envoys, see FRUS 1945/IV: 946-951. Steinhardt emphasized Munich, the selling out of Czechoslovak democracy, and the revival of Hungarian revisionism. Schoenfeld rejected these arguments. See also the Report of Rosty-Forgách, January 3, 1946, KÚM BéO 3/pol. 1946, ÚMKL; Report of Rosty-Forgách, January 24, 1946, KÚM BéO 17/pol/1946, ÚMKL; VIDA 1989: 149-152.

pressure, and the British silence did not leave much hope for the Hungarian government regarding international support.⁴⁴ In addition, the acceptance of the population exchange agreement was urged by the left-wing parties. In the initiation of the dialogue, the Prague visit of a Social Democratic Party delegation also played a role.⁴⁵ In the name of the Hungarian Communist Party, József Révai endeavored to convince Gyöngyösi and the members of the delegation to the first Prague negotiations to resume the discussions.⁴⁶

Under the influence of increasing domestic and external pressures, Gyöngyösi decided at the end of December to resume the negotiations. He invited the Czechoslovak delegation to Budapest on January 5, 1946.⁴⁷ He wished to limit the discussions to the population exchange and gave up his earlier precondition that the Czechoslovak government rescind the decrees disenfranchising the Hungarian minority. He now asked only that their implementation, i.e., deportation and expropriation, be suspended. Hoping for American support, he excluded discussion of a general decree concerning the unilateral expulsion of minorities.

Dalibor Krno, the Czechoslovak representative in Budapest, told István Kertész that: (1) There had to be agreement on the population exchange; the Slovaks in Hungary must be given six months to report. (2) It would be entirely at the discretion of the Czechoslovak government to select the Hungarians who would be exchanged for the Slovaks in Hungary. (3) Hungary should not insist on the formal withdrawal of the anti-Hungarian decrees but be satisfied that the situation of the Hungarians would, *de facto*, be improved. Krno added that if the Hungarian government would not accept the proposal, a general diplomatic and propaganda campaign would be initiated against it, and several hundred Slovak schools would

⁴⁴ KERTESZ 1984: 146–147; 1953a: 175; According to Byrnes's telegram no. 1197 (February 4, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 11), in its reply of January 17, 1946, the Soviet government agreed with the December 10, 1945, American position that bilateral Hungarian–Czechoslovak discussions were necessary. For the January 2, 1946, agreement by the Foreign Office, see FRUS 1946/II: 11; VIDA 1989: 141.

⁴⁵ VIDA 1989: 153; KERTESZ 1984: 141.

⁴⁶ VÁJLOK [s.a.]: 6.

⁴⁷ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 1136, December 21, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 951–952; KÜM BÉO 1/res. Bé. 1946, ÚMKL; Gyöngyösi's letter to Krno, in BARANYAI 1947b: 56.

be established so that in 50 years, about 1 million Slavs would be living in Hungary.⁴⁸ The Czechoslovak envoy also tried to convince his American colleague that if their proposals were rejected, there would be nothing left for them but to revive the prewar policy of the Little Entente.⁴⁹ In fact, when the Hungarian government declined the Yugoslav request that Hungary support Yugoslavia against Italy in the Trieste matter,⁵⁰ the Belgrade press started a campaign against Hungarian chauvinism and Hungary's anti-Yugoslav school policies,⁵¹ and shortly thereafter, it mentioned territorial demands vis-à-vis Hungary.⁵² There were increasing signs of cooperation between the two Slavic countries against Hungarian "revisionist" and "irredentist" propaganda even before the peace negotiations.⁵³

The Czechoslovak government welcomed the invitation to Budapest, interpreting it as the acceptance of the principle that the disputed questions would be resolved by direct negotiations between the parties. It also assumed that with this invitation, the Hungarian government, in principle, accepted the Czechoslovak proposals made in Prague.⁵⁴ Arnošt Heidrich, the state secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told Rosty-Forgách: "I would consider it appropriate if we could assure the Great Powers at the peace conference that we came to agree in a friendly manner *on all pending matters* and ask that the peace treaty be drafted accordingly."⁵⁵ (Italics in original). The Czechoslovak willingness to negotiate before the elections and the peace conference increased because their confidence in American

⁴⁸ Kertész's note, January 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 76/Bé, ÚMKL.

⁴⁹ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 1136, December 21, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 952.

⁵⁰ Negotiation of Gyöngyösi, with Col. Cicmil and Capt. Brankov, September 17, 1945, KÜM BéO, 86/res. Bé, 1945, ÚMKL.

⁵¹ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 1136, December 21, 1945, FRUS 1945/IV: 952.

⁵² The French Minister in Belgrade, Jean Payart's telegram nos. 291–292, March 7, 1946, on Yugoslav demands for territory in the Mohács–Baja area and of the Dráva triangle. Série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 26, MAE AD; KERTESZ 1984: 112.

⁵³ Marshal Josip Broz Tito's declaration, November 24, 1945, BéO 41–24, Bé, 1945, ÚMKL; Tito's declaration, March 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 1167/Bé, 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁴ VÁJLÖK [s.a.]: 10.

⁵⁵ Report of Rosty-Forgách from Prague on January 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 8/pol. 1946, ÚMKL. Peregrin Fiša, the councillor of the Czech legation, considered it inevitable that agreement be reached on the population exchange and the border questions.

support was notably shaken. After the nationalization in the fall of 1945 and after the withdrawal of the American and Soviet troops on December 1, Czechoslovak foreign policy remained firmly oriented toward the Soviet Union, and this was increasingly resented by the United States.⁵⁶ The Czechoslovak side thought that by accepting the invitation, even though the meeting was held in Prague due to Clementis's illness, they satisfied the American demands of October 1945, according to which the direct negotiations between the two concerned countries would make it possible to present a unified proposal to the Great Powers.⁵⁷

The intentions of the Czechoslovaks were seen clearly by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Kertész warned Minister of Foreign Affairs János Gyöngyösi that Prague would present the continuation of the negotiations to the Big Three as proof that the Hungarian–Czechoslovak problems were resolved by direct negotiations and, therefore, the peace conference did not need to address them. The agreement regulating the Hungarian–Czechoslovak differences was on the way. Kertész, the head of the Peace Preparatory Division, was afraid that they would move the Hungarians from the 100%-Hungarian Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) and would not give any formal guarantees regarding the rights of the Hungarians in Slovakia.⁵⁸ Rosty-Forgách in Prague thought that the driving force behind the Czechoslovak desire for a settlement was the fear that the peace treaty might be more favorable to Hungary than the dictated peace signed in 1920 in the Palais de Trianon.⁵⁹ The Hungarian representative in Prague recognized the reluctance that the Czechoslovaks felt toward an international decision and toward the peace conference. For this reason, Prague did not want this issue to come before an international forum or be placed on the agenda of the peace conference. If, perchance, the Slovak Democratic Party were to win the elections with a sizable majority,

⁵⁶ LUNDESTAD 1975: 156–163. According to George Kennan, Czechoslovakia was lost to the West after the Košice government was established. The expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, the cession of Ruthenia, Czechoslovakia's fear of another Soviet occupation, and the postponement of the elections to May 26, 1946, strengthened this opinion. See also Steinhardt's telegram no. 721, December 11, 1945, in FRUS 1945/IV: 948.

⁵⁷ FRUS 1945/IV: 937–938. See also page 119 in this chapter.

⁵⁸ Kertész's note, January 8, 1946, KÜM BÉO 76/Bé, ÚMKL.

⁵⁹ Rosty-Forgách report from Prague, January 16, 1945, KÜM BÉO 13/pol., ÚMKL.

this might put an entirely different light on the Hungarian question. Rosty-Forgách drew attention to the demand for the four Hungarian communities that were claimed for the enlargement of Greater-Bratislava and also to the Czechoslovak revisionist spirit. Since the Great Powers supported the ethnic principle in the case of Yugoslavia and Austria, Hungary could insist “on the preservation of the Hungarian ethnic bloc. ... No historic or political responsibility could be assumed for building a Slovakian corridor beyond the Trianon borders and, thus, for tearing from the Hungarian body politic 400,000 Hungarians whose fate could not be in doubt. In the exchange, the Hungarians, whom the Czechoslovak authorities had illegally expelled and who now wandered around the country homeless and destitute, needed to be taken into consideration.” Rosty-Forgách pointed out that if the Hungarian government agreed to a population exchange at a 1:6 or 1:7 ratio (i.e., the exchange of 500,000 Hungarians for the Slovaks who wished to leave voluntarily), the Yugoslavs and Romanians would view this as a precedent. He also viewed it as a precedent if “we left 400,000 Hungarians in Czechoslovakia without the assurance of any minority rights. If we do not demand rights for the Hungarians here, we cannot demand them, on moral grounds, in Yugoslavia or Romania either. Thus, in the final analysis, the Czechoslovak–Hungarian debate affects almost 2 million Hungarians in minority status, and it can have a very serious effect on the Hungarians at home as well, in both the moral and economic spheres.” Consequently, Rosty-Forgách rejected the acceptance of the December 5, 1945, Czechoslovak proposal as the basis for negotiations.⁶⁰

Listening to the comments, Gyöngyösi accepted the invitation to Prague on January 21, 1946, on the condition that the initial Czechoslovak position was declared unacceptable and he recommended acceptance of a modified proposal to the Hungarian Council of Ministers on January 31. He suggested that a Hungarian–Czechoslovak committee should be responsible for the identification of the Hungarians to be transferred. Additionally, the Hungarians and Slovaks could take their personal property with them

⁶⁰ Rosty-Forgách memorandum, January 20, 1946, KÜM BéO 6/pol. res., 1946, ÚMKL; Rosty-Forgách's Report from Prague, January 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 17/pol., ÚMKL; Opposing views of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs experts, Ödön Pásint, Mihály Szabados, and Jenő Bendák, January 28 – February 1, 1946, see KÜM BéO 32/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL.

and would be compensated for their real estate left behind. There would be additional negotiations about the fate of the Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak government would stop the expulsions, the dispersal of the Hungarians, and the expropriations. Hungarian schools would be reopened, and the possibility for Hungarians to earn a living would be guaranteed.⁶¹ The Hungarian proposal was handed to the Czechoslovak representative in Budapest on January 30, 1946, and, because no answer was received, the Hungarian delegation departed for Prague on February 5 under the assumption that the other party had accepted the proposal as a basis for negotiations.⁶²

Despite recommendations by the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to delay the negotiations, Gyöngyösi accepted the odium of renewing the dialogue because, in the absence of any support from the Great Powers, this was the only hope for bringing the persecution of the Hungarians to an end. On January 24 in Prague, Steinhardt explained to Rosty-Forgách that

If the problem of the Hungarian minority would come before the peace conference the Soviet Union, as the Great Power neighbor of both Czechoslovakia and Hungary, would demand a dominant role. This would be a disadvantage for Hungary because the Slavic solidarity would be against Hungary both in the north and in the south. Furthermore, the delay in direct agreement could lead to a series of other, major complications because of the inertia of the Great Power negotiating apparatus and thus the pacification of the Danube Basin would be set back. ... It is always better if the feuding parties can settle without a judge.

The Hungarian representative in Prague noted that while in December Steinhardt took it for granted that the Hungarian–Czechoslovak differences

⁶¹ Gyöngyösi's proposal to the Council of Ministers, January 31, 1946, KÜM BéO 216/pol., ÚMKL.

⁶² "A második prágai tárgyalásokról 1946. február 6-án készült jegyzőkönyv" [Minutes of the Second Prague Conference February 6, 1946], KÜM BéO 198/respol., ÚMKL. See also BARANYAI 1947b: 61–67.

would be resolved by an equitable peace arrangement, the American ambassador now urged a bilateral agreement.⁶³ This change did not occur because Steinhardt was friendly with Beneš, as Rosty-Forgách believed, but because of the change in attitude developing in Washington. Byrnes, after the Moscow conference of ministers of foreign affairs, urged the calling of the peace conference. The American suggestion was accompanied by promises from Moscow.

At the Budapest railway station, prior to leaving for Prague, Béla Demeter informed Kertész about a message from the newly elected president of the republic, Zoltán Tildy, stating that Marshal Voroshilov had told him that “the problem of Transylvania would be solved to our satisfaction if we took a more conciliatory attitude toward Czechoslovakia and, as a first step of a reasonable policy, would conclude the population exchange agreement with Prague.”⁶⁴ The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs accepted the American advice and believed the Soviet statement aimed to convince Prague that the Czechoslovak statement about 450,000 Slovaks was not correct.⁶⁵

When the Hungarian delegation arrived in Prague, Dalibor Krno told Kertész that, because of an error in the cipher section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he could only now transmit their answer, dated February 2. In the Czechoslovak answer, they rejected the Hungarian proposal for a bilateral committee responsible for overseeing the selection of the Hungarians to be forcibly transferred, and they also refused to accept the inclusion of the representatives of the Great Powers in the implementation of the population exchange.⁶⁶ The Czechoslovak delegation wished to discuss the matter of the Hungarians in Slovakia in its totality, including their transfer and Slovakization, and rejected the “partial” solution, namely limiting discussions to the population exchange. This completely changed the situation, and the entire purpose of the discussion became questionable.⁶⁷

⁶³ KÜM BÉO 17/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁶⁴ KERTESZ 1984: 96, 131, 281. About Pushkin's statement: 96, 131, 147. See also page 129 of this chapter and KERTESZ 1953a: 175–176.

⁶⁵ KERTESZ 1984: 147.

⁶⁶ BARANYAI 1947b: 65–66.

⁶⁷ KERTESZ 1984: 148.

At the meeting of the Hungarian delegation, Gyöngyösi calmed down the participants⁶⁸ and, against Kertész's advice,⁶⁹ decided to begin the negotiations.

At the opening of the second Prague negotiations (February 6–10, 1946), Clementis announced that “the Czechoslovak Government wishes to resolve the question finally and conclusively” with mutual agreements and concessions. Twisting the truth, he stated that since the establishment of his government, it had never turned to the Great Powers with concrete proposals that could resolve or regulate their relationship. He outlined his ideas:

- (1) The first concrete step could be an agreement about population exchange.
- (2) As an internal measure the government, through its Slovakian commissar of internal affairs issued guidelines for the presidential decree about the deprivation of their Czechoslovak citizenship of the Hungarians, except those of “national Slovak origin” using the Slovakian language for personal communication. These persons should return, without any pressure or coercion, to their original ethnic group, asking for the reestablishment of their Czechoslovak citizenship.
- 3) Following the return of the former Slovaks to their ethnic group and the completion of the population exchange there would remain only 150–200,000 Hungarians in Czechoslovakia. After the great losses during the war and the expulsion of the Germans from Hungary it should certainly not be difficult to relocate these Hungarians and the Czechoslovak government would assist in this. With this the matter would be completely resolved as far as we were concerned and I can declare in the name of the Czechoslovak government that we have no interest whatever in the Slovaks who, after all this, remained in Hungary and who, I assume, will become assimilated.⁷⁰

In his response, the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs stated that his authority was limited to a discussion of the population exchange and, in response to Clementis's proposed new plan and “definitive” solution, submitted the agreement proposal of the Hungarian delegation. Gyöngyösi

⁶⁸ VÁJLOK [s.a.]: ii.

⁶⁹ KERTESZ 1984: 148.

⁷⁰ Material for the so-called “confidential file,” KÜM BÉO 188/respol., ÚMKL.

asked for a detailed discussion of the population exchange and appointed Secretary-General Pál Sebestyén and Minister István Kertész. He also promised to submit the Czechoslovak proposals to his government.⁷¹

After a short debate, the Czechoslovak delegation accepted the Hungarian proposal and, at the experts' debate, after mutual concessions, reached an agreement. The Hungarians, by accepting the negotiations, agreed that the Hungarians to be resettled would be selected by the Czechoslovak authorities and then, on February 9, the agreement was rapidly hammered out.⁷²

The population exchange agreement provided for the voluntary resettlement of the Slovaks from Hungary and the selection and forced transfer of an equal number of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia, to be selected by the Czechoslovak authorities. The agreement also included the expulsion of a total of 1,000 "war criminals." The number of Hungarians to be transferred included those who had been expelled earlier or who had escaped from Czechoslovakia. The resettled people could take their personal property with them and would be compensated for their real estate.

In addition to establishing a joint Czechoslovak–Hungarian commission, the Hungarian *chargé d'affaires*' office in Bratislava was set up. In the minutes, both sides agreed that the "population exchange does not resolve the problems of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia and that they were awaiting further resolution" and that if further negotiations did not lead to success, the two governments might refer the matter to the peace conference. The Czechoslovak government also reserved the right to resolve the matter by other means. The Prague government announced that until the final fate of the Hungarian residents was decided, it would stop the expulsion of the Hungarians, their internal resettlement, and expropriation. Public servants who had been deprived of their position would be granted social assistance for the maintenance of a minimal existence.⁷³

⁷¹ Minutes in the French language of the February 6–7, 1946, experts' discussion. Kertész, Sebestyén, and Vájlak participated in the drafting of the agreement with Heidrich, Winkler, Granatier, Cech, and Ivan Horvat.

⁷² KERTESZ 1984: 149. Submission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Council of Ministers, February 15, 1946 (307/pol. 1946). It was accepted by the council on the following day. See "confidential file," KÜM BéO 307/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁷³ KERTESZ 1984: 149.

At the conclusion of the second Prague negotiations, the Czechoslovak delegation agreed that Pál Sebestyén would return to Prague with the commitments of the Hungarian government. This same delegation was amazed that the diplomatic situation of Hungary, which was similar to Germany's at the end of the war, had improved to the point where it could negotiate with the victor regarding the resettlement of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia while the Sudeten Germans were simply expelled.⁷⁴

After returning to Budapest, Kertész advised Gyöngyösi that the characteristically unequal agreement had to be modified because the financial and economic clauses and the selection of the Hungarians required further negotiations that could be prolonged until the peace conference.⁷⁵

It was Sándor Vájlók's responsibility to submit a memorandum to President Tildy, Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy, and the party leaders, which pointed out the weaknesses of the agreement.

(1) The Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement has given the Czechoslovak government a free hand in organizing the transfer of the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia and for determining the fate of the Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia. The Hungarian government is unable to stop the anti-Hungarian propaganda and the Hungarians can expect no help whatever from it. The Hungarian government has no way to interfere with whatever is done during the forced transfer of the Hungarians. While the Slovaks in Hungary voluntarily move to Czechoslovakia, the Hungarians there are being deported and are forced by the authorities to leave their homes. The agreement has the nature of a dictated peace and in its details might even be worse. It did not enable the Hungarian government to address the fate of 700,000 people when, at the same time, it gave the Czechoslovak authorities sovereignty rights in Hungary.

(2) By clearing the Csallóköz and Mátyusföld (Matuška zem) of Hungarians and settling Slovaks in those areas, a Slovak ethnic corridor will be established between Hungary and the 450–500,000 Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia. Of these Hungarians about 300,000 will presumably

⁷⁴ KERTESZ 1984: 149.

⁷⁵ KERTESZ 1984: 149–150.

declare themselves to be Slovaks because gaining citizenship will protect them from destitution, unemployment and the danger of eviction from their homes. These social reasons will be strengthened by the feeling of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia that the Hungarian government has sold them out and has agreed that they may be viewed as a reparation payment. According to Slovak calculations, approximately 150–200,000 Hungarians will remain there whom the Hungarian government will have to resettle in Hungary after the peace treaty.

(3) Deprivation from elementary human rights and complete political and cultural oppression of the Hungarians will persist in Czechoslovakia and there will be no education in Hungarian for the Hungarians who continue to live in that country. Suspension of the expulsions and expropriations only restores to what every person is already entitled to and does not constitute any form of concession.

(4) The Czechoslovak government is afraid of the peace negotiations and fears that the ethnic principle, accepted by the Great Powers as the basis for territorial reorganization, might be applied to its detriment in the Czechoslovak–Hungarian relationship. This is why they want to reach an agreement prior to the peace negotiations. Unfortunately the Hungarian authorities seem to support this endeavor. The agreement would be the first step in this direction. The agreement would grant Hungary no economic or political advantages. It would not even create the atmosphere necessary for the development of a friendly relationship between the two countries because the Slovak hatred for the Hungarians would certainly not come to an end and Czechoslovakia would continue to intrigue against Hungary.

(5) The agreement places severe economic burdens on Hungary because probably 70–80,000 Hungarian families will be expelled. The Hungarian government cannot support these Hungarians, chased out of their good homes and despoiled, adequately. For all the suffering caused by the deportation the government will be held responsible and also for tacitly acknowledging the national demoralization and economic degradation of 700,000 Hungarians in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak solution will serve as a model for Yugoslavia and Romania. If in this case the Hungarian government does not consider interference with its domestic affairs and national feelings objectionable, it will not be able to protest if in other

countries the minorities are deprived of their rights, put across the border into Hungary or are forced to give up their Hungarian identity under the threat to their existence.⁷⁶

The Vájlók memorandum is quoted here because it was the most comprehensive attempt to request a modification of the agreement or a delay in its acceptance. The experts of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also wished to amend the population exchange agreement.⁷⁷ None of these objections changed the position of the minister of foreign affairs. Gyöngyösi argued that, in his estimation, 30–40,000 Slovaks would voluntarily move to Czechoslovakia and that, if the population exchange did not take place, the Prague government propaganda might convince the peace conference of the legitimacy of their position. According to Gyöngyösi, given the passivity of the West, signing the agreement was the only way to ensure the sheer existence of the Hungarians during the period before the peace negotiations.⁷⁸ On Gyöngyösi's motion, the Hungarian government accepted the agreement on February 16, 1946, without any changes to the text.⁷⁹

On February 27, 1946, Clementis and Gyöngyösi signed the Hungarian–Czechoslovak population exchange agreement in Budapest. Following this, the Czechoslovak state secretary announced to the leaders of the Hungarian coalition parties that Czechoslovakia wished to be a national state and intended to get rid of the German and Hungarian population living within its territory. In a new agreement between the two countries, Hungary could agree to accept 200,000 Hungarians. If this would not materialize, the Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia could not count on any minority protection and the Hungarians living in a bloc would be dispersed. He added: “There can be no talk of territorial adjustment because

⁷⁶ Material of the “confidential file,” KÜM BéO 188/respol., ÚMKL.

⁷⁷ KÜM BéO 188/respol., ÚMKL. Minister of Finance Ferenc Gordon's statement, February 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 22/Bé. rest. 1946, ÚMKL; Comments by Ferenc Wagner, February 23, 1946, KÜM BéO 32/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMK; recommended amendments, February 25, KÜM BéO 33/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL. See also KERTESZ 1984: 150. Subsequently, Kertész did not participate in the implementation of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak population exchange.

⁷⁸ KERTESZ 1984: 150.

⁷⁹ Material of the “confidential file,” KÜM BéO 188/respol., ÚMKL.

the Soviet Union has accepted the Trianon borders as a final solution and there cannot be any renewal of the Vienna Award.” Gyöngyösi and the leaders of the parties declared the Clementis proposal to be unacceptable.⁸⁰

Gyöngyösi offered that the two countries should solve the border dispute between themselves without any input from the Great Powers because, “We Hungarians are not thinking of the borders drawn by the Vienna Award but, considering all options, of something much more modest. Yet, we are envisaging a solution that would make the transfer of several hundred thousand Hungarians unnecessary and would make it possible for them to retain their land and remain in their homes.”⁸¹ The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs assured Clementis that there would never be any further Hungarian revisionist activity. The Czechoslovak state secretary for foreign affairs immediately gave a negative answer.

In an unofficial conversation, Pál Auer, the chairman of the National Assembly’s Foreign Affairs Committee, mentioned to the Czechoslovak Minister, Juraj Slávik, that Hungary would like to get back, at least, the Csallóköz and a little bit more. Slávik considered this possible if Czechoslovakia regained some Slovak-inhabited territory, such as the area north of Balassagyarmat. This was the first time that a territorial exchange was mentioned. Slávik stated that the Czechoslovaks were bound to consider such a proposal. He raised Auer’s hope that a humane solution to the minority question was possible. Auer reported this at an interparty conference on March 6, 1946, and it caused considerable surprise among the leaders of the various parties.⁸²

Gyöngyösi wished to inform the Great Powers about the discussions over the potential return of the Csallóköz, hoping that the peace treaty would return the area and a narrow section inhabited by Hungarians to Hungary.⁸³ By March 1946, however, the Hungarian government had learned that none

⁸⁰ KÜM BéO 47/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL; BALOGH 1988: 117–118.

⁸¹ KÜM BéO 47/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL; BALOGH 1988: 117–118.

⁸² KÜM BéO 47/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL; BALOGH 1988: 117–118; Schoenfeld’s telegram no. 365, from Budapest, March 22, 1946, 760 F 64/3–2246 NA; Inter-Party conference, March 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 51/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL.

⁸³ KÜM BéO 47/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL; BALOGH 1988: 117–118; Schoenfeld’s telegram no. 365, from Budapest, March 22, 1946, 760 F 64/3–2246 NA; Inter-Party conference, March 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 51/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL.

of the Great Powers were willing to support Hungarian territorial demands vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia. Aladár Szegedy-Maszák, the Hungarian minister in Washington, raised the question of border modification in a conversation with a key member of the American peace preparatory group on February 25, 1946, and asked whether the American government was considering such a possibility. Freeman Matthews, the director of the Office of European Affairs at the Department of State, denied this and stated that, according to the American government, the issue had to be settled by the two concerned governments. Szegedy-Maszák gained the impression that “the United States committed itself, in some way, to the 1938 Czechoslovak borders or does not wish to offend Czechoslovakia, which was balancing very carefully between East and West and evidently blackmailing both. Consequently, the United States did not wish to insist on a territorial adjustment. It was also apparent, however, that America did not approve of a forced population transfer.”⁸⁴

The deputy of the British political representative in Budapest responded negatively on March 19, 1946, to the question raised six months earlier regarding participation in a commission supervising the Czechoslovak–Hungarian population exchange or investigating the condition of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. The British representative stated on behalf of his government that “His Majesty’s Government would not be prepared to try to persuade the Czechoslovakian Government to agree to any frontier rectification in favor of Hungary though they would not withhold recognition of any changes freely agreed to between the two countries concerned.”⁸⁵

The Hungarian idea about “land with the people” had become uncertain. Clementis reported to Steinhardt, the American ambassador in Prague, about the discussions in Budapest. According to Steinhardt, the Czechoslovak state secretary for foreign affairs warned that the Hungarian representatives should not attach too much importance to any promises they might have received from unauthorized individuals in Great Britain and the United

⁸⁴ Szegedy-Maszák’s telegram from Washington, February 25, 1946, KÜM BéO 15/pol., 1946, ÚMKL. The report arrived in Budapest on March 27. The Hungarian envoy raised this issue on cabled instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁸⁵ BARANYAI 1947b: 54–55; William Mitchell Carse’s letter no. 15 (4/73/46) to Gyöngyösi, March 19, 1946, KÜM BéO 55/Bé. res., 1946, ÚMKL.

States suggesting that these two powers would support Hungary at the peace conference in demanding a cession of territory from Czechoslovakia. He argued that the British government would not wish to be a party to another Munich and that it was most unlikely that the American government would support the forced cession of territory by one of the victorious Allies to a country which had been a member of the Axis.

At the same time, Clementis misled the American ambassador by claiming that Gyöngyösi would accept the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians if the three Great Powers recommended this. In his March 11, 1945, report, Steinhardt tried to convince the State Department of the advantages of expelling the Hungarians. He believed that a three-power *démarche* would convince Hungary to accept the 200,000 Hungarians, and he saw the following advantages for the United States: (1) The solution of the minority question would, at least temporarily, reestablish Central European stability. (2) The source of conflict would disappear, including the friction between the Slovaks and Hungarians in the United States. (3) If the relationship between Hungary and Czechoslovakia became friendly, the freedom of travel would increase and there would be an upswing in trade and the overall economy. (4) The economic recovery of Hungary would make the reception of the expelled Hungarians easier, and all these things would slow down the programs of Soviet economic imperialism.

There were no more occupying forces in Czechoslovakia and hence the increase in the ability to travel would have greater benefits for Hungary. The tripartite *démarche* would demonstrate the solidarity of the Big Three. Steinhardt reached the conclusion that Hungary just wished to maintain appearances by accepting the three-power *démarche*, and thus America could participate without any risks.⁸⁶

The Department of State gave credence to the above and considered the early implementation of the transfer to be desirable. It considered Clementis's recommendation a possible solution but asked Steinhardt and Schoenfeld if the two countries concerned would accept the three-power decision as final. The Department of State did not wish to go beyond the

⁸⁶ Steinhardt's telegram no. 345, March 7, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 364–365; VIDA 1989: 156; Steinhardt's report no. 603, March 11, 1946, 760/64/3–1146, NA.

pronouncements of the three powers because Czechoslovakia, according to the Moscow agreement, would participate in the discussions on the Hungarian peace treaty.⁸⁷

Schoenfeld's telegram from Budapest led to the removal of the plan of a tripartite *démarche* from the agenda. Schoenfeld also clarified the misunderstanding created by Clementis's statement. In his view, the truth was precisely the opposite. The Clementis proposal was rejected by the entire Hungarian political spectrum as an inhumane solution. Schoenfeld considered it a major injustice if, after the Hungarian request for an international commission was turned down, there were a three-power intervention on Czechoslovakia's behalf. "From the standpoint of substantial justice Hungary's position as a former enemy satellite, as against Czechoslovak status as a victorious Allied state, does not appear to be relevant to the question of this minority and to the larger issue of stabilization in this part of Europe as in its new 'democratic' vestments Hungary has been expressly assured of help in attaining equality of status with the United Nations." Schoenfeld wrote that "aside from the British reluctance to persuade the Czechs to accept frontier rectification we ourselves have admitted some cogency in the Hungarian case as observed in Dept's territorial studies. For us now to force settlement which Hungarians would not otherwise accept appears to me to step backwards in settling such minority problems."⁸⁸

Steinhardt, however, continued to support Clementis's three-power idea. He responded to Schoenfeld's telegram by saying that he (Steinhardt) did not necessarily want a joint *démarche* but only support in principle. The American ambassador in Prague tried to clear up the Clementis misunderstanding on April 8, 1946. The Czechoslovak state secretary for foreign affairs claimed, on the basis of a report from General František Dastich, the Czechoslovak representative at the Budapest ACC, that Hungary had a new proposal according to which the Hungarian government was willing to accept the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia provided Czechoslovakia would yield a small area. According to Dastich, Hungary would not raise the

⁸⁷ Byrnes's telegram no. 224 to Prague, March 21, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 365–366; VIDA 1989: 157.

⁸⁸ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 591, March 27, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 366–367; VIDA 1989: 157; see ROMSICS 1992: 243–251.

territorial issue at the peace conference but would demand minority rights. On the basis of this report, Clementis concluded that the primary purpose of the Hungarian government was to obtain territory from Czechoslovakia and that the Hungarian statements that Hungary was unable to take in the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia were not made in good faith. Clementis hoped that when the Hungarian government delegation visited Moscow, Vyshinsky would convince them about the necessity of accepting the three-power *démarche*. Clementis proposed that the Soviet Union take the lead and initiate the *démarche*, and only asked that the Americans not oppose the action.

On April 15, 1946, Schoenfeld – citing Pál Auer, who was close to President Tildy and Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy – denied the “news” about a Hungarian proposal but suspected that the Communist Party leader Mátyás Rákosi might have initiated unofficial feelers toward Czechoslovakia. Auer believed that if the Allies were to inform Beneš that they would appreciate a minor territorial adjustment in Hungary’s favor, this would strengthen Hungarian democracy against its left- and right-wing extremes.⁸⁹

The rumours spread about the three-power *démarche* could not be sustained after the exchange of telegrams between the American envoys in Prague and Budapest. The Czechoslovak government realized this reluctantly and, at the beginning of April 1946, submitted its claims vis-à-vis Hungary to the ambassadors of the Great Powers in Prague and then to the deputy ministers of foreign affairs meeting in London and the CFM session in Paris.

⁸⁹ Steinhardt’s telegram no. 440 from Prague, March 26, 1946, 760 F. 64/B-2646, NA; Steinhardt’s telegram no. 507, April 8, 1946, 760 F. 64/4-846, NA; Schoenfeld’s telegram no. 707 from Budapest, April 15, 1946, 760 F. 64/4-1546, NA.

THE LONDON CONFERENCE OF THE DEPUTY MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE TRANSYLVANIA QUESTION

THE MOSCOW VISIT OF THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT DELEGATION

During the months following the Moscow conference of the ministers of foreign affairs, the differences between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies again became more acute. At the first session of the United Nations in January 1946, Bevin and Vyshinsky engaged in a heated debate about the withdrawal of Allied troops from Greece and Iran. In response to Stalin's February 9 statement about the incompatibility of communism and capitalism, Byrnes delivered a foreign policy speech to the Overseas Press Club in New York on February 26, 1946. In this, he enunciated the basic principles of the new American foreign policy. He emphasized the United States' responsibility to use all its influence to promote the implementation of the UN Charter and to reserve the use of force for the prevention of aggression. Byrnes, recognizing the Soviet Union as a Great Power, declared that Great Powers did not have the right to maintain troops on the territory of other countries without the approval and freely expressed agreement of these countries; they could not delay the establishment of peace and could not force troops on small and impoverished countries.¹

¹ Byrnes's speech to Overseas Press Club, New York, February 28, 1946, Department of State Bulletin 14, no. 18. (March 10, 1946): 355-358, quoted in WARD 1981: 82.

After the Moscow conference, American diplomacy changed tactics. It adopted the British point of view and endeavored to reach a peace agreement as soon as possible to achieve the removal of Soviet troops from the eastern half of Europe. President Truman, who played an increasing role in shaping foreign policy, was not at all in favor of the compromising Moscow agreement. His inflexibility and the speech of the secretary of state indicating the new ideas, as well as the deteriorating Soviet–American relations over the crisis of Soviet troop withdrawal from Iran in March and April, led to delays in the peace negotiations. There was a reversal of roles. During the summer and autumn of 1945, the United States set conditions for the initiation of substantive discussions, but from the beginning of 1946, it was the Soviet Union that rigidly insisted on the procedures elaborated in Moscow and on the three-power decision-making. It was only after many months of debate that the Soviets agreed, step by step, to enlarge the circle of participants and to having the differing views of the Great Powers appear side by side in the joint documents. The Americans planned to have the peace proposals prepared by April 1. The conference of the deputy ministers of foreign affairs in London upset all these expectations.

THE DEPUTY MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONFERENCE
IN LONDON (JANUARY 18 – APRIL 20, 1946) AND THE FIRST
JOINT PEACE TREATY DRAFTS OF THE GREAT POWERS

At Lancaster House in London, the deputy ministers of foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, the United States, and France reviewed the agreements of the September CFM meeting and began their deliberations on the basis of the Potsdam 4–3–2 formula, confirmed in Moscow. Consequently, during the first phase of the discussions, between January 19 and March 8, 1946, the discussions were limited to the Italian peace treaty drafts. The Soviet and the Anglo-American delegations fought over Trieste and reparation issues, while France was fighting the Anglo-Americans about her territorial demands vis-à-vis Italy. The procedural matters of all peace negotiations were affected by the debate at the February 12 session

about receiving proposals from interested allies and comments from the former enemy countries. In contrast to James Clement Dunn, the American deputy secretary of state, Sir Gladwyn Jebb, the British undersecretary of state, who was in charge of the peace preparation during the war, objected to treating allies and former enemies the same way. He suggested that the allies be asked to submit written opinions and wished to give a hearing to former enemies at the peace conference. Fedor Gusev, the Soviet ambassador in London, wished to submit the returned answers to an expert committee, namely to the Secretariat of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs committee.² The British and Americans did everything possible to preserve the decision-making by the Great Powers, to maintain the principle of rendering justice, and to keep the small victorious countries from having a direct input into the discussions.

Negotiations over the Italian peace treaty proposals provided a model to be followed for the other four cases: Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland. On February 20, 1946, there was a debate about whether the French and Austrian demands for a border adjustment should even be communicated to the Italian government. Up to this time, the peace negotiations were held in secret session between the victorious Great Powers, with the exclusion of the public, and the representatives of the former enemy countries were not familiar with the proposals that served as the basis for the discussions or the point of view the “judges” held relative to them. The French delegation, which so generously supported, on January 13, the plan to give the defeated countries a hearing, now opposed paying any attention to the opinion of the Italian government prior to the elaboration of the peace treaty drafts by the Great Powers. The Soviet delegation was also opposed to informing Italy about anything.³ This created a procedural precedent. In the critical phase of preparing the proposals, the concerned allies and the former enemy countries could not express their views and could not participate in the debates of the Great Powers. Hearing the defeated countries occurred

² Maurice Couve de Murville's telegram no. 621 from London on the 19th session of the London conference, February 13, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 138. MAE AD.

³ Maurice Couve de Murville's telegram no. 666–668 from London, February 21, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 138. MAE AD.

only, on British request, at the consultative Paris conference under the control of the CFM.

By the end of February, the secretary of state was becoming concerned about the slow pace of the London discussions. On February 19, James Clement Dunn warned Byrnes that the Paris conference could not be called for May 1.⁴ Byrnes, in Washington, concluded that, from positions taken by several powers on various questions discussed, it was evident that a treaty drawn up thereon would be harsher than what any one of the powers, each of which was well disposed towards Italy, desired to see imposed on that country. He also felt that imposition of such harsh conditions on people whose material contribution to defeating Germany had already been acknowledged would not, in the end, serve the best interests of world order and stability, and would not meet the hopes of the United States government for a just and enduring peace, and that, therefore, the US government proposed that each power recede somewhat from the demands and restrictions they desired to impose upon Italy, so that, through compromise, a settlement in the best interest of all might be arrived at.⁵

Dunn insisted on the position that he voiced at the London meeting of the CFM. A limitation of the Italian armed forces would serve as a reason to reduce the forces of the Balkan countries as well. The reduction of reparations was justified by the inability of the country to make the payments. By drawing the ethnic line between Italy and Yugoslavia, they wished to achieve the result that the least number of citizens would come under foreign rule. After a debate lasting six weeks, it became evident that the parties were simply reiterating their original position. At the end of February, the American delegation proposed that they discuss the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian peace treaty proposals because it doubted the Soviet Union's willingness to make peace and was concerned that delaying the peace negotiations would lead to the postponement of the Paris conference. It was the opinion of the deputy secretary of state that the Soviet Union was not interested in reestablishing stability in Italy, was willing to tolerate only "puppet governments" in Southeast Europe, and was unwilling

⁴ James C. Dunn's telegram from London, no. 2105, February 19, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 14.

⁵ Byrnes's telegram to London no. 1807, February 26, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 15-16.

to withdraw the Red Army from the area. While the United States urged that peace settlement be made as soon as possible in order to reestablish the political and economic stability of Italy and the Balkans and permit the formation of governments independent of external assistance and pressure, it was suspected that the Soviet Union intentionally delayed an agreement until the last possible moment so that the British and Americans would be forced to make concessions in view of the fact that they wished to open the Paris conference on May 1. Dunn saw three possible solutions:

- (1) On May 1 the Great Powers would submit a joint peace treaty proposal at the Paris conference.
- (2) A draft reflecting partial agreement would be submitted.
- (3) The Great Powers would submit separate alternative proposals at the Paris conference.

The American deputy secretary of state excluded the first option and urged that the Paris conference be opened on May 1, with a joint proposal that reflected the differing opinions of the Great Powers but was agreed on the major issues. As an alternative, Dunn recommended to the State Department "that we have to begin somewhere, sometime to carry out a policy of dealing with questions of importance to us in Europe on the basis of our own policy without waiting to be dragged around by the hair by some other nation and winding up by stultifying our own actions and finding that we are only carrying out the dictates of someone else's policy."⁶ In response, Byrnes notified his deputy on March 5 that he wished to summon the CFM to a session in Paris on April 15 in order to accelerate the preparation of the peace treaty proposals. On Bevin's advice, the secretary of state postponed sending his proposal to the Soviets until after the resolution of the Iranian crisis (April 4). Thus, the opening of the CFM conference in Paris was postponed to April 25.⁷

At the London conference of the deputy ministers of foreign affairs, there were lengthy debates about the tasks of the Paris conference, procedures,

⁶ Dunn's letter to Freeman Matthews, February 27, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 16–19.

⁷ WARD 1981: 86–88; FRUS 1946/II: 26–27, 34–36, 45.

the sequence of matters to be discussed, and the list of invitees. By the end of February, it became evident that a May 1 opening was impossible, and on April 18 Byrnes planned to call the conference into session at the end of May, after the Paris meeting of the council.⁸ Referring to the procedures accepted in Moscow, Gusev stated on March 20 that the planned meeting could not be considered a peace conference because no decisions would be made; only recommendations for the peace treaty drafts would be taken. Furthermore, only those who fought actively against the former enemy could participate in the discussions. If necessary, the council could continue to meet during the Paris conference. Couve de Murville, the head of the French delegation, recommended that the conference decide when and under what conditions the representatives of the defeated countries would be heard. There was general agreement that the former enemy countries could not participate in the conference with the same standing as the Allies. The deputy secretary of state, referring to the correspondence between Byrnes and Bidault, argued that these countries should be able to state their position and debate the peace treaty proposals at the Paris conference. On the basis of the Moscow decision, however, Gusev pointed out that the enemy countries could be heard only after the recommendations of the conference had been accepted.

All this led Dunn to the conclusion that the Soviet government viewed the Paris conference as a gathering where, on the basis of the 4-3-2 formula, the Great Powers would have their peace proposals accepted, and that the Soviet government "conceives the Paris Conference as a meeting at which the Great Powers, responsible under the Moscow Decision for drafting the five treaties, will push through their agreed upon drafts, limiting the role of the smaller Allied States and the consultation, if any, of the five enemy states to a minimum."⁹ Gusev confirmed this view when he asserted that the only task of the Conference was to make recommendations concerning the peace treaty proposals promulgated by the CFM. Otherwise, the conference would have no purpose, since recommendations could be accepted only by the agreement of the Great Powers. The Soviet ambassador opposed

⁸ FRUS 1946/II: 68-69.

⁹ James C. Dunn's telegram from London no. 3256, March 21, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 30-31; Couve de Murville's telegrams from London concerning the 32nd session of the conference, March 21, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 138, MAE AD.

the conference being called without a prior Great Power agreement on the peace treaty proposals. He advised his colleagues that if they insisted on the Paris conference, they had no choice but to accept the principal Soviet demands. This left Couve de Murville, the deputy minister of foreign affairs of the host country, in a complete quandary: would there be a conference, and, if so, when and who would be the attendees?¹⁰

On March 23, 1946, the French government submitted to the three Allied Powers its proposals for the organization and procedures of the Paris conference. Because Molotov had accepted Byrnes's recommendations concerning the convocation of a new Paris meeting of the CFM, the Soviet delegation speeded up its work in London, and by April 20, 1946, the first joint peace treaty drafts of the Great Powers for Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland were ready. They were based on the 4-3-2 formula and included, in addition to the mutually agreed conditions, the open and pending issues waiting to be resolved.¹¹

On March 6, 1946, Byrnes suggested that, in preparation for the Paris conference, the Balkan peace treaty proposals be discussed.¹² The British delegation responded affirmatively, and the French deputy minister of foreign affairs was willing to stay away from the discussion about the Balkan peace treaties. The Big Three's deputy ministers of foreign affairs began to discuss the Romanian peace treaty proposals, submitted by the Soviet Union, on March 11, 1946. By that time, Romania had reshaped its government, and the United States and Great Britain were prepared to recognize the Groza government. In Bulgaria, the opposition was unable to have its conditions accepted by the Patriotic Front government. The Kimon Georgiev government was restructured on March 31 but was not recognized by the United States and Great Britain. Nevertheless, the three deputy ministers began discussing Bulgaria on April 1, and on April 8, it was Hungary's turn.¹³

¹⁰ Dunn's telegram from London no. 3255, March 21, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 32-33. Gusev repeated his statement on March 30 that they would attend the Paris conference only if there was a prior joint acceptance of the peace treaty proposals. Dunn's telegram from London no. 3613, March 31, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 36-37.

¹¹ Série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 138, MAE AD; FRUS 1946/II: (D) 46/53.

¹² Byrnes's telegram to London no. 2057, March 6, 1946, FRUS 1946/II.

¹³ FÜLÖP 1985: 138.

On March 27, the Soviet delegation submitted drafts for the Bulgarian and Hungarian¹⁴ peace treaties that were identical in wording to the Romanian one. In addition to the introduction, the Hungarian proposal contained 13 clauses. The clauses included: (1) military restrictions; (2) restitution of the property and vessels removed by the Hungarian troops to the Allied nations and to their citizens; (3) restoration of all legal rights and interests of the United Nations and their nationals; (4) the payment of \$300 million in reparation; (5) the transfer of all German assets in Hungary to the Soviet Union; (6) the declaration that the two Vienna Awards were null and void; (7) the cession of all of Transylvania to Romania; (8) the disbanding of all organizations conducting propaganda hostile to the Allies; (9) release of all persons imprisoned because of sympathy for the Allied nations or because of race or religion; (10) the revocation of all discriminatory legislation; (11) the guarantee of free speech, religious practice, language, political opinion, and public meetings; (12) Hungary's cooperation in the arrest and trial of war criminals; and (13) the right of the Soviet Union to keep on Hungarian territory such armed forces as it might need for the maintenance of the lines of communication of the Red Army with the Soviet zone of occupation in Austria.

The draft stated that after the treaty was signed, the Allies would support Hungary's admission to the UN. The draft then dealt with the mechanics of signing and ratifying the peace treaty.

The Soviet proposal took into consideration the American and British recommendations and the results of the preceding discussions. In the identically worded March 11 and March 27 proposals, the Romanian–Hungarian border reflected the definitive Soviet position. On April 10, the American delegation proposed an amendment to Article 7 of the Romanian peace treaty proposal, regarding the Hungarian–Romanian border. Romania submitted a memorandum on April 15. The Hungarian peace treaty proposal was discussed, in parallel with the Romanian and Bulgarian ones, between April 8 and April 16 by the deputy ministers. In general, with the necessary changes having been carried out, the Romanian text was used as a basis.

¹⁴ For the Romanian proposal, see CMAE (D) (B) (46) 1.2, March 11, 1946; for the Hungarian one, CMAE (D) (B) (46) 4; for the Bulgarian one, CMAE (D) (B) (46) 5, March 27, 1946. All in *série Y, Internationale 1944–1949*, vol. 138, MAE AD.

In considering the Hungarian peace treaty proposal, the three deputy ministers took the March 27 Soviet proposal as their basis for discussion. Article 2 (return of Allied properties); Article 4 (transfer of German assets to the Soviet Union), and Article 6 (return of Allied shipping) were accepted, although the Americans also submitted their recommendations. The Soviet wording of the preamble was expanded by the inclusion of the UN membership issue, although this decision was postponed to determine whether this should be handled as a separate item. The American proposal about the limitations imposed on the armed forces was referred to a separate air force and military expert panel, but this dealt with the Hungarian regulations only in June, in combination with the reductions of the entire armed forces of other former enemy states.

An American and British amendment to the Soviet proposal on reparations was submitted that addressed the matter of the Allies other than the Soviet Union and also addressed the time frame for the reparations. With minor modifications, the Americans accepted the articles on human rights, revocation of discriminatory legislation, and disbanding fascist organizations. The Americans urged an expansion of the article on war criminals and wished to detail Hungary's responsibility in this matter.

On the matter of withdrawing Allied troops, the return of Hungarian financial assets, and the stationing of Soviet security troops along the lines of communication to the Austrian Soviet Zone, the Americans agreed, albeit with the reservation that if Austria's independence was agreed upon prior to the Hungarian peace treaty, or in parallel with it, this article would have to be revised.

Regarding Hungary's admission to the UN, Hungary's obligations to participate in the UN peacekeeping missions were deleted on American and British recommendation. The Soviet proposal on the procedural matters of ratification and enactment of the peace treaties faithfully reflected the Great Powers character of the treaties, made without asking for or including any statement from the defeated country. The treaty would enter into force upon the deposit of the ratification documents of the three Great Powers in Moscow.

On April 16, 1946, the Americans wished to amend this so that the peace treaty would go into effect for the other allied and associated powers if they followed the above procedure. The deputy ministers accepted the article about the cessation of hostilities between Romania and Hungary and, on a British recommendation, that Hungary would recognize the Italian, Romanian,

Bulgarian, and Finnish peace treaties, as well as the peace treaties with Austria, Germany, and Japan to be concluded at some later date. The British delegation had the article about the UN and the International Court of Justice included, as well as the one about closing the International Agricultural Institute in Rome.

At the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, no decision was made on the Soviet proposal regarding Allied wartime activities, on the British proposal regarding the adherence to the peace treaty, the American proposal on settling all of Hungary's borders, the British and American proposal on the international regulation of Danubian shipping, the American proposal on military cemeteries, or on the British and American proposal on economic and financial regulations, such as debt, Hungarian assets abroad, joint arbitration panels, commercial rulings, and industrial ownership. Thus, the first joint peace treaty draft for Hungary, prepared by the deputy ministers of the victorious Great Powers in London, consisted of a preamble and 24, still-debated, articles.

Later on, from April to November 1946, this text served as the basis for the discussions between the Great Powers. Specifically, Hungarian debates were limited to the matter of reparation. Ever since the armistice negotiations, the United States felt that the sum set was too high, and Dunn, referring to the deterioration of the Hungarian economic situation, asked that a decision be postponed.

On April 15, the Soviet delegation advised its allies that under Article 6 of the Armistice Agreement, Hungary had returned the goods looted from the Soviet Union but had paid only \$5.8 million in reparation by April 1, 1946, and had started to ship goods valued at \$6.8 million to the Soviet Union. It was in vain that the American deputy secretary of state pointed to the unparalleled inflation and to the urgency of discussing the intervention proposed by the United States in March 1946 to reestablish the Hungarian economy. The Soviet delegation remained adamant, refused to reduce the reparation demand, or to adjust the 1945 dollar–gold parity¹⁵ as the basis for calculations. In working out the peace treaty drafts, no agreement could be reached in this matter at that time.

¹⁵ Report on the debate on the draft of the Hungarian peace treaty between April 8–20, 1946, at the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, CMAE (D) (B) (46), 38, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 138, MAE AD.

At the March–April debates, the Soviet delegation skillfully combined the ongoing Italian and Balkan peace treaty negotiations. The Soviets emphasized that in discussions concerning Italy, more serious assessments were indicated because of the unconditional surrender, the damage caused to the Soviet Union by Italian troops, and because of Italy's aggression. In Romania's case, and particularly for Bulgaria, they argued for more lenient terms because with these countries, the armistice agreements were not based on unconditional surrender, and they also sought to include, in the preamble of these treaties, favorable comments about these countries' contribution to the war against Germany.

The American deputy secretary of state protested against such an unfavorable comparison of Italy with the other two countries. Dunn gained the impression that simplified peace conditions for the Balkan countries, the drive for an early treaty with these countries, and the difficulties raised about the Italian peace treaty all served to perpetuate Soviet domination over Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary.¹⁶ To strengthen their bargaining position, the Soviets demanded that the Red Army retain the right to maintain military units to protect its lines of communication with its Austrian Zone of Occupation in the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian peace treaty proposals.¹⁷

The decision, first proposed at the September 1945 London CFM meeting and confirmed in Moscow in December 1945, which addressed the problem of withdrawing the occupying forces, permitted the retention of contingents of only very limited size. In order to have even these troops removed, the United States delegation recommended in February 1946 that the Austrian peace negotiations be initiated.¹⁸ Simultaneously, on a British initiative, within the ACC in Vienna, a second set of discussions was started about the control of Austria, and this resulted several months later in the signing of an agreement, on June 28, 1946, that made the restoration of the country's independence and sovereignty possible.¹⁹

¹⁶ James C. Dunn's telegrams from London to the State Department no. 2962, March 12, 1946, and no. 4044, April 11, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 28–29.

¹⁷ Peace treaty proposals of the Soviet Union for Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, CMAE (D) (B) (46), 2, 4, 5, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 138, MAE AD.

¹⁸ KERTESZ 1985: 19, 25; WARD 1981: 90.

¹⁹ CRONIN 1986: 37.

Between November 1945 and April 1946, the number of Soviet occupying forces in Austria was reduced from 180,000 to 140,000, the British from 75,000 to 28,000, the American from 70,000 to 13,000, and the French from 40,000 to 15,000.²⁰ The efforts of the Department of State were not crowned with success because on April 22, even before the Paris meeting of the CFM, Molotov rejected a discussion of the Austrian question.²¹

The London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs devoted 39 sessions to the discussion of the Italian peace treaty drafts and 15 to the Balkan ones. In the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian peace treaty drafts, the following matters remained unresolved: inclusion of the war record of these countries in the preambles, the withdrawal of the Allied forces, the precise delineation of the Soviet–Romanian border, the Transylvania question, economic issues (including reparation, restitution, and economic relationships), Danubian navigation, military limitations, and the participation of those countries which were not invited to the Paris conference but which were at war with these countries.

The Soviet delegation endeavored to have its proposals accepted *in toto*, and thus, the British and the Americans could not achieve any concessions at all. The American delegate felt that the Soviet Union would prefer to postpone the peace treaties rather than yield on any of its peace goals. The Soviets would give up this bargaining position only if they were granted substantial advantages. These would include reparations and the transfer of vessels – essentially only from Italy – because in the Balkan treaties, the Soviets sought only to consolidate their position gained during the armistice agreement or by direct negotiations.

The Soviet Union considered the peace treaties purely as a means of strengthening its position in the former enemy countries and assessing the effects they might have on its relationships with the Allied Powers. The Soviets realized that they would not get one of the former Italian colonies, but they wished to use the question of “protectorates” as a bargaining chip. They wished to prolong the Italian reparation negotiations until they were given what they deemed appropriate amounts, and also wanted part of

²⁰ Memorandum, April 5, 1946, PRO FO 371.55257 (C 4097), quoted in CRONIN 1986: 35–36.

²¹ Byrnes's telegram to Moscow no. 743, April 20, 1946, and telegram from Moscow transmitting Molotov's letter no. 1340, April 25, 1946, FRUS 1946/IV: 335–336.

the Italian navy. The Soviet Union was particularly anxious to ensure that Italy, being part of the British and American sphere, did not receive better treatment than Romania or Bulgaria. They also wished to decide the Italian–Yugoslav border dispute in Yugoslavia’s favor.

Dunn recognized that the Soviet Union wanted to use the peace treaties to establish its exclusive Balkan sphere of interest and would oppose all British or American peace proposals that challenged that. According to the American deputy secretary of state, agreement between the Great Powers about the text of the Balkan peace treaties could only be reached when the status and role of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States in this area were clarified – an issue far more important than the peace treaties themselves.

Until, for instance, the Soviet Union decided to restore the Hungarian economy, there was no purpose in discussing the Hungarian economic peace treaty clauses. Similarly, the Bulgarian political situation could not be resolved at the peace conference. Based on all these considerations, Dunn believed that progress in the matter of the peace treaties could only be achieved if the Soviets yielded somewhat on their exclusive control in the Balkans and made an attempt to improve their relations with the other Allied Powers. Otherwise, the acceptance of the Soviet peace treaty proposals would only strengthen their control over the former enemy countries.²²

On April 16, 1946, during the only session devoted exclusively to the Hungarian peace treaty drafts, the deputy foreign ministers debated whether to draw the CFM’s attention to the demands presented in the Czechoslovak and Romanian memoranda, as well as to the demand that might be submitted by Yugoslavia.²³ Both issues were referred to the Paris meeting of the CFM. The positions of the three Great Powers concerning the fate of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia and the Hungarian–Romanian territorial dispute took shape simultaneously with the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, during the spring of 1946. These two critical components of the Hungarian peace treaty preparations deserve a closer look.

²² Dunn’s telegram to the Secretary of State from London no. 4334, April 18, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 70–72.

²³ CMAE (D) (B) 12th session, April 16, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 138, MAE AD.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK MEMORANDUM OF
APRIL 10, 1946, AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE

When the population exchange agreement was signed on February 27, 1946, the Czechoslovak government was unable to get Hungary to engage in negotiations about the transfer of an additional 200,000 Hungarians or to accept the Three-Power line as suggested by Clementis but objected to by Hungary. On April 3, 1946, Dalibor Krno, who in the meantime had been elected deputy secretary-general of the UN, handed Gladwyn Jebb, the British deputy foreign secretary three memoranda referring to, respectively, the "reslovakization of 250,000 Hungarians, the forced transfer of 200,000 Hungarians and the economic demands vis-à-vis Hungary." These documents, representing the proposals and comments of the Czechoslovak government, were presented at the April 10, 1946, session of the London Conference of Deputy Ministers.²⁴ The Prague government started from the assumption that the Vienna Awards never took place and demanded that Hungary recognize the Trianon borders as legally valid, final and unalterable; renounce the concept of the so-called Crown of St. Stephen (i.e., historic Hungary) and all its claims, principally its territorial claims. Hungary should refrain from using its emblems of sovereignty and, in its flags, the double cross and three hills, the emblems of Slovakia; remove all monuments, memorials and the like commemorating Upper Hungary (Felvidék) as a part of Hungary and should, by legislation, prohibit, under threat of sanction, the spreading of irredentist ideas by wireless, the press, in the schools, in textbooks, public manifestations, or by any other overt or hidden means; Hungary should not tolerate within her territory any societies, organizations, or associations having as their object the overt or hidden spreading of revisionism or any paramilitary or military training or similar activities. The symbol of revisionism, St. Stephen's crown, should be deposited in the UN museum. Hungary should reestablish the pre-Munich 1938 conditions in every respect with

²⁴ CMAE (D) (B) (46) 14, April 11, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 138, MAE AD. For the text of the memorandum, see "Propositions et observations du gouvernement tchécoslovaque concernant la Traité de paix avec la Hongrie," série Z, Europe 1944-1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD.

appropriate compensation. From the above, the Czechoslovak document concluded that the former Czechoslovak citizens of Hungarian extraction, particularly after 1938, were a dangerous foreign element to the domestic and international peace of the country and that it was not possible to live peacefully with this alien, hostile element. From the perspective of world peace, European security and the future of friendly relations between the two countries, this question must be resolved permanently to eliminate the most important source of European conflicts. Since direct negotiations did not lead to results, Czechoslovakia felt that it was entitled to expel 200,000 former Czechoslovak citizens of Hungarian nationality on the basis of the February 27, 1946, population exchange agreement. The Czechoslovak memorandum asked that Hungary be obligated to make an agreement with Czechoslovakia about the resettlement within three months after the signing of the peace treaty. If such an agreement were not reached, Czechoslovakia reserved the right to execute the transfer unilaterally. In addition to the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians, the Czechoslovak government also stated its territorial demand for the Bratislava bridgehead. They justified the annexation of Dunacsún, Horvátjárfalu, Oroszvár, Rajka, and Bezenye villages because Bratislava could expand only in this direction and they wished to build the planned harbor and water power generating plant on Czechoslovak territory. The defense of Bratislava against a Hungarian artillery attack would also be possible only in this way. The population of the five villages was 7,523. Of these, 53% were German, 25% Croatian, and only 25% were Hungarian. The Czechoslovak memorandum stated that if Hungary did not pay the \$30 million in reparations under the April 6, 1946, Prague agreement, within six years, it would have to grant Czechoslovakia the right to explore Hungary's natural resources and the right to put a lien on Hungarian state properties and monopolies. The reparations included objects and documents of historical and cultural value. The Czechoslovak government wished to include the armistice agreement in the peace treaty and wanted the peace treaty to declare the validity of the Trianon Treaty, particularly its military clauses. The financial, economic, and transportation demands would have given Czechoslovakia a free hand in Hungary for decades. It wished to put Hungary under UN financial supervision, which

would enforce the aforementioned economic provisions. The memorandum also called for the placement of the supervision of the military clauses under a Soviet–Czechoslovak–Yugoslav supervisory commission. In addition, the Czechoslovak text left the door open for further demands.

The Hungarian government knew nothing about the Czechoslovak demands submitted in London. These were carefully analyzed by the Foreign Office, and then instructions were prepared for the British delegation going to the CFM meeting in Paris about the Czechoslovak–Hungarian dispute. The British expert on Hungary, Professor Carlile Aylmer Macartney, adviser to the Research Department of the Foreign Office, made the following recommendations about the Czechoslovak memorandum:

- (1) Earlier territorial studies by the Foreign Office (June 7, 1945 conference) indicate that the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav demands for territory beyond the Trianon borders cannot be justified. For “never existing” presumably “null and void” is meant. It is impossible to force anyone to regard a thing which happened in the past as not having happened; the most that any state or any person can do is to restore the status quo ante. All these clauses bind Hungary not merely to accept the frontiers laid down, but to accept them as unalterable and eternal. It is submitted that this is a novel demand to make on any defeated state; that it is unrealistic like pulling out all a man’s teeth and then exacting from him a solemn pledge not to have a toothache; and that it conflicts with the rights which Hungary will enjoy on her admission to membership of the United Nations.
- (2) The Hungarian armistice agreement addresses the matter of disbanding the Fascist organizations. Others are calculated to bring about the effect opposite to that designed. The Hungarian State will probably in any case of its own volition, now that it is a republic, abandon the symbols of the crooked cross, etc. To remove the Holy Crown and place it in an international museum would be an unwarrantable interference in Hungary’s affairs.
- (3) In the arrangements for the reversal of the Vienna Awards ‘unsuspected and unwarranted claims’ must be carefully avoided.
- (4) There is no intention of querying the Czechoslovak Government’s claim that it treated its Magyar minority liberally, although the picture

presented here is too rosy in certain respects. It would, however, be possible to refute many times over, out of the mouths of Czechoslovak statesmen themselves, who in the past repeatedly stated the exact opposite, the thesis now put forward that the Magyar minority was disloyal and worthy of punishment. Only 80,000 Hungarian Slovaks have, under pressure, volunteered to move to Slovakia. On the equal exchange basis, and assuming the restitution of the Trianon frontier, 100,000 persons are really amenable to the so-called re-Slovakization. Even if we add another 100,000 there still remain about 350,000 persons for expulsion. These are nearly all peasant farmers. The losses suffered by Hungary in the war are not as high as 1 million persons and many of the losses are Jews deported by the Germans. ... Nor ... will 400,000 Swabians leave Hungary ... enabling the settlement of 20–25,000 Hungarian families. ... It will be simply impossible to settle another 850,000 persons, and the proposed expulsion can have no other effect than to create a starving and desperate proletariat which must remain for many years the focus of economic, social and political disorder in a Hungary of war devastation, removal of war booty and unemployment. The “Magyarization–Slovakization” arguments represent, of course a one-sided view of history; some of the truth, but not the whole truth and not necessarily, nothing but the truth. If the Treaty of Trianon is to remain in force why the Czechoslovak Minorities Treaties should be abrogated? The Hungarians, when they protested against the draft treaty, were consoled with the assurance that the minorities’ treaties would secure the position of the Magyar minorities in the Successor States.

(5) The Czechoslovak claim for the Bratislava (Pozsony) bridgehead is not ethnic. It consists of two Hungarian communities and three Hungarian–Croatian communities with the Croats being 16th Century settlers and loyal to Hungary. The Germans have all fled from this area. (Oroszvár, which means Russian Fortress, mentioned already by Anonymus, circa 1200 AD, was given its name not by Slovaks but by Kiev prisoners of war settled there in 846. The area’s economic dependence on Pozsony is undeniable. It is very dubious, however, if it would form a useful strategic glacis to that city, particularly after Hungary would solemnly and eternally pledged her acceptance of the frontier, a useful terrain for constructing a dam, the

whole area from the Little Carpathians to the Croat frontier being as flat as a billiard table. As said, however, the area concerned is a small one, but if the Trianon frontier is really not sacrosanct but susceptible to change where such change seems useful and desirable, it may be suggested that there are many plans where a still much stronger case could be made for change in favor of Hungary.

(6) The economic, financial and transportation demands are so excessive that they would have to be accepted by all Danubian countries as a general and shared obligation. The sanctions demanded for non compliance with the peace treaty and with the reparation schedule are in conflict with the Soviet–Hungarian economic agreement and thus the Czechoslovak government would come into conflict with the Soviet Union over the matter of the exploitation of natural resources and the liens filed against Hungarian state properties.²⁵

James Marjoribanks, the Hungarian–Romanian desk officer section of the FO Reconstruction Department – Peace Treaty Section, prepared a summary of the Czechoslovak memorandum on April 17, 1946, and considered its arguments to be “very weak.” So far as the territorial demands were concerned, he found that the enlargement of the Bratislava bridgehead could not be justified on ethnic grounds. He did not believe that the “transfer” was an issue that had to be included in the peace treaty. He considered that the lien claim about the reparation went much too far, and he felt that all the other claims were such that they did not deserve any serious consideration.

Deputy Foreign Secretary Gladwyn Jebb defended the Czechoslovak recommendations on April 18. He urged the enlargement of the Bratislava bridgehead and did not even consider the placement of the Crown of St. Stephen in the UN museum as a “crazy idea.” On April 20, William G. Hayter, the head of the Southern European Department responsible for this area, referred the transfer issue to bilateral negotiation. Dennis Allen decided the debate in favor of those who demanded that the Czechoslovak demands be reviewed by experts.

²⁵ Carlile Aylmer Macartney’s notes on the Czechoslovak recommendations and comments, April 5, 1946, PRO FO 371.59064 R 7011/7011/21.

In a second memorandum, on April 18, James Marjoribanks again rejected the Czechoslovak arguments. Czechoslovakia had already received everything under the armistice agreement from Hungary that it was entitled to and, therefore, it was unnecessary to send an Allied control staff to keep an eye on reparations. The transfer was not properly included in the peace treaty, and, because there were no Slovaks living in the Bratislava bridgehead area, its enlargement was not justified.

After a discussion with William Hayter, James Marjoribanks summarized the Foreign Office's ruling opinion, stating that the Czechoslovak demands could be presented to the CFM but that the British government would not support them. Gladwyn Jebb rose to the defense of the enlargement of the Bratislava bridgehead one more time, saying that this "terribly complex and bad border" should be adjusted in favor of "our Czech allies and against our Hungarian enemies."

Even though Jebb was the head of the British delegation at the London meeting of the Council of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Hayter's view prevailed: that instead of a "hasty" decision, they should wait until both parties presented their case at the Paris conference. The intervention of Philip B. Nichols, the British ambassador in Prague, who echoed the arguments of the Czechoslovak government, did not alter the Foreign Office position.

In the guidelines drafted on April 9 and May 8, 1946, for the British delegation in Paris representing the official position of the British government on Czechoslovak-Hungarian minority matters, W.S. Williams, the deputy chief of the Southern Department, and Christopher F.A. Warner, the Hungarian expert, essentially ignored the opinion of the officials participating in the peace negotiations or working in the Foreign Office Research Department. After discussing the decision to reestablish the Trianon borders, they stated: "The present Czechoslovak Government evidently fear the strength of Hungarian revisionism and are [sic!] determined to rid themselves of this minority. They propose to do so without agreeing to any frontier alterations in favor of Hungary." After presenting the diplomatic steps taken between December 1945 and March 1946, they drafted the following position paper concerning the newest claims of the Czechoslovak government:

(1) The extension of the Bratislava bridgehead. "If however, the Czechoslovak Government is determined to have it, they might consent to some minor rectification of the frontier at another point in exchange as an essential condition."

(2) The compulsory "*re-Slovakization*" of about 250,000 persons of Magyar extraction who would remain in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak Government states that the policy of giving special rights to minorities failed during the period between the two wars and they therefore propose to make certain persons, numbering about 250,000, conform to an educational and administrative process designed to return them to full Slovak nationality and outlook. It is the estimate of the Foreign Office Research Department that only 100,000 persons could fairly be deemed suitable for such a treatment. Great Britain has not proposed to include any clauses in the Peace Treaty to protect minorities. The Minority Treaties included in the Versailles settlements were not a success in the period between the wars, nor was the international machinery set up by the League effective in this respect. When the October 31, 1945 Hungarian peace preparatory note on the question of nationality²⁶ was considered in the FO it was assumed that after declaring the Vienna Award null and void, the persons living outside their national frontiers would receive the full nationality of their country of residence. The present peace treaty guarantees free speech, free use of the language and religion, but does not refer to Czech territory. The Czechoslovak Government therefore would have a completely free hand to make any 're-Slovakization' experiments it chose to make.

(3) *The compulsory deportation of over 200,000 Magyars.* Czechoslovakia, under the charter of the United Nations assumed the overriding obligations to encourage 'respect for human rights and to promote freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. The real number to be involved may be as high as 400,000 if all remaining Magyars are to be moved from Czechoslovakia. According to the views of the British and American Governments this was a matter that had to be settled by bilateral negotiations "between the two countries themselves." Great

²⁶ KÜMBÉO 99/res. Bé/1945, ÚMKL, in BARANYAI 1947a: 14-19.

Britain also stated that she “should be willing to recognize any frontier rectification which might be agreed upon between the two countries.” If the Czechoslovaks are determined to get rid of their Magyar populations they will eventually do so without reference to our (British) views and it would therefore be unnecessary to arouse the resentment of the Hungarian people by supporting such a scheme. It should moreover be borne in mind that once elected to the UNO, the Hungarians will be able to protest to the Security Council if they dislike the Czech treatment of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. ... The Russians have in general expressed views similar to the British ones. At the time of the Hungarian government delegation’s visit to Moscow, the Soviets told them that they were in favor of the granting of full minority rights to all Magyars left in Czechoslovakia by the Peace Settlement. They were non-committal on the suggestion for the cession to Hungary of a strip of territory with some 300,000 Magyar populations. Under these conditions Czechoslovakia should be advised that at the proper time it should present its claims to the Council of Foreign Ministers or at the peace conference and that these claims should be referred for study to an expert committee. The Foreign Office Recommended to the government that the extension of the Bratislava bridgehead might be granted particularly if there is American or Russian support and if a frontier rectification elsewhere in favor of Hungary is possible; the transfer of the Hungarian minority to Hungary should be left for bilateral negotiations between the parties concerned; that the measures of re-Slovakization proposed by the Czechoslovak Government are not matters for discussion in connection with the Hungarian peace treaty but while sympathizing with the Czechs’ feelings, we hope that nothing will be done which would be at variance with the principles of the United Nations Charter which binds all members to respect human rights and freedoms. We should on principle contest the Russian proposal ... that the Hungarian minority left in Czechoslovakia should receive minority rights.²⁷ (*Italics in original.*)

²⁷ Paris Meeting: Czechoslovak–Hungarian Minority Question, May 9–10, 1946, R. 7011/7011/.21, FO notes, PRO FO 371.59064.

The position taken by the Foreign Office faithfully reflects the beginnings of the joint policy of the three Great Powers in the matter of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. The exception was the British support for the principle of territorial exchange raised at the February 27, 1946, discussion between Auer and Slávik. The Czechoslovak government was given a free hand in "re-Slovakization" but while the British hoped that human rights and freedoms would be respected, this could not be expected from Stalin's Soviet Union.

When it became impossible for Hungary to accept the 200,000 Hungarians, as suggested by the Three Powers, the Americans, together with the British and the Soviets, referred the debate to the area of bilateral agreement, and the question finally did enter this narrow sphere. When discussing the Hungarian government delegation's visit to Moscow, we will see that the Soviets did not object to all of the Hungarians being resettled under the concept of "population exchange" but they had to preserve the principle of Three-Power decision-making.

The British rejected the guarantee of human rights. After the Moscow visit, it remained an open question whether the Soviet leaders had really promised the Hungarian governmental delegation to guarantee equal rights. This was the point on which a debate arose between the officials of the Foreign Office. Christopher F.A. Warner, the undersecretary of the Southern Department, recommended that the view denying the legitimacy of minority protection be made the official policy.

Macartney reacted violently: "When discussing in the Foreign Office the policy of H.M. Government towards Hungary I have repeatedly been informed that whatever might be the merits of the facts of any problem, our official policy was not to oppose the wishes of the USSR. It is now stated that in this, the one instance where it may suggest something which accords with humanity and with the principles of the Atlantic Charter, we should contest its wishes. Is it really too late and really quite futile to protest against the indecency of this proposal?"²⁸

Williams admitted in his response that all this sounded bad, but that the general feeling was that the "post-1918 minority agreements did little

²⁸ Macartney to Williams, May 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.59064.

good to the minority groups they are intended to protect and were a continuous source of international friction. This time it is hoped that the Human Rights clauses in the Peace Treaties coupled with the right of governments to appeal to the Security Council of the UNO if they feel their nationals in surrounding countries are being victimized, will provide a more satisfactory means of protecting minorities than the old minority treaty system.”²⁹

The Prague government – when it saw that the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs did not, in any meritorious way, discuss its recommendations – started new actions in order to gain the support of the Allied Powers. The Czechoslovak government submitted its request first to the ambassadors of the Great Powers in Prague and then, on April 25, 1946, to the CFM in Paris. It asked that the Hungarian question and its territorial demands vis-à-vis Germany be placed on the agenda.³⁰ Beneš, Masaryk, and Clementis emphasized that, first of all, they wished to have the pre-Munich borders confirmed and that there could be no discussion about them. Compared to their “transfer” request, they considered that getting the Bratislava bridgehead was of lesser importance.

On April 20, 1946, Beneš assured Maurice Dejean, the French ambassador in Prague, that he had received a “formal promise” from the British government of its support. In Paris, Jindřich Nosek advised the secretary-general of the Paris conference, Jacques Fouches-Duparc, that the Soviet Union had sided with them in the questions discussed.³¹ Dejean assured the Czechoslovak statesmen that “France’s position has been taken years ago and will conform to our obligations and also to our sympathies.”³² The secretary-general of the Paris conference, however, clarified the French position and advised the Czechoslovak ambassador that, on the basis of

²⁹ Williams to Macartney, June 11, 1946, PRO FO 371.59064.

³⁰ Jindřich Nosek, Czechoslovak Ambassador’s note to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, N/Yr, no. 212/duv. 46, April 25, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD.

³¹ Ambassador Dejean’s telegrams from Prague, nos. 573–574, April 19 and nos. 581–583, April 20, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD; Fouches-Duparc note to Couve de Murville, April 20, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD.

³² Ambassador Dejean’s telegrams from Prague, nos. 573–574, April 19, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD.

the Potsdam and Moscow procedural agreements, France had no right to participate in the Hungarian peace treaty preparations. Nosek asked that the French government provide support in conversations in the corridors outside the conference.³³

President Beneš endeavored to allay the American reservations. He tried to convince Steinhardt that, if they were to assure minority rights to the Hungarians, they would create a "state within the state." Because the German and Hungarian minorities opened the door to the Nazis in 1938–1939, they both had to be expelled. He argued that, as Hungary was transferring its German minority to Germany, the Hungarian minority from Czechoslovakia should take the place of these individuals and that, therefore, the claim of the Hungarian government that there would be no space available to receive the minority from Czechoslovakia was not made in good faith but was advanced solely for the purpose of maintaining a Hungarian bridgehead in Czechoslovakia. He indicated on the map that a Hungarian bridgehead in Slovakia might be as dangerous at some point in the future as was the German bridgehead in Bohemia at the outbreak of the last war.

Beneš related that, at the meeting of Nosek with Molotov in Paris, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs acquiesced to the transfer claim but added: "I must first find out how the Americans feel about it as without the Americans I can do nothing." Finally, the Czechoslovak president tried to gain the approval of his discussion partner by pointing out that the Soviets had received all of the credit in Czechoslovakia for the Potsdam decision authorizing the transfer of the German minority to Germany and expressed the hope that, if a favorable decision were arrived at in Paris authorizing the transfer of the Hungarian minority to Hungary, the decision would be conveyed to him immediately so that, this time, the US would at least share in the credit.³⁴

In spite of the Czechoslovak diplomatic activities, this question was not settled at the Paris conference of the CFM but only at the subsequent Paris conference.

³³ Fouques-Duparc note to Couve de Murville, April 20, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD.

³⁴ Steinhardt's telegram to Byrnes in Paris, no. 727, May 7, 1946, FRUS 1946/IV: 368–369.

PREPARATION OF THE ROMANIAN PEACE TREATY AND
THE MEMORANDUM OF THE HUNGARIAN MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS

The London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs focused on Hungarian and Romanian politics. Domestic politics in the two countries became subject to the withdrawal of Allied troops and to the settlement of territorial issues. Hungary seemed to gain some advantage from the November 4, 1945, elections and from the fact that all three Great Powers recognized the new government. Enlargement of the Groza government and the Hungarian political crisis in the spring of 1946, however, began to reduce the differences between the two countries as far as British and American views were concerned. Following the reestablishment of the Romanian constitutional system, British and American diplomacy saw no reason for keeping the Hungarian–Romanian border issue on the agenda.

On December 31, Vyshinsky, the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs, Averell Harriman, the American, and Archibald Clark Kerr, the British ambassador in Moscow, arrived in the Romanian capital. After a weeklong debate, the three Allied representatives agreed to the appointment of Emil Hațieganu, (Peasant Party) and Mihail Romniceanu (Liberal Party) as state secretaries. In a declaration on January 8, 1946, the Romanian Council of Ministers promised to hold parliamentary elections as soon as possible, to ensure the freedom of the elections, and to guarantee the rights of free speech, religion, and assembly. The following day, Groza gave additional verbal promises to the British and American ambassadors. In a memorandum of February 5, 1946, the British and American governments listed the written and oral promises made by the Romanian prime minister and, on this basis, conditionally recognized his government. The American secretary of state wished to get rid of the troublesome Romanian affair as soon as possible. Two months later, he justified this haste to President Truman, stating: “It is particularly desirable ... to resolve those pending problems that could affect the completion of the peace treaties.”³⁵ In this ambiguous way, then, the Great Powers resolved the problem of recognizing the Romanian government.

³⁵ Byrnes’s memorandum to Truman, April 17, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 588. For the details of the Transylvania question, see FÜLÖP 1988a.

The entry of representatives of the historic parties into the government placed the Transylvania problem once again at the centre of political debate. Groza's ideas were in conflict not only with the king, with the National Peasant Party, and with the Liberal Party, but also with the foreign policy ideas of Tătărescu, who, in the new situation, became a balance wheel in domestic policies and was given the portfolio of finance in addition to his previous governmental position. Tătărescu viewed Groza's ideas about Transylvania and about Budapest–Bucharest cooperation with grave misgivings.

Contrary to the prime minister's intent, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs assembled documentation about the Romanian–Hungarian border issue by the end of 1945, which was as elaborate as that prepared for the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. When Groza objected, Vasile Stoica, the secretary-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told him that they had to be prepared for all eventualities, namely, for the inability of the Romanian government to come to an agreement with Hungary.³⁶ The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reverted to the traditional Romanian position on the border question and adapted it to the international conditions prevailing at the beginning of 1946.

At the time of his visit to Bucharest, Vyshinsky promised Tătărescu that the January 1, 1938, borders would be reestablished. The Romanians hoped that the Soviet Union would not be the only Great Power supporting the annexation of Transylvania to Romania. They assumed that they could regain the esteem of the British and Americans and that the United States and Great Britain would not oppose the Soviet position. In case territorial concessions were demanded from Romania, Tătărescu, similarly to Czechoslovakia, threatened the mass expulsion of Hungarians.³⁷

On February 8, 1946, the Romanian minister of foreign affairs told the French minister in Bucharest that he (Tătărescu) would be in charge of the Romanian delegation at the Paris conference and also hinted that he was aware of the views that Georges Bidault had represented at the London

³⁶ Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram no. 420, December 20, 1945, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 26, MAE AD.

³⁷ Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram no. 113, January 16, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 26, MAE AD.

conference concerning the Transylvanian border issue. Tătărescu expressed his appreciation for the efforts of French diplomacy to reestablish harmony between the Soviet Union and the Anglo-Saxon powers, but hoped that Bidault realized the tremendous disappointment it would cause to France's Romanian friends if he did not support the complete restoration of the Transylvanian borders. It was inconceivable to Romanian public opinion that the Fourth Republic would represent a position contrary to the one consistently supported by the Third Republic. Paul-Boncour tried to reassure the Romanian minister of foreign affairs that this was not the French position and that Tătărescu could easily convince himself of this when he met the French minister of foreign affairs in Paris.³⁸

When Adrian Holman, the British political representative, made his introductory visit on March 25, 1946, the Romanian minister of foreign affairs tried to convince him that while he was anti-Communist, the only realistic policy was close cooperation with the Soviet Union. However, Romania was not Slavic but Latin, and hence her ties were toward the West and not the East. Despite the difficulties, they wished to maintain the friendliest relationship with Great Britain. Tătărescu assured Holman that "the Soviet Union categorically favored the return of all of Transylvania to Romania" and that this found great favor in Romanian public opinion and increased the standing of the Communists, particularly because many were doubtful about the intentions of Great Britain and of the United States. The minister of foreign affairs considered it regrettable that Great Britain did not respond to this and did not counterbalance the anti-British propaganda of the Communists. Tătărescu claimed that, according to his information, America and, to a lesser degree, Great Britain had assured the Hungarian government in some manner that the question had to be examined carefully on an ethnic basis, and the resolution of the problem would require a compromise. The Romanian minister of foreign affairs added that after the peace treaty was signed, the number of Soviet troops would be gradually reduced.³⁹

³⁸ Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 148–149, February 8, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 26, MAE AD.

³⁹ Holman's telegram to the Department of State (copy), March 25, 1946, 871.000/3-2546, National Archives.

While Tătărescu tried to convince the French and British representatives that they could reestablish their political influence in Romania only by the restoration of the prewar borders of Transylvania, the Romanian prime minister sent messages to Budapest, early in 1946, endeavoring to change the negative Hungarian attitude toward bilateral discussions. On January 15, 1946, Groza asked Prime Minister Tildy, through Ministerial Councillor Dezső Hirsch, not to let himself be influenced by the reactionaries and to refrain from allowing them to resume the Transylvania debate, because this could lead to a catastrophe. Groza said that was currently engaged in a life-and-death struggle, and in this, Marshal Stalin was entirely on his side. He was serious in proposing a customs union and thus replacing the economically nonviable small countries with a strong economic bloc reaching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.⁴⁰ The Romanian prime minister complained at the end of January to an old Transylvanian acquaintance that his policy proclaiming Romanian–Hungarian friendship had raised no echo in Hungary and that he was sending a message to the appropriate circles in Budapest that he was continuing to fight for his old ideas. He added that revisionist policies would reactivate the Little Entente.⁴¹ In March 1946, Groza summarized his feelings about Transylvania to the Romanian envoys leaving for their posts abroad. He said: “In discussing the Hungarian question they should never refer to historic rights because these were always debatable and it can never be decided whether the Hungarian position or the theory of Daco-Roman continuity was correct. He had one claim on Transylvania, namely that he had given full equal rights to the Hungarians in Transylvania and that he would defend this equality in the future so that the significance of borders would cease.”⁴²

In the spring of 1946, the views of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs prevailed in the intra-governmental debate. Early that year, Tătărescu submitted five memoranda to the representative of the Soviet government

⁴⁰ Dezső Hirsch report, January 24, 1946, no. 294/e1946, ÚMKL.

⁴¹ Zoltán Keresztes report from Bucharest on Romanian preparations for peace, February 4, 1946, KÜM BéO 21/ol–1946, ÚMKL.

⁴² Councillor Sándor Nékám's report from Bucharest, March 18, 1946, KÜM BéO 48/pol. 1946, ÚMKL, quoted in BALOGH 1987: 188.

regarding the Romanian–Hungarian question, focusing on Romania’s military and economic contributions in the war against Germany and Hungary, on the Transylvania question, on the Romanian–Hungarian border, on Romania’s demands for reparations from Hungary, and on the clauses to be included in the Hungarian peace treaty. The Romanian government asked that the peace treaty confirm the Trianon border because, after the armistice agreement was signed, Romania had fought on the side of the Allies. Article 19 of the Hungarian armistice agreement, signed in Moscow on January 20, 1945, declared the Vienna Award null and void and also mandated that Hungarian troops withdraw behind the borders of December 31, 1937. Romanian administration was then reestablished in North Transylvania. The correctness of the Trianon settlement was proven by the fact that, between the two wars, Transylvania showed significant progress in all areas, as well as by the Romanian people’s all-embracing and tolerant policy toward the other nationalities. After the return of North Transylvania, this policy was strengthened even more.⁴³

The English translation of the Romanian memorandum was sent to London by the vessel *Transylvania* but was not delivered to the British and American deputy secretaries of state. Tătărescu did not wish for the Romanian government to initiate the raising of the territorial question.

In fact, all he knew about the debates of the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs came from Moscow. The Romanian minister of foreign affairs wished to hold on to the Soviet promises he had received from the Soviet chairman of the Bucharest ACC. He therefore withheld the distribution of the Romanian memorandum, wanting to see how the deputy ministers’ conference developed. Despite the urging of the Romanian envoy in London, Tătărescu did not wish to initiate hostilities with Hungary because he believed that “in spite of the repeated failure of Groza’s friendly policies vis-à-vis Hungary this policy had Moscow’s support stronger now than before.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Jean Paul-Boncour’s telegram nos. 36–37, March 25, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 28, MAE AD.

⁴⁴ Jean Paul-Boncour’s telegram from Bucharest, no. 42, March 27, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 28, MAE AD.

From the beginning of the peace preparatory process, Kertész believed that the question of changing the Hungarian–Romanian border depended entirely on the Great Powers and therefore did not favor putting forward any Hungarian territorial demands. In its note to the three Great Powers on January 25, 1946, the Hungarian government asked that an expert committee be sent to address all the problems related to Hungary in a comprehensive, expert, and objective fashion. The memorandum used the procedural mistakes of the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War I as justification for why excessive claims against Hungary were met.⁴⁵ Alvary Gascoigne, the British political representative in Budapest, stated in his letter of transmittal of the Hungarian memorandum that it covered the same ground and contained the usual arguments about the injustice of the Trianon treaty. Gascoigne told the Hungarian diplomat who had handed him the memorandum that the Allied Powers would have all matters concerning Hungary investigated by experts and that it was not desirable for Hungary to raise the issue under the present conditions. Professor Macartney, however, concluded: “There is quite a lot of sound sense in the Hungarian memo, although it, of course, contains the Hungarian point of view. ... It would surely only be fair to ensure that the Hungarians have some opportunity to state their case at one stage or another of the drafting of the Treaty.”⁴⁶

In its memorandum of February 1, 1946, the Hungarian government advised the representatives of the three Great Powers of its general views about the peace negotiations: coordination of the territorial and nationality issues, ensuring economic and cultural cooperation, and eliminating the factors causing international political and social antagonisms.⁴⁷ The memorandum – which aimed at the honest and institutional dismantling of the conflicts built up over the past 100 years by nationalism and at the creation of healthy economic conditions – and the other peace preparatory documents were characterized by Pushkin as bearing the stamp of the

⁴⁵ BARANYAI 1947a: 39–47; KÜM, 20/res. Be–1946, ÜMKL, quoted in BALOGH 1988: 45.

⁴⁶ Gascoigne’s report no. 62, February 2, 1946, R/2608/2608/21 and Macartney’s note, February 25, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038.

⁴⁷ BARANYAI 1947a: 48–51, Memorandum, KÜM, 30/res. Bé. 1946; KERTESZ 1953a: 177.

Horthy system and as being similar to documents sent out by that regime. Consequently, he refused to consider them. The Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party were also displeased with the peace preparatory activities. Sándor Szalai accused Kertész of nationalism and considered his activities useless and harmful.⁴⁸ Kertész rejected this criticism. However, the left-wing parties managed to force Gyöngyösi to submit the territorial memorandum to an interparty conference. He also had to refrain from sending Kertész to London, where the deputy ministers of foreign affairs of the Great Powers were preparing the peace treaty plans.⁴⁹

The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared the territorial memorandum, based on indications of a change in the Soviet position. In the wake of encouragement from Voroshilov and Pushkin, prior to the Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations, other promises were also made.⁵⁰ Yet there were contrary warnings from the Great Powers that merely stated the facts. Kertész received word from Paris that “the French will not support us at the peace negotiations if we were to strive in any way for changes in the Trianon borders. Not because they did not see the correctness of our position, but because they do not wish to confront any Balkan country on our behalf. There may be some small chance relative to the Transylvania question, such as raising the possibility of autonomy.”⁵¹ Freeman Matthews, director of the Office of European Affairs in the State Department, said only that regarding the probable Hungarian peace clauses, “this time the Hungarian Government will have every opportunity to express its views about the peace treaty clauses and the Trianon process will not be repeated.

⁴⁸ KERTESZ 1953a: 178; *Népszava*, February 24, March 3, 10, 17 and 24, 1946.

⁴⁹ KERTESZ 1984: 98, 184; Pál Marik's letter to István Kertész, January 28, 1946, KÜM BéO 625/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁰ KERTESZ 1984: 96, 281; 1983: 208. According to Schoenfeld's telegram no. 350 of February 18, 1946, Gyula Dessewffy, the editor of the Smallholder's Party's paper *Kis Újság*, claimed that “Voroshilov told some government officials that the Soviet Government was prepared to support Hungary's revisionist demands in Transylvania provided that Hungary's economic and general policies allow the conclusion that it would be in the interests of the Soviet Union to strengthen its neighbor.” See also Schoenfeld's telegram from Budapest, no. 486, March 9, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 272.

⁵¹ Dénes Nemestóthy's letter to Kertész, February 4, 1946, KÜM BéO 5/biz, ÚMKL.

This was specified in the letter Secretary of State Byrnes wrote to the French Government concerning the peace treaties.”⁵²

After all this, in a draft note, the Peace Preparatory Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended the following:

With the satisfactory solution of the problem of Transylvania, by settling equitably the political and economic claims of Hungary and Romania, this territory could form a connecting link, rather than a dividing line, between the two states. In any case the solution must be such that any division of the mountainous region of Transylvania lying between the areas of the original settlement of these two neighboring nations, both of which have populations of about the same size, eleven to twelve million Hungarians and thirteen to fourteen million Romanians of whom the greater part inhabit the Great Plain, should be affected in such a manner that it should complete most advantageously the economic systems of both countries, and that, from a national point of view, it should create a state of equilibrium.⁵³

This territorial draft note, approved by him, was submitted to the Inter-Party Conference, which convened at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on March 6, 1946, at the very peak of the Hungarian political crisis and a day after the formation of the Left-Wing Bloc. Gyöngyösi declared: “We have not received any invitation from the Great Powers to engage in direct Hungarian–Romanian negotiations.” Regarding the probable reaction of the Great Powers to the Hungarian territorial memorandum, he stated that he had received instructions to present his position and was therefore obliged to do so. The Soviet Union, a dominant factor in this area and a neighbor to all the concerned countries, would probably be indifferent toward a territorial demand vis-à-vis the Romanians. When, at least two months earlier, he raised this question with the Budapest representative of

⁵² Report of Aladár Szegedy-Maszák from Washington, January 14, 1946, KÜM BéO 2/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵³ “Memorandum to the Three Great Powers on the Subject of Aligning the Nationality and Territorial Matters,” February 20, 1946, KÜM BéO 40/Bé. res., ÚMKL, quoted in KERTESZ 1953a: 179.

the Soviet Union, it caused no concern. Since that time, the question had not been raised and it was possible that, because of the deterioration of the Soviet–Hungarian relationship, there had been a change in the Soviet position. Gyöngyösi also stated: “We were asked by the Soviet Union as well to state our position and it would be very odd if the Hungarian Government would not state its position when invited to do so. ... Our neighbors have all stated their position, namely to maintain the Trianon borders. This makes the position of our representatives abroad impossible, because in the absence of an official Hungarian position, they do not know what to represent. We must place a definite and clear position before the world.” Gyöngyösi’s hopes were not realized because the left-wing parties opposed the presentation of the territorial memorandum to the Great Powers. In view of the fact that the Paris conference was scheduled for May 1, Kertész considered the dispatch of the memorandum to be urgent. He indicated that

It would be best if the borders were to become meaningless. As long, however, as there were borders and a large number of Hungarians were living beyond these borders, it was our obligation to look after the economic, cultural, and human rights issues of the Hungarian minority. If our minorities had been treated fairly in the past the importance of the territorial issues would have decreased to a large extent. ... We must point out honestly that true peace will not come as long as hundreds of thousands of Hungarians can be oppressed or expelled. They don’t grant Hungary even a minimal economic survival ... the least we can do is to present to the Great Powers our difficulties that ensued from the Trianon settlement and leave the solution to them. It is critical for the future of Hungarian democracy that we do this.⁵⁴

In spite of Kertész’s arguments and Gyöngyösi’s threat of resignation, on March 23, the coalition parties suspended any further work on the territorial memorandum. Groza’s concerns were thus unfounded. The ideas of the British, American, and French about territorial adjustments, dropped at

⁵⁴ Memorandum of Kertész, March 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 51/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL, quoted in KERTÉSZ 1953a: 178–179; BALOGH 1988: 141–142.

precisely this time, were not derived from the Hungarian government's peace preparatory diplomacy because, until the end of April 1946, the territorial demands were not even mentioned to the CFM. Hungarian preparations for peace came to a dead stop while the question of the Romanian–Hungarian border reached a critical point in London.

CHANGE IN THE POSITION OF THE
GREAT POWERS ON THE QUESTION
OF TRANSYLVANIA'S BORDERS

The need for a discussion of the Balkan peace treaty drafts was raised in London at the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs in February 1946. James Marjoribanks and John C. Campbell, the Balkan experts of the British and American delegations, brought their views on the Romanian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian territorial questions into harmony on February 26, 1946. Concerning the Transylvania question, Campbell concluded that the State Department's position was somewhat modified from what it had been since the question was first raised at Lancaster House (September 20, 1945). He admitted that the American proposal regarding the modification of the Trianon border in Hungary's favor could be explained by public opinion pressure that followed the announcement that the Soviet Union had returned Transylvania's administration unilaterally to Romania in March 1945. At that time, the Department of State maintained its position vis-à-vis the press by stating that the step taken by the Soviet Union was not a regular transfer of territory but a simple administrative decision and that the final decision was postponed until the ratification of the peace agreement. Marjoribanks expressed his willingness to discuss the matter but doubted whether a border adjustment in Hungary's favor was acceptable. Campbell indicated that his delegation came to the same conclusion. A. Russell, the Hungarian expert in the Foreign Office, was pleased to comment on this: "The change in the American attitude in the Transylvania question is interesting and could be useful when the time comes to debate the issue. So far, it has seemed that we would have to mediate between the Americans and

the Russians even though we are committed to support the Americans; we will need America's full support for the peace treaties."⁵⁵

Fedor Gusev, the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs, was ready at the end of February to present his delegation's Romanian peace treaty plan. The Foreign Office, therefore, urgently elaborated the tactics to be followed in the debate on the Transylvania question. The British government wished, first of all, to clarify the precise Soviet–Romanian border line. At the end of the war, Soviet troops had occupied the islands controlling the mouth of the Danube. According to the June 28, 1940, Soviet–Romanian agreement, these islands belonged to Romania. The British undersecretary of state wished to obtain a description of the border and a map from the Soviet delegation that would prove that they did not wish to deviate from the pre-1918 borders. On February 28, 1946, the Foreign Office examined the Transylvania question in this context. It concluded:

Since September 1945 our attitude in this matter has been somewhat modified in favor of retaining the Trianon frontier intact. Feeling among Hungarians, Romanians seems to be developing towards a solution of the Transylvania question on a basis of autonomy rather than frontier rectification. All plans for minor frontier adjustments seem to cut across the railway line running North–South just inside Romanian territory, the unbroken operation of which is essential to the economic life of the area. More extensive alterations would be unjustifiable on ethnic grounds. It would seem that the action of the Soviet Union in handing back, *de iure* administration of Transylvania to the Romanian Government while leaving *de facto* control largely in the hands of the local Hungarian Communists presents probably the best immediate solution to Transylvania's political problem. In any case, it is unlikely that we shall be able to persuade the Soviet Union to alter the settlement they have already made. Since the economic prosperity of Transylvania depends entirely on the satisfactory relations with both Romania and Hungary the Russian policy of lowering trade barriers between the two countries may present a long-term solution

⁵⁵ Marjoribanks notes of February 26, 1946, and Russell notes of February 28, Reconstruction, PRO FO 371.57154 U 3137.

to a problem which, given Russia's preponderance in this area, should be viewed more in the economic than political light. (On this basis) we have now informed the United States delegation that we would not oppose their raising the question of the frontier, if they see fit, but that we are not convinced that any alteration of the existing frontier between Romania and Hungary is in fact desirable.⁵⁶

On February 26, 1946, the king of Romania raised the question of maintaining the Transylvania frontier with John H. Le Rougetel, the British political representative. On the following day, February 27, he addressed six questions to Burton Y. Berry, the American political representative: (1) Does the US expect to continue to participate equally in the carrying out of succeeding steps required to give full effect to the Moscow decision concerning Romania? (2) Is it the point of view of the United States government that the Soviet troops in Romania will depart after the ratification of the Romanian peace treaty? (3) Certain members of the Romanian government make it understood that the failure of the Groza government to be reelected will have serious consequences in Romania. Is this the view of the US government, or is it the view that the three Allied Powers will accept whatever government results from the expression of the will of the people at the election? (4) Some ministers pretend that the US and UK wish to redraw the frontier line between Romania and Hungary, whereas the Soviet authorities wish to retain the present frontier. As the present frontier was established by the Anglo-Americans after the First World War, it is important for Anglo-American prestige in Romania as well as for the Romanians themselves that the frontier be retained. (5) Does the US government expect to occupy itself at all after the peace treaty with the economic situation in Romania? (6) Can it be expected that after the signing of the peace treaty, the US will seek to establish commercial relations with Romania?⁵⁷

In a telegram on March 6, 1946, Berry advised the secretary of state that, in December 1945,

⁵⁶ Summary of the territorial arrangements in the Romanian peace treaty, February 28, 1946, PRO FO 371.57153 U 2349/69/70, referred to by BALOGH 1988: 578–579.

⁵⁷ Berry's telegram no. 246, February 28, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 578–579.

Soviet officials have informed Rumanians that the Americans desire to alter the Transylvanian frontier in favor of Hungary. In repeating the information Groza Government officials hammer home the point that the Soviet Government is the defender of Rumania against a projected Anglo-American aggression. Moreover, they have reminded the Rumanians that the Soviet Government, during the armistice negotiations, desired to return the whole of Northern Transylvania unequivocally to Rumania, but was prevented from so doing by the insistence of Mr. Churchill that the final settlement be held over for the Peace Conference. Marshal of the Court Negel, in a recent conversation with me, stressed the importance of the subject, saying that the Rumanian peasant was unimpressed by the fact that six ciphers have been added to the national budget because of Soviet demands, but the same peasant will be profoundly impressed by the moving of a frontier post a few kilometers. The Marshal added that the discussions in London were being represented in Rumania as a tug of war between the Anglo-Americans and the Soviets, with the Soviets pulling on the Rumanian side. He said that the story of the American proposal is reacting among Rumanians of all political parties to the advantage of the Soviet Government and the Rumanian Communist Party. Moreover, if the Americans maintain their attitude in discussing the treaty terms with Rumanian officials, and the discussion precedes the Rumanian elections, the Americans will be presenting an electoral victory to the Communist-backed Groza government. After giving this subject very careful consideration, it is my belief that (1) the Soviet authorities have consistently sought, and will continue to seek, to confirm the present frontier between Rumania and Hungary; (2) this attitude is increasing the prestige in Rumania of the Soviet Government; (3) our suggestion to make minor rectifications in the frontier on ethnic grounds touches all Rumanians on a very sensitive spot and will cause our prestige to diminish if our pressure is maintained; and (4) the Hungarians, in view of the presence of heavy concentrated groups deep in Rumania, will likely be as dissatisfied as the Rumanians with our efforts if we press to establish the principle of rectification of the frontier for ethnic reasons and then apply the principle only within a few kilometers of the present frontier. I do suggest that consideration be given to the thought that the solution

of the problem of the alteration of the Transylvanian frontier be sought within the framework of the UNO, rather than at the Peace Conference.⁵⁸

In response to King Michael's questions, the American secretary of state declared:

I feel views of this Government as to desirability of concerted Soviet, US and UK policy and action and our wish to see established democratic Governments truly representative of will of people expressed through free elections have been so frequently stated as to make reiteration unnecessary. The same can be said for position this Government that rehabilitation of economy of those nations which have suffered as result of war and establishment of normal commercial relations throughout world are cornerstones of stable peace. As indicated my address February 28, 1946 Great Powers have no right to keep troops in territories of other sovereign states without their approval and consent freely given and must not unduly prolong making of peace nor continue to impose troops upon small and impoverished states. Concerning Rumanian–Hungarian frontier it will be recalled that that in negotiations preceding signature of the Rumanian armistice US Government, in line with its general belief that all territorial questions should be postponed until final peace settlement, took position that matter of Rumanian–Hungarian frontier should be thus deferred. While we do not believe that any useful purpose will be served by hypothetical discussion at present of matters to be taken up in connection with peace treaties, it may be stated that US Government will approach each question of this nature at appropriate time with utmost sympathy toward wishes of the inhabitants of area involved and with most careful attention to ethnographic, economic and political aspects of problem.⁵⁹

In his telegram on March 9, 1946, Schoenfeld, the American diplomatic representative in Budapest, based on information received, considered that:

⁵⁸ Berry's telegram no. 271, March 6, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 579–581; BALOGH 1988: 146.

⁵⁹ Byrnes's telegram no. 148, March 8, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 581.

From information available here it is not altogether certain Soviets would refuse the Hungarians support for rectification Transylvanian frontier. There is reason to believe USSR is dangling the carrot of revision before Hungarians to obtain economic concessions. It may be that if our feeling that the Transylvanian frontier should be redrawn somewhat in favor of Hungarians became public knowledge, it might have some effect on short-term political situation in Rumania but apparently this damage has already been done if the King's views expressed to British are based on Rumanian public opinion. It seems to me we should strive for long range objective of removing as many frontier injustices in Central Europe as possible as occasions for so doing arise. By throwing problem in lap of UNO, we in effect turn our backs on an unsolved problem though I can readily understand Berry's point of view under pressure of current events. In considering what we might gain by advocating or participating in a revision of Transylvanian frontier following points seem to be pertinent: (1) Do we not thereby reinforce our belief in the principle that frontiers are not static and that injustices should be corrected? (2) If minimum Hungarian claims are satisfied do we not remove one more of reasons why the Balkans have been consistent trouble spot and (3) as a practical present day fact is it not more important for us to consider the effect of a frontier revision on Hungarian internal politics than on Rumanian internal politics inasmuch as Hungary is still a twilight zone in respect to Soviet expansion whereas the shadows are falling on Rumania are already of deeper hue.⁶⁰

At the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Soviet delegation recommended on March 11, regarding the Romanian peace treaty draft, and on March 27, regarding the Hungarian one, that the second Vienna Award be declared null and void and that the whole of Transylvania be assigned to Romania. They did not mention Romania's contribution to the war against Germany. While the Foreign Office considered this proposal even worse than that of September 1945, the British delegation raised no serious objections but made its agreement to the reestablishment of the

⁶⁰ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 486, March 9, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 272-273.

Trianon frontier conditional on the settlement of all frontiers, including the Romanian borders, at the peace conference. Dunn, the leader of the American delegation, aware of the Soviet position, on March 19, 1946, modified the position of the Department of State on the Hungarian–Romanian frontier issue, as announced on September 20, 1945. In his summary, the American deputy secretary of state reminded the readers that:

Our proposal last September was that Rumanian–Hungarian frontier shall be generally that of 1938 but ethnic situation of Transylvania shall be examined to determine whether by awarding small section to Hungary number of persons under alien rule would be substantially reduced. British and French supported this general approach then but British now seem less enthusiastic. No available substantiation of reports from Budapest that Russians may be disposed to revision. Gusev flatly stated Mar 11 Soviet Government believed all Transylvania should go to Romania. Soviet position appears fixed. Case for rectification of boundary not sufficiently clear to warrant making major issue of it. Available statistics indicate that no revision apart from exchange of population would return to Hungary significant number of Hungarians without transferring to Hungarian rule large number of Rumanians. Unlikely that reduction of those under alien rule would be as much as 100,000. This would represent no solution minority problem. Transylvanian question cannot be solved by trimming frontier. Although some satisfaction of well-founded Hungarian claims would benefit democratic Hungarian forces psychologically, it is doubtful that small rectification would contribute much to political stability in this region. Even if we willing to incur Rumanian resentment, our sponsorship rectification could hardly satisfy Hungarians. Also a minor change might aggravate situation of remaining Hungarians in Rumania. Therefore it may not be desirable politically to attempt by means of present treaties alteration these boundaries. But we would want to oppose provisions which preclude late adjustment by other means. If in general discussions this question Russians evince complete disinclination to study on its merits any proposal for revision, it might be well seek solution along lines of following amended text Article VII Soviet draft Rumanian treaty. The decisions of Vienna award

of Aug 30, 1940 are declared null and void without prejudice however to direct negotiations between Governments Rumania and Hungary looking toward an adjustment of the frontier which would substantially reduce the number of persons living under alien rule.⁶¹

On April 5, 1946, Byrnes approved Dunn's position, and this was submitted officially to the Conference of the Deputy Ministers on April 10.

Adrian Holman, the British minister in Bucharest, recommended on April 2, 1946, that the rumors that the Soviet Union was the "real defender" of Transylvania's belonging to Romania should be counterbalanced. W.S. Williams, the Deputy Chief of the Foreign Office's Southern European Department, referring to the communications from King Michael on February 26 and Tătărescu on March 25, did not consider that it would be desirable to make any pronouncement regarding one particular article of the respective treaty before a decision on the terms of the treaty as a whole had been taken. He only wished to inform the king of Romania that the decision was in the hands of the CFM, that they were fully aware of the Romanian views, and that they would give full consideration to them. In Holman's proposal, the strengthening of Article 19 of the armistice agreement was indicated. Williams pointed out that it was the interpretation of this article that was important from the Romanian perspective. They would like to know whether they would get all of Transylvania back or only a part of it. In a note on April 4, Lord Hood, the head of the Peace Preparatory Section, presented the draft proposal of the American delegation according to which the Trianon frontier would be restored, subject to any modification that might be agreed upon by Hungary and Romania. Sir Gladwyn Jebb, on April 6, reported the instructions of his American colleague, namely that he would raise the Transylvania question at the next session of the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Dunn interpreted the British policy to mean that the British delegation wished to refrain from discussing the Transylvania question until they had received final assurance

⁶¹ Byrnes's telegram from Washington, no. 315, April 5, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 587-588, and note of James Marjoribanks, March 9, 1946. Reconstruction Department U 2677/69/70, PRO FO 371. 59024.

from the Soviets about where Romania's other frontiers would be drawn. The American deputy secretary of state was agreeable to the British point of view that endeavored to force the Soviets to make a clear stand but still felt that Transylvania could be debated before a satisfactory answer was obtained on the other issues. Jebb ultimately agreed that the Transylvania question could not be indefinitely delayed, particularly since he had just obtained a 1941 Soviet map that showed the Soviet–Romanian border precisely at the mouth of the Danube. The British undersecretary of state had more problems with the answer that the Foreign Office prepared for the American proposal.

According to Jebb, the frontier, of course, had to remain unless it was changed by mutual agreement between Romania and Hungary, and that it would probably remain the Trianon frontier since the Romanians were unlikely to give anything away. “Consequently, the entire matter is just one of face-saving though I (Jebb) don’t know whose face is going to be saved except if we find some researcher in Mr Pazvolsky’s office who would be willing to clear this all up. I assume therefore that my best response would be that I have no particular objection to the American proposal assuming that my other colleagues agree.”

In order to pacify the king of Romania, Jebb recommended the formula that no difficulty should be raised by Great Britain regarding the border between Hungary and Romania, which would remain largely the Trianon one, but that Britain would be very watchful to make sure that all of Romania’s borders were precisely determined. The British endeavored to make sure that no attempt was made to change the 1940 borders to Romania’s disadvantage. The leaders of the Southern European Division of the Foreign Office agreed with this position, but only objected to the word “largely” saying that it would hardly be a comfort to the king. Therefore, they recommended that “the King be told outright that it was not their intention to urge a revision of the border except those on which Hungary and Romania agreed.”

On the basis of all the above, Bevin notified Holman in a telegram on April 17, 1946, that at the London tripartite discussions, the question of the Transylvania frontier had not been settled, but that “at the same time, we have no reason to doubt that it will really be the Trianon frontier that will

be reestablished.” The British foreign secretary did not consider it appropriate to issue a declaration or to share their position on the Transylvania frontiers with members of the Groza government as long as the precise line of Romania’s other frontiers was not determined. Bevin instructed his representative in Bucharest to inform the king of Romania that it was not their intent to propose or support any change in the Trianon borders, although they would naturally “be ready to recognize any border adjustment arrived at by mutual agreement between Romania and Hungary.”⁶²

At the April 16, 1946, session of the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the representatives of the three Great Powers decided that the article prescribing the reestablishment of the January 1, 1938, Romanian–Hungarian borders be included in the draft peace treaties. They did not agree, however, to include a Soviet proposal (“and thus the whole of Transylvania is returned to the territory of Romania”) and an American amending proposal (“without prejudice however to direct negotiations between the Governments of Rumania and Hungary looking toward an adjustment of the frontier which would substantially reduce the number of persons living under alien rule”).⁶³ Because the Soviet proposal repeated an article that had already been accepted, albeit in a slightly different version, the first session of the CFM in Paris (April 25 – May 16, 1946) could make a decision only on the American proposal raising the possibility of a bilateral agreement.

THE MOSCOW VISIT OF THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT DELEGATION AND THE SEBESTYÉN MISSION

On March 13, 1946, István Kertész, the head of the Peace Preparatory Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declared that his peace preparation activities were at an end because the Coalition Parties could not agree on the

⁶² Notes of Williams, April 4, 1946, Lord Hood, April 4, Jebb April 6, Williams April 9, and Jebb April 13. Also Bevin’s telegram to Bucharest, no. 158, April 17, 1946, PRO FO 371.49145 R 5227/257/37.

⁶³ Série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 138, MAE AD.

goals to be pursued at the peace conference. In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy on April 5, he stated that since February 1 they had been unable to even submit a memorandum, as a result of which "we would be unable to point out the basic claims for a decent life of the Hungarian people in Transylvania."⁶⁴ After he sent the letter offering his resignation, he learned from Gyöngyösi that the situation was not hopeless and that a Hungarian government delegation was going to Moscow shortly at the invitation of the Soviet Union.⁶⁵ By the beginning of April, the position of the left-wing parties also began to change, and they decided that Soviet assistance should be sought in solving the Transylvania question. Rákosi informed the leaders of the Smallholder's Party that, relying on Soviet information, a territorial claim for between 4,000 and 10,000 km² could be made and that in this case some assistance could be counted upon.⁶⁶

Prior to his departure for Moscow, Gyöngyösi asked that a plan for the modification of the Romanian–Hungarian territorial settlement be prepared that would return a part of the Parts (Partium) to Hungary. Even though the majority of the Hungarians lived in the Székely (Szekler) Counties, he considered the reattachment of that area hopeless. The Peace Preparatory Department received a plan from the Államtudományi Intézet (Political Science Institute) on April 6, 1946. Prepared three days earlier by Imre Jakabffy, it delineated, as a compromise, a Hungarian–Romanian border that would assure the future of the Hungarians without offending the legitimate interests of the Romanians. "Our territorial demands should be such that there would be room for all one of the Hungarians in Romania, in an area adjacent to Hungary. This could be no other than the territory between Máramaros (Maramureş) and Temesvár (Timiş) Counties, which we call the Partium." In this area of 22,055 km², 1,554,788 people lived in 1930. According to Jakabffy, this solution would include the possibility that the Hungarian–Romanian territorial dispute could be resolved by a population exchange.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Kertész's letter to Ferenc Nagy, April 5, 1945, KÜM BÉO 65/res. Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁶⁵ KERTESZ 1953a: 180.

⁶⁶ NAGY 1948: 146.

⁶⁷ Jakabffy's plan for the Hungarian–Romanian border with two maps, April 3, 1946, KÜM BÉO 925/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

On the evening before his departure for Moscow, on April 8, 1946, Gyöngyösi summoned Kertész and told him that at a conference with Zoltán Tildy, the president of the republic, it was felt that the territorial demands outlined in the proposal were excessive and unrealistic because, according to them, 865,000 Romanians would be incorporated into Hungary and only 495,000 Hungarians would be transferred.⁶⁸ Instead, it was decided at the meeting with Tildy that Gyöngyösi should take a plan that would only allow the transfer of Hungarians living along the present border. In order to implement this demand, Kertész and the experts at the Teleki Institute developed the so-called "Smaller Partium territorial transfer" plan during the night of April 8.⁶⁹ This envisaged the return to Hungary of 11,800 km², with 442,000 Hungarians and 421,000 Romanians. The participants at the meeting with Tildy empowered Gyöngyösi to present the 22,000 km² Partium plan as a back-up proposal. Kertész did not believe that presenting two plans in Moscow was wise but, evidently, on the basis of Rákosi's proposal for a 4,000 to 10,000 km² territorial adjustment, the Hungarian coalition parties accepted the above dual proposal.

The Hungarian government delegation was in Moscow from April 9 to April 18, 1946. Three summaries survived of the meetings: one by Gyöngyösi in English, one report by Ferenc Kemény submitted to the American minister in Budapest, and a Russian one. On April 9, Gyöngyösi, using maps, explained the plans to Molotov. The first proposal suggested the return of 11,800 km² and 967,000 inhabitants to Hungary. According to Gyöngyösi, this would entail a revision of the border along ethnic lines, but it had the disadvantage that the majority of the Hungarians would remain in Romania, while many Romanians would be transferred to Hungary. The Hungarian minister then submitted his second proposal, according to which approximately the same number of Hungarians would remain in Romania as the

⁶⁸ According to the 1930 Romanian mother tongue statistics. At the Council of Ministers' meeting no. 100, on April 8, 1946, just prior to the trip to Moscow, there was no discussion of this matter. See SZÜCS 2003: A. 132–135.

⁶⁹ Kertész's summary: "The Problems of Hungarian–Romanian Territorial Adjustments. The Partium Solution," April 10, 1946; Artúr Némethy (Benisch): "Proposal for the Determination of Hungary's Borders," August 10, 1945; "Modification of the Trianon Border," August 16, 1945, KÜM BéO 70/Bé. res., ÚMKL.

number of Romanians who would be transferred to Hungary. This was the basis of the second proposal, which would entail the transfer of 22,000 km². Molotov listened attentively to the Hungarian arguments and then said that, in the armistice agreement, the Allies had promised Romania that they would support the return of the whole or a greater part of Transylvania to Romania. Gyöngyösi declared that his proposal would not be in conflict with this because "our maximal demand of 22,000 km² was only one fifth of the territory of Transylvania." The Hungarian minister reported on the Czechoslovakian–Hungarian negotiations and on the demands made by both countries. The Soviet minister of foreign affairs acknowledged and approved the population exchange agreement and expressed his hopes that Czechoslovakia would guarantee equal rights to the Hungarians in Slovakia. Molotov expressed his thanks for the Hungarian presentation and terminated the conversation without divulging anything about Soviet intentions.

On April 10, 1946, Stalin received Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy, Foreign Minister Gyöngyösi, the Socialist leader Árpád Szakasits, the Communist Ernő Gerő, and the Hungarian envoy in Moscow, Gyula Szekfű. Nagy expressed the country's thanks for its liberation and for the democratic developments made possible with Soviet assistance. He then spoke of the land reform, the nationalization of the mines, and the control of the banks and declared that he felt obliged to report on the results of one year of democracy in Hungary. Stalin interrupted him and said that Hungary was an independent and free country and, therefore, its prime minister was not obliged to make any reports. He (Stalin) would consider Nagy's exposé as a communication from a friendly country.

Nagy asked Stalin for one or two Soviet economic advisors and then, in response to a query by the Soviet prime minister, said that in the past, there had been some trouble with the behavior of the Red Army, which was not unusual in an occupied country, but that recently, the complaints had fallen to a minimum. Stalin then declared that the occupying forces would be withdrawn from Hungary soon and that only small detachments would remain. He also agreed to an extension of the time frame for reparation payments, the repair of the damage to the Hungarian National Railways, and the return of Hungarian movable property in the West or, at least, the return of the gold.

Speaking about the preparations for the peace treaties, Nagy stated that Hungary had no demands regarding Yugoslavia and then, speaking of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian population exchange, said that many more Hungarians lived in Slovakia than vice versa. Stalin did not see this as a major problem. He said that they had transferred 1 million Poles and, in exchange, received only 100,000 Ukrainians but nevertheless went ahead with the population exchange. Stalin added that not every government was able to accomplish such courageous measures.

The Soviet dictator claimed that the Czechs were ready to discuss territorial questions but were afraid of the Slovaks. He stated that it would be better for Hungary to receive Hungarians from Czechoslovakia rather than let them lose their citizenship later. He added that, in his opinion, the Hungarians in Slovakia were absolutely entitled to be granted equal rights and hinted that the Soviet government would try to settle this question. Stalin announced that some Soviet troops would be gradually withdrawn from Hungary, but that all the troops could not leave at once.

Ferenc Nagy then turned to the Transylvania question and announced that his minister of foreign affairs had plans on this matter. Pushkin interrupted him and said that Gyöngyösi had maps as well. Gyöngyösi showed the maps to Stalin, who rose from his chair and studied them with great interest. Gyöngyösi presented his proposals very much in much the same way as he had with Molotov. Stalin listened attentively, repeatedly looked at the maps, and asked Molotov about the Romanian armistice clause concerning Transylvania. Molotov replied that the armistice clause granted the whole or the greater part of Transylvania to Romania. Stalin remarked that this convention permitted Hungary to receive a portion of the territory, but precisely which part would have to be determined. He stated that this question was currently under discussion by the deputy foreign ministers in London.

Stalin also informed the Hungarian delegation about the forthcoming departure of Molotov to the Paris session of the CFM on April 25 and repeated that the Transylvanian question would be examined by this forum. Gyöngyösi wanted to know if the Hungarian territorial demands for the return of part of Transylvania to Hungary were not conflicting with Soviet

interests. Before Stalin had the chance to reply, Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy and his deputy, Árpád Szakasits, rebuked Gyöngyösi, asking him not to raise the question.

Stalin asked twice if the plans included any population exchange. Gyöngyösi indicated that they did not but that a population exchange was possible under the plan. Stalin joked that if the Soviet Union accepted this plan, the king of Romania would abdicate. Nagy commented that in that case, Romania would become a republic just like Hungary.

Stalin then asked Molotov about the clauses contained in the Romanian armistice agreement. Molotov reminded him that the Allies promised support for Romania's demands to get Transylvania or at least the greater part of it. Stalin pondered the matter and then announced that he would think about it and that they would meet again.

At the end of his summary of the two-hour meeting, Gyöngyösi commented that it was "friendly, thanks to Stalin's personality who in spite of the fact that he impressed us with his historic personality still showed us the human and encouraging side of his persona. The members of the delegation sensed that they stood before the greatest son of a great country and perhaps before the most popular personality in history whose monumentality was not lacking in a community of spirit with us."

On April 12, 1946, Gyöngyösi negotiated with Dekanozov. The Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs stated: "What demands you raise at the peace conference must be decided by the Hungarian Government, particularly by Ferenc Nagy as prime minister and the leader of the majority party." He allowed that Nagy might discuss the issue with Groza and attempt to reach an agreement. Gyöngyösi replied that he saw no possibility of an agreement. If Groza gave up a single square kilometer prior to the elections he would suffer a major political harm. The Hungarian government, on the other hand, would be accused of missing the opportunity to obtain a better outcome by having engaged in negotiations with Groza. The responsibility was so great that neither government would be willing to take it. During the Czechoslovak negotiations, they had reached the conclusion with Clementis that, despite the goodwill shown by both sides on major

issues, the political stakes were such that they could only be resolved by an international decision.⁷⁰

On April 15, 1946, Molotov responded to the questions raised by the Hungarian delegation during the Moscow discussions. He expressed his opinion that the pending issues between Hungary and Czechoslovakia and between Hungary and Romania should be settled by direct negotiations between the countries concerned. Regarding the Hungarian–Romanian dispute, he emphasized that he would not consider it sensible if Hungary were to bring these issues to the peace conference without first conducting negotiations with the Romanians. Gyöngyösi was not enthusiastic about direct negotiations because both Czechoslovakia and Romania were facing elections. “For this reason Hungary could engage in direct negotiations only if the initiation of such negotiations by the respective governments were to come from the Soviet Union.” Nagy interjected that “if these countries cannot agree with each other, they have to be made to agree.” Gyöngyösi asked who should initiate the discussions, upon which Molotov replied: “Naturally, those in whose interest the negotiations would be, namely Hungary.”⁷¹

Stalin’s toast, delivered on April 16, 1946, was characteristic of the reception the Soviets granted to the Hungarian government delegation. It appeared to the generalissimo that: “Presently many small and medium sized countries are afraid of the Soviets. This fear is without foundation. Lenin had declared that every nation, be it large or small, has a particular value and importance for humanity. This same principle guides Soviet policy today. More than half of the Soviet population is not Russian but consists of many nationalities. These people enjoy complete autonomy and freedom. The Soviets have always felt a friendship toward Hungary and always wanted friendly relations with her.” Stalin expressed his pleasure that the leaders of Hungary were democrats and emphasized that the Soviet

⁷⁰ An English translation of the Gyöngyösi notes was published in KERTESZ 1985: 116–123; Schoenfeld to Dunn in London, April 22, 1946, box 100, R 6–43, National Archives; ISLAMOV–POKIVAILOVA 2000: 382–393.

⁷¹ Ferenc Kemény’s notes, April 15, 1946, KÜM BéO 1119/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

Union wished to be friends with Hungary regardless the composition of the government.⁷²

After the Hungarian government delegation returned from Moscow, Ferenc Nagy informed the British and American ministers, and the Hungarian envoys abroad informed their host countries. Stalin's decision to extend the time frame for reparations from six years to eight years was also granted to the other countries in the Soviet sphere, Finland and Romania. In connection with an overall Soviet demobilization, the number of troops stationed in Hungary was indeed reduced. In the spring of 1945, there were about 1 million soldiers in Hungary. By September 1945, there were 920,000; in April 1946, 760,000; and by September 1946, only 220,000–250,000. By the time of the peace treaty, this number was to be reduced to 50,000.⁷³

The reports of the Hungarian government delegation about the interpretation of the Soviet announcements prompted two debates: one about the guarantee of minority rights to the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia, and another about Soviet support for Hungarian territorial demands vis-à-vis Romania. Stalin's cynical statement, which encouraged Ferenc Nagy to accept all Hungarians from Czechoslovakia under the slogan of population exchange, and the rejection of the "people with land" principle were hard to misunderstand. At a press conference on April 20, Nagy emphasized that they could rely on Soviet support for ensuring minority rights for the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia.⁷⁴ Ripka, the Czechoslovak minister of commerce, received the opposite information from Stalin in Moscow. According to Ripka, the Soviet prime minister stated: "(1) He could see no reason why Czechoslovakia, which had taken part in the fight against the Nazis, should cede 'one foot' of territory to Hungary; (2) that without

⁷² KERTESZ 1985: 128.

⁷³ Telegram of the American representative at the Allied Headquarters in Caserta, no. 3695, September 25, 1945, 740.00119 Control (Hungary) 9–2546, National Archives; Schoenfeld's telegram, Communication from MNB Director Oltványi, no. 640, April 4, 1946, 740.00119 Control (Hungary) 4–446, National Archives.

⁷⁴ Schoenfeld's telegram from Budapest, no. 762, April 24, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 368.

regard to the exchange of minorities already provided for Hungary, she should accept from Czechoslovakia the maximum possible number of Hungarians; (3) that the Hungarians who remained in Czechoslovakia should be 'denationalized.'⁷⁵ Schoenfeld speculated that either Stalin had not been honest with his Czechoslovak and Hungarian visitors, or that he had changed his mind on the basis of Ripka's submission.⁷⁶ The Hungarian officialdom only found out at the Paris conference which one of the two assumptions was correct.

The other question open to interpretation was the nature of the Soviet position taken on the Hungarian–Romanian border question. The fact that the Soviets encouraged bilateral discussions and listened to the Hungarian plans for border modifications led certain Hungarian statesmen to draw far-reaching conclusions. It became clear, however, from Ferenc Nagy's report and from the discussions with the other foreign diplomats, that in deciding the territorial question, the Soviet leaders considered it possible to raise Hungarian demands under Article 19 of the Romanian armistice agreement, but did not commit themselves to supporting them.⁷⁷ While the Hungarian government delegation was in Moscow, the Communist Party leader, Mátyás Rákosi, on April 15, 1946, told the British minister in Budapest that: "There was some hope that Hungary would receive a part of Northwest Transylvania, namely the part that was purely Hungarian in population and adjacent to the present border. He thought that Russia looked at this with favor and that he had heard that Great Britain and the United States would not be averse to such a modification."⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Steinhardt's telegram from Prague, no. 593, April 19, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 367.

⁷⁶ Schoenfeld's telegram from Budapest, no. 762, April 24, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 368.

⁷⁷ Schoenfeld's telegram about his conversations with Ferenc Nagy, no. 742, April 20, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 280–283; Gascoigne's telegram from Budapest about his conversation with Ferenc Nagy, no. 421, April 19, 1945, PRO FO 371.59053 R 6117/3408/21; Frank Roberts's telegram from Moscow about an April 24 communication from Szekfü, the Hungarian Minister, April 25, 1946, no. 1531, PRO FO 371.59053 R 6403/3408/21; C.F.A. Warner's note about a communication from the Hungarian envoy in London, István Bede, April 18, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025.

⁷⁸ Gascoigne's telegram from Budapest, no. 211, April 15, 1946, PRO FO 371.59005 R 6151/256/21.

The Hungarian hopes proved to be without any foundation because Dekanozov and Molotov both assured the Romanian representatives in Moscow, while the Hungarian government delegation was still there, that the Soviet Union would protect Romania against any modification of her present borders with Hungary.⁷⁹ Molotov even told Professor Iorgu Iordan, the Romanian political representative in Moscow, that Great Britain supported the transfer of a large part of Transylvania to Hungary.⁸⁰ Vasile Stoica, the secretary-general of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, did not believe this because he knew from reports received from London that it was not true. At this time, the Romanian ambassador in Moscow explained to his French counterpart that they would be willing to cede 24,000 km² of territory if all the Hungarians – 1.5 million – were resettled from Transylvania.⁸¹ On April 15, 1946, based on news received from Moscow, the Romanian government instructed its representative in London to request the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs to confirm in a note the Trianon border and accept Romania's demands for compensation from Hungary. The Soviet government acted in accordance with the principles of tripartite decision-making. Considering the American amendment of April 10, presented in London, Molotov recommended to the Hungarian government delegation on April 15 that the questions pending between Hungary and Romania be resolved through direct negotiations.

At its session on April 23, 1946, the Hungarian government decided that it would send Pál Sebestyén, the minister plenipotentiary and envoy extraordinary, to Bucharest to recommend to Prime Minister Groza and Minister of Foreign Affairs Tătărescu that, in order to improve relations and resolve the territorial-minority questions, a Romanian–Hungarian conference be held between the two prime ministers and ministers of foreign affairs. The

⁷⁹ Paul-Boncour's telegram from Bucharest, no. 339, April 19, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD; telegram of Holman, British political representative in Bucharest, no. 554, April 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59147.

⁸⁰ Telegram of Holman, British political representative in Bucharest, no. 554, April 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59147.

⁸¹ Telegram of Catroux, French Ambassador in Moscow, no. 921, April 17, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

Hungarian Council of Ministers at the same time instructed Kertész to “put together a memorandum on our territorial demands vis-à-vis Romania, in relation to the peace treaty to be signed with Hungary.” The final draft was prepared according to Gyöngyösi’s directives.⁸²

In Bucharest, Pál Sebestyén was received on the morning of April 27, 1946, by Tătărescu and that same afternoon by Groza. The Hungarian envoy suggested that

a friendly Great Power knows about our mission and approves it, and explained the reasons for his trip to Tătărescu and later to Groza. Accordingly, the Hungarian Government, as the depository of the interests of all the Hungarians, has only one concern, namely the future fate of the Hungarians living beyond the borders of Hungary and thus excluded from the Hungarian national existence. The majority of these Hungarians are in Romania and therefore it is understandable that of all the neighboring countries it was the condition of the Hungarians in Romania that represented the greatest concern to the Hungarian Government. Under these circumstances, the Hungarian Government will raise at the peace conference the question of the Hungarians in Romania and will submit proposals to resolve this problem. The Hungarian Government would wish that, prior to going to the peace conference with the problem of the Hungarians in Romania, the question could be made the subject of a friendly and confidential negotiation with the Romanian Government. These discussions would address all the pending issues between Romania and Hungary including a territorial rearrangement without which the Hungarian Government cannot conceive a resolution of the problem of the Hungarians in Romania.

⁸² Kertész’s note: “Our Territorial Demands Submitted at the Peace Conference,” April 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 80/Bé. res., ÚMKL. The Romanian expert at the Political Science Institute prepared a document listing the various possible solutions of the Transylvanian territorial questions. On April 26, 1946, a variation of the plan was attached, proposing that instead of Arad and its surroundings, Kolozsvár and its environment be incorporated into Hungary.

The official response of the Romanian government was conveyed to Sebestyén by Groza that same afternoon:

Concerning the request of the Hungarian Government for direct negotiations it is forced to state that there might have been a time when the pending questions, perhaps even the border question, could have been resolved by direct negotiations. He made attempts in that direction and hoped to meet with the Hungarian Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, but received an answer from Hungary that they did not consider that the time was ripe for such a meeting. Now, however, he was not in a position to negotiate with the Hungarian Government about territorial questions and this for two reasons, one of form and one of merit. For reasons of form he cannot negotiate with Hungary about territorial matters because this problem was already before the Great Powers and he did not consider it proper that two small countries should try to act in advance of their decision. As far as merit was concerned, Groza did not consider any negotiations about Transylvania possible because he believed that the dismantling of the unity of Transylvania was impossible and would be a fatal mistake.⁸³

Sebestyén notified the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs by telegram about the Romanian rejection of the Hungarian initiative.⁸⁴ On the afternoon of April 29, Gyöngyösi gave Schoenfeld and Pushkin the memorandum containing the territorial claims vis-à-vis Romania, verbally adding the purposes of the Sebestyén Mission and the reasons for Groza's negative stand. Kertész did the same for Carse, the British representative, on April 30.⁸⁵ Carse considered the memorandum to be too late "because

⁸³ Sebestyén's report, April 30, 1946, KÜM BéO, nos. 1216 and 1217/Be, ÚMKL. For Sebestyén's conversation with Groza, see FÜLÖP 1988b: 46–47.

⁸⁴ N.A.761./4-2946 Schoenfeld telegram no. 786 on April 29, 1946.

⁸⁵ Kertész's notes, April 30, 1946, KÜM BéO 80/Bé. res. 1946 and 94/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL. Written confirmation of verbal notification, May 2, 1946, KÜM BéO 94/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL.

the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs was already in session. The memorandum should have been submitted at least one month earlier ... and he did not believe that the British Government would support our request for territorial changes.”⁸⁶ Holman, the British political representative in Bucharest, was informed by Stoica that Romania would accept only the Trianon border and that if the Hungarian government wished to negotiate about improving Romanian–Hungarian relations, this would have to wait until after the peace treaties had been signed with the Great Powers.⁸⁷ Warner, the Foreign Office official, commented on this basis that the Hungarian emissary, not unexpectedly, had been sharply rebuffed.⁸⁸ On the basis of the information received from Kertész on April 30, 1946, Schoenfeld also reported that because the Hungarians initiated the negotiations with the Romanians on the basis of Soviet suggestions, subsequent to their rejection, they would submit the question to the Paris conference and that Pushkin had told Gyöngyösi the day before that now the Hungarians were free to do so.⁸⁹ At the end of April, the Hungarian government presented to the Great Powers its proposals on territorial rearrangements. This was just as ineffective for the evolution of the peace treaty drafts as the Romanian memorandum submitted in London on April 15.

Burton Y. Berry, the American representative in Bucharest, shared the conclusion of his reports with his French colleague on May 1, 1946. According to him, the territorial rearrangement would have more disadvantages than advantages. The Hungarian minority was scattered among the villages, deep in Transylvania, and thus the territorial adjustment would cause severe difficulties in the life of this region, made worse by “the Hungarians brutally ejecting the Romanian elements from the regained areas. ... What good would it serve to revive the diplomatic hostilities between Budapest

⁸⁶ Holman’s telegram from Bucharest to Foreign Office, no. 554, April 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025.

⁸⁷ Holman’s telegram no. 554 on April 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025.

⁸⁸ Warner’s note, April 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.58145 R 6551/357/31.

⁸⁹ Schoenfeld’s telegram no. 806, April 30, 1946, 764.71/4-3046, National Archives.

and Bucharest when the conditions, and particularly the policies dictated from Moscow vis-à-vis Hungary and Groza's implementation of them, are such that they would make it possible to avoid the conflicts for a long time." Berry not only shared his views with the State Department, but he informally shared with Stoica the response from Washington. According to this message, the American delegation in Paris received instructions in conformity with Berry's views.⁹⁰ At the end of April, Tătărescu was told about the message that Holman had conveyed to the king of Romania. The Romanian minister of foreign affairs attributed London's and Washington's relinquishing of their September 1945 plans to the Soviet Union's success in bringing Romania's cause to victory with its Allies.⁹¹ The Romanian minister of foreign affairs was so certain that the "problem of fundamental importance to Romania" had received a favorable solution that he aborted the submission of the April 15 Romanian memorandum in Paris and London.⁹²

On April 29, 1946, Groza summarized his views on the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute and his policies vis-à-vis Hungary to Nékám, the Hungarian representative in Bucharest:

He completely understood ... that the Hungarian Government was deeply concerned about the fate of the Hungarians living abroad, and particularly in Transylvania. He would feel the same way if there were large numbers of Romanians living abroad. He also understood why the Hungarian Government would raise certain territorial claims vis-à-vis Romania with the Great Powers. He wished to state, however, that this would not make him change his policies. He wished to emphasize that he did not make his friendly comments about Hungary because of the elections and even less because he wished to obtain territorial advantages at the peace conference.

⁹⁰ Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 346–349, May 1, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD; Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 350–351, May 2, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

⁹¹ Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram no. 352, May 1, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

⁹² Jean Paul-Boncour's telegram no. 353, May 1, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

For him friendship with Hungary was a matter of the heart because he was convinced that this policy was vitally important for both nations and was the only correct way. The territorial question matter was now in the hands of the Great Powers and they will make the decisions. Regardless of those decisions he would maintain the same policies, create a customs union, achieve the spiritualisation of the borders and forge permanent friendship between the two nations.⁹³

In view of the failure of the Sebestyén mission, the American proposal to keep the door open to bilateral negotiations became moot. The task was left to the Paris meeting of the CFM to draft the joint decision of the Great Powers concerning the Hungarian–Romanian territorial question within the Romanian and Hungarian peace treaties.

⁹³ Sándor Nekám's report, May 3, 1946, KÜM BÉO 177/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CFM IN PARIS: THE WASHINGTON, LONDON AND PARIS VISIT OF THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT DELEGATION

The Paris session of the CFM was summoned on the assumption that the procedural steps worked out in Moscow and the plans to call a meeting in Paris on May 1 were no longer tenable. Under the conditions following the dissolution of the Antifascist Coalition and after the speeches of Stalin on February 8, Byrnes on February 28, and Churchill on March 5, the Great Powers had to fight, step-by-step, for the successful completion of every phase of the negotiations. The complex, frequently superimposed procedural methods made the entire peace preparatory process fragile. After the autumn of 1945 and in May and June 1946, it became very doubtful whether the CFM could draft the treaties and whether there would even be a Paris conference, followed by a peace conference. Soviet diplomacy adhered rigidly to the implementation of its position and used the delay in the peace process to solidify its own proposal and the position of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments that had come to power with Soviet help.

Byrnes impressed on American public opinion how “firm and inflexible” he was with the Soviet Union, while at the meetings of the CFM, the American secretary of state was prepared for agreements and for the continuation of the discussions based on mutual concessions. Byrnes went to Paris with the decision to stay in office only until the end of the peace negotiations. He submitted his resignation to Truman on April 16, and the president designated General George Marshall as his successor.¹ The possibility was

¹ WARD 1981: 89–90.

raised at the State Department that if the Great Powers could not reach an agreement, the United States would unilaterally make peace with the respective countries or, instead of individual peace treaties, the ministers of foreign affairs would open a debate on the overall European settlements. The officials in the State Department recognized that the sequence of negotiations decisively affected the fate of the Balkan countries. It was for this reason that Washington now urged the resolution of the central issues, Austria and Germany, which during the summer of 1945 had been pushed into the background.

Bevin accepted the leadership role of the United States and was pleased to note that Byrnes was now more concerned with winning British consent than in the past. British and American policies came into harmony. They urged the summoning of the Paris conference, the withdrawal of the Allied forces, and the reestablishment of Austrian independence. Bidault continued to act as a balance wheel and referee between the Three Great Powers. For France, the most important issues were the resolution of the German question and the separation of the Ruhr, the Rhine, and the Saar areas from Germany.²

THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CFM IN PARIS
(APRIL 25 – MAY 16, 1946) AND THE
DEBATE ON THE HUNGARIAN PEACE TREATY

On April 25, 1946, the council resolved one of the procedural problems: France could henceforth participate in the debate on all plans. On Bidault's proposal, the CFM discussed first the five peace drafts and then the German question. Bevin expressed his reservations about opening a debate about Germany without asking the other Allies. Byrnes wished to tie his agreement to Austria being put on the agenda, but the procedure was finally decided according to Molotov's position. The Soviet minister of foreign affairs wished to sign a peace treaty with Austria because it fought as part of

² Memorandum of the French delegation, FRUS 1946/II: 109–112.

Germany. Molotov agreed to the Austrian peace negotiations preceding the German ones but insisted on an absolute priority for the debate on the other five peace treaties. This was the Soviet response to the proposal submitted by the United States at the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Byrnes did not call the treaty to be signed with Austria a peace treaty but a “State Treaty” because the tripartite declaration of November 1, 1943, envisaged the restoration of Austria’s independence. The American secretary of state clearly delineated his goal. The allied troops had to be withdrawn from Austria, the Austrian government had to function in the spirit of the tripartite declaration, and “Austria’s situation had to be resolved simultaneously with the other peace treaties.”³

Even though they were unable to place the Austrian agreement on the agenda at the opening of the session, on April 26, 1946, the American delegation submitted its draft treaty for the “Reestablishment of an independent and democratic Austria.”⁴ Molotov and Vyshinsky rejected this. They claimed that Austria’s denazification was not progressing adequately. The Soviet minister of foreign affairs wished to extend the stationing of Allied troops in Austria until May 1947, i.e., for another full year.⁵ As the session of the CFM in Paris progressed, the increasing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union led to increasingly heated debates on this key issue of the peace settlement. On May 5, Molotov suggested that the American troops stationed abroad be withdrawn. In his response, Byrnes reminded Molotov that, in contrast to the small numbers of American troops abroad, except in Germany and Japan, the Soviet Union had hundreds of thousands of troops beyond its borders – frequently contrary to the wishes of the governments and peoples of the countries they were in. The secretary of state indicated that it was the basis of his policy to secure the withdrawal of all troops from countries other than Japan and Germany. “We had urged the conclusion of an agreement with Austria in order to permit the withdrawal of Allied forces from that country.”⁶

³ FRUS 1946/II: 109–112.

⁴ Session of the CFM on April 25, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 24–126.

⁵ Unofficial discussion between Byrnes and Molotov on April 28, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 148.

⁶ FRUS 1946/II: 248–249.

On April 29, 1946, Byrnes submitted his proposal for a 25-year four-power agreement on Germany's demilitarization. He indicated that this was a radical departure from the traditional isolationist policy of the United States and that "this would guarantee that this time the United States was not going to leave Europe after the war."⁷

Molotov again blocked any discussion of the American proposal because he wished to discuss the five peace treaties first. At the same time, he conducted endless debates at the Italian peace negotiations about the \$300 million Soviet demand for reparations and the issue of the Italian colonies. He even achieved his goal of holding a hearing of the Italian and Yugoslav representatives regarding Trieste on May 3, 1946. In keeping with his earlier tactics, Molotov used the primacy of the Italian negotiations to strengthen the position of the Romanian and Bulgarian governments. He tried to link recognition of Italy's cobelligerent status with recognition of a similar situation for Romania and Bulgaria.

In order to accelerate the work of the council, Bidault initiated a number of informal meetings. At the first of these gatherings, Molotov blamed his negotiating partners for the slow progress. He saw a direct relationship between the non-recognition of the Bulgarian government by Great Britain and the United States and the delay in the peace negotiations. The Soviet minister of foreign affairs was unwilling to agree to the Italian peace treaty until the matter of reparations was settled.⁸ The true intentions of the Soviets were revealed during the May 5 discussion when it appeared that Molotov was willing to forgo the reparations if the Trieste matter was resolved in Yugoslavia's favor.⁹ Byrnes rejected this "deal." By May 6, the Italian discussion came to a standstill over the issue of Trieste and reparations. At this point, the deputy ministers of foreign affairs submitted to the council the list of the clauses in the Balkan treaties that had to be discussed. The following morning, the ministers of foreign affairs debated the Romanian drafts and, in the afternoon, the Hungarian and Bulgarian ones.

⁷ WARD 1981: 94.

⁸ WARD 1981: 94–95. Informal meeting on May 2, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 214–222.

⁹ FRUS 1946/II: 247–249. Molotov's other proposal: Greece should forgo the reparation in exchange for the Dodecanese Islands.

At the morning session of the CFM on May 7, 1946, when the peace treaty draft for Romania was discussed, Byrnes and Molotov withdrew the American and Soviet proposals, and thus the reestablishment of the January 1, 1938, border between Hungary and Romania was accepted.¹⁰ Because of the failure of the Sebestyén mission and the apparently immutable Soviet position, the American proposal, which left the door open for bilateral negotiations, became moot. The Soviet amendment, namely that all of Transylvania be returned to Romania, was unnecessary since, in a slightly different wording, it just repeated what was in the text already, namely the reestablishment of the Trianon Hungarian–Romanian frontier. After the negotiation initiatives of the Hungarian government were rejected in Bucharest, the only thing left was to ask the Paris conference for a hearing. The decision reached jointly by the Great Powers was entered, for the time being, only into the draft peace treaties.

In their debate about the Romanian draft peace treaty, the Soviet, British, and American ministers of foreign affairs discussed the Danube Commission, the disbanding of the fascist organizations, and the punishment of war criminals. In this, they set a precedent for the Hungarian and Bulgarian treaties. The American delegation proposed that regulations guaranteeing equal economic opportunities for all allies and the principle of the most favored nation be included in the draft. The Soviet delegation, however, referred to a Potsdam declaration and wished to resolve the economic matters outside the peace negotiations through diplomatic means. Molotov also insisted that the discussions on the international regulation of the Danube be limited to riparian states, while the British and, to a lesser degree, the Americans, wished to reestablish the pre-1940 Soviet–German treaty situation.¹¹

At the 12th meeting of the council, in the afternoon of May 7, 1946, the Bulgarian draft peace treaty was discussed for the first time. Molotov even questioned whether the Bulgarian borders had to be discussed at all. According to Soviet ideas, the Soviet Union and the United States, which did

¹⁰ FRUS 1946/II: 259–260; CMAE (46), 11^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 143, MAE AD.

¹¹ FRUS 1946/II: 260–272.

not participate in the territorial settlements after World War I, were hardly in a position to make decisions in the Greek–Bulgarian border dispute. Molotov considered the Soviet–Romanian and Romanian–Hungarian border questions, mentioned in the armistice agreements, different from the Bulgarian one because those affected the Allied governments directly. At the time when the Bulgarian armistice agreement was made, there was no discussion about the borders. Byrnes recommended that Bulgaria's January 1, 1941, borders be reestablished except for the Greek–Bulgarian boundary issue, which would be kept open until the two governments could express their views to the CFM or to the Paris conference.¹² As we will see, the acceptance of this recommendation also created a precedent that opened the way for raising the Czechoslovak territorial demands vis-à-vis Hungary.

The other debate was about another key issue of the peace negotiations, namely the withdrawal of Allied (Soviet) troops. In the March 27 Bulgarian peace treaty plans, Molotov withdrew the agreement he made at the earlier London meeting of the CFM, justifying this move by stating that the Soviet troops were using the Bulgarian stretch of the Danube as their supply route to their Austrian zone of occupation. It was in vain that Bevin cited the London tripartite agreement for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops, to which Molotov had agreed. Now Molotov asked that this be renegotiated under the pretext that there had to be some editorial changes.¹³ What the Foreign Office and the British military leadership had feared since December 1945 came to pass, and the Soviet Union raised the matter of the Soviet liaison troops in Bulgaria, as a bargaining chip, to obtain concessions in the countries belonging to the Anglo-American sphere, namely Greece and Italy. The British government wished to avoid at all costs linking the British withdrawal from Greece to the Soviet withdrawal from Bulgaria.¹⁴ Byrnes claimed that at the London meeting they already took exception to

¹² FRUS 1946/II: 272–273.

¹³ FRUS 1946/II: 274–276.

¹⁴ "Withdrawal of Allied Troops from Certain European Countries," L.C. Hollis, message to the FO, December 12, 1945, no. COS (45) 685, PRO FO 371.50966. The notes of Silverwood Cope, Lord Hood and W.S. Williams, December 19, 1945, and Sir Orme Sargent, January 2, 1946, PRO FO 371.50966.

the Soviet proposal and that the number of the supply liaison troops had to be decreased. Molotov tried to reassure Byrnes that Soviet troops would remain in Bulgaria only as long as necessary. Bevin was not impressed by this nebulous Soviet promise and wanted the Soviet Union to accept the Byrnes proposal about the reestablishment of Austria's independence.¹⁵

One week later, on May 14, 1946, in the debate on "the withdrawal of allied troops from enemy countries," it finally became clear that Molotov tied the Soviet withdrawal from Bulgaria to the withdrawal of British and American troops from Italy. In other words, he was willing to make concessions only on a reciprocal basis. On Bevin's objection – that the correct parallel was Romania and Bulgaria, and not Italy –, Molotov rightly claimed that it was not the Soviet Union but Great Britain that proposed the stationing of troops abroad for the protection of the supply routes to the zones of occupation, and that a similar recommendation was not made for Italy by the British. Bevin and Byrnes, recognizing that any other solution was unlikely, asked that an Austrian treaty be initiated. The secretary of state argued that a four-power agreement would return to the Austrian government its freedom of movement, the allied troops could be withdrawn, and this would eliminate all the problems linked to the maintenance of lines of communication through Italy, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. Byrnes therefore called on Molotov to have the Council of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs immediately address the treaty to be signed with Austria. Molotov rejected the idea of agreeing to a sixth peace treaty, namely Austria, prior to the conclusion of the other five treaties. He was also unwilling to yield on the principle of reciprocity, namely the simultaneous withdrawal of British, American, and French troops from Italy and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Bulgaria.¹⁶

The Hungarian draft peace treaty was discussed by the CFM for the first time, independently, at the 12th session, in the afternoon of May 7, 1946. The tripartite agreements, reached at the earlier Romanian and Bulgarian negotiations, were considered valid for Hungary as well, and therefore these were not taken up again. At the debate about the Hungarian draft peace

¹⁵ FRUS 1946/II: 276.

¹⁶ FRUS 1946/II: 375–379.

treaty, two items were placed on the agenda: the Czechoslovak–Hungarian border and the question of the reparations. On the proposal of the American delegation, the Vienna Awards were declared null and void and as if they had never existed. The January 1, 1938, borders were reestablished, but in the case of Czechoslovakia and Hungary, “this text should be considered tentative until the governments of Czechoslovakia and Hungary have had an opportunity to present orally to the Council of Foreign Ministers or to the peace conference their perspective views on this subject.”¹⁷ The ministers of foreign affairs applied the Bulgarian precedent and indicated that they would examine the Czechoslovak memorandum of April 10, 1946, submitted to the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, as well as the presumably forthcoming Hungarian counterarguments. The article dealing with reparation was amended at Soviet request. According to the agreement reached at the time of the Hungarian government delegation’s visit to Moscow, the period of reparation payments was increased from six to eight years. Bevin argued against reparations even appearing in the peace treaty and considered it a mistake that it was not rejected at the armistice negotiations because “the United Kingdom was interested in seeing the economic rehabilitation of Hungary so that the Hungarian people would have a chance to get on their feet again.” Byrnes referred to Harriman’s letter from Moscow of January 12, 1946, voicing American reservations and reminded the meeting that the tripartite initiative of the United States and the questions raised at the London Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs remained unanswered.¹⁸ Molotov rejected the Anglo-American criticism and, instead of decreasing or eliminating the reparations, believed that improvements in the Hungarian economic situation could be achieved by the return of the goods and gold presently in the Western zones.¹⁹ Even though Bevin and Byrnes expressed their views, they finally agreed that the Soviet proposal on reparations be

¹⁷ American proposal for the Hungarian borders, May 8, 1946, CMAE (46)57, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 145, MAE AD.

¹⁸ FRUS 1946/II: 277–283.

¹⁹ FRUS 1946/II: 282.

included in the peace treaty. The secretary of state reserved the right that, depending on the developments in the Hungarian economic situation, the amount of reparations could be renegotiated.²⁰

The Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs submitted a further report on the Hungarian peace treaty plans to the CFM on May 9, 1946. A tripartite agreement was reached on political and territorial issues while expert panels continued discussions on military and economic-financial issues. The open questions remaining were the punishment of the war criminals, international control of the Danube, and the matter of abandoning the demands vis-à-vis the Allies. These were decided at the Romanian negotiations and not at the Hungarian ones.²¹ So far as the Romanian–Hungarian border was concerned, the proposal accepted by the three ministers of foreign affairs was submitted by the British delegation.²²

When the CFM came to a standstill in the preparations for the peace treaty, a debate started again about calling for a new Paris conference. Byrnes recommended on May 9 that the deputy ministers of foreign affairs should prepare the text of the agreed-upon and debated articles and submit those to a Paris Conference to start on June 15. Molotov agreed that a report be prepared about the present stage of the peace treaty proposals, but, under the Moscow agreement, did not consider it possible to call another conference until tripartite agreement was reached on the text of the five treaties. Bevin emphasized that the drafts had to be completed, but that it was not necessary that every article be agreed upon. On May 10, seeing that the positions of the Big Three were rigid, Bidault proposed that instead of calling a new conference, the first Paris meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs be adjourned and that a second, unplanned session of the same conference be called for June 15. In this way, he hoped to resolve the procedural problems of the peace treaty settlement. Byrnes insisted that the conference be summoned for July 1 or July 15. Molotov agreed on condition that the drafting

²⁰ FRUS 1946/II: 282–283.

²¹ CFM(46)92, PRO FO 371.59038 R 7474; CMAE(46)92, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 146, MAE AD.

²² CFM(46)61, PRO FO 371.59038 R 7474.

of the plans be completed by June 5. Molotov relented somewhat on May 11 and stated: "In regard to Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary there were no questions in those treaties which were of sufficient importance to delay the Conference, although there was the specific question of Bulgarian relations with the United States and Great Britain."²³ He believed that so far as the Balkan peace treaties were concerned, all fundamental issues were resolved, and he wished to resolve the issues of Italian reparations and Trieste.²⁴

The Soviet Union considered it to be of utmost importance that the Yugoslav position prevail and thus the Anglo-American position in Italy become weaker. For this reason, the Soviet delegation recommended on May 14 that the Anglo-American troops be withdrawn from Italy at the same time the Soviet troops were withdrawn from Bulgaria. Byrnes wished to reach agreement on the reestablishment of Austria's independence, Germany's demilitarization for 25 years, and the summoning of a peace treaty preparatory conference on Germany for November 12, 1946.²⁵ After his proposal was rejected by the Soviets, Byrnes broke off the negotiations. He ignored Bevin and Bidault's opposition and, after a discussion on the German peace on May 16, the meeting was adjourned, on his request, until June 15. The Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs continued to study the pending questions in Paris, and the decision to summon a new conference was postponed.²⁶

BRITISH-AMERICAN POLICY AND THE HUNGARIAN
PEACE AIMS: NEGOTIATIONS OF PRIME MINISTER
FERENC NAGY IN WASHINGTON, LONDON AND PARIS

The position taken by the CFM in Paris about the Hungarian-Romanian border caused a change in the relationship between Hungary and the Great Powers, induced a modification in the peace preparatory activities of the

²³ FRUS 1946/II: 351.

²⁴ FRUS 1946/II: 351.

²⁵ FRUS 1946/II: 400.

²⁶ WARD 1981: 96-99.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and caused a crisis in Hungarian domestic politics. Following the visit to Moscow, the Hungarian government hoped until the last moment that the Big Three would seriously consider its territorial memorandum. The telegrams received from István Bede in London, citing the officials of the Foreign Office, were encouraging: "Our territorial demands vis-à-vis Romania are certain of success provided they do not exceed reasonable expectations." This impression was strengthened for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the publication of a hitherto unknown fact according to which, on September 20, 1945, the American delegation submitted "changes in our favor in the Hungarian–Romanian border question." After informing the Hungarian government that such a step could not be expected from Great Britain, Bede opined that: "In our case, assuming Soviet goodwill, we may expect results from an American initiative."²⁷ For this reason, and at the time of the CFM sessions, Ferenc Nagy and János Gyöngyösi tried to convince Schoenfeld on May 7, 1946, that, as a relatively disinterested allied power, the United States could initiate the discussion of the Hungarian territorial memorandum at the peace conference.²⁸

The news coming from Paris shook the position of the Hungarian government and its prime minister. The lack of Soviet support changed the hitherto pacific attitude of the Smallholders vis-à-vis the Communists. This coincided with the advice that the American and British governments gave to the Smallholder leaders after the March political crisis. At the beginning of March 1946, the leaders of the Independent Smallholders feared that "sooner or later, but definitely before the peace treaty, the Communist Party in Hungary will stage a coup in Hungary and seize power."²⁹ At that time,

²⁷ Bede's cypher telegrams from London, nos. 36, 37, 43, 44, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, April 24, 25, 27 and May 2, 3, 4, 5, 1946, KÜM BéO, 14/res., ÜMKL. See also the report of Maurice Dejean, French Ambassador in Prague, no. 165, May 4, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD. He reported on his conversation with Ferenc Rosty-Forgách during which the Hungarian envoy mentioned the 22,000 km² proposal, which was based on national equilibrium. Ambassador Dejean observed: "The Hungarians consider the resettlement of minorities inhuman with which Prague wishes to undermine the basis of revisionism, but consider it entirely acceptable if it increases Hungary's population and size."

²⁸ Schoenfeld's telegram from Budapest, no. 850, May 7, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 285.

²⁹ Carse's telegram no. 222, March 3, 1946, PRO FO 371.59003 R 3560/256/21.

Prime Minister Nagy was forced, under pressure from a Soviet diplomatic démarche, to yield to the demands of the left-wing parties. The Smallholders' Party centre endeavored at all costs to maintain the coalition and, therefore, on March 12, was willing to exclude a number of Smallholder representatives.³⁰ Gascoigne, the British envoy in Budapest, considered Nagy's concessions to be dangerous steps and hoped with all his heart that no further concessions would be made to the left because it would whittle away the majority position of the Smallholders' Party that it gained at the time of the general elections. In fact, subjection to the demands of the left would constitute the betrayal of the mandate given by the electorate. On instructions from the Foreign Office, Gascoigne expressed the interest of the British government in the establishment in Hungary of a truly democratic system, based on popular will.³¹ Schoenfeld also mentioned to Nagy that "continual concessions to minority groups in the interest of maintaining the coalition might in the end involve negation of the people's mandate given in the November elections which we recognize were free and untrammelled. I added that in face of this danger it was his responsibility to determine when the time had come for the will of the electors to take precedence over expediency of keeping the coalition." Nagy answered that he was ever conscious of that responsibility and added that "the signing of the peace treaty and withdrawal of the occupation forces would in all probability raise questions whether coalition was to be maintained and if so in what form." On Schoenfeld's cautioning that if events between then and the conclusion of peace proceeded at the pace they had taken since the election, he might find himself faced with an accomplished fact of leftist control fastened upon a country with no possibility of realizing the purposes of the voters, Nagy again repeated his often voiced conviction: "The alternative to coalition and, specifically to his Prime Ministership was anarchy."³²

The political crisis in March caused an unfavorable change in the way Hungary was viewed by Great Britain and the United States, and it is therefore understandable that amidst the widespread disappointment produced

³⁰ BALOGH 1975: 181–190; IZSÁK 1986: 95–98; VIDA 1986: 166–179; NAGY 1948: 193–196.

³¹ Gascoigne's telegram from Budapest, no. 204, April 8, 1946, PRO FO 371.59005 R 5745/256/31.

³² Schoenfeld's telegram no. 631, April 3, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 275.

by the CFM's "Transylvania" position, Ferenc Nagy saw no reason to make further concessions to the Soviet Union and to the Hungarian Communists.³³ The Hungarian prime minister explained to Gascoigne that as long as a just peace could be hoped for, he could tolerate the Communist excesses but that henceforth he would resist left-wing pressure.³⁴ The Smallholder counter-attack and Nagy's May 21, 1946, memorandum led to a new coalition crisis.³⁵

Under the effects of the decisive stand of the "moderate" political forces, the State Department and the Foreign Office started to weigh again the support they might give at the peace conference toward the realization of the Hungarian peace goals. It is certain that in Paris, independently of the changes in Hungarian domestic politics, the delegations of the United States and of Great Britain endeavored to achieve the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the reduction of reparations, and the ending of Allied control by a peace treaty signed as soon as possible, thereby reestablishing Hungary's independence and sovereignty. In contrast, the Soviet Union insisted on the peace settlement procedures established in Potsdam and Moscow, on the delay of withdrawal from Austria, on returning Hungarian movable properties from the West rather than reducing the reparations and, in general, on the acceptance without change of all Soviet peace treaty proposals. The clashes between the three Great Powers at the first Paris session of the CFM remained unknown to the Hungarian government and to Hungarian public opinion. The real shock was caused by the Great Power position taken in the Hungarian–Romanian territorial dispute, with the return to the Trianon borders and the disregard for an "ethnic line."

After such preliminaries, it is not surprising that, seeing the increasingly sharp Soviet–American debates and the Hungarian domestic policy tempest, Pushkin, without mentioning earlier positions or the immutable Soviet stances, told Gyöngyösi bluntly that "the Paris CFM conference declared

³³ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 879, May 10, 1946, 864.00/5–1946, National Archives.

³⁴ Gascoigne's telegram no. 534, May 17, 1946, PRO FO 371.59005 R 7456/256/21; Hayter's conversation with Bede, no. 134, June 12, 1946, PRO FO 371.59005 R 7759/256/21. According to Hayter, Bede saw the possibility of a Communist takeover because of the Transylvania decision. See also the report of the French Ambassador in London, René Massigli, no. 1699, May 24, 1964, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD.

³⁵ VIDA 1975.

the 1938 Vienna Award null and void and thus the pre-1938 borders of Romania and Hungary were reestablished. The CFM accepted this resolution on the basis of Byrnes's recommendation that was made immediately after the matter came up for discussion. There was no objection to Byrnes's proposal." The Soviet minister also told Gyöngyösi that his request to Molotov for an informal visit was now "obviously moot." Pushkin then expressed his understanding for the difficult position of the Hungarian government and opined that it was up to the Hungarian government to decide what it wanted to do under the present conditions.³⁶ The tension in Hungarian–Soviet relations over the Transylvania issue and the true Soviet feelings were better reflected in what Pushkin's deputy, Councillor Oshukin, told Robert Faure, the French *chargé d'affaires*. The Soviet diplomat considered it astounding that even the Communists were revisionists and that about 90% of the Hungarians were the same. He also called Gyöngyösi, somewhat undiplomatically, stupid.³⁷ The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs was not advised of Oshukin's assessment, but he could sense from the stated Soviet reservations about Kertész being sent to Paris as a delegate and from the fact that the chief economic delegate, Artúr Kárász, was prevented from going, that the Soviet government did not wish to have the Hungarian peace goals presented to the Allied Powers.³⁸

At the time of the Pushkin statement, the Hungarian government had learned from several sources that in the debate about the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute the Soviet Union had the decisive role.³⁹ In a message sent to Gyöngyösi, Byrnes, referring to the further course of the discussions, tried to amend the biased impression created by the Soviet statements. The secretary of state insisted in a telegram that: "From time

³⁶ Gyöngyösi's note about the communication from Pushkin, May 21, 1946, KÜM BéO 176/Bé. res., ÚMKL.

³⁷ Robert Faure report no. 3, June 1, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 13, MAE AD. Faure noted: "The Hungarian Government assumed that it was enough to announce a democracy ... and that as a reward the Great Powers and particularly the Soviet Union was obliged to help this late-coming and unwanted child."

³⁸ KERTESZ 1985: 110.

³⁹ Schoenfeld's telegram no. 976, 24 May 24, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 298–299; Hayter's notes on the conversation with Bede, May 13, 1946, PRO FO 371.59005; report of Pál Auer from Paris, May 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 2115/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

negotiation armistice Soviets have insisted all Transylvania be returned Rumania. US Government endeavored obtain arrangement permitting minor rectifications on ethnic grounds and subsequently favored adoption treaty language at least envisaging direct negotiations that connection between Hungary and Rumania. However Soviet view that whole territory be returned Rumania without qualification and without reference subsequent direct negotiations finally prevailed.”⁴⁰

The position taken by the CFM on May 7, 1946, for a moment united all parties in Romania, celebrating the “restoration of the country’s territorial integrity.” The majority of the population attributed this victory to King Michael. The Groza–Tătărescu government received only a small part of the “appreciation.” The Romanian minister of foreign affairs told the French minister in Bucharest that “the Romanian demands have been allowed most satisfactorily and eternally” even if the Hungarians will not admit the defeat and will try to question the decision by the Great Powers at the Paris conference of the 21 Powers.⁴¹ Tătărescu’s predictions were soon realized. The Hungarian government saw no hope of obtaining Soviet support but was not willing to give up the possibility of a British and American initiative relative to raising the matter of the Hungarian territorial adjustment.

Gyöngyösi asked the departing British minister, on May 17, to “have the British Government take steps so that, independently of the decision, the Hungarian–Romanian border question is taken up again at the peace conference and that the Hungarian Government has the opportunity to present its position with the conference taking it into serious consideration.”⁴² In order to allay false hopes, the Hungarian government was told by London that while the question was technically open until the Paris conference, it was extremely unlikely that the decision would be changed.⁴³ At the same

⁴⁰ Byrnes’s instructions to Schoenfeld, no. 535, June 4, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 301–302.

⁴¹ Paul-Boncour’s telegrams from Bucharest, May 8, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

⁴² Gyöngyösi’s note about Gascoigne’s goodbye visit, May 17, 1946, KÜM BéO 1423/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁴³ Hayter’s conversation with Bede, May 13, 1946, PRO FO 371.59005; Bede code telegram no. 59, May 17, 1946, KÜM BéO, ÚMKL. According to Bede: “The decision of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in the matter of the Transylvania border, must be viewed as a fact unlikely to be changed.”

time, the Hungarian government received information from Paris that gave them some hope to hold on to. Philip E. Mosely, the Southeast European expert of the American delegation and a participant at the Paris meeting of the CFM, told Kertész and Auer that the United States delegation was not likely to reopen the question of the boundary but that it would consider sympathetically any moderate proposal for adjustment which might be put forward. He added that the concept of a numerical balancing of minorities on opposite sides of the frontier might seem somewhat mechanical in approach and might be interpreted to imply a willingness to provide for a large-scale exchange of population. He also expressed, as a strictly personal view, that a moderate suggestion for rectification based mainly on ethnic and economic factors might have a better hearing.⁴⁴ On this basis, the Hungarian government did not consider the decision final and hoped for a smaller border adjustment.⁴⁵

After Kertész and Auer arrived in Paris, they gradually reconstructed the proceedings of the CFM and the agreements the Allies had made with each other. This brought them to the realization that they could not count on defeated Hungary's arguments being listened to or that her interests would be considered by the victors.⁴⁶ The Peace Preparatory Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, nevertheless, continued to inform the Allied Powers about Hungary's peace goals.

In its peace proposal of May 8, 1946, the Hungarian government emphasized bringing the territorial and nationality principles into harmony, the economic and cultural cooperation of the Danubian countries, and the elimination of the political and social conflicts between them. The government also submitted Hungary's reparation demands vis-à-vis Germany. The officials of the Foreign Office had discussed these matters repeatedly and they still considered their recommendations about a Danubian economic federation and about easing the contacts between the countries in this area

⁴⁴ Mosely's report to Dunn, May 17, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 441-442; CFM files, lot M-88, box 20, Hungary Treaty, National Archives.

⁴⁵ Gyöngyösi's report to the Peace Preparatory Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, June 3, 1946, KÜM BéO, 144/respol. 1946, ÜMKL.

⁴⁶ Kertész's discussion with French diplomat de la Grandville, the secretary-general of the Paris Conference, June 20, 1946, KÜM BéO 1721/Bé. res. 1946, ÜMKL, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 182-183.

to be important. They did not wish to include these matters in the Hungarian peace treaty text because, partly on the basis of Auer's reports from Paris, they considered economic integration and Hungarian–Romanian customs union proposals instruments to increase Soviet influence in the area.⁴⁷ The Foreign Office rejected Hungary's reparation demands vis-à-vis Germany. The Hungarian government justified its request by arguing that replacement of its destroyed capital equipment and raw material supplies could be facilitated if reparations on Hungary's behalf would be assessed against Germany in order to ease the enormous losses suffered by the country. A further reason was that the Hungarian people had opposed the war, had taken part in it with only moderate forces, that democratic Hungary declared war on Germany, and that all this had to be recognized. In his covering letter to the Hungarian note, Gascoigne wrote on May 13, 1946, that the reasons put forward by the Hungarian government did not hold water because:

- a) There was but little opposition on the part of the Hungarian people to fight on Germany's side while the going was good for the Axis.
- b) The Hungarian forces employed were admittedly small in comparison with the gigantic armies used by the Great Powers, but, nevertheless, they constituted the major part of the armed forces of Hungary.
- c) 'Democratic' Hungary did not declare war upon Germany until January 1945 and the Hungarian army of Szálasi was fighting in the field against our ally Russia, until the ceasefire on May 8, 1945.

The Foreign Office accepted this negative assessment of Hungary's war record and conveyed to Paris, as the official position of the British government, that "there are no grounds whatever for the Hungarians claiming reparation from Germany."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Note of the Hungarian Government of May 8, 1946, received by the British Political Mission in Hungary, Budapest, on May 13, 1946, KÜM BéO 130/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL, and PRO FO 371.59038.

⁴⁸ Hayter transmitting Gascoigne letter of May 13, 1946, from Budapest to Lord Hood on the Hungarian peace memorandum, June 28, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038 R 7474/2608/21. Hood was the official of the British delegation at the Paris Conference responsible for the Hungarian peace treaty.

The British rejection of the Hungarian demand for reparation, just like the other questions raised at the peace conference, fit well into the framework of the agreements between the Great Powers and actually had its roots in the Yalta Conference. According to the joint Soviet, British, and American declaration of February 11, 1945, Germany could be obliged to pay reparation and restitution only for damages to the antifascist allied countries.⁴⁹ The Yalta formula excluded the possibility of demands being made by former enemy countries like Hungary. The Potsdam conference exempted the Soviet Union from satisfying demands of this nature.

The declaration stated: "Reparation claims of USSR shall be met by removals from the zone of Germany occupied by the USSR and from appropriate German external assets. The USSR undertakes to settle the reparation claims of Poland from its own share of reparations. The reparations claims of the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries entitled to reparations shall be met from the Western zones and from appropriate German external assets."⁵⁰

On the basis of the Potsdam conference, the United States, Great Britain, and France had called a reparation conference that met in Paris on November 15, 1945. It made decisions about the participation of the other allied countries entitled to lesser amounts of reparation. This meeting was independent of the tripartite Allied Reparations Commission that was established after the Yalta Conference and consisted of the representatives of the Great Powers. The 21 invited countries did not include the five former enemy countries or Austria.

The Allied Powers reached a decision in principle at the Reparations Conference that affected the future Hungarian claims as well. The principle stated that the participating countries would accept the reparation granted as payment in full for all their claims and that all their claims would be aggregated as a single item in their reparation demand. The various claims falling under this heading included reparation, restitution, including the cost of occupation of Germany, credits acquired during occupation on clearing accounts and claims, etc.⁵¹

⁴⁹ FRUS 1945/Malta-Yalta: 982-983.

⁵⁰ FRUS 1945/Malta-Yalta: 409.

⁵¹ FRUS 1945/III: 1478.

They also agreed that the reparation agreement did not affect any pre-September 1, 1939, claims these countries might have against Germany, and this clause was included in the text of the Hungarian peace treaty.⁵² The agreement, in this form, was urged primarily by the United States because it wanted to avoid that, following the Paris Reparation Agreement of January 24, 1946, the smaller Allied nations continue to come forward repeatedly with additional claims. The American delegation wanted to put a final stop for all time to disbursement above and beyond the Reparation Agreement and charged to the western zones of Germany. The Reparation Agreement in existence between the Great Powers was applied to Hungary and to the other vanquished countries at the second session of the CFM in Paris.

The section of the May 8, 1946, Hungarian peace proposal that dealt with minority protection guarantees received a more favorable reception from the Foreign Office and by the Department of State, and also signalled a change in the Hungarian preparations for peace. The Hungarian government protagonists understood that they could not hope for border adjustments (except, perhaps, the ones suggested by Mosely) and therefore focused all their efforts on the construction of a minority protection system.

The peace preparatory memorandum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a proposal for the elimination of the factors causing political and social conflicts among the Southeast European countries, stating that it was inferred in the first and second articles of the United Nations Charter that one people may not exercise hegemony over another in any territory, nor oppress national, racial, or religious minorities. The Hungarian memorandum took these two articles as its base and proposed specific clauses for the Southeast European area.

Referring to Article 55 of the United Nations Charter, the memorandum underlined that it was the intention to promote respect for elementary human rights and liberties regardless of race, sex, language, or religion. Logically, it followed that the peace treaty must bind the contracting parties to invalidate any law or decree whose hidden or avowed object was the

⁵² FRUS 1945/III: 406.

oppression of any nationality, forbidding discrimination and mandating that human rights and freedoms be respected.

The memorandum aimed to oblige the signatories of the peace treaties to rescind all laws and regulations whose overt or covert purpose was the oppression of a nationality. Those who had already suffered injury were to be compensated. According to the memorandum:

Minority groups which may remain after the fixing of the new frontiers should be organized into autonomous bodies. The manner in which the Soviet Union handles national minorities might be taken as a pattern. These autonomies and the minority rights could then be placed under international supervision by local delegates of the United Nations Organization. The Hungarian Government, for its part would welcome the work of such supervisory bodies for the minorities remaining in Hungary on a basis of reciprocity, and binds itself to accept its counsels and complies with its instructions.

The memorandum also stated that by clear and decisive mandates in the peace treaties, citizenship should be guaranteed for every inhabitant of the territories in question, that the Hungarians expelled from their homes during World War I, World War II, or the interwar years should be allowed to return and be paid at least partial compensation, and that their freedom of movement and of communication should be guaranteed. The greatest significance was attributed to the last point because:

Along the Danube the frontiers have become walls which are sometimes impenetrable and cause difficulties to the population which are inconceivable in other countries in Europe. The already oppressive political atmosphere has been made even more difficult to endure by the fact that certain countries, out of suspicion or mutual distrust have placed increasingly great artificial obstacles in the way of free contacts and communication across the frontiers. This produced the general idea of the 'spiritualization of frontiers' which has had no result in practice. If, however, it has so far proved impossible to make frontiers invisible at least they might be rendered less obvious. To this end steps should be taken to ensure freedom of travel, correspondence

by letter, telephone, or telegraph, and the widest possibility for the import and distribution of papers, books, and periodicals.⁵³

The chapter on minority protection of the Hungarian peace memorandum of May 8 signified a change in direction of the Hungarian peace preparatory process, for the emphasis was shifted from ethnic borders to the fate of the Hungarians living in the neighboring countries and to the prevention of their mass expulsion into Hungary.⁵⁴

The group of experts on the legal protection of minorities met at the Prime Minister's Office on May 7, 1946, and drafted a code for minority rights. It was referred to by the Peace Preparatory Department simply as the codex. The Hungarian minister in Paris delivered this document with a cover letter to the members of the CFM on June 11, 1946, and Gyöngyösi transmitted it on July 11 to the representatives of the Great Powers in Budapest. Referring to the United Nations Charter, the Hungarian government proposed that clauses designed to protect the interests of the minorities should be included in the peace treaties or that the UN Security Council make separate agreements with the particular Southeast European countries concerning minority protection. The Hungarian government also recommended that a joint commission and a judiciary be established to interpret the clauses and to arbitrate disputes arising from the implementation of the regulations.⁵⁵

On May 6, 1946, the Hungarian government submitted a memorandum about minority rights violations in Czechoslovakia to the ministers of the Great Powers in Budapest. A similar memorandum about Romania was transmitted on May 20.⁵⁶ Subsequently, on June 4, Pál Auer submitted to

⁵³ The peace preparatory memorandum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 27 and May 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 130/res., Bé. res. 1946 and 50/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁴ Kertész's memorandum on the peace preparation, May 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 1350/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁵ Minorities treaty drafts, June 11 and July 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 87/B–1946 and 2321/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁶ Memoranda about minority rights violations, May 6 and May 20, 1946, KÜM BéO 120/Bé. res. 1946, and 166/Bé. res. 1946; Pál Auer's Memorandum to the Council of Foreign Ministers, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 22, MAE AD; BARANYAI 1947a: 104–117; 1947b: 131–138.

the Soviet, British, and American delegations the 10 most important peace memoranda prepared between August 14, 1945, and May 20, 1946. He also requested a hearing concerning the persecution of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia and the position taken by the CFM in May regarding the Hungarian–Romanian border.⁵⁷

The discussions between Vilmos Böhm and the Czechoslovak leaders in Prague left no doubt that Beneš and Clementis wanted to effect the expulsion of the Hungarians through unilateral, internal action. A speech by Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, the Romanian minister of justice, delivered in Cluj, evoked the expulsion of 300,000 to 400,000 Hungarians, indicating that Romania would follow the example set by Czechoslovakia. Ever since the population exchange agreement was signed in February 1946, this possibility had been on the mind of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs experts.⁵⁸

During his discussions in Prague, Vilmos Böhm found that Zdeněk Fierlinger, the Czechoslovak prime minister, did not support the Slovak demand for the expansion of the Bratislava bridgehead and that, allegedly, Beneš did not either. However, Clementis rejected any provision of autonomy for the Hungarians, considered the population exchange a mistake, and emphasized that the Soviet Union endorsed the Czechoslovak position. According to Clementis, Stalin asked only one question about this matter: “Why did you not expel the Hungarians earlier?”⁵⁹ Beneš claimed that “he only saw the catastrophe that Munich represented for Czechoslovakia and that he just wanted to eliminate the danger of new Hungarian revisionism.” The Czechoslovak president sensed that Britain and the United States did not agree with his position and that if the Soviet Union withdrew its support, Czechoslovakia would be forced to submit.⁶⁰

Without waiting for the outcome of the Council of Ministers and the Paris conference, the Czechoslovak government initiated its “reslovakization”

⁵⁷ KERTESZ 1984: 182.

⁵⁸ Böhm’s report from Stockholm, May 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 9/pol./164/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL; Pătrășcanu’s Cluj speech, June 10, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

⁵⁹ Böhm’s report from Stockholm, May 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 9/pol./164/Bé. res. 1946. This agrees with Pushkin’s comment cited above.

⁶⁰ Böhm’s report from Stockholm, May 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 9/pol./164/Bé. res. 1946.

campaign on June 17, 1946, in which it forced several hundred thousand of the Hungarian minority to declare themselves to be of Slovak descent.⁶¹ In Romania, Prime Minister Groza stated publicly that in March 1945, his government promised Stalin that Northern Transylvania would be governed democratically and would respect minority rights.⁶² In contrast, Pătrășcanu's statement about a "revival of Hungarian revisionism" signified the beginning of a new anti-Hungarian campaign. Speaking for his government, he rejected regional autonomy or independence and emphasized Romania's exclusive rights over all of Transylvania.⁶³

The leaders of the Hungarian peace preparatory team in Paris, István Kertész and Zoltán Baranyai, gained the impression that the Great Powers would "seriously consider" the minority rights code.⁶⁴ In connection with Prime Minister Nagy's proposed visit to Washington and London in May–June 1946, the State Department and the Foreign Office raised the possibility of including a minority protection clause in the Romanian peace treaty, thereby strengthening the position of the Smallholders' Party in Hungary.

The Foreign Office was beginning to think favorably of supporting the Hungarian peace goals because the May 21 actions of the Independent Smallholders' Party – initiating a percentage-based distribution of ministerial, administrative, and police positions – were in accordance with the advice given by the British and American ministers in Budapest. It seemed that the Smallholders had dismissed the illusion that yielding to Communist demands would gain them Moscow's understanding.

The Foreign Office officials were in an awkward position when they considered the assistance they might give to the Smallholders' Party. M.S. Williams, the head of the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, admitted that they could give no loans or economic assistance. They could not support the peace goals of the Smallholders and could not protect

⁶¹ BALOGH 1988: 123–124.

⁶² Paul-Boncour's telegram about Groza's May 12 speech no. 413, May 18, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

⁶³ Pătrășcanu's Cluj speech, June 10, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

⁶⁴ Baranyai's note in Budapest on the minority agreement proposal, July 11, 1946, KÜM BéO, 162/respol. 1946, ÚMKL.

them from forceful action taken by the Red Army if the Soviet government decided to assist the Communists in taking over.

Williams and his superiors – Sir Orme Sargent, the new permanent undersecretary of state, and William G. Hayter – saw that the only possible steps to take were to assure that the actions of the Smallholders received wide publicity in the press, over the radio, and also in Parliament. In addition, if necessary, representations to the Soviet government could be made if it showed signs of wanting to prevent the Smallholders from playing their proper part in the government of their country.⁶⁵

This position of the Foreign Office took shape just prior to the western trip of the Hungarian government delegation. Bevin turned to his American colleague on June 7 to gain the State Department's support in the Hungarian question. In his introduction he stated: "It is quite clear that we cannot make any provision in the peace treaties for a revision of the Transylvanian or Czechoslovak frontiers and these two questions must be considered closed."

What impressed the Foreign Office was the *démarche* of the Hungarian government, according to which something should be done to protect the Hungarians in Romania and Czechoslovakia. While it considered the Hungarian memorandum describing the disabilities under which the Hungarian minority in Romania at present lived to be an exaggeration, it did not doubt that, in general, the Hungarian allegations were accurate.⁶⁶

Originally, there was no intention of including minority protection clauses in the peace treaties because it was hoped that the human rights articles would suffice. "We now think, however," cabled Bevin, "that we should try to do something more to protect the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. One of the principal disabilities under which they seem likely to have to suffer is denial of Romanian nationality and full civic rights."

⁶⁵ Situation in Hungary. Notes of Williams, May 23, 1946, of Hayter, May 23, 1946, and Sargent, May 24, 1946, PRO FO 371.59023.

⁶⁶ For the evaluation of the Hungarian memorandum of May 20, 1946, KÜM BéO, 160/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL, see the comments of the British and French consuls in Cluj, G.E. Key and Pierre Richard, and the British Minister in Bucharest, Adrian Holman's report, July 18, 1946, PRO FO 371.59148 R 10963/257/37; Paul-Boncour's telegram nos. 482–483, June 8, 1946, and his report no. 67, June 17, 1946, série Z, Europe, Roumanie, vol. 24, MAE AD.

For this reason, the foreign secretary recommended to Byrnes that the following article be included in the peace treaty: "The Romanian Government undertake, as the case may be, either to confirm in the possession of Romanian nationality and full civic rights following there from, or to confer such nationality and full civic rights upon all inhabitants of the territories subject to the Vienna Award, who remain therein after the date of the coming into force of the present treaty."

Bevin made no similar recommendation for the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia because, according to him, some protection for the Hungarians in the neighboring countries would be provided by the fact that Hungary and her neighbors would all be members of the UN. The UN Charter binds the member states to grant full freedom to all their inhabitants to live their lives freely without distinction as to race or language, etc. "Should the Hungarians have complaints as to the treatment of persons of Hungarian origin in neighboring countries they would, under the terms of the Charter be fully justified in raising the matter with the Security Council?"

In the telegram addressed to his American colleague, Bevin expressed the hope that the citizenship article would be included in the Romanian peace treaty, and the support Hungary could gain from the UN would "strengthen the position of the Smallholders ... to enable them to rally behind them the bulk of the Hungarian people and to withstand pressure from the extreme left."⁶⁷

The response from the State Department was prompt. It agreed with the strengthening of the Smallholders' Party's position but expressed its doubts about whether the British proposal would "in practice be more effective than the article on human rights in ensuring fair treatment for the Hungarian minority in Romania." The Department of State nevertheless agreed to the inclusion of the above article in the Romanian peace treaty because it might offer some encouragement to the Smallholders. If the discussion of the Romanian peace treaty at the second session of the CFM would prove favorable and "there appears to be a reasonably good prospect of securing Soviet agreement to it," Byrnes would be willing to support such a recommendation

⁶⁷ Bevin's telegram to Washington, no. 5640, June 7, 1946, PRO FO 371.59024.

by Bevin. At the same time, the Department of State considered it unwise to raise hopes which, in the event, might not be realized, and therefore during the Washington visit of Prime Minister Nagy, it avoided any discussion of this matter.⁶⁸ Before the visit, the Foreign Office took the same position and only told Nagy that because of Soviet intransigence, it was the British government's opinion that it was impossible to review the position taken by the CFM on May 7 and Hungary could not expect any economic assistance from Great Britain. The London message did not even mention the inclusion of the minority protection article in the Romanian peace treaty.⁶⁹

During his Western visit of June 8–25, 1946, Nagy endeavored to obtain an improvement of the Hungarian peace conditions. After the Hungarians raised the question of regulating the fate of the 3 million Hungarians remaining beyond the borders, Byrnes, on June 12, informed the leader of the Hungarian delegation about the American proposals, submitted in London and in Paris, and about the ensuing debates. The secretary of state admitted readily that the Soviets had recommended that all of Transylvania be given to Romania, whereas he had suggested direct Hungarian–Romanian negotiations so that, with minor border modifications, the minimum number of people remained under foreign rule. Byrnes stated: “Albeit reluctantly, we were forced to agree that because the population of Transylvania was so intermingled that without an exchange of population exchange no adjustment of the frontier would provide a solution to the ethnic problem.” The secretary of state mentioned that when the Italian–Yugoslav border was determined, he recommended that first ethnic and then economic viewpoints be taken into consideration. During the conversation, Nagy stated: “If the same decision would be handed down now to Hungary as after 1919, it would mean upheaval of their political system.” It was Byrnes's opinion, however, that these questions could not be decided with any degree of perfection. In Europe, it was simply impossible to do what he suggested – to have a line which was truly an ethnic frontier.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Lord Inverchapel's telegram from Washington, no. 5960, June 15, 1946, PRO FO 371.59024 R 8922.

⁶⁹ Carse's telegrams no. 494, May 28 and no. 569, May 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59023 R 7904/1266/21 and R 8071/1266/21, quoted in VIDA 1977–1978: 251–252.

⁷⁰ FRUS 1946/VI: 306–308, reprinted in VIDA 1977–1985: 270–271.

The Hungarian peace goals were presented to the Department of State by Minister of Foreign Affairs János Gyöngyösi. He asked that the burden of the reparations be reduced; that the forceful transfer actions be stopped; that the human rights of the Hungarians living beyond the borders of Hungary be respected; that the UNRRA assistance be increased; that an EXIM Bank loan be granted; and that the war material surplus property purchase credit limits be increased. John D. Hickerson, the Deputy Chief of the Office of European Affairs of the State Department, stated that "in the political sphere the United States Government will do everything in its power to bring about a fair and equitable settlement of outstanding issues at the forthcoming peace conference." He pointed out that the restitution of displaced goods was primarily an international problem, which could be decided only in concert with the allies of the United States, and said that the opinion of the allies of the United States was important in getting an increase in the UNRRA assistance. He indicated that an American loan was likely only if this was not used for the fulfilment of the reparation shipments. When Nagy asked Dean Acheson, who represented the absent secretary of state on June 13, to support the Hungarian minorities, Acheson stated that, in regard to the Hungarian minority problem, the matter was one for consideration by the Big Three in connection with the Paris meeting and any subsequent peace conference. He added that the secretary was fully cognizant of the situation and that the US government had consistently advocated leaving the way open for Hungary to undertake direct negotiations with its two neighbors in this connection.⁷¹

According to the memoirs of Ferenc Nagy, Byrnes declared at the time of Nagy's Washington visit: "The key to the Hungarian and Romanian question is held by the Soviet Union. The May 7 Paris decision on Transylvania was made on Soviet demand. If the Soviets would be willing to raise the Transylvania question one more time, America would be pleased to support Hungary's wishes."⁷² According to the British ambassador in Washington, the misunderstanding generated by this comment was due to American tactics because the Department of State failed to make plain that the United States government stood by its decision the previous month to

⁷¹ FRUS 1946/VI: 308–316, reprinted in VIDA 1977–1985: 273–276.

⁷² NAGY 1948: 301.

restore the Trianon frontier between Hungary and Romania. The State Department may have encouraged Hungarians in some wishful thinking that the United States government still had an open mind on this question and might, at the Paris conference come, out in favor of modification of the Trianon frontier at Romania's expense, provided that Hungary could gain the goodwill of the Soviet Union by that time.⁷³ During the visit to London, British government officials did everything possible to dispel the Hungarians' illusions.

On June 21, in London, Philip Noel-Baker, the minister of state, explained to the Hungarian delegation that so far it had not been easy to reach an agreement on any question at the CFM and, knowing the Soviet intransigence, it would be useless to raise the Transylvania question again. The British government felt that the most important point was not where the frontier ran, but that the frontier should become progressively unimportant and that it was willing to assist in the promotion of good relations. If the Hungarian and Romanian governments could reach an agreement, they would have the support of His Majesty's government. In a novel proposal, Nagy raised the question of self-government (cantonal autonomy) for the Székelys and promised that he would keep the British official informed about the details of the plan. Noel-Baker expressed his hope that, in the spirit of the United Nations Charter, the minorities would receive better treatment in the future than they had received in the past. The minority rights protection of the League of Nations could have been effective if the League itself had proved workable. According to the British minister of state, the UN Economic and Social Council had recently debated the Bill of Human Rights and there was hope that it would become effective. He added as consolation, that shortly both Hungary and Romania would become members of the UN. Ferenc Nagy held that the Hungarian–Czechoslovak population exchange, the forced “Slovakization” by intimidation, and the expulsion of 200,000 Hungarians were immoral. “If this forcible expulsion took place no Hungarian government could exist that did not pursue a revisionist policy. Hungary would accept the Hungarians in Slovakia provided

⁷³ Lord Inverchapel's telegram to London, no. 3967, June 15, 1946, to PRO FO 371.59024.

they could bring land with them.” Noel-Baker emphasized his government’s interest in justice everywhere but admitted that “after Munich, they (the British) were in no position to lecture the Czechs about not turning their country into a national state.”⁷⁴ According to Bede, the Hungarian envoy in London, Noel-Baker thought that the resumption of direct negotiations would be useful because the British government disapproved of the forceful transfer practiced by the Czechs.⁷⁵

The Hungarian government delegation was received on June 21 by Prime Minister Clement Attlee and Permanent Undersecretary of State Sir Orme Sargent. Ferenc Nagy asked for a just peace for Hungary and stated that Hungary still hoped to get some territory back from Romania, and that those Hungarians who remained outside Hungary after the peace treaties would retain minority rights. Attlee considered the true essence of democracy to be the toleration of opposition and of differing opinions. He stated that governments which asked for rights for their nationals who were in the minority in other countries must concede these rights in their own countries. This would mean a change in practice from the past in Hungary. According to the views of the British prime minister, no treaty provisions would succeed unless there was a real democratic spirit in the countries concerned and recognition of the rights of other people. Therefore, the establishment of satisfactory relations with neighboring countries and of cordial relations between people was more important than the establishment of juridical rights under a treaty or by the United Nations. Attlee stated plainly that Hungary’s borders were set by the Great Powers and expressed his doubts about Russia’s willingness to change its position. According to him, Hungary would have to reach a permanent agreement about the borders directly with Czechoslovakia and Romania. The British prime minister considered the economic integration of the Danubian countries to be most important and admitted that, in spite of all its faults, the old Austro-Hungarian Empire had been an economic unit and that it had been a mistake to try to form a number of states in that area, each of them economically self-sufficient.

⁷⁴ William G. Hayter’s report, June 21, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025; Bede’s report from London, June 27, 1946, KÜM BéO 1832/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁷⁵ Bede’s report from London, June 27, 1946, KÜM BéO 1832/Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

On the evening of June 21, Nagy and Gyöngyösi again met with Sir Orme Sargent. When the Hungarian delegation argued that if Czechoslovakia insisted on a forceful transfer (expulsion), it should yield some territory, the British diplomat expressed his surprise that a victorious power should be asked to surrender territory to a defeated enemy. Nagy replied that it was not primarily a territorial question and that the primary interest of the Hungarian government was that the Hungarian minority receive decent treatment, which they were not getting at the time. Sargent, referring to the bitter experiences of the Czechs with their minorities, rejected the Hungarian position and recommended the initiation of bilateral negotiations as the solution. Sargent considered the improvement in the Hungarian economic situation to be more important than even the minority question, and reminded the Hungarian prime minister that the British government would not tolerate it if Hungary paid reparations to Yugoslavia with British goods.⁷⁶ When Nagy and Gyöngyösi visited the Soviet, American, and French embassies in London, they did not hear any more favorable opinions about Hungary's chances at the peace conference. On June 21, Massigli, the French ambassador, explained to Gyöngyösi that the border question was closed and there was no desire to add new difficulties to the old ones. The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs indicated his hopes relative to the Hungarians in Slovakia, but Massigli thought that Gyöngyösi was full of illusions on this subject as well.⁷⁷

On June 25, 1946, the Hungarian government delegation met with Foreign Secretary Bevin in Paris. Ferenc Nagy pointed out that the Trianon settlement was even less bearable now and that the May 7 decision taken by the Great Powers in Paris created a very unfortunate impression in Hungary. The Hungarian prime minister hoped that there could be a solution in the spirit of the UN Charter so that the forthcoming peace treaty would

⁷⁶ The Hungarian Government delegation's visit in London, June 21, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025; Bede's report on Nagy's negotiations with Attlee, June 27, 1946, KÜM BéO 41/pol. 1946 (1933/Bé. 1946), ÚMKL; Bede's report on the visit of the Hungarian government delegation to Sir Orme Sergeant, June 29, 1946, KÜM BéO pol. 1946 (1835/Bé. 1946), ÚMKL.

⁷⁷ Massigli's telegram from London, no. 2172, June 21, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944-1949, Hongrie, vol. 26, MAE AD.

serve true justice and would not become an instrument of vengeance. Nagy asked the British foreign secretary to “assist Hungary, if possible, so that the Council of Foreign Ministers reopening the Transylvania question and that the clauses of the peace treaty oblige Czechoslovakia to give equal rights to the Hungarian minority.” In his response, Bevin stated that initially he supported the recommendation on some adjustments to the Hungarian–Romanian border, submitted in London by the American secretary of state, but that later they accepted the well-known decision because in that part of Europe it was impossible to establish borders that were equally satisfactory to all parties. The foreign secretary went on to say that, at the present conference, it had been decided that there was no point in going on with it. He hoped, however, that it could be arranged after the peace treaty was signed and the Romanian elections had been held, so the Romanians and Hungarians could meet and arrive at a common settlement. Bevin held that the wholesale evacuation of minorities would place an excessive strain on both Czechoslovakia and Hungary. He hoped that a moral code would be built up in regard to the treatment of minorities and was determined to urge full use of the human rights clause in the UN Charter in order to establish proper protection for everybody. This, he felt, was a better method than bilateral arrangements between two countries alone. He hoped that this would prove more effective than the minority clauses in the Treaty of Versailles. Bevin approved of Southeast European economic cooperation and the customs unions. He also wanted to promote the free transit of goods by guaranteeing Danubian shipping. The principal concern of the British foreign secretary was the drafting of the peace treaties as quickly as possible, but he also stated that he would try to do his best, in spite of the many difficulties, to do justice to all parties. He added that they would try not to make things too rigid and to ensure that there would be provision for these matters to be reviewed.

On the basis of all this, Nagy said that he was grateful to the foreign secretary for his opinion that the frontiers laid down in the treaty should be drawn elastically so that even after the conclusion of the treaty, the frontier question would not be settled irrevocably. Nagy also asked if the foreign secretary was in favor of Hungary’s bringing the question of revision before

the Big Four in order to propose a readjustment that would be equitable with respect to Romania. He added that if a revision of the frontier was impossible, could a clause not be inserted in the treaty to the effect that the Romanian–Hungarian frontier was not final? Foreign Secretary Bevin promised only that he would consider this.⁷⁸

Contrary to the Foreign Office position before Nagy's Western visit, Bevin, in Paris, decided that he would not raise the issue of the Romanian nationality article and citizen rights. He did not consider that Byrnes's attitude at the CFM meeting was favorable to the submission of such a proposal.⁷⁹ At the time of Masaryk's and Clementis's Paris visit on June 29, Bevin stated that minority clauses were not good for the treaties and that the question could be settled without the intervention of the Big Four.⁸⁰ The Czechoslovak foreign affairs officials considered British support critical at the CFM discussions of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. Bevin told them of his conversation with Ferenc Nagy, in which he urged him to come to an understanding with the Czechoslovaks for a satisfactory solution to the minority question.⁸¹

The Hungarian government delegation was received in Paris by Bidault, the French minister of foreign affairs, who, referring to the procedures elaborated in Potsdam and Moscow, stated that France had no say in the matter of the Hungarian peace treaty proposals. In the final act of its Paris visit, the Hungarian delegation met with the Soviet minister of foreign affairs. Nagy told Molotov that British and American support could be obtained for Hungary's Transylvanian demands if the Soviet Union initiated the amendment of the Paris position. According to Nagy, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs rejected this, saying that "the Soviet Union does not change its position on the same issue from one time to another," adding that the formal proposal had been made by the American secretary of state and that

⁷⁸ Marjoribanks's letter to Hayter, June 26, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025; Bede's report, June 28, 1946, KÜM BéO 44/pol. 1946 (1836/Bé. 1946), ÚMKL.

⁷⁹ Marjoribanks's letter to Hayter, June 26, 1946, PRO FO 371.59025.

⁸⁰ Telegram of the British peace delegation in Paris, no. 282 on June 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038 R 9714/2608/21.

⁸¹ Telegram of the British peace delegation in Paris, no. 282 on June 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038 R 9714/2608/21.

the Soviet delegation concurred because this decision conformed to the appropriate clause of the armistice agreement.⁸² With this, the Hungarian delegation lost all hope for Soviet support. When Nagy raised the matter, he ignored Molotov's statement of May 28, 1946, in which he declared that the position taken by the CFM on the border issue was final.⁸³ The Hungarian prime minister could not have known that in their Hungarian peace treaty proposals, the Paris delegations of Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union recommended to the CFM that the January 1, 1938, border of Hungary be reestablished, with the amendment of the American delegation that the Hungarian–Czechoslovak border question be left open. The Soviet territorial recommendation did not allow for the Czechoslovak attempt to enlarge the Bratislava bridgehead.

The visit of the Hungarian government delegation to Moscow in April and the West in June 1946 served to inform the representatives of the Great Powers who were in charge of drafting the peace treaty, and this, in a way, compensated for not being heard by the CFM. British and American policy favored economic and financial concessions – such as the return of the Hungarian gold and other Hungarian assets in the western zones, UNRRA assistance, credit for buying war surplus goods, loans, etc. –, but made no commitment to support Hungarian territorial and minority protection goals, even though such support was essential for the reinforcement of moderate political forces in Hungary. At the discussions of the Hungarian peace treaty by the CFM, Great Britain and the United States did not initiate any changes in the previously accepted positions. The Hungarian government had to accept that the May 7 decision was the result of the forceful position taken by the Soviet Union and, therefore, it was unreasonable to expect any review of that decision by Moscow. In both London and Paris, the same advice was repeatedly offered: Hungary must seek the resolution of the contentious issues by direct negotiation with its neighbors. Bevin told Nagy that at the peace negotiations, Hungary's interests could not be considered. It seemed hopeless to have minority protection clauses included in the text of the peace treaties because both the British and the Americans

⁸² NAGY 1948: 313.

⁸³ *Vneshnyaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuza* 1981: 126, quoted in BALOGH 1988: 182.

preferred a general, effective, and institutional guarantee of human rights and freedom.⁸⁴ The American–Hungarian air traffic agreement, the request for Hungarian economic information, and the encouragement given to the Smallholders showed during the spring and summer of 1946 that the United States was interested in Hungarian affairs. The same interest was shown by Great Britain in urging the establishment of a “real democracy in Hungary.” Both countries recognized, however, that the Soviet Union had a controlling interest in the area.⁸⁵

In spite of the disagreements, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Great Britain did not wish to jeopardize the peacetime cooperation of the Great Powers for the sake of Hungary.

SECOND SESSION OF THE CFM IN PARIS
(JUNE 15 – JULY 12, 1946) AND THE PEACE PLANS
OF THE GREAT POWERS FOR HUNGARY

Between May and June, Soviet–American relations continued to deteriorate, and the possibility loomed that the Great Powers would not agree on a joint peace settlement. After the first session of the CFM in Paris, on May 20, Byrnes stated that progress was disappointingly slow and emphasized for the first time that the United States was prepared to refer the question of the peace treaties to the UN if the CFM did not convoke the Paris conference that summer.⁸⁶ Molotov responded that the secretary of state’s statement was contrary to the Potsdam and Moscow agreements and spoke of pressure, threats, and intimidation against the Soviet Union. By the middle of June, the crisis had abated somewhat. It was at this time that the Western visit of the Hungarian government delegation took place. In spite of the

⁸⁴ BALOGH 1988: 192–215; Bede’s summary of the London visit of the Hungarian statesmen, KÚM BéO 45/pol. (1893/Bé. 1946), ÚMKL; VIDA 1977–1985: 256–258.

⁸⁵ See VIDA 1977–1985: 254–255; NAGY 1948: 304; Schoenfeld’s incoming telegram no. 871, May 9, 1946, decimal files, 864400, National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland, quoted in KERTESZ 1985: 109.

⁸⁶ WARD 1981: 99–102.

differences of opinion, the willingness of the Americans and Soviets to negotiate did not disappear. In Paris, the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs agreed on legal and technical issues between May 27 and June 14, 1946, and the expert committees on military and economic affairs received joint reports.⁸⁷

Due to the deterioration of the Italian political situation and the Trieste debate, the second Paris session of the CFM opened on June 15 in a tense atmosphere. Yet, behind the publicly visible conflicts, the outlines of an agreement loomed. In addition to the five peace treaty drafts, the Austrian and German settlements and the Italian political situation were all discussed.⁸⁸ The Soviet delegation was careful to avoid steps that would have led to the complete collapse of the CFM. A tactical shift was revealed in the Soviet delegation's proposal that Italy's representative be heard, that the reparations burden be eased, and that the cost of occupation be reduced. The duration of the economic limitation clauses was reduced to 18 months on Molotov's proposal, down from the two years recommended by Great Britain and the three years proposed by the United States. In this instance, the Soviet Union played the role of the champion of Italian sovereignty and independence against Anglo-American "imperialism."⁸⁹ Soviet policy remained consistent in trying to obtain Trieste for Yugoslavia; ensuring that after the Allied Control ended in Austria, no progress would be made in Austrian peace treaty discussions; and delaying debate about the German peace treaty proposals until the peace negotiations with the five former satellites were completed.⁹⁰

At the June 20, 1946, session of the CFM, there was some progress on the withdrawal of Allied troops. Bevin stated that Molotov had raised the

⁸⁷ FRUS 1946/II: 463–492. Summary of the deputy ministers' actions, June 14, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 157, MAE AD.

⁸⁸ FRUS 1946/II: 495–496. The United States submitted its Austrian peace treaty plans on May 29, 1946.

⁸⁹ WARD 1981: 104–106.

⁹⁰ Telegram of Jefferson Caffery, the American Ambassador in Paris on statements by Bogomolov, the Soviet Ambassador in Paris, no. 2888, June 15, 1946, FRUS 1946/II; Bogomolov–Charpentier conversation in Paris, June 12, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 137, MAE AD.

question of the retention of troops for maintaining communications to Austria. If the Austrian question were settled, this problem would not arise. If it were not settled, the British could maintain lines of communication through Germany, subject to US agreement. There was another point in this connection. Bevin referred to the decision reached in London regarding Bulgaria. He said that the British delegation was anxious for the London decision to be confirmed and that Soviet troops be withdrawn from Bulgaria. If Allied troops were to be withdrawn from Italy, the withdrawal of Soviet troops should be on the same basis. Bevin stated that he was ready to withdraw all British troops from Italy 90 days after the signing of the treaty. On Byrnes's proposal, the time of withdrawal was limited to 90 days after the peace treaty came into effect. Molotov could envisage an even shorter limit and originally wished to link the withdrawal to the signing of the treaty. Eventually, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs accepted the Anglo-American proposal.⁹¹

In informal discussions, starting on June 20, the CFM negotiated the issues of Italy's borders, colonies, and reparations. On June 25, Byrnes indicated his willingness to sign the Bulgarian peace treaty, provided an agreement could be reached on the text of all five treaties. Thus, the path was opened toward the resolution of the pending Balkan problems. The territorial settlements were not reviewed again. After June 24, the international system controlling the Danube became the focal point of the council's debates. According to the Soviet delegation, only the riparian countries could make decisions concerning the freedom of navigation. On Bevin's proposal, they agreed on June 29 that the four Great Powers would issue a declaration stating that navigation on the Danube was free and open, and that equal conditions were established for everybody regarding fees and commercial navigation. The declaration recommended that the riparian countries accept this principle.

When Bevin accepted the Soviet proposal concerning the Romanian assets found in the Allied territories, the Soviet delegation, at the 28th meeting of the CFM, on June 27, 1946, agreed to settle the issues of the Bulgarian navy, the French-Italian border, Romania's renunciation of its

⁹¹ FRUS 1946/II: 551-552.

claims against the Allies, and the transfer of Dodecanese Islands to Greece. When the report of the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs was submitted, Couve de Murville stated that agreement had been reached on all articles of the Hungarian peace treaty and thus the CFM could bring this matter to a close. Because of the sequence of the negotiations (Romania–Bulgaria–Hungary), the clauses of the Hungarian peace treaty draft were never put on the agenda independently – neither when the general and economic clauses were debated nor when the military restrictions were made uniform. On June 27–28, agreement was reached on several issues. There was indeed a breakthrough at the second session of the CFM in Paris, but they could not agree on the magnitude of the reparations; the return of the assets looted from Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, and currently located in Germany; the establishment of the international regime for the Danube; the renunciation by the former enemy countries of any reparation claims; the application of the principle of the most favored nation; and the mechanism for interpreting the peace treaties and supervising their implementation. For this reason, the differing views of the Great Powers on unresolved questions were entered into the peace treaty drafts.⁹²

The sequence of negotiations agreed upon in Potsdam proved to be decisive in drafting the Hungarian economic and military clauses. Hungary's reparation claims vis-à-vis Germany were examined in conjunction with the Italian and Romanian peace treaty plans. On June 17, 1946, a British, American, and French proposal obliged Italy to give up her claims vis-à-vis Germany that had arisen during the war. With Soviet agreement, this clause was put into Article 67 of the Italian peace treaty draft.⁹³ During the debate on the Romanian peace treaty, on June 27, Molotov initially wished to eliminate the Anglo-American proposal for renunciation of reparations from Germany, but in view of the Italian precedent, he accepted that it should be included in an article of the final text. On the proposal of Secretary of State Byrnes, the CFM accepted a similar clause for the Bulgarian and Hungarian peace treaty drafts as well.⁹⁴

⁹² FRUS 1946/II: 648–686; François Coulet's telegram to the French diplomatic representatives abroad, no. 290, July 2, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 317, MAE AD.

⁹³ FRUS 1946/II: 509.

⁹⁴ FÜLÖP 1987a: 273.

The presentation of Hungary's economic peace proposals could have no effect, under these circumstances, on the deliberations of the CFM at its second session in Paris. Artúr Kárász, the chief economic delegate, designated, summarized the Hungarian economic demands to Mitchell Carse, the British *chargé d'affaires* in Budapest, and to Philip Mosely, the American Southeast European expert in Paris.⁹⁵ Buttressing Hungary's territorial demands vis-à-vis Romania with economic arguments, he pointed out that Hungarian raw material needs also justified revision of the Trianon borders. Without a reduction in reparations, Kárász considered it utterly impossible that Hungary could repay her prewar debts. He felt the "open door" principle had to be preserved, otherwise Southeast Europe would be irretrievably lost to the West. In agreement with Great Britain and the United States, Hungary wished to preserve the international nature of the Danube. He considered it urgent that the Hungarian assets in Germany be determined because, according to the Potsdam Agreement, the Soviet Union was making unlimited demands on Hungary. Kárász acknowledged the neighboring Great Power as an important market for Hungary and did not wish to reject legitimate Soviet demands; he only wanted to prevent a Soviet monopoly. Carse warned the Hungarian chief economic delegate not to have any false ideas regarding the practical considerations his proposals might receive in Paris.⁹⁶ The Soviet Union rejected the Hungarian economic peace treaty proposals. Following a *démarche* by the Hungarian Communist Party and by the Soviet deputy chairman of the Allied Control Committee, László Faragó was appointed chief Hungarian delegate in charge of economics in place of Artúr Kárász.⁹⁷

The economic experts on Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish affairs reported on the economic articles in the Hungarian peace treaty draft

⁹⁵ Carse's telegram no. 613, June 3, 1946, and the negative annotation of Fred A. Warner, the Hungary expert at the Foreign Office, June 5, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038 R 8303/26668/21; KÁRÁSZ 1990; János M. Rainer's interview with Kárász: RAINER 1989; István Szakály's and Katalin Vikol's interview with Arthur Kárász in December 1991 in Paris; KERTESZ 1953a: 176; BALOGH 1988: 187–188.

⁹⁶ Carse's telegram, June 3, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038.

⁹⁷ NAGY 1948: 315. Third session of the Peace Preparatory Committee appointed by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, June 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 90/B, ÚMKL.

on July 5, 1946. Regarding Hungarian reparations, the American delegation reserved the right to have this issue renegotiated at the Paris conference. The debates on economic issues reached no conclusion, and the whole matter was referred to the CFM.

The discussions on Allied assets ranged across reparations, insurance rights, and, on a French proposal, the matter of the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company. The last point is interesting because the Soviet Union opposed including any provisions in the peace treaties that would protect private enterprise. Furthermore, under the Potsdam 4–3–2 agreement, France did not have the right to make proposals regarding the Hungarian peace treaty drafts. Yet, the French initiative was crowned with success because it received British and American support, and in Paragraph 10 of Article 26 of the Hungarian peace treaty, it was entered that the May 29, 1923, Rome agreement, regulating the affairs of the railway company, would remain in effect. The Soviet Union proposed that the limitations placed on Hungarian assets in the area controlled by the Allies be rescinded and that Hungarian assets not be expropriated. The British and American delegations held the opposite opinion and wished to apply Article 71 of the Italian and Article 26 of the Romanian peace treaties to Hungary. This meant that it became possible to liquidate, retain, and expropriate Hungarian assets, rights, and interests for Allied compensation. The Soviet Union urged that restrictions placed on Hungarian assets in former enemy countries, primarily Germany, be rescinded and that the assets be returned. The British, American, and French delegations wished to insert Article 69 of the Italian peace treaty, and the American delegation wished to omit reference to Germany, proposing instead that the Allied Control Council in Germany reach a separate agreement on this issue with Hungary. In the matter of prewar debts, the French delegation, supported by the British, wished to insert a stricter clause and demanded that the interest owed also be repaid. The French proposal was not included in the Hungarian peace treaty because both the United States and the Soviet Union opposed it.

Based on a previous decision by the Italian expert economic panel, the American, French, and Soviet delegations urged that the rulings of the Hungarian economic courts issued between April 10, 1940, and the signing of

the peace treaty be subject to litigation. The British delegation opposed this, believing that only an independent court should rule in such matters. As for equal economic opportunities and the principle of the most favored nation were concerned, their implementation for 18 months after the signing of the peace treaties was agreed upon, with only exceptions, such as civil aviation, being debated. The Soviets wished to narrow the parameters of the clause, and the Americans wished to expand them. The British delegation wished to regulate the rights of engaging in contracts, but the other three delegations opposed this.⁹⁸

The debate of the experts on the economic articles confirmed that the Three Great Powers resolved the Hungarian questions on the basis of Italian and Romanian precedents. There were actually Four Great Powers because, during the economic debates, France repeatedly took the initiative, and in the final wording of the treaty, the clauses were expanded to include French interests. Instead of an evaluation based on merit, Hungary was struck with all the unfavorable clauses because the debates of the experts ignored the Hungarian economic situation and were based on satisfying the victors' demands to the greatest extent possible.

Similarly to the economic clauses, the Hungarian military and aviation restrictions were also decided as a function of the debates on the other peace treaties. The Joint Committee of naval, military, and aviation experts of the CFM filed its first report concerning the Hungarian peace treaty on June 4, 1946.⁹⁹ From the very beginning of the peace negotiations, Italy served as a precedent for the Balkan treaties. Accordingly, the Anglo-American endeavors to limit the Bulgarian and, to a lesser degree, the Romanian armed forces could be realized only if they would have accepted a similar limitation on the Italian armed forces. The Soviet Union objected most vigorously to the maintenance of Allied control after the signing of the peace treaties. In determining the strength of the Romanian, Hungarian, and Finnish ground and air forces, the British and American delegations wished to determine the permissible size of the respective armies and air

⁹⁸ CFM 146/194, PRO FO 371.59038 R 10218/2668/21.

⁹⁹ CFM (D) (46) 127, PRO FO 371.59038 R 8635/605/21.

forces on the basis of the country's European status, length of borders, area, and population. In order to maintain Italy's internal balance, the United States and Great Britain wished to provide her with a reasonable-size army and a larger air force than for the Balkan countries. Both powers, at the same time, endeavored to keep the Bulgarian army and air force, considered to be a threat to Greece, well below the level of the Greek forces.

On the recommendation of the Soviet delegation, the military clauses regulating the size of the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian armed forces were worded more leniently than the similar clauses for Italy. The basis for these decisions was the April 1, 1946, report of the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs relative to Romania. The British and American delegations urged the limitation of the Romanian armed forces because this could serve as a precedent for their principal purpose: the maximum possible restriction of the Bulgarian forces. By the spring of 1946, the Soviet Union had reduced the Hungarian army to 25,000 men. Taking the Bulgarian numbers as a basis, the Americans recommended a force of 60,000, and the British of 70,000 men. To their surprise, the Soviet Union agreed to accept a figure of 65,000, to include the personnel of the anti-aircraft units and the crews of the Danube flotilla. The limitations of the Hungarian and Bulgarian air forces were debated together. On British and American proposal, the principle accepted for Romania was implemented, namely, taking the area of the country, the size of the population, and the urban centers to be defended as a basis. They ignored the Soviet proposal, which considered limitations based on border protection and internal security unnecessary. It was only at the beginning of the debates on the limitations of the Hungarian and Bulgarian air forces that the Soviet delegation realized that the number accepted for Romania would serve as a benchmark for the other two countries, and that the very different situations of Hungary and Bulgaria would not be discussed on the basis of merit. The Hungarian and Bulgarian air forces could keep 90 aircraft each, Hungary with 5,000 personnel and Bulgaria, after a lengthy debate, with 5,200. The application of the Romanian and Bulgarian clauses, with the necessary changes having been carried out, created the anomaly that in

Article 15 of the peace treaty, Hungary was forbidden to possess, construct, or experiment with submarines, torpedoes, and sea mines. In their report, the British naval service advisors, Brigadier Arthur J.H. Dove and Group Captain Francis J.G. Braithwaite, tried to justify the need for this clause by stating that

odd though it might seem, since Hungary has no navy, it was not the result of careless drafting. The article was designed partly as a precaution to hinder German rearmament as well as to restrict the forces of the ex-enemy country itself. Experimental work on torpedoes, special assault craft, and small submarines could well be carried out on inland waters such as Lake Balaton and submarines could be constructed in sections and moved by rail to a port for assembly. The references to naval weapons were thus of some value.¹⁰⁰

After the joint reports of the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs on April 20 and May 9, 1946, the British delegation submitted in June a peace proposal consisting of 44 articles. The American delegation submitted one with 51 articles on June 21, and the Soviet delegation submitted one on June 24. The last one was shorter, consisting of only 26 articles, and differed from the earlier ones in both structure and approach. It was from these three proposals that the three deputy ministers of foreign affairs assembled the proposed text for the Hungarian peace treaty into 37 articles, and it was this draft that was submitted in July to the Paris conference of the 21 victorious powers.

In the clauses about Hungary's borders, the British text, following the American one, preserved the rights of Czechoslovakia and Hungary to present their views verbally before the CFM and before the Paris conference. This was absent from the Soviet proposal. The British delegation recommended that a new fifth article be added: "Hungary renounces all rights, titles, and claims to territory outside the frontiers described above." At the second session of the CFM in Paris, the British delegation did not insist that this

¹⁰⁰ Dove-Braithwaite Report, COS (47) 67; PRO FO 371.66974; FÜLÖP 1992a.

article be added to the Hungarian peace treaty. Thus, the recommendation, reminiscent of the April 10 Czechoslovak document, was omitted from the text accepted jointly by the three Great Powers.

The joint British–American–Soviet text was based structurally on the Soviet peace treaty draft. The political clauses included the American articles on human rights, the punishment of war criminals, the cessation of the state of war between Romania and Hungary, and the recognition of the peace treaties signed or to be signed with the other former enemy countries. The military limitations reflected the various stages of the discussions. The Americans wished to reduce the number of military aircraft to 60, but the final draft, on a Soviet recommendation, permitted 70 aircraft, while for the number of personnel, the American proposal was accepted and not the Soviet one of 6,000. The withdrawal of the Allied troops was proposed by the Americans to occur within 30 days after the signing of the peace treaty but, in accordance with the Italian–Bulgarian compromise, the time was extended by the CFM to 90 days. The British and American delegations envisioned the establishment of a three-power treaty commission to monitor the implementation of the military clauses. The Americans proposed a detailed plan for the international regulation of the Danube, the British proposed free navigation and a conference of all the interested parties, while the Soviets did not even mention the Danube question.¹⁰¹

The pressure of deadlines impelled the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs to take the text of the Italian and Romanian peace treaty proposals and the drafts made by the three Allied Powers and, using unified guiding principles, arrange the joint texts into a clear system and record the differences of opinion. The difficulties in reconciling the interests of the Great Powers and the methodology of drafting meant that the positions agreed upon in the complicated process of consensus building had to be viewed as final. This had been pointed out repeatedly to the Hungarian government delegation during its Western visit.

¹⁰¹ British proposals for the Hungarian peace treaty, June 10, 1946, CFM (D) (46) 149, the American on June 21, 1946, CFM (D) (46) 126; the Soviet on June 24, 1946, CFM (D) (46) 138, and of the CFM on July 18, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038.

As shown at the Paris conference, there was only one way and one possibility for the peace treaty proposals to be modified – namely, through the expansion of the text by the inclusion of new clauses. This option was granted only to the smaller victorious countries, which only served to increase the severity of the peace treaty proposals presented by the Three Great Powers.

In the period between March 27, 1946, when the first Soviet proposal was submitted, and June 27, when the report of the Soviet–British–American deputy ministers of foreign affairs was drafted, consensus was reached by the Great Powers, and thus the critical period of the Hungarian peace treaty negotiations came to an end. The CFM did not grant the Hungarian representatives a hearing during these three crucial months.¹⁰² To be sure, Czechoslovakia and Romania were not granted a hearing either. The peace preparatory documents of the Peace Preparatory Division of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the visits of the Hungarian government delegation to Moscow and the West had no significant effect on the Hungarian peace terms.

Starting on June 29, 1946, the CFM discussed Trieste, Italian reparations, and the calling of the Paris conference. In spite of Byrnes's repeated attempts, ever since June 22, Molotov refused to listen to any suggestions for calling the conference into session. The American secretary of state wished to complete the Paris conference between July 20 and September 1, before the General Assembly of the UN met in New York. He argued that while the CFM had 10 months to debate the peace treaties, the allied and associated countries would have only five weeks to do the same. The secretary of state declared that he did not mind dictating peace terms to the enemy but that he did not like to dictate the terms of peace to his friends.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Comments of Warner and Hayter on the Hungarian memorandum of June 12, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038 R 9067/2068/21. During Nagy's visit to London, Warner commented on the Hungarian government's memorandum of June 12, 1946, requesting a hearing, stating that even though the Hungarians were promised a hearing, it should take place at the Paris conference: "Now that we have heard everything here in London and in Washington that you have to say, we have even less reason to hear you before the CFM." Hayter added on June 25, 1946, that "Paris will have to settle this." See also Kertész's conversation with de la Grandville in Paris, KÜM BéO 1721/Bé. 1946, ÜMKL, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 182–183.

¹⁰³ FRUS 1946/II: 691–692.

Molotov realized that Byrnes was in a time-squeeze and therefore resorted to his delaying tactics. He insisted that a unified perspective among the Great Powers be worked out in order to force the secretary of state, very anxious to have the conference started, to make further concessions.¹⁰⁴ On July 3, 1946, Byrnes submitted a proposal on the Trieste question that proved to be acceptable to the Soviet delegation, which represented Yugoslav interests. The following day, agreement was reached on the \$100 million Italian reparations question. Molotov made one more attempt to postpone the Paris conference to the mid-September, but on July 4, he finally agreed to have it summoned for the 29th.¹⁰⁵

The ministers of foreign affairs debated the procedures and the agenda of the Paris conference for days and in a very tense atmosphere. Molotov excluded China from the list of invitees. He made a serious mistake when he did not buttress the minority position of the Soviet Union with procedural bulwarks that would have assured the support of the other three Great Powers and when he accepted an early date for convening the conference. For this reason, Stalin instructed Molotov to obtain a binding procedural commitment from the CFM that was favorable to the Soviet Union. The Soviet delegation managed to block the sending out of the invitations for another four days.

Molotov divided the Paris conference into five separate conferences to negotiate the peace terms with the five former enemy countries, with the proviso that only those countries could participate in the individual meetings that were in a state of war with the respective country. According to the Soviet proposal, the Italian treaty would have to be discussed by 20 countries, the Bulgarian and Hungarian by twelve each, the Romanian by eleven, and the Finnish by nine. Referring to the Potsdam Agreement, Molotov stated that the council may convoke a formal conference of the state(s) chiefly interested in seeking a solution to the particular problem.¹⁰⁶

Molotov wanted a two-thirds majority vote for the acceptance of any recommendation by a committee or by the full meeting. The Soviet Union,

¹⁰⁴ FRUS 1946/II: 692–694.

¹⁰⁵ FRUS 1946/II: 754–755.

¹⁰⁶ SANAKOEV–TSIBULEVSKY 1972: 401.

Byelorussia, and the Ukraine could count on the vote of the Slavic bloc – Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. If they could gather two more votes, they could block any recommendation of the 21-member conference. Bevin and Byrnes endeavored to make the recommendations of the CFM only advisory in nature and argued that the participants at the conference should be able to determine the procedural rules themselves.

On July 8, Molotov yielded on a number of issues. He agreed that the invitations should be sent out in the name of the CFM and that no particular reference be made to China. He agreed that the five political commissions – legal, drafting, military, Italian economic, and Balkan–Finnish economic –, would be under the control of the general session. He also agreed that France would participate in all five peace negotiations and that the two-thirds majority rule would be applied only to the political-territorial committees.

Bidault amended the last rule so that decisions made by a simple majority would also be submitted to the plenary session, where, however, a two-thirds majority was required to submit a question to the CFM.¹⁰⁷ The Great Powers could not reach an agreement on the agenda of the conference. The CFM made only recommendations to the Allied Powers regarding the agenda but agreed that the complete peace treaty proposals would be transmitted to the defeated countries. The American delegation reserved the right to accept or reject any further new recommendation regarding the agenda.

On July 9, the CFM sent out the invitations to the conference. The General Assembly of the UN was postponed to September 23. The draft texts of the five peace treaty proposals were completed by the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs on July 12. They were dispatched to the respective countries on the 19th and were published on the 29th, the official opening day of the conference.¹⁰⁸

Following the completion of the “second order” peace treaty proposals, the CFM addressed the central issue of the European peace settlements: the Austrian and German peace treaties. Until the spring of 1946, France disrupted Allied unity on Germany by insisting that the Rhine and Ruhr areas be separated from Germany. The Potsdam Agreement essentially lost its

¹⁰⁷ WARD 1981: 115–118.

¹⁰⁸ FRUS 1946/II: 781–842.

validity on German economic unity when, on May 3, 1946, General Lucius Clay, the military governor of the American Zone, suspended the reparation shipments to the Soviet Union.

On July 9, Molotov suggested extending Byrnes's disarmament recommendations to 40 years, which the secretary of state immediately accepted. Bevin saw three possible approaches to European peace: a balance of power between states of equal strength, domination by one power or two blocs of power, and united control by the four powers with the cooperation of their allies. Molotov recommended the economic unity and rebuilding of Germany, complete disarmament, the establishment of a reparations program, and the creation of a central German government. Bidault demanded that the Saar area be given to France, that the Ruhr be kept under international control, and that the Rhineland be separated from Germany. The American secretary of state proposed uniting the zones economically and selecting a group of deputy ministers of foreign affairs to address the German peace treaty drafts. The CFM finally agreed that, after the Paris conference, a separate session would be devoted to the German question.¹⁰⁹

On the last day of the second Paris session of the CFM, July 12, 1946, the American¹¹⁰ and British¹¹¹ delegations submitted their recommendations for an Austrian peace treaty – an almost verbatim copy of the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian draft peace treaties. Byrnes tried to cajole Molotov into accepting the Austrian treaty by indicating that it would enable the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops while also allowing British and American soldiers to return home to their anxiously waiting families.¹¹² Molotov was not impressed and made any initiation of the Austrian peace treaty contingent on the denazification of Austria and the removal of 437,000 refugees from Austrian territory.¹¹³ The ministers of foreign affairs postponed the discussion of the Austrian treaty until after the Paris conference.

¹⁰⁹ FRUS 1946/II: 842–913.

¹¹⁰ CFM (46) 119, June 20, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038.

¹¹¹ CFM (46) 151, June 26, 1946, PRO FO 371.59038.

¹¹² FRUS 1946/II: 914.

¹¹³ FRUS 1946/II: 939.

The second Paris session of the CFM did not change the order of negotiations determined in Potsdam, and the Austrian–German debate was postponed. However, the Italian–Bulgarian agreement and the proposed withdrawal of troops within 90 days after the signing of the peace treaties made it inevitable that the Red Army and Soviet diplomacy would plan for the post-treaty period.

In June and July 1947, the Soviet Union took unilateral steps in East-Central Europe that weakened the position of the Smallholders' Party in Hungary and of the opposition parties in Romania and Bulgaria while strengthening the Communist parties under its protection. In a note of July 7, 1946, Sviridov, the deputy chairman of the ACC in Hungary, demanded the disbandment of certain groups, primarily Catholic organizations.¹¹⁴ In Bulgaria, Sergey Biryuzov, the Soviet deputy chairman of the ACC, forced the resignation of Minister of Defense Damyan Velchev, one of the leaders of the independent Zveno Party. Velchev's supporters were arrested, and Biryuzov initiated a purge of the Bulgarian army, preventing the opposition from entering the government, despite this being mandated by the Moscow meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.¹¹⁵ In Romania, the Groza government accepted an election law that reduced the opposition parties' chances.¹¹⁶ The Soviet Union was trying to create a *fait accompli* for the time after the withdrawal of its forces.

As for Bulgaria, the United States could do little beyond continuing to withhold diplomatic recognition, evoking a possible refusal to sign the peace treaty, and threatening to withhold its signature from the Romanian peace treaty as well.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, Byrnes emphasized in a July 15, 1946, radio address that while the peace treaty drafts were not perfect, they were the best agreement the Big Four could reach. The secretary of state wanted the peace treaties signed before the Paris conference ended.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Knox Helm's telegram from Budapest, no. 750, July 4, 1946, PRO FO 371. 59063 R 10046/671/21.

¹¹⁵ Telegrams of Houston-Boswall, British Minister in Sofia, no. 545, June 23 and no. 633, July 12, and no. 671, July 20, 1946, PRO FO 371. 58520; LUNDESTAD 1975: 278.

¹¹⁶ LUNDESTAD 1975: 249–250.

¹¹⁷ LUNDESTAD 1975: 250, 279.

¹¹⁸ WARD 1981: 123.

Byrnes did not wish to use the unresolved Balkan peace treaty issues or the recognition of the Bulgarian government as bargaining chips, as he had already secured an acceptable agreement on key Italian matters – Trieste, the colonies, and reparations – as well as on convening the Paris conference. By the summer of 1946, the American secretary of state had essentially written off Romania and Bulgaria.

In secret diplomatic negotiations, the Great Powers successfully harmonized their interests on most articles of the peace treaties, bringing the most important segment of the peace negotiations to an end. The members of the CFM accepted an obligation not to introduce amendments at the Paris conference to any mutually accepted clause. The conference could accept recommendations only for the 26 subjects left open in the peace treaty proposals.

THE PARIS CONFERENCE AND THE HUNGARIAN PEACE DELEGATION

Georges Bidault, the French minister of foreign affairs, opened the Paris Conference at the Luxembourg Palace on July 29, 1946. He identified the absence of the United States and the Soviet Union as the reason why the post-World War I peace settlement failed. He presented the draft peace treaties of the CFM and the decisions of the Paris Conference on procedural questions as not final, emphasizing that this was why the representatives of the allied nations, who had actively participated in the war with substantial military forces, had convened in Paris on this day. Bidault referred to his correspondence with the American secretary of state in January 1946 and to the assurances of his American colleague – who had participated in the Moscow negotiations of the three ministers of foreign affairs – that the discussion at this conference would be as broad and as thorough as possible, and that the peace treaties would be finally drafted only after recommendations had received full and complete consideration. He expressed his sincere desire to find, if not ideal, at least reasonable solutions; solutions that were not incompatible with justice or honour and would help bring the pacifying factors desperately needed to this sorely stricken part of the world.

James F. Byrnes, the American secretary of state, reminded his audience that “because of our suffering during the war we want an effective peace which will stand guard against the recurrence of aggression, but we do not want a peace of vengeance.” Byrnes stated: “Prolonged mass occupation of other countries after they have been effectively disarmed is not the way to get

peace or the way to guard peace." He stressed the point: "When the enemy is vanquished, differences over the making of peace are bound to be differences among allies. ... That must not happen again. However difficult may be the paths of international cooperation, the United States is determined not to return to the policy of isolation." Byrnes pointed out that, for his part, he wished to listen to the opinions of the other victors before drafting the final formulation of the texts because peace treaties that determine boundaries and the disposition of colonies and territories cannot be effectively made if they are not accepted by the principal Allied states. He believed that "if the principal Allied States had not attempted to harmonize their views before this conference, I hesitate to say how many months this conference would have to go on while efforts were being made to reconcile their positions." Byrnes hoped "that all meetings of the conference and its committees will be public." At the last session of the CFM, Byrnes promised that the United States would stand by its agreements in the council. "But if the conference should, by a two thirds vote of the governments here represented, make a contrary recommendation, the United States will use its influence to secure the adoption of that recommendation by the Council."

Clement Attlee, the British prime minister, spoke in lieu of Bevin, who was ill. He said: "We are seeking to make a beginning in reestablishing normal relationships between nations by bringing back into the European family circle five erring members. They were not mainly responsible for the calamity which fell upon the world, but they have been accessories. With their support or acquiescence the Governments of these peoples joined in the attack on civilization. To a greater or lesser degree in the later stages of the struggle these peoples have sought to make atonement." The British prime minister noted: "We should not be devoting ourselves to examining historical claims or the supposed interests of particular States. We should keep before our minds the simple objective of removing from the hearts of the common people in all lands the brooding fear of another war and of enabling them to live together as good citizens not only of their own States but of Europe and the world." Attlee continued, "the major part of dealing with Germany and the German people remains," and added, "the greater part of the drafts before you have been agreed by the Four Powers. They

are put forward as embodying the greatest measure of agreement." Attlee was looking forward to the recommendations made on the open questions. He further stated:

No doubt many will feel that the differences between the Four Powers have taken too long to resolve. But the main fact is that we have now found agreement on many important matters. This in itself is a matter for rejoicing and not an occasion for criticism. For, quite frankly, without such agreement the chances of producing acceptable Peace Treaties would have been remote. As the war recedes there also recedes the stimulus of the common danger which brought us together. The enemy is broken and humble. As States, Germany and Japan can hardly be said to count at present; but let us never forget that they are still there and that their capacity for making trouble, if there is any disunion in the Allied ranks, is still very real. Let us not forget either that what brought us together was not so much the aggressor himself as the spirit behind the aggression. This spirit of militant totalitarian nationalism, the spirit that animated Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese warlords, has not yet been altogether killed.

Molotov, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs, wished to entrust the Paris Conference with the task of the five peace conferences for the purpose of producing a just, solid, and lasting European peace and security. He said: "Justice demands above all that we have regard in practice for the interests of the countries which were attacked and suffered as a result of aggression." Molotov supported the Allies in their just demands for the punishment of war criminals, the indemnification of the damage caused to them, and the establishment of a just peace. "It must be clear to us," he said, "that the attacking countries which went to war as Germany's allies should be held responsible for the crimes of their ruling circles. Aggression and invasion of foreign countries must not go unpunished if one is really anxious to prevent new aggressions and invasions." He further stated:

The USSR is fully conscious of the fact that as a result of democratic reforms the countries which were allied to Hitlerite Germany took, in the

last stages of the war, a new path, and in certain cases, rendered the Allied States considerable assistance in the struggle for the complete liquidation of the German aggressor. It is precisely for this reason that the Soviet Union admits that these States should compensate for the damage caused to them not in full but in part in a definite and restricted measure. On the other hand, the Soviet Union is opposed to all attempts to impose on the ex-satellites of Germany all sorts of outside interference in their economic life and declines such demands on these countries and such pressure on these peoples as are incompatible with their sovereignty and national dignity. It will not take much to see this when one becomes familiar with the texts of the armistice for Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland which were fully made public immediately after their signature. Since then, on the initiative of the Soviet Government, a number of clauses laid down by the armistice agreements were lightened, which fact is to be accounted for by the desire to facilitate to these countries the transition to economic and general national revival after the war. It is also on this basis that peace treaties with these countries should be drawn up.

Molotov stressed Great Power cooperation: "It is natural that the Declaration on Liberated Europe, adopted at the Crimea Conference of the leaders of the Allied Powers, Great Britain, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, laid a special stress on the necessity to destroy the last vestige of Nazism and Fascism to enable the liberated peoples to create democratic institutions of their own choice." He attacked critics of Great Power cooperation: "We cannot overlook the fact that at present the decisions of the Council of Foreign Ministers are assailed by all sorts of reactionary elements who are stuffed with absurd anti-Soviet prejudices and who base their calculation on the frustration of the cooperation among the Great Powers. The draft peace treaties submitted to the Conference deal a new blow to the efforts of these gentlemen."

Finally, he defined the role of the Paris Conference: "Our Conference is attended by the delegations, with equal rights, which represent 21 nations. Here every one of us has the opportunity to state his views freely and to express his agreement or disagreement with this or that part of any

peace treaty. ... Here the views of the states ex-satellites of Germany will also be heard.”

The speeches of the participants of the CFM faithfully reflect the differing peace conceptions of the Great Powers, the different role assigned to the Paris Conference, the lenient or punitive nature of the peace process, and the difference in the peace goals to be achieved. During the first weeks of the conference, procedural matters provoked an open clash between the Great Powers.¹

PROCEDURAL DEBATES AT THE PARIS CONFERENCE
AND THE AUDIENCE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE FORMER ENEMY COUNTRIES

The task of the conference of the 21 victorious countries, summoned by the CFM for July 29 – October 15, 1946, was to accept the recommendations for the five peace treaty proposals and to refer them to the meeting of the council in New York. The debate about procedures and rules of order began at the Paris meeting of the council and was continued by a committee consisting of the principal delegates to the conference at their 12 sessions. The representatives of the smaller allied countries soon realized that the conference was consultative in nature and that it was a forum subordinate to the council. Their recommendations would be considered only for the still open questions and even there only if they happened to agree with the consensus of the Great Powers. The procedures accepted in Potsdam and Moscow were modified at the council's session in Paris. Because of a series of postponements, the conference was not called for May 1, 1946, but for July 29. France was allowed to participate in the debate on the Balkan and Finnish peace treaty proposals, and instead of a unified, single proposal by the CFM, texts reflecting differences of opinion were submitted to the Allied and Associated Powers.

¹ Conférence de Paris, 1^{re}, 2^e, 3^e séance, July 29–31, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 156, MAE AD; FRUS 1946/III: 26–29, 33–39, 48–52.

In the procedural debates of the Paris Conference between August 1–9, 1946, the following matters were settled: the membership of the various committees, the sequence of acting on recommendations, the control of press publicity in plenary and committee meetings, and the methodology of giving an audience to the representatives of the defeated countries. The fact that the logical sequence of the peace negotiations was upset and that there were increasing differences in the way the Great Powers thought about the war provoked a debate that was very painful for Hungary. This debate focused on Hungarian political and territorial matters and on whether Poland could participate in the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission. The 21 countries participating in the Paris Conference were selected on the basis of the Moscow formula. Other than the members of the CFM, those allied countries could participate in the conference that fought actively and with substantial forces in the European theatres. Needless to say, all of them were interested primarily in the German question.² It was at the Paris Conference that the American principle of “One War, One Peace” clashed with the Soviet contention that only those countries could participate in the peace treaty negotiations with any one of the five former enemy countries that were at war with and fought against that particular country.

The application of the “One War, One Peace” formula created major anomalies. Poland’s army, under the command of General Władysław Anders, fought only in Italy, but Poland – with Soviet, Czechoslovak, and Yugoslav assistance – tried to prove that it also fought in the east. On August 1, 1946, Alexander Bramson, the representative of the Polish government, asked for recognition that Hungary had been *de facto* at war with Poland and, therefore, it was justified that Poland participate in the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission and in the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, where Poland intended to file a claim of \$20 million in reparation from Hungary. The Polish diplomat admitted that Hungary had never declared war on Poland, but it could be regarded as having been in a state of war with that country, because the Hungarian government signed the Tripartite Pact on November 20, 1940,³ broke off diplomatic relations with Poland on December 7, 1940, and the Hungarian troops committed

² For the Moscow agreement, see FÜLÖP 1987b: 170.

³ JUHÁSZ 1988: 244.

aggression and crimes contrary to the laws of war on Polish territory.⁴ The following day, the Polish delegate softened his stand, pointing out that Hungary was moving toward a democratic system, but in order to overcome past divisions that divided the two countries in the past and, in the interest of lasting peace and friendly relations, he demanded that the state of war be recognized in retrospect and that Poland have the right to vote on and sign the peace treaty.

Molotov supported the Polish request because Hungary was almost a neighbor to Poland and Hungarian troops had joined German forces without a declaration of war and had occupied a part of Poland. Therefore, Poland had the right to participate in the conclusion of the Hungarian peace treaty. Masaryk, the leader of the Czechoslovak delegation, and Moša Pijade, the leader of the Yugoslav delegation, held that Molotov's arguments were well-founded and correct and supported the Polish demand. Byrnes and McNeil rejected the Polish demand in the name of the United States and Great Britain and, therefore, Poland did not insist that its request be approved.⁵ This peculiar interlude was due to the endeavors of the Polish government, friendly with the Soviet Union, at the Paris Conference to minimize the achievements of the Anders army in Italy and to be granted the right to participate in at least one additional peace negotiation beyond Italy.⁶ Poland evidently would not need to demonstrate its right to participate in the negotiations about the German peace treaty. In the case of Hungary, participation by any country other than the Great Powers who had signed the armistice agreement and the victorious neighboring countries was open to serious question. The matter of accepting the recommendations of the conference with a simple or two-thirds majority divided the Great Powers. It was this question that led to the first public clash between Molotov and Byrnes.⁷ The Soviet minister of foreign affairs defended the principle of Great

⁴ Conférence de Paris, Commission de Règlement, 3^e séance, August 1, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 156, MAE AD.

⁵ Conférence de Paris, Commission de Règlement, 4^e séance, August 2, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 156, MAE AD.

⁶ Gabriella Szabó's conversation with Kazimierz Dębnicki, Second Secretary at the Polish Embassy in Paris, August 10, 1946, KŮM BéO 114/Bé., ŮMKL.

⁷ Conférence de Paris, Commission de Règlement, 7^e séance, August 5, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 156, MAE AD.

Power unanimity and cooperation and, referring to the responsibilities of the CFM, insisted on the two-thirds principle. The Soviet Union could count on the rest of the so-called "Slavic Bloc," which also included Byelorussia, Ukraine, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, and was known as "the Six," to reject any recommendation submitted to it, particularly if it could count on the vote of the United States, Great Britain, and France acting according to previously agreed-upon conditions. In contrast, the United States delegation preferred that recommendations be passed by a simple majority because this would win for it the support of the small countries and help to bring pressure on the Soviet Union. The British delegation wished to submit to the council both the two-thirds and simple majority recommendations. A compromise recommendation by the French and the Soviet Union was that the latter would be submitted to the council only if there was unanimity to do so. At the end of the Procedures Committee deliberation, Byrnes was successful in having the British proposal accepted by a 15 to 6 vote.

Thus, for the first time in the history of the postwar conferences, two camps were established: the Slavic Bloc and the Western Bloc.⁸ The majority decision of the Paris Conference, however, did not tie Molotov's hands. He declared that the forum making the decisions at the sessions of the CFM would consider only those recommendations that were made at the Paris Conference by a two-thirds majority.⁹ So far as Hungarian matters were concerned, the CFM's Paris Conference maintained the principle that decisions would be made by the three Great Powers. In the noncritical open questions, however, there was frequent and open disagreement among the Great Powers. Insisting on a democratic voting process, the United States wished to show the small countries that their interests could be expressed when the peace treaty stipulations were drafted. The Soviet delegation endeavored to limit the debate to the hitherto undecided issues at the conference and protect the interests of the Slavic Bloc until doing so threatened the unanimity of the Great Powers. Instead of public statements and debates, the British delegation endeavored to arrive at solutions by secret

⁸ WARD 1981: 129–133.

⁹ WARD 1981: 129–133.

diplomatic methods. France, in the role of host, attempted to arbitrate in the conflicts between the Soviet Union and the United States.

On August 1, 1946, Byrnes succeeded in having the Commission on Procedures agree that the plenary and committee meetings of the conference would be open to the representatives of the press. Consequently, at the Paris Conference, it became impossible to create a true negotiating atmosphere or to have an honest debate. Every speaker was aware that his words would immediately be known to the public of his home country and spoke not so much to his fellow delegates as to the worldwide audience. The increasing rigidity of positions and the sharp verbal clashes did not favor meritorious discussions. For this reason, the Paris Conference produced significantly less progress in drafting the peace treaty proposals than the secret negotiations of the CFM.¹⁰

At the August 9 meeting, the Yugoslav delegation raised the question of inviting the representatives of the former enemy countries and hearing their views.¹¹ The 21 victorious powers participating in the Paris Conference decided that between August 10 and 15, the delegations of the defeated countries might speak but could not participate in the work of the conference. Vyshinsky, the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs, considered this a significant departure from Versailles, where no hearing at all was granted to the defeated countries. Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak minister of foreign affairs, protested against the former enemy countries being given more rights and privileges than those granted to the Allied Powers. He wished to preserve the right of the victors to respond to the comments made by the representatives of the defeated countries at the plenary sessions.¹² Apart from their single opportunity to speak, the representatives of the defeated countries were not only excluded from the plenary sessions but, on a recommendation by the United States, were excluded from participating in any committee of the conference. The committees would decide whether they would hear the defeated countries or not. As we will see, this would happen only if one of the victorious states initiated an invitation to this effect. The

¹⁰ WARD 1981: 129–133; KERTESZ 1984: 175–176.

¹¹ RDCP I: 137–151.

¹² RDCP I: 147.

procedures accepted were similar to court procedures used to examine the accused party. The representative of the defeated country was taken to the committee room to present a response to a stated question and was then excused from the room. Under these conditions, it was patently impossible to have a peace negotiation between the victors and the vanquished. The only change from the original Soviet proposal was that the vanquished could state their views not after the acceptance of the recommendations of the conference but before it.

The principal representatives of the defeated countries were heard after August 10, in the sequence determined at Potsdam. Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi spoke as an anti-Fascist, democrat, and Italian. He argued against the harsh peace terms, asked that Italy be recognized as a co-belligerent, pointed out the punitive nature of the peace proposal – manifest particularly in the territorial settlement –, stated Italy's view on the Trieste question, submitted Italy's demands for reparations vis-à-vis Germany, discussed the matter of the Italian colonies, and questioned the legitimacy of confiscating the Italian fleet. The Italian exposition was listened to by the victors in a hostile atmosphere. In the name of the Yugoslav delegation, Edvard Kardelj rejected the Italian claims.

Tătărescu, the Romanian minister of foreign affairs, expressed his thanks for the nullification of the Vienna Award and for the reestablishment of the January 1, 1938, Hungarian–Romanian border. He asked that in the introduction to the draft peace treaty, Romania's belligerent status be recognized starting August 24, 1944, and not only against Germany but against Horthy's Hungary as well. On this basis, Romania demanded reparations and compensation from both Germany and Hungary.¹³ Tătărescu objected to the punitive nature of the military articles and asked that the reparation demands be reduced. He rejected the principle of the most favored nation, protested against the severity of the economic clauses of the draft treaty providing for compensation to United Nations nationals, and pointed out that it was unjust to force Romania to relinquish its rights vis-à-vis

¹³ Memorandum on Romania's restitution demands, September 1946, KÜM BéO 132/Conf., ÚMKL. The sum demanded by Romania was \$508 million; *Adevărul*, June 30, 1946, reproduced in FÜLÖP 1987a: 204–217; FRUS 1946/III: 175–184, 190–198.

Germany. Tătărescu stated that the minorities living on Romanian territory were guaranteed full freedom.¹⁴ Vyshinsky recommended that the sum of reparation be reduced in recognition of Romania's change of sides. Masaryk supported Vyshinsky's position, citing Romania's role in the liberation of Czechoslovakia.¹⁵

On August 14, Georgi Kulishev, the Bulgarian minister of foreign affairs, also demanded that Bulgaria be granted co-belligerent status. He rejected the Greek territorial demands and, citing Bulgaria's rights established after World War I, demanded access to the Aegean Sea. He also questioned the validity of the economic articles and particularly of the Greek reparation claims. Kulishev supported the Soviet position on the international control of the Danube according to which only the riparian countries had the right to participate.¹⁶ Gyöngyösi presented the comments of the Hungarian peace delegation at the 17th plenary session of the conference on August 14.¹⁷

Finally, on August 15, Carl Enckell, the Finnish minister of foreign affairs asked that the demands made in the peace treaty after the 1940 Winter War and in the 1944 Moscow armistice concerning territorial changes be reduced, and that the reparation demands also be reduced. He emphasized: "It is the sincere desire of the Finnish Government that the peace to come shall be one of reconciliation, and pave the way to a lasting friendship between the Finnish people and its great neighbor laying the foundation for the existence of Finland as a free and independent nation."¹⁸

On August 15, Byrnes transformed the conference into an American-Soviet debating forum when he criticized the Soviet contention that the other former enemy countries were more democratic than Italy because "their views coincided with those of the Soviet Union." He took exception to Molotov's position, as well as that of the Ukrainian minister of foreign affairs, when they attacked America's ally, Greece, and defended Bulgaria. In response to Molotov's accusation that some countries got rich off the

¹⁴ RDCP II: 226-233, 280-286.

¹⁵ RDCP II: 287-290.

¹⁶ RDCP II: 292-299.

¹⁷ RDCP II: 309-318.

¹⁸ RDCP II: 333-336; FRUS 1946/III: 239-240.

war, Byrnes reminded him of the \$11 billion lend-lease agreement that the United States granted the Soviet Union when it was in danger. Vyshinsky charged that the United States wished to rule the world with handouts. The speech of the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs was received with applause by the Czechoslovak delegation, whereupon Byrnes ordered the suspension of the \$50 million loan at 2½ percent interest granted by the American government to Czechoslovakia. During the following weeks, it became clear that Czechoslovakia had given Romania \$10 million from this loan at an interest of 13%. As a consequence, the American assessment of Czechoslovakia plummeted, affecting negotiations at the Paris Conference.¹⁹ When American planes were shot down over Yugoslavia on August 9 and 20, 1946, a new crisis erupted among the conference participants. Byrnes threatened to take action through the UN Security Council, and, following Molotov's intervention, the Yugoslav government was forced to bow before the American threat.²⁰

On August 16, 1946, the conference established its commissions. All 21 countries participated in the General (which in fact was not meeting), Legal and Drafting, and Military Commissions. In the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish Political and Territorial Commissions, as well as in the Italian and Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, those Allies participated who had actively fought against the specific former enemy country. The only exception was made for France and the members of the CFM. Between August 13 and October 15, the Political and Territorial Commission met with Italy 41 times and the Economic Commission 34 times. The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission met 20 times between August 16 and October 5, while the Bulgarian one met 16 times, the Romanian 12 times, the Finnish 8 times, the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission 51 times, the Military Commission 37 times, and the Legal and Drafting Commission 16 times.²¹ As the numbers show, the greatest debates

¹⁹ RDCP II: 324–332; Steinhardt's telegrams from Prague, no. 1511, August 14, 1946, and no. 1686, September 18, 1946, and Byrnes's telegrams from Paris to Washington, no. 1100, August 30, 1946, and no. 4608, September 17, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 212–222; WARD 1981: 136.

²⁰ WARD 1981: 137.

²¹ RDCP IV.

took place in the cases of Italy and Hungary. The members of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission included the four Great Powers, as well as Ukraine, Byelorussia, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Australia, South Africa, India, Canada, and New Zealand. The Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission included all of the above, plus Greece.

Because of the tensions developing among the Great Powers, the five peace treaty proposals were debated for 79 days instead of the originally planned five weeks. A total of 53 two-thirds majority recommendations and 41 simple majority recommendations were drafted. Byrnes's speech in Stuttgart on September 6, in which he outlined the United States policy vis-à-vis Germany, marked a turning point in the conference. He promised that the United States would not withdraw from Germany as long as the occupying forces of other countries remained there. He recommended merging the American and British zones, reestablishing German political and economic unity, and creating a democratic central government. To counterbalance the French territorial claims, he questioned the finality of the Oder–Neisse border.

On the other hand, Henry Wallace, the American secretary of commerce, questioned the legitimacy of the firm American policy toward the Soviet Union in a speech on September 12. Wallace indicated that a genuine peace between the United States and the Soviet Union was necessary and that only the recognition of their mutual interests could achieve this. Byrnes saw this speech as criticism of his policies, which had Truman's support, and therefore, on September 17, again submitted his resignation. On September 20, Truman was forced to ask for Wallace's resignation to resolve a conflict that temporarily paralyzed America's foreign policy. However, the incident contributed to an easing of the tensions between the two countries. Stalin responded favorably to Wallace's speech, stating in a press interview that he doubted there was any danger of another war between East and West. This made it possible to bring the Paris Conference to a close.²²

²² WARD 1981: 139–144; Stalin's statement for the *Sunday Times*, September 26, 1946; telegrams of the French Chargé d'Affaires from Moscow, nos. 1899–1900 and 1903–1904, September 26, 1946, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, URSS, vol. 34, MAE AD.

During the conference, the CFM met seven times after August 29, always unofficially, while the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs convened 10 times. Due to the very slow progress at the Paris Conference, it was decided on September 24 to accelerate the sessions' activities. There was also a debate over postponing the UN meeting scheduled for September 23 in New York to allow for a further CFM meeting. In this case, Molotov indicated his readiness to sign the peace treaties during the Paris Conference. Bevin sought an agreement on a date to discuss the Austrian and German peace treaties, and, on his recommendation, it was agreed to complete the work of the committees by October 5 and hold the closing session on October 15. On October 4, a Soviet recommendation was accepted, according to which the CFM would meet in New York, at the same time as the UN, in order to work out the final text of the peace treaties. After November 4, the CFM discussed the conclusion of the five peace negotiations and the German question.²³

AUDIENCE OF THE HUNGARIAN PEACE DELEGATION
AND ITS STATEMENTS ABOUT THE DRAFT OF
THE HUNGARIAN PEACE TREATY: AMENDMENTS
RECOMMENDED BY THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

The Hungarian draft peace treaty, prepared by the CFM, was discussed by the Hungarian government in an extraordinary session on August 6, 1946.²⁴ The Council of Ministers prepared a separate memorandum on war guilt, emphasizing that Hungary had contributed to Germany's defeat by fulfilling its obligations under the armistice agreement.²⁵ Gyöngyösi considered it not only unnecessary but outright harmful to debate Czechoslovakia's participation in the war or to mention that Slovakia fought alongside

²³ WARD 1981: 144–148.

²⁴ Minutes of the extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers, August 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 166/Bé. res., ÚMKL, quoted in BALOGH 1988: 222.

²⁵ Memorandum on war responsibility. August 16, 1946, KÜM BéO 170/Konf., ÚMKL. Reprinted in BARANYAI 1947a: 67–84. For the circumstances of the transmission of the September 3, 1946, memorandum, see KERTESZ 1984: 193.

Germany. Two questions arose regarding the political borders reflecting the Trianon status quo. The Hungarian minister of foreign affairs proposed the following for consideration:

Should we feature the 22,000 km² territorial demand vis-à-vis Romania, even though we know that none of the Great Powers will support it and that it does not follow ethnic lines or should we rather emphasize minority protection? Should we emphasize that the territorial demands are actually to serve the minority protection issue and that, in view of the fact that the Allies wished to resolve this matter in some other way, should we ask for an institutional guarantee of the rights of the Hungarian minority in Romania and for a minor ethnic border adjustment?²⁶

Thus, the Hungarian government prioritized issue of minority protection over nationality equilibrium, which had been recommended by the CFM in London and was based on the September 1945 Istria precedent. It also prepared a territorial demand of 4,000–5,000 km², in line with the American recommendation of May 17, 1946.²⁷ At the Paris Conference, in Gyöngyösi's August 14 speech, and in the Hungarian peace delegation's comments, the 22,000 km² was presented as Hungary's official position, while the ethnic border adjustment was mentioned only during the commission meeting.

Returning to the Council of Ministers' position on political borders, Gyöngyösi addressed Czechoslovakia's territorial demands vis-à-vis Hungary, stating that the Czechoslovaks wished to eliminate the Hungarian population living there through population exchange and forced transfer. He felt that every effort had to be made to thwart this endeavor and to protect the rights of the Hungarians remaining there. According to Gyöngyösi: "The Czechoslovak state does not wish to have any minorities within its borders and would have them only if there would be some regulatory activity by

²⁶ Minutes of the extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers, August 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 166/Bé. res., ÚMKL.

²⁷ KERTESZ 1984: 208–209. Kertész admits that the border adjustment demands were based on Philip Moseley's personal opinion of May 17, 1946. It was this position that was approved by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly on August 5, 1946. See BALOGH 1988: 220–221. At the August 6 meeting of the Council of Ministers, Gyöngyösi mentioned the 11,000 km² Small Parts (Partium) recommendation as a minor border adjustment plan.

the UN that would be compulsory for all UN members.”²⁸ The Hungarian government did not consider the human rights article of the draft peace treaty adequate and therefore asked the 21 victorious countries to grant collective minority rights.

At the August 6 meeting of the Council of Ministers, Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy determined that when the peace treaty was to take effect, Hungary’s obligations to the occupying forces would have come to an end. The status of the liaison troops would have to be defined more precisely to allow the Hungarian defense forces to have and maintain good relations with them. The government wanted the return of prisoners of war, as well as of deportees and civilians, mostly Germans, within one year after the peace treaty was enacted. In discussing the compensation and reparation issues, the ministers asked that the June 15, 1945, Hungarian–Soviet agreement’s price determinations be reviewed and that the reparation demands be reduced. The Soviet Union extended the payment period from six to eight years, but Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia did not follow suit, and hence these matters would have to be discussed directly by Hungary and her neighbors.

In his comment, János Erős pointed out that the price schedule tripled the total of the restitution amount, and unless this was changed, “it would condemn all of Hungary to slavery for 100 years.” Antal Balla urged that the Hungarian assets in Germany be defined accurately and that Soviet Russia’s assistance be sought in the matter of confiscating Hungarian assets abroad because the Soviets were more favorably inclined in this matter than the British, Americans, and French. The Soviet version of Article 19 of the Hungarian draft peace treaty ruled: “The limitations imposed in respect to Hungarian property on the territory of Germany ... shall be withdrawn simultaneously with the coming into force of the present treaty. The rights of Hungarian owners with respect to the disposal of the above-mentioned property shall be restored.”

The article further stated that the goods taken to Germany after January 20, 1945, had to be returned to Hungary. According to the British, American, and French proposal, Hungary would have to relinquish all financial

²⁸ Minutes of the extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers, August 6, 1946, KÜM BéO 166/Bé. res., ÚMKL.

demands vis-à-vis Germany, arising between September 1, 1939, and May 8, 1945, as well as all intergovernmental and reparation demands. At the August 6 meeting of the council, it was decided to support the Soviet proposal because it guaranteed that the Hungarian demands vis-à-vis Germany would remain valid. The Council of Ministers declared that the British, American, and French proposal was unacceptable because "Hungary had suffered immeasurable harm from the German occupation and German looting. There is neither a legal nor moral basis for Germany's enemies forcing Hungary to relinquish its reparation claims vis-à-vis Germany. The only qualification would be that Hungary, as a former German ally, would grant the reparation demands of the Allied Powers priority but could not relinquish her own."²⁹

The August 6, 1946, the Council of Ministers meeting dealt primarily with the open economic clauses of the Hungarian draft peace treaty proposals. The question of reparations had caused frictions between the Americans and the Soviets ever since the Hungarian armistice agreement. For this reason, the government felt that in order to eliminate the price differentials, a separate agreement was needed between Hungary and the Soviet Union, outside of the requirements of the peace treaty. On recommendation of Gyöngyösi, the Council of Ministers was prepared to grant priority to the reparation matter but demanded that, in the implementation of the economic demands, Hungary's ability to pay be taken into consideration. The members of the government resented the fact that the dismantled factories and businesses were considered spoils of war, while Hungary had to give up its right to demand compensation for the damages caused by the Allies during the war. The size of the reparation demands, the method of enforcement, and the fact that the right of interpretation of the debated questions of the peace treaty was reserved to the Great Powers was also resented by the ministers. The Council of Ministers approved the position to be taken relative to the Hungarian peace proposals.³⁰

The Hungarian peace delegation was established by a Council of Ministers fiat on July 11, 1946. János Gyöngyösi, the minister of foreign affairs,

²⁹ KÜM BÉO 166/Bé. res., ÚMKL.

³⁰ KÜM BÉO 166/Bé. res., ÚMKL.

was its leader. His deputy was Ernő Gerő, who was in Paris from August 22 to September 9. István Kertész was the secretary-general of the peace delegation and was in charge of administrative matters. The political delegation consisted of Pál Auer, Aladár Szegedy-Maszák, Gyula Szekfű, Pál Sebestyén, Chief Economic Delegate László Faragó, and Chief Military Expert Col. István Szemes. Mihály Károlyi, István Bede, Zoltán Baranyai, and General György Rakovszky spent shorter periods of time in Paris as advisors to the delegation. Expert committees were established for Romania (Béla Demeter, László Gáldi, Imre Jakabffy, Tibor Mikó, and Miklós Takácsy), for Czechoslovakia (István Révay, Sándor Vájlok, and Oszkár Bethlen), for economics (László Faragó, István Vásárhelyi, Lóránd Dabasi Schweng, Arthur Székely, and Lajos Trajánovits), and for military questions (István Szemes, Jenő Czebe, and György Rakovszky).³¹

Gyöngyösi gave his presentation of the Hungarian peace treaty plans at the 17th plenary session of the Paris Conference on August 14, 1946. In accordance with the resolution of the Hungarian Council of Ministers, Gyöngyösi asked that it be recognized that “it is a new and democratic Hungary that appears today before the Conference. The liberating forces of 1848 and the democratic energy of 1918 are united in her.” He referred to a complimentary memorandum of Marshal Voroshilov, which stated: “Hungary had contributed to the success of the war the Allies fought against Germany, did away with the large estates, ruthlessly acted against the criminals of the previous regimes, held free elections, etc.” On this basis, Voroshilov declared that Hungary’s wartime responsibilities were limited and that the Hungarian people could not be held accountable even if the highly questionable principle of collective responsibility were enforced.³² Gyöngyösi focused his presentation on the rights of the Hungarian minorities living beyond the borders of Hungary:

³¹ István Kertész: “A magyar béke delegáció adminisztrációjának szervezete és működése” [Organization and Function of the Hungarian Peace Delegation], October 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 200/Bé., 186–188, ÚMKL. For the participation of Hungarian Communists, Ernő Gerő and Elek Bolgár, see the conversation of Frederick Merrill and Pál Auer, Paris, August 1, 1946, CFM files, FRUS 1946/III: 84; DEC report on Mihály Károlyi, August 30, 1945, série Z, Europe 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 25, MAE AD.

³² Gyöngyösi’s letter, August 14, 1946, KÜM BéO CP(PLEN) 17, ÚMKL; PRO FO 371.59039 R 12233/2609/21; RDCP II: 319–322; FRUS 1946/III: 210–220.

The wish to see all Hungarians reunited within the frontiers of one national State should seem legitimate. Nevertheless it appears that the realization of this aim is rendered difficult by geographical and political obstacles, not easily solved. That is why the constantly acute problem consists – as the frontiers cannot be altered – in modifying the importance of the frontiers and in assuring to the Hungarians, living on the territory of another State, liberties that are essential conditions of democracy, i.e. the right to live independently, free of want and fear, maintaining their national character. Unfortunately, I am sorry to be compelled to observe that, very often, on (in) our regions, the condition of those belonging to a national minority, consists in being not only regarded as nationals of another state, but being also deprived of the exercise of human rights and, partly, of the guarantee of human dignity.

Gyöngyösi stressed that the settlement which followed World War I contained clauses regarding territories populated by minorities. These clauses did not always guarantee full respect of human rights, but since their application was controlled by the League of Nations, there was at least possibility of a right to appeal. Gyöngyösi continued: “We are also aware that Hitlerite Germany has known, for its own imperialist political needs, how to make full use of the guarantees assured to national minorities by the treaties. But the fact that she misused them does not justify the abandonment of a necessary guarantee. This is confirmed by the claims advanced by the representatives of international Jewish organizations, the most authoritative in the matter of the protection of minorities rights, as the result of the cruel persecutions they have endured.”

Gyöngyösi reminded the conference that the United Nations Charter and the declaration of principles contained in the drafts of the peace treaties mention only certain liberties, leaving out the right to choose one's domicile, the right to choose one's language of instruction, the right to work, and the right to enterprise. He reasoned that, in a world torn by passions and national intolerance resulting from the war, it is precisely these liberties that must be assured. Therefore, it would seem necessary, until the entry into force of the code to be issued by the United Nations Organization, to come to an agreement whereby the states with mixed Central and Eastern

European populations should pledge themselves to respect the exercise of these liberties.³³

To resolve the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute permanently, Gyöngyösi requested “the return of only 22,000 of the 103,000 km² of the Transylvania, which lay within the boundaries of Hungary before World War I,” adding that “the two nations would therefore be equally interested in a satisfactory solution of the problem of minorities, with the result that wide territorial autonomies may be granted to them on both sides of the frontier.” He asked the conference to invite Romania to engage in bilateral discussions with Hungary. If these were unsuccessful, he proposed that the conference dispatch a special committee, the report of which would be submitted to the conference. He considered this matter crucial because “anxiety is felt for the Hungarians not only in regard to the exercise by them of their political rights but mainly on account of the danger to which their status of equality in the economic plan is exposed with the consequent considerable impoverishment of the Hungarian population in Transylvania which is already apparent.”³⁴ Gyöngyösi saw no moral or legal justification for the Romanian claims for reparations against Hungary. He protested against the expulsion of 650,000 Hungarians living in Slovakia, deprived of their national status (citizenship) and their most elementary human rights:

The forcible ejection of 200,000 Hungarians from Slovakia in addition to the population exchange is not only morally and politically unjustifiable, but if a Hungarian government could be found willing to accept it under outside pressure, it would be digging its own grave and the grave of Hungarian democracy by so doing. The land and the people, who have tilled it for centuries and implanted their civilization therein, are indissolubly linked together. Such a bond could only be forcibly broken by violation of the fundamental laws of human existence. Czechoslovakia wants to keep territory inhabited by Hungarians. In that case let her keep the Hungarians also and give them the full rights of the individual and the citizen. If for any reason Czechoslovakia refuses to do so and insists on the forcible removal of

³³ BALOGH 1988: 229–230; FÜLÖP 1991a: 75.

³⁴ Gyöngyösi's intervention, August 14, 1946, KÜM BéO 36/Bé., ÚMKL.

the Hungarian minority, the Hungarian Government would be compelled to maintain the principle that the land is the people's.³⁵

Gyöngyösi asked the conference to dispatch an international expert panel. He characterized the economic clauses as reducing the country to permanent poverty, with the population living on the brink of starvation. He also took exception to the proposal to liquidate Hungarian assets located in the lands of the Allies and to the negation of Hungarian demands for reparation and compensation from Germany and its former allies. At the same time, he promised that "Hungary is anxious to comply with the reparation obligations we assumed under the Armistice but it has been impossible to make provision in our stabilisation budget for the service of our pre-war debts and the payments involved in the restitution of Allied property as provided for in the draft treaty." In conclusion, the Hungarian foreign minister welcomed the possibility of becoming a member of the UN as a sign of a guarantee for lasting peace.³⁶

Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak minister of foreign affairs, responded to Gyöngyösi's presentation provocatively at the plenary session of the conference on August 15. At the beginning of his talk, Masaryk posed the question: "Who won this war? The United Nations or Hungary?" He rejected Hungary's arguments about Czechoslovak minority policies and added: "The transfer of population is not our idea. It worked well after the Greco-Turkish war. ... The behaviour of the German and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia is very similar. ... After all these unspeakable experiences, can you wonder that we did not give back all the rights and privileges of which the Hungarians had taken such abusive advantage for so long?" Masaryk considered it legitimate to have a "real final solution" and to remove the Hungarian minority, a constant source of unrest and recurring revisionism.

He protested against easing Hungary's economic situation, arguing that it was due to her wartime activities and the inflation that was produced by Hungary itself. He cynically added: "It is obviously easier to appeal to the

³⁵ FRUS 1946/III: 215–219.

³⁶ FRUS 1946/III: 215–219.

generosity of others than to work by the sweat of one's brow."³⁷ Kuzma Venediktovich Kiselyov, the Byelorussian delegate, pointed to Hungary's wartime responsibilities but did see her turning against Germany as a mitigating circumstance. He agreed with Masaryk's statement that a source of conflict that could cause further trouble in the relations between Slovakia and Hungary had to be removed. According to Kiselyov, the transfer of the Hungarians would stabilize the peace in this part of Europe and solidify the new, democratic Hungary as well.³⁸ Secretary of State Byrnes commented on the procedural debates of the Paris Conference and the economic reconstruction plans of the peace treaty proposals. The American delegation considered it useful that, after the CFM produced a unified position on all fundamental issues, the representatives of the former enemy countries could be heard and have their proposals submitted in writing, prior to the committees beginning their work. The United States had sought no territorial or other exclusive advantages for itself from this war, but insisted on the principle of equality and on the principle of the most favored nation. The United States merely required that, during a period of 18 months, Italy, the three Balkan countries, and Finland would accord non-discriminatory treatment in commercial matters to those members of the United Nations which, reciprocally, would grant similar treatment to them in like manner. This is not a punitive article of the treaty.³⁹

Vyshinsky attributed the debated issues of the Hungarian peace treaty proposals to the Anglo-American endeavor to place additional burdens and demands on the vanquished. He called the Soviet demands for reparations logical and just, and felt that the burden was proportional to Hungary's economic abilities and corresponded to obligations Hungary assumed at the armistice negotiations.⁴⁰ Vyshinsky claimed that by extending the payment period from six to eight years, they had already made concessions and he was not willing to change the Soviet reparation policies. He attributed Hungary's

³⁷ RDCP III: 319–323; FRUS 1946/III: 221–226.

³⁸ RDCP III: 323–324; FRUS 1946/III: 226–228.

³⁹ RDCP III: 324–328; FRUS 1946/III: 229–231.

⁴⁰ Debates at the Paris meeting of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, July 21, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039.

economic difficulties to the expenditures undertaken in her fight against the Allies. He also urged that the Hungarian assets taken to the American zone be returned. Vyshinsky considered the acceptance of the Soviet economic peace proposals to be the cornerstone of European reconstruction and rejected the American proposal to reduce Hungarian reparations. He also referred to Masaryk's request for the population transfer. He said that this was of major importance and that he intended to take an active part in the search for the most equitable solution.⁴¹

The representatives of the Great Powers did not directly respond to the statement of the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs. While Romania and Bulgaria received support from the other members of the Slavic Bloc, Hungary could not count on any open support for any of her grievances. In the committee debates on the Hungarian peace treaty proposals, the Czechoslovak request for transfer and the Soviet–American disagreement over reparations and the principle of most favored nation came to the fore. The duality of the Soviet position became manifest in the differences between the statements by the Byelorussian delegate and by Vyshinsky. It was the Byelorussian and Ukrainian delegations that presented a position which differed from the united stand taken by the allies at the Paris Conference and from the joint position of the CFM. It clearly reflected the true Soviet attitude and position. To some extent, this echoed the differences in the position taken by Great Britain and the one taken by the Dominions.

Respecting the principle that decisions would be made by the Big Three, Vyshinsky did not openly support the Czechoslovak position during the first session of the Paris Conference, even though when Prime Minister Klement Gottwald visited Moscow between July 20 and 25, 1946, the Prague government delegation was given assurances of Soviet agreement with the expulsion of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia.⁴² The Soviet delegation knew that without British and American support, the transfer plan could not be

⁴¹ RDCP III: 328–332.

⁴² Szekfü's report from Moscow on a conversation with Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dekanozov, July 31, 1946, KÜM BéO 29/pol. 1946, ÚMKL, in KERTESZ 1985: 134–135; American Ambassador Bedell Smith's telegram to Washington, no. 2297, July 26, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 208–209.

implemented and therefore held to the political line developed jointly at the beginning of 1946, according to which the resolution of this problem had to be sought in bilateral negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

After listening to Gyöngyösi, Czechoslovak public opinion began to realize that the matter of transfer was not helped by overt Soviet support because the verbal battles with the Soviets were likely to push the American and British delegations and its supporters toward the support of the Hungarian contentions. Prague considered that the British delegation was more or less neutral but noticed that the Dominions were beginning to support the Hungarian cause, raising the possibility that minority protection of the Hungarians in Slovakia might be accepted. The British *chargé d'affaires* in Prague asked the Foreign Office to endorse the legitimate claims of Czechoslovakia, namely to be rid of the Hungarian minority. On August 30, the Foreign Office responded by sending the Paris delegation instructions that went quite a long way in supporting the Czechoslovak views, and is "the furthest we can go at present taking Hungarian and other susceptibilities into account."⁴³

The Soviet delegation did everything possible to keep the American reservations about the Hungarian reparation clause from the text of the peace treaty, because it was not an amendment or new wording but simply a unilateral declaration. Even before the peace treaty proposals were published, Gusev, the Soviet ambassador, tried on July 18 and 27 to prevent the printing and distribution of the Hungarian text. As a result, the Hungarian peace treaty proposal was thus published later than the others.⁴⁴ The verbal battle between Byrnes and Vyshinsky after Gyöngyösi's presentation reflected the differences of opinion of the two Great Powers on procedural and economic matters and was a direct continuation of the debate left unresolved at the second Paris meeting of the CFM. Byrnes wanted to grant the defeated countries a hearing prior to the committee deliberations. Even before the Potsdam Conference, the American peace treaty proposals for

⁴³ Shuckburgh's letter to Hankey, August 16, 1946, and Williams's response, August 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039 R 12237/2603/21. The conference did not assure Gyöngyösi of an opportunity to respond to Masaryk. Report, August 16, 1946, KÜM BéO 198/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁴⁴ CFM (D) 14th meeting, July 27, 1946, and the telegram from the British delegation to London, no. 386, July 21, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039.

Italy had envisaged that the views of the former enemy countries would be heard before the peace terms crystallized. However, after a year of peace negotiations by the Great Powers, all that remained of these good intentions at the Paris Conference was permission for the representatives of the defeated countries to address one of the plenary sessions. This was confirmed by an exchange of letters between France and the United States in January 1946. Byrnes considered it unfortunate that the smaller victorious countries were allowed to respond, but this was supported by the Soviet delegation, by Masaryk, and Herbert Evatt, the Australian minister of foreign affairs. The anti-imperialist utterances of the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs during the economic debate further heightened the Soviet–American tensions. The economic clauses for Hungary were discussed in tightly linked sessions of the two economic commissions.

At the first session of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, on August 17, 1946, Siniša Stanković, the Yugoslav delegate, was elected chairman, and a Czechoslovak diplomat was elected rapporteur for the commission's recommendations.⁴⁵ In line with Vyshinsky's speech at the Romanian Political and Territorial Commission, Ambassador Gusev sought to limit the participants in the Hungarian commission to those who had been at war with Hungary and those mentioned in the preamble of the draft Hungarian peace treaty. Maurice Couve de Murville, the French deputy minister of foreign affairs, rejected this based on the procedural and administrative rules of the conference. At the second meeting, on August 19, the Australian delegate, Alfred Stirling, was elected vice chairman and worked out the committee's agenda. The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission viewed its task as being limited to the preamble, the border and political articles, the withdrawal of the Allied troops, and the negotiation of the final clauses. Instead of a general debate, the individual articles were discussed after the written amendments proposed by Hungary, the neighboring countries, and the other participants of the conference had been received. On the recommendation of Hector McNeil, the British delegate, the commission requested that the Hungarian peace delegation's

⁴⁵ PPC (46), (P&T), 1st meeting, PRO FO 371.59039; RDCP VI: 261–261.

comments be submitted in writing and ordered that both sides be heard in the Czechoslovakia–Hungary border dispute. To avoid hearing the Hungarian and Romanian representatives twice on the border question, the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission decided that the agenda would be set jointly with the president of the Romanian Commission.⁴⁶

The Hungarian peace delegation was informed by the secretariat of the Paris Conference on the evening of August 19 that its written comments had to be submitted by midnight on August 20. However, the official request was not received until after the deadline had already expired.⁴⁷ Thanks to the preparedness of the Hungarian Peace Preparatory Department, the delegation was still able to submit its comments on time. Referring to the Voroshilov letter mentioned above, they requested changes to the preamble and recognition of Hungary's contributions to the war against Germany. A recommendation regarding the Czechoslovak–Hungarian and Romanian–Hungarian borders was also submitted.

As in the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Finnish proposals, Article 2 of the Hungarian peace treaty proposal stated: "Hungary shall take all measures necessary to secure to all persons under Hungarian jurisdiction, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, the enjoyment of human rights and of the fundamental freedoms including freedom of expression, of press and publication, of religious worship, of political opinion and of public meeting." In its comments on this article, the Hungarian peace delegation, on August 20, stated: "The listed rights and freedoms do not include a totality of Human Rights and therefore it would be desirable if Article 2 were expanded with a specific listing of these rights, such as free choice of domicile, free choice of the language of instruction, freedom of work and enterprise. It was also asked that the words, race, sex and nationality be added to the list of areas not subject of discrimination."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ PPC (46), (P&T), 2nd meeting, PRO FO 371.59039; RDCP VI: 263.

⁴⁷ István Kertész: "A magyar béke delegáció adminisztrációjának szervezete és működése" [Organization and Function of the Hungarian Peace Delegation], October 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 199/konf., ÚMKL.

⁴⁸ CP (Gen.), doc. 5, PRO FO 371.59040 R 13941/2608/21; "Observations du gouvernement Hongrois," August 20, 1946, KÜM BéO, 78/Konf., ÚMKL.

The Hungarian delegation also pointed out that the determination of the status of minorities required clauses reaching far deeper. For this reason, they requested that clauses corresponding to the views stated in the memorandum submitted on June 11 be included in the peace treaty with Romania. On the basis of reciprocity, Hungary would assume the same obligations vis-à-vis its own minorities.⁴⁹ The Hungarian delegation made no comments on the merits of the military regulations, addressing only some technical matters such as the question of armaments. In accordance with the resolution of the Council of Ministers, the delegation requested that prisoners of war be returned home within one year after the peace treaty was signed. Several recommendations were made to modify and complement the economic articles.

For Article 22, dealing with reparations, the Hungarian peace delegation requested that the principle of reciprocity be applied to the return of railway rolling stock and proposed convening an international conference to regulate this matter. In connection with damage done to Allied property in Hungary (Article 23), they argued that responsibility should be limited to damage caused by Hungarian governments and their agencies, and should under no circumstances extend to any destruction resulting from military operations in Hungary after March 19, 1944, the day Hungary lost its sovereignty. The Hungarian government supported the Soviet Union's recommendation that compensation be set at 33%. In accordance with the Soviet position, the Hungarian peace delegation wished to resolve the matter of the bondholders of the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company outside of the peace treaty. If this were not possible, they proposed that an international conference be convened to assess Hungary's ability to pay when making arrangements for its foreign debts.

The Hungarian delegation requested that Article 24, regarding the transfer of German property in Hungary to the Soviet Union, also state that the costs of this transfer would be borne by the Soviet Union. Concerning the liquidation of Hungarian property in Allied territory (Article 25), the peace delegation endorsed the Soviet recommendation that Hungary retain

⁴⁹ FÜLÖP 1989b: 112–113.

full control over its assets, rights, and interests, and that all looted assets currently held in Allied countries, primarily Czechoslovakia and Poland, be returned. If liquidation of the Hungarian assets was unavoidable, they proposed that it be carried out in a jointly established sequence and through a mutually agreed-upon method. The Hungarian peace delegation wanted to exclude the liquidation of those assets that were confiscated by particular governments, primarily Czechoslovakia, after the war had come to an end.

In connection with Article 26, regulating the Hungarian demands vis-à-vis Germany and her former allies, the Hungarian delegation asked that the Soviet recommendation be accepted, which assured complete freedom of action. It was felt that this article should be worded in such a fashion that it would guarantee Hungary's right to demand the return of the looted assets and would terminate Romania's sequestration through CASBI (*Casa de Administrare și Supraveghere a Bunurilor Inamice*, Office for the Control of Enemy Property).

Regarding Article 28, the Hungarian delegation asked that compensation for Hungarian citizens be ordered for all damages caused by belligerent action of the Allied troops or by looting. The Hungarian peace delegation requested that an article be added to regulate demands arising from territorial changes, which caused investment and other problems between Hungary and the Successor States, and also that economic rights-of-way issues (water and transportation matters) be addressed.⁵⁰ In accordance with the decision of the Council of Ministers, the Hungarian peace delegation asked that a Hungarian plenipotentiary be appointed to work with the mission chief of each of the three Great Powers in Hungary. The delegation tied the peace treaty's coming into force not only to ratification by the Great Powers but also to the ratification by Hungary.⁵¹

Yugoslavia was the first of Hungary's neighbors to make ultimatum-like demands. On August 16, 1946, Kardelj, the Yugoslav deputy minister of foreign affairs, told Gyöngyösi that Yugoslavia had no intention of making

⁵⁰ Summary report on the military clauses of the peace treaty proposals. Preliminary summary report of the economic section of the peace delegation concerning the economic clauses of the peace treaty proposals, Paris, October 14, 1946, KÜM BÉO 40/kat. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵¹ "Our Comments on the Peace Treaty Proposals," Paris, August 20, 1946, KÜM BÉO 88/konf., ÚMKL.

demands but that there were two issues: the Baja waterworks and a proposed population exchange of approximately 40,000 people, which he wished to settle with the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs during the Paris Conference. The following day, Jože Vilfan, the general secretary of the Yugoslav delegation, told Kertész that an agreement on the waterworks had to be reached within 48 hours, or the Yugoslav delegation would submit an amendment to the Paris Conference. Kertész was prepared to make a statement on principle but preferred to leave the details to the experts. On August 19, the Yugoslav delegation presented its agreement proposal in the Serbian language, and on August 21 transmitted the text in French with some additional comments. The Hungarian delegation accepted the Yugoslav modification with the addition that, according to the Hungarian peace memorandum of November 12, 1945, the countries lying along the Danube had to jointly regulate water issues in the Carpathian Basin.⁵²

In his negotiations with Kardelj, Gerő was successful on August 24 in persuading the Yugoslavs to withdraw an amendment they had submitted in the meantime and received assurance that the problem would be resolved by an exchange of letters between the leaders of the two delegations.⁵³ The Hungarian delegation wished to avoid a debate with Yugoslavia because the focal point of Hungary's endeavors was to block the forced resettlement of 200,000 Hungarians from Slovakia. In his letter to the leader of the Yugoslav delegation, Gyöngyösi pointed out: "The present leaders of the Hungarian Republic are endeavoring to eliminate all painful issues and create the best possible relationship between Hungary and the Yugoslav People's Republic."⁵⁴

The Yugoslav delegation submitted five proposals to complement the Hungarian peace treaty proposal and to change its wording. In Article 2 on human rights, Yugoslavia requested that the requirement for education in the mother tongue be added. The Hungarian delegation had no objection

⁵² Peace memorandum, November 12, 1945, KÜM BéO 100/res. Bé. 1945, ÚMKL. Reprinted in BARANYAI 1947a: 20–35; KERTESZ 1984: 220; FRUS 1946/IV: 275.

⁵³ Gyöngyösi's report to the Hungarian Government: "Yugoslav Initiative Toward Direct Hungarian–Yugoslav Negotiations to Resolve the Water Works and Population Exchange," August 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 309/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁴ Draft of Gyöngyösi's letter, August 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 67/konf., ÚMKL. It became moot after the Gerő–Kardelj agreement.

but asked that the Yugoslav amendment also be included in the similarly worded Hungarian–Romanian peace agreement proposal.

Regarding Article 3 of the Hungarian draft peace treaty, the Yugoslavs wished to add a provision ensuring that the Yugoslav minority in Hungary be protected from persecution. After a brief debate, the Yugoslav delegation removed this item from the agenda.⁵⁵ The Yugoslavs also demanded the return of archival and artistic material, a request that aligned with a similar demand from Czechoslovakia. On September 12, 1946, a bilateral Hungarian–Yugoslav agreement was reached on voluntary population exchange, in which Yugoslavia accepted the Hungarian basic principles.⁵⁶ After resolving the waterworks issue, the Yugoslav government informed the Hungarian delegation that diplomatic relations with Hungary would be resumed.⁵⁷

The Romanian delegation, claiming that, in their view, a state of war had existed between Hungary and Romania since August 24, 1944, and that this was confirmed in Articles 7 and 8 of their peace treaty proposals, submitted a series of economic and other demands. The \$507 million Romanian reparation claim was debated by the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission.⁵⁸ Romania demanded that the goods removed by Hungary from North Transylvania between 1940 and 1944 be returned, in agreement with similar Czechoslovak and Yugoslav requests to amend Article 22 of the Hungarian draft peace treaty.⁵⁹ A Romanian request that Hungarian railway transportation fees be regulated and that the needs of the neighboring countries be considered⁶⁰ met with Czechoslovak support, became part of

⁵⁵ Yugoslav claims, September 4, 1946, KÜM BéO 423/konf. 1946, ÚMKL; Sándor Vájlók's summary of the Yugoslav amending proposals, September 7, 1946, KÜM BéO 895/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁶ Exchange of population, Hungary–Yugoslavia, September 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 529/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁷ Sándor Vájlók's summary of the Yugoslav amending proposals, September 7, 1946, KÜM BéO 895/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁵⁸ CP, Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, doc. 2, August 22, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039 R 12721/2608/21.

⁵⁹ CP, Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, doc. 7, August 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039 R 13537/2608/21.

⁶⁰ CP (Plen), doc. 12, August 22, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039 R 12610/2608/21.

Article 29 of the Hungarian peace treaty proposal, and was included, after completion of the discussions, in the Hungarian peace treaty.⁶¹

The Romanian delegation was presumptuous enough to refer, in demanding its rights, to the right of free communication and transit, and to Articles 295–299 of the Trianon peace treaty of 1920.⁶² In a memorandum, the Romanian minister of foreign affairs requested that the point where the Hungarian and Romanian border met the Yugoslav border be determined (*Triplex Confinium*) and that, under Articles 77 and 177 of the Trianon peace treaty, the archives, registers, maps, and documents relating to the ceded territories be returned. The archives and art objects removed during the “Hungarian occupation” of North Transylvania were also to be returned. The financial stipulations of the April 28, 1930, Paris agreement had to be met; the assets of the Gojdu Foundation had to be returned; the Vienna building of the Transylvania Aulic Chancery had to be handed over to Romania; Romanian personal property had to be protected; the prisoners of war, deportees, and refugees had to be returned; Romanian military cemeteries had to be well maintained; and actions contrary to the rules of war had to be punished.⁶³

This time, the flood of Romanian demands was too much even for the officials of the Foreign Office. M.S. Williams, the assistant head of the Southern Department, referred all these matters to a bilateral Romanian–Hungarian understanding and agreed only to the need to define the Triplex Confinium, provided that the Hungarian delegation was given a hearing.⁶⁴ H. Chalmer Bell, the expert of the Foreign Office Research Department, characterized even that as a *reductio ad absurdum* of a typical Balkan squabble. In the matter of the Vienna house of the Transylvania Chancellery, he proposed a Solomonic solution, suggesting that instead of either of the disputing sides, the building should be given to Austria.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Keenlyside’s letter to the Foreign Office, September 10, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039 R 13588/2608/21.

⁶² Accepted as Article 32 of the Hungarian peace treaty, PRO FO 371.59039 R 13588/2608/21.

⁶³ CP (H/P), doc. 2, August 21, 1946, PRO FO 371.59040 R 12886/2608/21.

⁶⁴ Williams’s note, August 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59040 R 12886/2608/21.

⁶⁵ H. Chalmer Bell’s note, August 28, 1946, PRO FO 371.59040 R 12886/2608/21.

The political, territorial, military, and economic recommendations made by Czechoslovakia went much further than the Romanian demands, which were made by a country that, like Hungary, has also been a former enemy. The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission discussed a Czechoslovak recommendation concerning Article 1, which requested that the results of the First Vienna Award be annulled and raised the question of the Bratislava bridgehead. They also sought to expand Article 4 of the Hungarian draft peace treaty, which mandated the dissolution of fascist organizations, by adding that revisionist organizations must also be dissolved. Czechoslovakia aimed to have the transfer proposal accepted as a new clause and wanted the state of war between Czechoslovakia and Hungary to be dated to the day of the Vienna Award, November 2, 1938. They wanted to add to Article 34 a requirement that the three heads of mission invite the allied and associated powers to participate in debates regarding the interpretation of peace treaty clauses in which they had an interest. The Czechoslovak delegation submitted two proposals regarding limitations on the strength of the Hungarian armed forces. Among the Czechoslovak economic recommendations, the most damaging for Hungary was the declaration of the Vienna Award null and void, along with the demand to reestablish the legal situation as it had been before November 2, 1938. Czechoslovakia demanded the return of rolling stock transferred at that time by agreement, compensation for economic and insurance damages, the return of all artistic and literary assets taken away during Hungarian rule, and the transfer of all administrative, scientific, and artistic material pertaining to Slovakia that had already been mandated by the 1920 Peace Treaty of Trianon. The Czechoslovak delegation protested against extending the reparation payments from six to eight years.⁶⁶ Czechoslovakia considered itself to be the general heir to all assets of Czechoslovak citizens in Hungary who, after the liberation, had lost their Hungarian citizenship. During the Moscow negotiations between the Soviet and Czechoslovak governments at the end of July 1946, these positions provoked debate because the Soviet Union regarded German and Hungarian property as enemy assets, while

⁶⁶ The preliminary Paris report of the economic section of the peace delegation, October 14, 1946, KÜM BéO 67/konf., ÚMKL.

Czechoslovakia had deprived Germans and Hungarians of their citizenship yet still wished to exercise sovereign rights over their property.⁶⁷

The Australian delegation also submitted amendments to the five peace treaty drafts, primarily concerning human rights and the implementation of the peace treaties. Australia wished to enter the protection of human rights as a fundamental tenet into the constitutional system of the affected countries. By creating a European Human Rights Court, an international solution to these problems and effective minority protection was envisaged. A supervisory council would have simplified the resolution of the debated issues, and a conference called five years after the implementation of the peace treaties would have provided an opportunity to correct problems retrospectively.⁶⁸ The members of the CFM did not support the addition of the Australian amendments to the peace treaty proposals.

The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, aware of the proposed amendments, began on August 24, 1946, to discuss the preamble to the Hungarian peace treaty. The Czechoslovak delegation protested that the text made no mention of Hungary's responsibility in the preparations for war, in Czechoslovakia's dismemberment, and that Hungary participated willingly on the side of Germany in the war until events separated the two countries. Walter Bedell Smith, the American, Lord Hood, the British, Alexei D. Voina, the Ukrainian, and Avdo Humo, the Yugoslav delegate, assured Vlado Clementis that they felt deep sympathy for the Czechoslovak theses, but – using the Italian precedent of the previous day as an argument, and with Yugoslavia relinquishing a similar demand – they managed to get Czechoslovakia to withdraw its demands.⁶⁹ Referring to the Hungarian submission that claimed Hungary contributed to the final success of the war against Germany, Ambassador Gusev stated that the Soviet government appreciated the contributions made by the former German satellites to the war, but did not consider it necessary or desirable

⁶⁷ Telegram of Elbridge Durbrow, American Chargé d'Affaires ad interim in Moscow, no. 3075, August 2, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 211.

⁶⁸ Herbert Vere Evatt, Australian Foreign Minister's declaration, Paris, July 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.59039 R 12789/2608/21; KERTESZ 1984: 176, 194, 238.

⁶⁹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 3rd meeting, PRO FO 371.59039 R 12720/2608/21.

for this to be entered into the peace treaty text. The committee, following the Italian model where a similar request was rejected, did not support a discussion of the Hungarian request.⁷⁰

At the 4th session of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, Clementis resigned from the rapporteur position, and, on Lord Hood's recommendation, the Ukrainian delegate was entrusted with the task. The preamble was accepted in its original form with a minor Australian modification. When Hungary's political borders were discussed, the Australian delegation reserved the right to submit an amendment concerning the guarantee of human rights for the people living in the ceded territories. Consideration of the Hungarian comments about the Hungarian–Romanian border were referred to a joint session of the Romanian and the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commissions, which was allowed to hear the two involved countries, provided at least one delegation supported such a move. The Hungarian delegation was not given a hearing at the sessions of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission because it had not specifically requested this in the comments it submitted on August 20. Gusev argued that the hearing given to the Italian delegate in the discussion on the Italian–Yugoslav questions was not a precedent, as the Hungarian–Romanian territorial debate involved two former enemy countries, not a victorious and a defeated country.

In determining the Hungarian–Czechoslovak border, Czechoslovakia submitted two amendments, and Hungary made some observations. Clementis quoted from the memorandum submitted by the Hungarian delegation: "Should Czechoslovakia propose modifications to the frontier as it existed on January 1, 1938, or should she not be prepared to grant guarantees for the return to the legal and ethnic status quo of January 1, 1938, Hungary requests that the Czechoslovak proposals should be communicated to her in sufficient time for comment." He pointed out that it was only Czechoslovakia that could ask for frontier modifications, not Hungary. The commission, referring to the American comments on Paragraph 4 of Article 1 of the CFM's Hungarian draft peace treaty, did not exclude this possibility and also accepted Clementis's recommendation that the

⁷⁰ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 3rd meeting, PRO FO 371.59039 R 12720/2608/21; BALOGH 1988: 232.

Hungarian delegation had until August 30 to submit its views in writing on the Bratislava bridgehead issue.⁷¹

Almost a month went by since the beginning of the Paris Conference before the two principal contentious issues in the Hungarian draft peace treaty came to the fore, on which the Hungarian delegation hoped to be heard. These were the Hungarian–Romanian territorial settlement and the political and ethnic border between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

CONCLUSION OF THE HUNGARIAN–ROMANIAN BORDER DISPUTE AND THE MINORITY CODEX

The Hungarian peace treaty proposal of the CFM reflected the joint position of the three Great Powers on the Hungarian–Romanian territorial question. The Soviets and the British endeavored to dispel the last illusions of the Hungarian government. Dekanozov, the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs – who proudly mentioned to Szekfű that he was the one who prepared the Hungarian draft peace treaty⁷² – told Szekfű openly that as far as Romania was concerned, they would insist that all of Transylvania remain in Romanian hands, that the rights of the Hungarian minority in Romania would be protected according to Soviet principles, and that it was for this reason that the draft peace treaty included the statement about guarantees of equal racial, religious, language, etc. rights to the minorities in Romania. Szekfű could not even get support for the restoration of Romanian citizenship to the 200,000–300,000 Hungarians who had left Romania but now returned. When the Hungarian envoy argued that they left Romania to escape Antonescu, Dekanozov replied: “Yes, but they went to Horthy.” Consequently, Szekfű concluded that Hungary could count on no support whatever from the Soviet Union.⁷³

⁷¹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 4th meeting, PRO FO. 371.59040 R 12964/2608/21.

⁷² Soviet draft peace treaty for Hungary, June 24, 1946, CFM, D (46) 138, PRO FO 371.59038. See the Soviet proposal on page 244.

⁷³ Szekfű's report from Moscow, July 31, 1946, KÜM BéO 29/pol. 1946 (89/konf., August 9, 1946), ÚMKL, in KERTESZ 1985: 134–135; NARA Records of International Conferences, Commissions and Expositions, 1943–1946, Record Group 43, Minutes and Papers of Meetings,

Alexander Knox Helm, the British minister in Budapest, in a letter of August 3, 1946, suggested support for the Hungarian peace goals, the reduction of reparation burdens, the earliest implementation of the peace treaty, the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, and also that there should be minor adjustments of the Hungarian–Romanian and Hungarian–Czechoslovak borders in Hungary’s favor. This would be far better than leaving the minority question open by just guaranteeing minority rights and privileges.⁷⁴ Christopher F.A. Warner, the superintending undersecretary, did not foresee much success for the Hungarian endeavor to alter the Transylvania decision. When Bede, the Hungarian envoy in London, asked whether Bevin would try to gain acceptance of his idea that regarding difficult and important questions, the peace treaties should not be too rigid and should hold out the possibility of review, Warner responded with great scepticism. The British diplomat believed that it would be a mistake for Hungary to nurture great hopes in this matter and did not predict much success for the negotiations with Groza after the Romanian elections.⁷⁵

In his conversation with the British minister, Prime Minister Nagy was not too optimistic about resolving the Transylvania question, particularly in view of the failure of the bilateral negotiations. However, he expressed his hopes that Romania could be induced to yield an area of 3,000–4,000 km² between Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare) and Nagyvárad (Oradea).⁷⁶ At the end of August, the Foreign Office excluded the possibility that the Soviet Union would support even such a minimal Hungarian demand, while the Romanians “will not want to risk the thin wedge” and would undoubtedly reject it.⁷⁷

When it became increasingly apparent to the Hungarian peace delegation that it would be impossible to gain Allied support for the border adjustment

Paris Council of Foreign Ministers 15–21, box 96, Rg–43, National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland.

⁷⁴ Knox Helm’s letter to Warner, no. 729/3/46, August 3, 1946, PRO FO 371.59007 R 11880/256/21, quoted in BALOGH 1988: 370.

⁷⁵ Conversation of Warner and Bede, August 13, 1946, PRO FO 371.59007 R 11880/256/21; Bede’s report from London, August 14, 1946, KÜM BéO 78/pol. 1946, ÜMKL.

⁷⁶ Knox Helm’s telegram, no. 904, August 16, 1946, PRO FO 371.590339 R 12202/2608/21.

⁷⁷ Comment by Horsfall-Carter, FO Research Department, August 28, 1946, PRO FO 371.590339 R 12202/2608/21.

requests, it began to emphasize the protection of collective minority rights. On August 10, 1946, Béla Demeter, István Révay, and Sándor Vájlók, the minorities experts of the delegation, recommended to Gyöngyösi that he request, in the name of his government, the dispatch of a peace conference committee to study the ethnographic, economic, and political issues in Slovakia and Romania. He should also request that representatives of the Hungarians living in the debated areas be given a hearing by the peace conference or that a plebiscite be held. Romania and Czechoslovakia should, even before the signing of the peace treaties, rescind retroactively the harmful and discriminating decrees and laws against ethnic Hungarians. It was felt that national minority rights and effective participation of the minorities in legislative, judicial, and executive activities should be guaranteed by the national minority autonomy and by international supervision and adjudication. The experts concluded that

the peace treaties would not offer guarantees that the 3 million Hungarians living beyond the borders of Hungary could live free of fear and with the enjoyment of all human rights. The Great Powers perhaps assumed that the victor states signed the UN Charter and thus accepted the obligation that their countries' domestic and foreign policy would respect the principles and spirit of the United Nations. Czechoslovakia's example was ample proof that this was not so. Experience showed that the minorities could not be left without effective protection because its absence resulted in grave inequalities and disturbances. While the new peace structure is being formed, we must ask that nationality rights will be guaranteed in practice.⁷⁸

In Gyöngyösi's address on August 14 and the comments of the Hungarian peace delegation on August 20, these arguments were emphasized. In his letter to the chairman of the Romanian Political and Territorial Commission, the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs requested to be heard concerning Article 3 of the Romanian draft peace treaty (identical to Article 2 of the Hungarian one) because "more than 1.5 million Hungarians

⁷⁸ Recommendation to Gyöngyösi by the Hungarian delegation's experts on minorities, August 10, 1946, KÜM BÉO 106/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

live currently under Romanian rule who have no assurance of a life free of fear and want.”⁷⁹ He justified his request by stating that the Hungarian delegation wished to put forward a request for more effective protection of the minorities’ rights.

At the same time, Béla Demeter suggested to Gyöngyösi that the detailed drafts for minority rights protection should be submitted to complement the memorandum submitted on June 11.⁸⁰ On August 30, 1946, the Hungarian delegation submitted the Hungarian government’s draft minority protection treaty to the French secretary-general of the conference. Called the Codex, it proposed a minority protection agreement among the permanent members of the UN Security Council – namely, the Soviet Union, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, and China – and Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The Hungarian government urged the implementation of complete territorial and personal autonomy with local international supervision and international jurisdiction, and as well as the right of the minority to turn directly to the Security Council with minority political, cultural, and religious complaints.⁸¹

The submission of the Minority Codex coincided with the abandonment of the 22,000 km² border adjustment plan that Gyöngyösi had originally submitted on August 14 and which was also included in the written submission of the delegation on August 20.⁸² At the August 28 session of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, there was not a single member of the 13 Allied and Associated Powers who supported the Hungarian request. Reviving another option, the Hungarian peace delegation worked out a 3,942 km² ethnic border adjustment, which Gyula Szekfű gave to General Bedell Smith,

⁷⁹ Gyöngyösi’s letter to the Chairman of the Romanian Political and Territorial Commission, Paris, August 20, 1946, KÜM, 370/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁸⁰ The Minority Code, Paris, August 9, 1946, KÜM BéO 363/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁸¹ “Draft Treaty on Minorities Protection,” in BARANYAI 1947a: 133–161. In Hungarian, see FÜLÖP 1989b: 117–138.

⁸² Béla Demeter’s pro domo, as well as his “Detailed Description of the Proposed Border Modification between Hungary and Romania,” August 10, 1946, KÜM BéO 106/konf. 1946, ÚMKL; Béla Demeter’s note, September 3, 1946, KÜM BéO 420/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. Demeter pointed out that the 22,000 km² recommendation was identical with the 1919 American and Italian proposal; CP (H/P), doc. e, August 31, 1946, PRO FO 371.59040 R 12919/2608/21.

the American delegate.⁸³ On August 30, 1946, the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission decided to hold a joint session with the corresponding Romanian committee, where both parties would be given a hearing.⁸⁴ On August 29, Frank Keith Officer, the Australian delegate, moved to hear “the directly interested state,” Hungary, at the Romanian commission meeting, but Soviet Ambassador Alexander Bogomolov rejected it, claiming that it was unnecessary to open a discussion on an issue in which the CFM had already taken a position. “Since no member of the Commission supported the Hungarian claim to a part of Transylvania, the Soviet Delegation saw no need to hear the views of Hungary.” Harriman stated that “he would support the agreed text of Article 2.” He considered, nevertheless, that the Australian delegate had a perfect right to ask that the Hungarian delegation be heard on this question. Geoffrey Warner, the British Foreign Office diplomat, stated the view of his delegation in similar terms. Czechoslovakia’s motion to postpone a decision and the Soviet Union’s recommendation to defeat it both lost on an eight to four vote.⁸⁵

At the joint meeting of the two commissions on August 31, 1946, with the Romanian delegation present, Pál Auer, representative of Hungary, addressed a joint meeting of the commissions on Romania, and Hungary on the subject of the Hungarian and Romanian frontier. He referred briefly to the history of the dispute over Transylvania and to the claim that the Hungarian government had made for the return of 22,000 km² of territory. Since the proposal had not been accepted by the CFM or the Paris Conference, the Hungarian delegation now wanted to propose a solution involving the rectification of the frontier on purely ethnic grounds. The Hungarian claim, shown on a map that was distributed, involved only 4,000 km², including the cities of Szatmár (Satu Mare), Nagykároly (Carei),

⁸³ Szekfü’s letter to Ambassador Bedell Smith, August 31, 1946, KÜM BéO 385/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁸⁴ CP (H/P), 5th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R 13045/2608/21.

⁸⁵ FRUS 1946/III: 311–312, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 209; Report of István Kertész to György Heltai, August 30, 1946, KÜM BéO 406/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. Kertész told Councillor Heltai over the telephone that “the decision to be made will not differ in substance from the May decision of the Council of Foreign Ministers. Therefore the press must be accordingly directed so that ... no revisionist waves be generated.”

Nagyvárad (Oradea), Nagyszalonta (Salonta), and Arad, with a population of 500,000, of whom two-thirds were Hungarian. Auer linked this proposal with Hungary's desire to obtain protection for the large Hungarian minority in Transylvania, including wide local autonomy for the Székelys (Szeklers) under UN control. He proposed that the conference recommend to the Hungarian and Romanian delegations that they undertake negotiations with a view to arriving at a solution. Should they not agree, then the commission should determine the most just solution and recommend it to the CFM.⁸⁶

Tătărescu responded to the Hungarian presentation on September 2, 1946. He said that the area claimed by Hungary contained only 67,000 more Hungarians than Romanians, and that it would be unthinkable to disrupt the entire life of Western Transylvania in order to make such a change. He said that any change in the frontier, which had been established in 1920 and confirmed by the decision of the CFM in 1946, would be against all moral principle and would be an egregious error. He said that it represented the proper line of ethnic division between the Romanian and Hungarian peoples. He also returned to the argument he had used with Pál Sebestyén on April 29, 1946, in Bucharest, according to which Transylvania was the "cradle" of the Romanian people and constituted an economic unit.⁸⁷ Tătărescu denied Auer's allegation that the August 30, 1940, arbitration procedure of the Vienna Award was initiated not by Hungary but by Romania. Furthermore, he claimed that "the Hungarians in Transylvania have been guaranteed all civic rights, free use of their mother tongue, participation in the administration, and free movement in all areas of economic life."⁸⁸ He questioned whether the CASBI (Office for the Control of Enemy Property) had truly expropriated Hungarian assets under the armistice agreement and denied

⁸⁶ Auer's speech to the combined commissions, August 31, 1946, KÜM BéO 391/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. For the Auer speech see the September 17, 1946, summary: "Steps of the Hungarian Government at the Peace Negotiations to Assure the Rights of the Hungarian Minority in Transylvania," KÜM BéO 106/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁸⁷ FÜLÖP 1988a: 106. Sebestyén pointed out that the Treaty of Trianon treaty had awarded areas to Romania that could not be called the cradle of the Romanians; at that time, Tătărescu agreed; FRUS 1946/III: 339.

⁸⁸ Demeter's note about the answer to be given to the Tătărescu speech, September 3, 1946, KÜM BéO 420/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

that any injuries had been done to Hungarians. Tătărescu did not acknowledge the 300,000 Hungarians who were deprived of their citizenship or the 200,000 wartime refugees. He claimed that these statements were without foundation. He did not accept the Hungarian recommendations for Transylvanian autonomy and for the initiation of bilateral negotiations.⁸⁹

The border adjustment proposal submitted by the Hungarian delegation was viewed by John C. Campbell, the Southeast Europe expert of the American delegation, as “based purely on ethnic considerations. It is about the same as the hypothetical ethnic line worked out in the Department of State which is shown in the upper left-hand corner of the attached cartogram.”⁹⁰ Weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the Hungarian proposal, Campbell stated that if there was any inclination on the part of a member of the CFM to make a border modification, “we might give as our view that the Hungarian claims appear reasonable with the exception of the claim for Arad and the immediate vicinity of that city.”⁹¹ Hayter, the retiring head of the Southern Department of the Foreign Office, told Bede on September 3, 1946, that “he saw a possibility that the reduced Hungarian territorial demands vis-à-vis Romania could be met, provided the Soviet Government could get the Romanian Government to agree.” In this regard, Hayter believed that the Bratislava bridgehead and the Czechoslovak territorial exchange matter could be used as a precedent. He also stated, however, that the British government would not assume responsibility for initiating a revision of the unanimous May 7 decision of the CFM but, according to him, a mutually agreed-upon modification between Hungarians and Romanians would be welcome.⁹² Warner, the superintending undersecretary in the Foreign Office, considered it possible that the article about the Hungarian–Romanian border be complemented with the possibility of a border adjustment. The Hungarian peace delegation would have to convince the Soviet Union to accept such a circumvention of the CFM decision and to make the necessary

⁸⁹ BALOGH 1988: 233; FRUS 1946/III, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 209.

⁹⁰ Campbell’s memorandum, September 2, 1946, FRUS 1946/IV: 851–853, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 210–211, 288. For the wartime plans, see ROMSICS 1992: 25, 296.

⁹¹ FRUS 1946/IV: 852, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 211.

⁹² Bede’s report from London, September 4, 1946, KÜM BÉO 89/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

recommendation to the committee. Warner also admitted that this solution had practically no chance of success.⁹³ Hungary could hardly expect any support from the Soviet Union in changing the position of the CFM. After listening to Hungary and Romania, the United States also refused to consider this, and thus there was no chance of implementing Campbell's views. As a final gesture toward the Hungarians, the Americans decided to publish and document their role in the development of the CFM position.

On September 5, 1946, at the request of the Australian delegate, Ambassador Harriman explained that the United States had not been a strong supporter of the proposed text but wished to clarify that he would vote for it since it had been agreed by the council. He noted that, during the council discussions, the United States delegation had made certain proposals for a study of possible modification of the frontier that might be reduce the number of persons under alien rule, contribute to stability, and foster mutual cooperation between Hungary and Romania. The other members of the CFM had not shared this view and, in view of the desirability of reaching unanimous agreement, the US had not insisted on its position.⁹⁴

Harriman reiterated his statement that he would vote for Article 2 as drafted but wished to take the occasion to say that, in view of the differences on various subjects evident in the statements of the Hungarian and Romanian representatives, the United States hoped that progress might be made through direct negotiations between them toward a mutually satisfactory settlement of the outstanding questions.

Subsequently, the Australian delegate proposed that Article 2 be adopted with a rider in the form of a recommendation that the CFM, before putting it into the final treaty, make further efforts to secure, in cooperation with the two interested parties, an adjustment so that some additional Hungarian centers might be incorporated into Hungary.⁹⁵ The committee rejected the Australian proposal and, by a vote of 10:2, accepted the text of Article 2 of the Romanian peace treaty proposal as recommended by the

⁹³ Bede's cipher telegram no. 14, September 3, 1946, 495/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

⁹⁴ Ambassador Harriman's declaration, September 5, 1946, KÜMBéO, 470/konf. 1946, briefly noted in KERTESZ 1984: 210; FRUS 1946/III: 376.

⁹⁵ KERTESZ 1984: 210; BALOGH 1988: 233.

CFM.⁹⁶ On September 23, 1946, Bedell Smith, at the 15th session of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, repeated the American call for bilateral negotiations.⁹⁷

In his letter of September 4, 1946, addressed to the chairman of the Romanian Political and Territorial Commission, Gyöngyösi repeated his request to state his position *viva voce* on the human rights articles in the Hungarian and Romanian draft peace treaties. The Hungarian requests were not honoured.

At the Paris Conference, the Australian delegation was the only one that seriously considered a detailed arrangement of the human rights question, including guarantees. The other victorious powers did not pay any heed to the Hungarian minority protection recommendations but found that the clauses assuring human rights that were entered into the text of the draft peace treaty were sufficient. These were supplemented by a British proposal that was accepted at the 11th meeting of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission on September 13, 1946, by a vote of 8:3 with two abstentions. The Soviet, Byelorussian, and Ukrainian delegations voted against it, while Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia abstained. The British proposal stated: "Hungary further undertakes that the laws in force in Hungary shall not, either in their content or in their application, discriminate or entail any discrimination between persons of Hungarian nationality on the ground of their race, sex, language or religion, whether in reference to their persons, property, business, professional or financial interests, status, political or civic rights, or any other nature."⁹⁸ This clause was included in both the Hungarian and the Romanian peace treaties. The text of the Hungarian Minority Codex was not accepted, even though it was the most comprehensive postwar attempt to codify minority rights and to resolve the nationality conflicts in harmony with the UN Charter.

⁹⁶ BALOGH 1988: 233. Australia and South Africa abstained.

⁹⁷ PPC (46), Hungary (P/T), 15th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14309/2608/21. The text of the call was the same as the text accepted at the 8th meeting of the Romanian Political and Territorial Commission.

⁹⁸ PPC (46), Hungary (P/T), 11th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R 13823/2608/21; BARACS et al. 1947: 14.

After the British and American declarations, the leader of the Hungarian delegation tried to gain Soviet support in initiating Hungarian–Romanian negotiations on minority protection, citizenship, and border traffic issues. Pushkin, the Soviet minister in Budapest, supported the idea.⁹⁹ Gyöngyösi spoke to Molotov on September 27, 1946, and informed him about the “situation of the Hungarians who had lived in Transylvania before the war but whose citizenship was never formalized, whose Romanian citizenship was not recognized by Romania, and who were now threatened with expulsion.” Molotov told Gyöngyösi that the Hungarian government should resume the direct negotiations that had been held on this matter before the peace conference. He refused, however, to give a direct answer to Gyöngyösi’s repeated questions regarding whether the Soviet government would support the Hungarian position. Molotov showed understanding only in the CASBI matter and referred to the telegram from General Ivan Susaykov, the vice chairman of the Romanian ACC, to the Romanian government, in which he suggested that after the German assets in Romania were delivered, the Hungarian assets might be released.¹⁰⁰

The rejection of the Hungarian territorial and minority protection proposals, along with the placement of the Czechoslovak demands on the agenda of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, prompted Prime Minister Nagy to go to Paris. On September 5, 1946, the Hungarian prime minister explained to General Walter Bedell Smith, the American ambassador, the extremely difficult and delicate course he had been forced to adopt in Hungary in order to preserve what he described as the Western idea of democracy. He pointed out that, in this respect, he had been more successful to date than any other democratic leader in Eastern Europe. He then illustrated some of his difficulties, particularly the Slav pressure on Hungary. Moreover, in three neighboring countries – Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria –, the Communists were now in control, while in Romania, the Communists also held the real reins of power. Nagy intimated quite clearly that unless Hungary could secure Western support for easing the treaty’s provisions, he could not hold out much longer as prime minister. This, he warned, could lead to a serious political situation

⁹⁹ Gyöngyösi’s note, September 10, 1946, KÜM BéO 39/Mk.b. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹⁰⁰ Gyöngyösi’s note, September 27, 1946, KÜM BéO 720/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

in Hungary, possibly even civil strife. He implied that it was in the interest of the United States to prevent such a scenario, as Hungary was, in fact, a bulwark of Western culture and political ideas.

Ambassador Bedell Smith replied: "It was the Secretary's firm opinion that the ex-enemy states of Eastern Europe must be given a chance to breathe again, and that this was not possible until the occupation forces were withdrawn. This was the foremost objective of the US Government."¹⁰¹ He added that the prime minister knew "the US has always believed in the right of all nations to trade freely. International waterways, such as the Danube, should be accessible to all on an equal basis ..." The prime minister said that it was "most important to Hungary that a part of Transylvania be returned. Hungary wanted frontier rectification largely for political and psychological reasons."

Nagy then went on to say that it would be impossible for Hungary to receive the 200,000 people the Czechs proposed to expel from Slovakia. He understood that the US opposed this proposal by the Czechs. Ambassador Smith reassured him on this point. A discussion then ensued regarding the Czech territorial claim on Hungary, specifically the Bratislava bridgehead. According to Nagy, the Czechs had made this demand primarily for strategic and prestige reasons. Ambassador Smith expressed the hope that it might serve as a basis for some give and take, and that both sides should be willing to make concessions in order to reach an agreement on the outstanding problems between the two countries.¹⁰²

Ferenc Nagy met Secretary of State James F. Byrnes on September 7, 1946, in Paris and repeated his arguments to him. In Jefferson Caffery's report:

Prime Minister Nagy, in conversation with the Secretary, describes the difficulties of his own political situation which he said had become more critical as result of unfavorable developments regarding the peace treaty in Paris. He said that Hungary apparently had not gained much by holding a free election last November compared to lack of sympathy with Hungary in Paris

¹⁰¹ Frederic T. Merrill's note, September 4, 1946, FRUS 1946/III: 370–372, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 204.

¹⁰² Frederic T. Merrill's note, September 4, 1946, FRUS 1946/III: 371–372; BALOGH 1988: 243; the telegram of the American Ambassador in Paris, Jefferson Caffery, no. 447, September 7, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 332–333.

and more favored positions of Bulgaria and Romania which still had not as yet held free elections. He pointed out he was one of few Peasant leaders left in Europe leading fight against Eastern interpretation of democracy and then elaborated on Soviet pressure on Hungary as well as Communist domination of neighboring states. Secretary pointed out Hungary unlike other satellites had advantage of being a sovereign state and had more independence. Moreover, she was neither demanding reparation nor territories in any Balkan peace treaty. He greatly sympathized with Hungary's problem and hoped to hear of progress made to overcome difficulties and further developments towards attainment of political freedoms.

In this and other conversations the prime minister had in Paris, it is evident he was extremely pessimistic. As Caffery reported:

Szegedy-Maszák told us this morning Nagy had returned to Budapest intending to resign should Czechoslovakia succeed in putting across its territorial and expulsion amendment. He told members of his delegation that Western democracies were apparently either unable or unwilling to oppose Soviet policies in Eastern Europe. Hungarians naturally despondent over acceptance in Hungarian and Rumanian territorial commissions of nullification of Vienna award returning all Transylvania to Rumania.¹⁰³

Following all of this, the Hungarian prime minister lost all hope that Hungary's peace goals could be met in Paris. Prior to his departure, Nagy spoke with the Hungarian peace delegation about how he would inform the government, the Foreign Affairs Committee, and the public. The delegation considered the Czechoslovak transfer recommendation to be the greatest danger. Nagy still hoped for American support in reparation and economic affairs, but Gyöngyösi advised that even in this matter, it would be prudent to await the Soviet response to the Hungarian request.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Telegram of Jefferson Caffery, American Ambassador in Paris, no. 447, September 7, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 332–333; NAGY 1948: 357; KERTESZ 1984: 204.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the Hungarian peace delegation discussion, September 5, 1946, KÜM, BóO 5/Mk.b. 1946, ÚMKL.

After September 4, 1946, and the closure of the Hungarian–Romanian border dispute, the Hungarian peace delegation shifted its focus to the commission meetings, where the Czechoslovak demands regarding the Bratislava bridgehead, territorial exchange, and the transfer issue were discussed.¹⁰⁵

THE GREAT POWERS AND THE HUNGARIAN–CZECHOSLOVAK DISPUTE

Czechoslovakia was on the side of the victors. Its peace goals, outlined in the memorandum of April 10, 1946, were to be achieved with the help of the Soviet Union. When the Czechoslovak government delegation negotiated in Moscow (July 20–25, 1946), Gottwald, Masaryk, and Clementis obtained the Soviet government's approval for the forced transfer of 200,000 Hungarians. By assisting the Czechoslovak communists – who had won a majority in the May 1946 elections –, the Soviet Union aimed to demonstrate its power to governments like those in Hungary and Austria, which had tried to resist Moscow's political advances.

Dekanozov told the Hungarian minister in Moscow quite plainly that the Soviet government would support the legitimate claims of the Czechoslovak government at the peace conference. He considered the transfer of the 200,000 Hungarians to be one such legitimate claim – arguing that Czechoslovaks could only live in peace once the Hungarians were expelled. As for the Czechoslovak territorial claims, Dekanozov did not provide Szekfű with an answer.¹⁰⁶

Czechoslovakia considered the Bratislava bridgehead to be a second-order matter compared to the population transfer. The Czechoslovak request did not appear in the June 24, 1946, draft peace treaty, but the British and American versions of the proposal of the CFM, delivered to the interested parties on July 18, indicated that Czechoslovakia and Hungary had reserved the right to state their views orally on the matter of the border readjustments.

¹⁰⁵ Telegram of Jefferson Caffery, American Ambassador in Paris, no. 447, September 7, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 333.

¹⁰⁶ Szekfű's report from Moscow, July 31, 1946, KÜM BéO 29/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

On July 20, the Czechoslovak ambassador in Paris protested to the CFM because, according to him, the Paris Conference had to hear the two governments only on the Czechoslovak request for redrawing the Czechoslovak–Hungarian border.¹⁰⁷ It was evident ever since Böhm's negotiations in Prague that the Czech and Slovak members of the Czechoslovak government viewed the legitimacy of the claim for the Bratislava bridgehead in different ways.

The Czechs – Beneš, Fierlinger, and Masaryk – were not enthusiastic about the wish of the Slovaks – Clementis, Slávik, and Krno – to submit this territorial claim.¹⁰⁸ As we have seen, the Foreign Office considered the expansion of the Bratislava bridgehead acceptable only if a border modification in Hungary's favor was possible somewhere else. The Hungarian government's "land with people" principle was an attempt to link the transfer and border adjustment questions.

The Czechoslovakian domestic debate was reflected in Masaryk's early feelers in August 1946, when he first raised the matter of the transfer and of the border adjustment. Samuel Reber, the American delegate, reported:

In a conversation yesterday with Jan Masaryk, Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, he informed me in strictest confidence that he is prepared to consider an adjustment of the frontier with Hungary if such a cession will solve the question of the transfer of Hungarian minorities. As this is contrary to the expressed views of the Czechoslovak Government he does not wish anything said about it at this stage of the Conference but has indicated that if Czechoslovakia does not receive satisfaction with regard to the expulsion of the Hungarian minorities this may provide a solution. The US position which has consistently been maintained and which has been made known both to Czechoslovakia and Hungary is opposed to the transfer of population except for the transfer of Germans provided under the Potsdam Agreement. Mr. Masaryk's suggestion therefore provides in

¹⁰⁷ CMEA (46), 239, PRO FO 371.59039 R 110332/2608/21. The obvious intent of the Czechoslovak letter was to block the submission of any Hungarian territorial claims.

¹⁰⁸ Böhm's report from Stockholm, May 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 9/pol./164/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL.

our opinion the best possible solution provided the cession of territory is adequate for this purpose.¹⁰⁹

In spite of the fact that Masaryk asked Samuel Reber, the assistant secretary of state, to keep this matter secret, he sent word to the Hungarian peace delegation, a few days later, via the European editor of the *New York Times* indicating that “Masaryk would attempt to reach agreement with the Hungarians by offering certain territories to Hungary in exchange for smaller territory.” When McCormick asked about the Bratislava bridgehead, Masaryk confirmed the demand for it and also for some other areas inhabited by Slovaks, in exchange for which the Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) and some other areas beyond it would be given to Hungary.¹¹⁰ Auer tried to find out from the Slovak diplomats whether Czechoslovakia might be prepared to consider the “land with people” principle, only to be told by Krno and Slávik that this was out of the question. On August 9, when Sebestyén asked the secretary-general of the Czechoslovak delegation about the possibilities of a border adjustment and/or territorial exchange, in which Hungary would receive considerably more land from Czechoslovakia than vice versa, Fischa admitted that Masaryk’s ideas had been debated by the delegation but, because of the Czech and Slovak differences, he did not believe that the matter was ripe for a discussion between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. According to information obtained by Auer, when Mihály Károlyi was negotiating in Prague, he had left a map, prepared by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This map showed one area encompassing 300,000 Hungarians and another where an additional 300,000 Hungarians resided. The map also showed two smaller areas along the border where 18,000 Slovaks lived.¹¹¹ According to Auer, Masaryk was making use of this map.

¹⁰⁹ KERTESZ 1984: 216, 289; the Masaryk–Reber conversation, August 3, 1946, FRUS 1946/III: 122–123.

¹¹⁰ Auer’s report on the August 6, 1946, Masaryk–McCormick conversation, August 17, 1946, KÚM BěO 429/konf., ÚMKL.

¹¹¹ KÚM BěO 429/konf., ÚMKL.

The Hungarian ideas about territorial exchange were conveyed to the Czechoslovak government by alternative routes. Jenő Polányi, one of the employees of the Teleki Institute, gave the maps during the summer of 1946 to Čajak, the councillor of the Czechoslovak Legation in Budapest.¹¹²

The Masaryk plan was still being debated by the Czechoslovak delegation in the middle of August, despite the fact that the information given to the editor of the *New York Times* was published on August 8 and that the Czechoslovak minister of foreign affairs was forced to deny it.¹¹³ In an August 18, 1946, memorandum of the United States delegation, Masaryk's willingness to make territorial concessions is compared with the Slovak members of the delegation rejecting this idea and insisting on the immediate and complete expulsion of the Hungarian minority. The memorandum attributes this rigidity principally to Clementis.¹¹⁴ In the debates within the Czechoslovak delegation, the Slovak point of view prevailed.

Mihály Károlyi went to see Jan Masaryk to ask him to use his influence on behalf of the 500,000 outlawed Hungarians. Masaryk, citing the memory of his father Tomáš G. Masaryk, indignantly rejected the idea that he agreed with the inhuman treatment of the Hungarians by the Slovaks, but also stated: "It is not me you should try to persuade, but Clementis."¹¹⁵ Other participants at the Paris Conference also came to the conclusion that the Hungarian affairs were directed by Clementis and that Masaryk only implemented Clementis's ideas.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Treason trial of Jenő Polányi by János Péter, September 30, 1946, KÜM BÉO 296/konf., ÚMKL. At the peak of the Paris Conference debates, at the end of September 1946, Polányi was sentenced to five years in prison for treason, in spite of the fact that István Révay, the director of the Teleki Institute, tried to intervene on his behalf with Kertész. At the trial, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was represented by János Péter. Čajak was expelled from Hungary by the government.

¹¹³ Auer's report on the August 6, 1946, Masaryk–McCormick conversation, August 17, 1946, KÜM BÉO 429/konf., ÚMKL.

¹¹⁴ KERTESZ 1984: 289; FRUS 1946/IV: 836; BALOGH 1988: 235. The British delegation wished to compensate Hungary for the Bratislava bridgehead in the Komárom area.

¹¹⁵ KERTESZ 1984: 188.

¹¹⁶ Szekfü's conversation in Moscow with Canadian Ambassador Dana Wilgress, August 23, 1946, KÜM BÉO 111/konf., ÚMKL. According to Wilgress, there was talk about giving a small area at the Eastern border of Slovakia to Hungary.

At the time of the Paris Conference, the Hungarian peace delegation received both direct and indirect invitations to reach an agreement with Czechoslovakia. Since the beginning of 1946, official Soviet, British, and American policy favored direct Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations. Dmitriy Manuilsky, the leader of the Ukrainian delegation, told Gyöngyösi on August 17 that he did not think the Czechoslovak–Hungarian problem was a very complex one and that, in his opinion, agreement could be reached easily. It was simply a question of the Czechoslovaks wanting to transfer 200,000 Hungarians to Hungary. It was his opinion that if it came to direct negotiations, an expedient could be found.¹¹⁷

Byrnes made an offer to Clementis on August 20 to mediate between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.¹¹⁸ The secretary-general of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Hungary expert of the Political Division told the Hungarian *chargé*, Ferenc Rosty-Forgách, that Gyöngyösi should negotiate with Clementis in Paris. On August 21, 1946, Masaryk declared that if the two countries could agree, Czechoslovakia was prepared to make substantial concessions to Hungary and opened the possibility for the prompt initiation of direct negotiations, provided that with the support of the Great Powers, the minority issues could be resolved.

Both Masaryk and Clementis emphasized that if agreement could be reached with Hungary about the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians within the framework of the population exchange, they would see to it that the transfer was executed humanely, that the resettled people could take their assets with them, and that there would be an economic agreement between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, including a reduction in the reparation payments.¹¹⁹ Maurice Dejean, the French ambassador in Prague, attributed the readiness of the Czechoslovaks to the fact that the interested governments had been admonished and advised to resolve the minority and local disputes

¹¹⁷ Gyöngyösi's report to Nagy, August 17, 1946, KÜM BéO 96/konf., ÚMKL.

¹¹⁸ Beáta Székely's notes, KÜM BéO 359/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹¹⁹ Rosty-Forgách's reports, August 19 and 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 106/pol. 1946 and 110/pol. 1946, ÚMKL; László Bartók's report, August 23, 1946, KÜM BéO 85/pol. 1946, ÚMKL. The Hungarian envoy to Vienna reported about a statement made by František Bořek-Dohalský, the Czechoslovak ambassador, about immediate bilateral negotiations, identical with Masaryk's statement.

in the spirit of good neighborliness. The Great Powers did not wish to make major changes in the agreed-upon Hungarian draft peace treaty. On this basis, Rosty-Forgách did not think that it was likely that further forced transfers of Hungarians from Slovakia would be approved. He believed that “our neighbors would be told to engage in direct negotiations with us and, hopefully, a general legal protection of minority human rights would be confirmed.”¹²⁰

In spite of the promises made to the Czechoslovak government delegation, the Soviet Union, in conformance with CFM’s procedures, left open the possibility of a bilateral Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement prior to the opening of the deliberations of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission. In open political discussions, the Soviet Union sided with Czechoslovakia, but this did not mean that behind the scenes it did not seek to find an accommodation with the British and American positions.

It was in this spirit that, at the August 15, 1946, plenary session, Vyshinsky stated that, in order to find an equitable solution, the Czechoslovak demand would be studied very carefully, and he did not promise unconditional support. The Manuilsky recommendation for bilateral negotiations indicated that, in agreement with Czechoslovakia, the members of the Slavic Bloc wished to avoid a public debate. The leaders of the Foreign Office also sensed in August 1946 that the Czechoslovak and Soviet positions had not solidified. Warner and Hayter told Bede at the beginning of September that they had been informed that Czechoslovakia might be willing to make a territorial exchange in which Hungary would receive a larger area than the one Czechoslovakia demanded from Hungary, so that in the matter of the Southeast European border issue, in at least one area, a solution could be found by bilateral negotiations. They believed that while in Romania the Soviet Union showed great interest in determining the line of the border, on the Czechoslovak side the Soviet Union would prefer a border arrived at by mutual agreement. Warner referred to a similar Czechoslovak–Polish negotiation initiated by the Soviet Union, and considered a solution that gave Hungary increased territory helpful in improving the atmosphere in the valley of the Danube.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Rosty-Forgách’s report from Prague, August 23, 1946, KÜM BéO 111/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹²¹ Bede’s report from London, September 4, 1946, KÜM BéO 89/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

In confidential political discussions, the Soviet position was much more flexible than in the Soviet representatives' speeches before the public. On September 10, Pushkin told Gyöngyösi, in a quasi-apologetic way, that the Soviet Union was in a very difficult position vis-à-vis the transfer and the Bratislava bridgehead because Czechoslovakia had ceded territory to the Soviet Union, had helped the Soviets before the war, and could be viewed as an old democratic country, while Hungary's democracy was still shaky.¹²²

The Hungarian–Czechoslovak agreement sought by the Great Powers was made difficult by the unilateral action of Czechoslovakia in trying to circumvent the population exchange agreement. On August 27, 1946, František Dastich, the Czechoslovak minister in Budapest, transmitted a list of 23,000 Hungarians whom they wish to expel as war criminals, over and above the exchange number agreed upon. They had agreed at the second Prague negotiation that expropriation and expulsion measures would be held in abeyance except against those who had committed crimes against the Czechoslovak Republic. By July 1946, only 92,000 Slovaks volunteered to be moved to Slovakia, and of these, only 55,000 were qualified. For this reason, the Slovak authorities used the war crime clause to prepare mass indictments against Hungarians and to pave the way for the expropriations and expulsions. Gyöngyösi, Gerő, and Sebestyén immediately went to see Clementis and Slávik in Paris to remind them of the February 27, 1946, agreement, according to which the people to be transferred on this basis would be limited to 999. Gerő sharply replied, “This is a Bata cipher!” Clementis blamed the lack of Hungarian support for the population exchange, claiming that six weeks of Czechoslovak propaganda were insufficient to overcome 150 years of Hungarianizing policies. Gerő commented that “perhaps they would have preferred to take 150 years for propaganda in favor of population exchange,” and emphasized: “We have given enough time for your propaganda and allowed means and methods that no other country would have allowed.” Gerő stated emphatically that expelling 23,000 Hungarians above the agreed-upon number was “an obvious circumvention of

¹²² Gyöngyösi's report, September 10, 1946, KÜM BéO 39/MK.1. 1946, (691/konf., September 26, 1946), ÚMKL. The linkage between the resettlement of the Hungarians and the cession of Transcarpathia surfaced at the Czechoslovak–Soviet discussions in Moscow in March 1945. See MURASHKO 1997: 171–172.

the basic principles of the agreement and of parity.”¹²³ Gerő also predicted that in the transfer issue, the decision would be unfavorable for Slovakia. With Clementis’s comment that he saw it differently, the meeting came to an end.¹²⁴ The mood of the Hungarian peace delegation, depressed by the Czechoslovak behavior and the Paris Conference atmosphere, is reflected in a letter Gyöngyösi wrote to Ernő Wittmann. According to Gyöngyösi:

In the matter of the complicated nationality and population exchange questions no results can be achieved with humanitarian, moral or logical arguments. Behind the issue ... there lurks Slavic cooperation and aggression. Naturally we must do everything to block this new great migration. ... One of my major disappointments is that I have not seen on the part of the so-called cultured and democratic West that moral indignation that the forceful transfer of 200,000 people and the inevitably associated inhumanity should have produced. It seems that Hitler generated a school of thought that infected not only us, the satellites, but contaminated the whole world.¹²⁵

It was after these preliminaries that, on August 30, 1946, the Hungarian peace delegation submitted its comments on the Czechoslovak transfer proposal. In this, they pointed out the dangers of applying the principle of a nation-state in Central and Eastern Europe. From Finland to Greece and from Switzerland to the Soviet Union, all the countries in this region had large nationalities living together. Acceptance of a pure nation-state would force several million people from their ancestral homes and create a new great migration. In spite of its unsatisfactory condition, the Hungarian minority had played no part in the dismemberment of the Czechoslovak Republic. That was made possible by cooperation between the Slovaks and the Sudeten Germans, by the divisiveness of the Czech people domestically,

¹²³ Gyöngyösi’s note, August 27, 1947, KÜM BéO MK.b. 1946, ÚMKL; “Memorandum on Hungarian–Czechoslovak Relations at the End of August 1946,” Prague, August 30, 1946, KÜM BéO 534/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. Gerő alluded to the famous Bata shoes factory selling technique to set the price at 999, instead of 1,000.

¹²⁴ KÜM BéO MK.b. 1946, ÚMKL; KÜM BéO 534/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹²⁵ Gyöngyösi’s letter to Ernő Wittmann in New York, September 7, 1946, KÜM BéO 315/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

and by Hitler and the French and British policies on the outside. The Hungarian peace delegation also pointed out that there was a close link between Czechoslovak territorial demands vis-à-vis Hungary and the expulsion proposal. Consequently, they asked that the discussion of the two issues be combined. They stated emphatically that they opposed the Czechoslovak transfer and could accept the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians only if their lands were also included.¹²⁶

The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission began the public debate on the Bratislava bridgehead at its 8th meeting on September 6, 1946. Juraj Slávik, the Czechoslovak delegate, presented their amendment as a local, 145 km² frontier adjustment. The Hungarian peace delegation objected to this proposal because the German population of the five villages had been resettled in accordance with the Potsdam Conference. Slávik claimed that the transfer had not taken place and that the Hungarians were therefore in a minority in that area. He also asserted that the Hungarian allegation that the change would cut across the London–Istanbul railway lines were without merit because there were other areas where a Vienna–Budapest link could be established. Slávik buttressed their territorial claim with Bratislava (Pozsony) urban expansion plans and economic arguments. On an Australian proposal, Pál Sebestyén, a member of the Hungarian peace delegation, was invited to address this question. The Hungarian delegate reminded the Commission that Czechoslovakia had made an identical, ethnically unjustified claim after World War I. The border would be 24 km from Bratislava and, considering Hungary's military weakness and the UN guarantee of the borders, would have no strategic advantage. Furthermore, Bratislava's urban spread was not in this direction, and between the wars, the port facilities had not expanded that way either. The Bratislava bridgehead would break up Hungarian communication and transportation lines, and the Rajka dam, which protected 110 Hungarian villages from flooding, would come under Czechoslovak control. A new highway and new border crossing facilities would have to be constructed. Moreover, the frontier adjustment was contrary to the spirit of the Atlantic Charter. Sebestyén also pointed out: "Czechoslovakia demands

¹²⁶ The Hungarian peace delegation's summary about the Paris Conference, KÜM BÉO 200–203/konf., ÚMKL, reprinted in FÜLÖP 1990b.

Hungarian land with Hungarian inhabitants and at the same time wishes to get rid of the Hungarian population on her territory and chase several hundred thousand ethnic Hungarians into Hungary.”¹²⁷

At the 9th meeting of the commission, on September 9, 1946, Bedell Smith, the American delegate, linked the Bratislava bridgehead to the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians and moved that the two proposals be examined together. Even though the United States appreciated Czechoslovakia's effort to create a homogenous state, the transfer would put a serious strain on Hungarian economy and was objectionable on humanitarian grounds as well. The American delegation would not sign a peace treaty that included the principle of forced population transfer. According to the American ambassador, the transfer must depend on the acquiescence of the recipient country and its ability to absorb such immigrants. The number of people to be transferred had to be limited to ensure that the transfer could be carried out humanely. For this reason, Bedell Smith suggested that the representatives of the two countries be heard and that a bilateral understanding between them be encouraged, so that a mutually satisfactory agreement could be reached on the matters of transfer and border adjustment. Any agreement reached between the Hungarians and Czechoslovaks could then be incorporated into the treaty. He hoped that any formal decision on the problem as a whole would be postponed until the commission had before it a joint recommendation from both governments. Ambassador Bedell Smith recommended that Rajka and Bezenye remain with Hungary. Novikov, the Soviet ambassador, and Slávik, the Czechoslovak delegate, opposed linking the transfer issue with the bridgehead question. On the motion of Stirling, the Australian delegate, a subcommittee was appointed to study the two amendments of the Czechoslovak territorial recommendations, with representatives from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ukraine, and Czechoslovakia. Bedell Smith thought it was peculiar that an interested party wished to serve as the judge for its own case, but the Czechoslovak delegate demanded, and was given, full membership on the subcommittee. The original Australian amendment called for a study of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak border

¹²⁷ CP (H/P), 8th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R13474/2608/21.

question, but Slávik managed to get the recommendation changed so that only the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak demands vis-à-vis Hungary would be examined.¹²⁸

By the beginning of September, the United States delegation had formulated tactics linking the two Czechoslovak demands. The negotiations between Nagy, Byrnes, and Bedell Smith were as important in this respect as the deterioration of the American–Czechoslovak and American–Soviet relations. The United States provided guarded support for the Hungarian attempt to block forceful transfer. Samuel Reber, Philip Mosely, John C. Campbell, and Fred Merrill worked with the Hungarians, Kertész and Szegedy-Maszák, to harmonize the text of the Hungarian proposals and the tactics to be followed. The United States delegation hoped for the survival of the Smallholders' Party and wanted to avoid, in the spirit of their June memorandum, holding ethnic groups collectively responsible, and repeating the mistake that had been made regarding the Germans at Potsdam. At the same time, the United States had to be careful not to give the impression that it protecting Hungary against the Allies or further damaging its relationship with Czechoslovakia. Consequently, Hungary, as a former enemy nation, could count on American understanding only at the secret negotiations at the conference, and there could be no open championing of Hungarian interests by the United States.¹²⁹

On September 11, at the 10th meeting of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, the recommendation of the Australian delegation was debated. This recommendation sought to make the protection of human rights and liberties a fundamental law of the Hungarian constitution. When the Soviet and Byelorussian delegates objected, Stirling withdrew his motion. The second submission of the Australian delegation concerned a guarantee of human rights in the territories to be ceded. Novikov, the Soviet ambassador, understood the intent of the Australian recommendation and protested against imposing such an obligation on a friendly and democratic country like Czechoslovakia. Vavro Hajdů, the Czechoslovak delegate, considered the amendment shocking and an interference into the domestic

¹²⁸ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 9th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R.13536/2608/21.

¹²⁹ CAMPBELL 1947a: 214; 1984: 51–52, quoted in KERTESZ 1984: 194–196; NAGY 1948: 356–357.

affairs of his country and also protested against a British recommendation to postpone the debate until it became evident whether territorial changes would be made in Czechoslovakia's favor.

The Yugoslav delegate considered the Australian amendment to be a form of support for fascism and revisionism. He charged that while the Hungarians had requested a statute of protection for Hungarian minorities in Romania, Yugoslavs in Hungary enjoyed no minority rights. He called for the rejection of the amendment, deeming it an encroachment on democratic order and the independence of nations. The Australian amendment was based on the post-World War I minority protection agreements, and the sole objective of the Australian delegation was to secure a just settlement. In case of Transylvania, the article on human rights in the Romanian draft peace treaty was considered adequate. A comparative example was furnished by the American proposal, which had been incorporated into the Italian peace treaty and obligated Yugoslavia to guarantee the legal status of the transferred territory's Italians. The Czechoslovaks rejected the analogy, claiming that the areas inhabited by Hungarians had not been ceded to Czechoslovakia but had been returned to it. According to the Yugoslav delegate, such obligations would be inappropriate for victorious Czechoslovakia, and imposing them would be demeaning. In the debate, Australia remained alone against the Slavic and other delegations, and the motion was defeated twelve to one. Thus, the matter of minority protection was removed from the agenda.¹³⁰

On September 13, the committee began to debate the Czechoslovak amendment regarding the disbanding of revisionist organizations. Clementis defined revisionism as a special variety of fascism, but more dangerous. He claimed that although Article 15 of the armistice agreement had ordered the removal of all revisionist symbols, this had not been carried out. There had been no formal dissolution of the Revisionist League, which still had its agents abroad, notably in the United States, Great Britain, and Switzerland. The observations presented by Hungary were proof that the spirit of revisionism was not dead. "Until revisionism was killed it would

¹³⁰ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 10th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R 13657/2608/21.

be impossible for Hungary to secure good relations with her neighbors Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia.” Kardelj, the leader of the Yugoslav delegation, claimed that, due to the memoranda presented to the CFM and the conference, it was clear that revisionism was not dead, causing great anxiety among Hungary’s neighbors. Kardelj then expounded upon the evils of the political system in Hungary between the two wars. Hungary had always complained of economic dislocation following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He, therefore, supported the Czechoslovak amendment.¹³¹ The Byelorussian and Ukrainian delegates supported the Czechoslovak amendment, but the French delegate opposed it. After a few minor amendments proposed by the American and Soviet delegates, the amendment was accepted unanimously on September 20.¹³²

On September 13, at its 12th meeting, the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission resumed the debate on the procedural amendment proposed by the American delegate. Masaryk, asserting the right of the victor, refused to negotiate with the vanquished. He repeatedly protested against linking the frontier and transfer questions, and he was joined in this by Stanković, the Yugoslav chairman of the commission. The debate on the Czechoslovak proposal to expel of 200,000 Hungarians began with a speech by Clementis. According to him, the expulsion of minorities would put an end to the threat of revisionism. The Czechoslovak government had attempted to resolve the problem of Slovak minorities in Hungary and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia through bilateral negotiations, but this endeavor led only to a partial solution – the population exchange agreement. The Hungarian government sabotaged it because in a final arrangement would have eliminated Hungary’s basis for future territorial claims against Czechoslovakia.

Of the 500,000 Hungarians remaining in Slovakia after the losses suffered during the war, 100,000 would be removed by the population exchange. Those speaking Slovak or declaring themselves to be Slovaks would have

¹³¹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 11th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R 13823/2608/21. The Byelorussian and Ukrainian delegates supported the Czechoslovak proposal.

¹³² PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 12th meeting, PRO FO, 371.59040 R 14004/2608/21; PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 12th meeting, PRO FO, 371.59040 R 14004/2608/21.

their Czechoslovak citizenship restored to them. There were no more than a total of 200,000 authentic Hungarians. The transfer would take place on the basis of a Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement within six months after ratification of the peace treaty and in accordance with humane principles. The Hungarian losses during the war and the transfer of 400,000 Germans would allow Hungary to take in the Hungarians. The Turkish–Greek, Ukrainian–Polish, and Czechoslovak–Ukrainian population exchanges could serve as precedents. After the Munich experience, Czechoslovakia would not grant minority rights and therefore sought to get rid of the minorities. This would reestablish peace in the Danube Basin and foster friendship between the two countries.¹³³

Aladár Szegedy-Maszák responded to the speech of the Czechoslovak delegate on September 18, 1946. He refuted the Czechoslovak data, pointing out that the number of Hungarians in Slovakia was actually 652,000, while there were only 104,000 Slovaks in Hungary. Acceptance of the Czechoslovak proposal would mean that, in addition to the large number of victims of the war, there would now be victims of the peace, casting 200,000 people into the tragic multitude of those who were homeless. The CFM had not included the Czechoslovak transfer recommendation in its peace treaty proposals, which had been made in order to change the nationality situation, even though the Czechoslovak government had asked for it. Accepting the Czechoslovak proposal would create a very dangerous precedent because it would be the starting point of a new nationality practice. If Czechoslovakia wanted to get rid of its Hungarian minority, or of a part of it, then it must give up the land that was essential for the survival of the Hungarian population to be resettled. The Hungarians could certainly not be held responsible for Munich. This was shown by the Great Powers when the Czechoslovak demand that the Hungarians be unilaterally expelled was not approved at the Potsdam Conference.

According to the Hungarian delegate, the transfer could not be done humanely. He mentioned the circumvention of the population exchange agreement by the designation of 23,000 Hungarians as “principal war

¹³³ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 12th meeting, PRO FO, 371.59040 R 14004/2608/21; PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 12th meeting, PRO FO, 371.59040 R 14004/2608/21.

criminals.” There were only 60–80,000 Slovaks in Hungary who wanted to move to Slovakia, and it was the above method that Czechoslovakia wanted to use to increase the number of Hungarians to be expelled. In the “re-Slovakization” process, individuals were made to choose between accepting Slovak nationality and expulsion. The forced resettlement of 200,000 Hungarians was unacceptable on political and moral grounds and, from an economic perspective, could not be accommodated in Hungary. The condemnation of this large number of Hungarians and their expulsion from their homes represented a grave peril for democracy in Hungary. Szegedy-Maszák invoked the basic principles of the Atlantic Charter and requested the Czechoslovak proposal be rejected.¹³⁴

At the 14th meeting of the commission, on September 20, Clementis responded in detail to the Hungarian assessment of the transfer and questioned the Hungarian data. According to him, Szegedy-Maszák had not denied the existence of the revisionist movement in Hungary, based on the Magyar minority in Slovakia, and had even used the Czechoslovak proposal to revive territorial revisionism. So far as the trials and expulsion of the guilty were concerned, he repeated that he was prepared to limit their number to 999, provided that the Hungarian government recognized that the resettlement statements of the Slovaks made them mandatory and that Hungary would not sabotage the implementation of the agreement. According to Clementis, the Slovak authorities would accept the statement of being Slovaks only from those who were truly of Slovak extraction and would be very careful that the Hungarians not exploit this clause in the hope of receiving citizenship. He stated that it was beneath his dignity to respond to the Hungarian accusation that among the Slovaks there was a large number of fascists and that Slovakia was Hitler’s most loyal satellite. The transfer was going to be done humanely, and Clementis was willing to invite UN representatives to supervise this. He was prepared to add this commitment to his amendment.

Bedell Smith did not question the goals of the Czechoslovak proposal but did question its methods. He stressed that the delegation of the United

¹³⁴ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 13th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R 14070/2608/21.

States would vote against the principle of forced transfer because it was totally unacceptable. The American proposal was not intended to offend Czechoslovakia's dignity by placing an Ally on the same level as an ex-enemy; he pointed out that Yugoslavia had already solved her minority problem with Hungary through direct negotiation. Such negotiations would achieve the ends desired by Czechoslovakia and ensure good relations between the two countries. He warned that a forced transfer could not exert a positive influence on future international relations. Bedell Smith proposed transferring the matter to the subcommittee studying the enlargement of the Bratislava bridgehead.

In his speech, Vyshinsky pointed out that the Hungarian–Czechoslovak population exchange agreement had not been implemented. In its minority policy, the Soviet Union had resolved nationality problems through population transfers and option arrangements. As an example, he mentioned the June 6, 1945, Soviet–Polish agreement, which resulted in the exchange of 1–1.5 million Poles for several hundred thousand Ukrainians.¹³⁵ According to Vyshinsky, Czechoslovakia sought to expel the Hungarian minority, but the Hungarian government did not recognize its own interests – namely, accepting as many of its sons as possible within its borders. The Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs saw two possible solutions: either letting the matter progress on its own or getting hold of the problem to find an equitable solution. The Soviet government believed the best solution would be to rid the countries of nationals of other states. There were many arguments in favor of the Czechoslovak proposal. Clementis had proved that, in the days of Munich, the Hungarian minority – siding with Konrad Henlein and Hans Frank – persecuted the Czechoslovaks, thereby threatening the peace of the whole world. Vyshinsky cited Hitler's suggestion to Darányi and Kánya in November 1937, that Hungary should not fritter away its policies in several directions but should concentrate on a single target: Czechoslovakia. Kánya's response was: "Hungary feels the same way."¹³⁶ Vyshinsky presented this as proof that the Hungarian government had

¹³⁵ On April 10, 1946, Stalin explained the same thing to Prime Minister Nagy. See page 191.

¹³⁶ RÁNKI et al. 1968: 244. For the Hitler–Darányi–Kánya negotiations see JUHÁSZ 1979: 131–132.

participated in the dismemberment of the Czechoslovak Republic and, therefore, that Czechoslovakia was in the right.

Vyshinsky described the amendment by the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission to prohibit revisionist propaganda as though the efforts to change the Czechoslovak–Hungarian border presented an acute danger to peace that could not be allowed. He claimed that, due to its central location in Europe, Czechoslovakia was exposed to attacks of historic Hungary's ruling class and German militaristic imperialism. In spite of its disastrous military defeat, Hungary had not abandoned its ideas of revisionist revenge and, therefore, the Czechoslovak proposal to expel the Hungarians and to put an end to revisionism was legitimate. The possibility of voluntary transfer had been ruled out due to the the Hungarian government's attitude; thus, compulsory transfer was inevitable, given the history of the Magyar minority, and would be the only lasting solution. Vyshinsky dismissed concerns that this would create a catastrophe in Hungary, calling such claims a gross exaggeration.

The Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs reminded the commission of the position taken by the Berlin Allied Control Council on November 20, 1945, which had assigned 500,000 Germans, scheduled to be sent from Hungary, to the American zone. Bedell Smith, present at this committee meeting, was party to that decision.¹³⁷ Vyshinsky also stated that by September 1, 1946, only 27%, that is, 137,000 Germans had been resettled. If Hungary implemented the transfer of the Germans, they could be replaced by good Hungarians. The Szegedy-Maszák argument that Czechoslovakia wanted to impose a peace of vengeance on Hungary and was making the Hungarians the scapegoats for Munich could only be explained by assuming that they wanted to leave the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia at all costs. It was true that the Hungarians were attached to their land, but Hungary had the duty of accepting them, because Czechoslovakia respected the human rights and the assets and valuables of those to be transferred. On the basis of all this, Vyshinsky asked that the Czechoslovak proposal be accepted.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ See page 126.

¹³⁸ Conférence de Paris, CP (H/P), doc. 16, September 20, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 156, MAE AD; PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 14th meeting, PRO FO, 371.59040

The 15th meeting of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission on September 23, 1946, was decisive for the transfer issue. The Slavic members of the Commission spoke in favor of the transfer of the Hungarians. The Yugoslav delegate reviewed the history of Hungarian revisionism. He said that these facts were sufficient to explain the present fears of the Czechoslovak people. Although Hungary had embarked on a new democratic course, much of the old spirit still prevailed. He rejected General Bedell Smith's reference to Yugoslavia because Czechoslovakia endeavored to do likewise, but this failed because of Hungarian resistance. Yugoslavia did not wish to forcefully expel the Hungarians living on its territory and was satisfied with a mutual and voluntary population exchange. Had Yugoslavia suffered the same fate as Czechoslovakia after Munich, she would have taken the same course as the latter.

Because of the failure to reach an agreement, Lutorovich, the Byelorussian delegate, saw no other possibility but to introduce the principle of mandatory transfer into the Hungarian draft peace treaty. The details of implementing the proposed transfer would have to be worked out by bilateral negotiation. He opposed the linking of the Czechoslovak territorial claims and the transfer and their study by a subcommittee. Lutorovich rejected the American delegation's ideas about the desirability of gradual assimilation and wondered if that was any better than the transfer of the population. He considered that the solution of minority problems by assimilation was harmful since it would be executed by means of infringement of the rights of the minority, i.e., by repression. Voina, the Ukrainian delegate, referred to the Polish-Ukrainian population exchange and, citing the Horthy-Szálasi regime's destructive policies vis-à-vis its neighbors, supported the Czechoslovak proposal.¹³⁹

The turn in the transfer debate came with the speech of the British delegate. Lord Hood said that he understood the Czechoslovak desire to find

R 14215/2608/21; KERTESZ 1984: 214–215, the speech is published in BARANYAI 1947c: 72–78. For the unused response draft of the Hungarian peace treaty delegation, see the draft summary of the Hungarian delegation's participation at the Paris Peace Conference, October 1, 1946, KÜM BÉO 850/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹³⁹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 15th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R 14309/2608/21.

a solution to this problem, but he felt that forced evictions would lead to more serious consequences than the presence of the minorities. It would be wrong to insert the principle of forced transfer into the treaty. He was certain that the Czechoslovak government would fulfill its pledge to humanely carry out any transfer, but it was not possible for the Czechoslovak government alone to give such assurances. Resettlement would be carried out properly only if the Hungarian government gave similar assurances. The Greek–Turkish transfer of 1920 came about on the basis of bilateral agreement, but in the present instance, the Budapest government was opposed. This was a matter that could not be resolved by unilateral action. A satisfactory solution required a bilateral agreement. The failure of past attempts was no reason for not trying again, since such an agreement would be in the best interests of both sides. He supported the US proposal for the reference of this amendment to the subcommittee, not for verification of figures but to work out, on the basis of the present debate, a solution acceptable to both parties, which could be provided by the Paris Conference.¹⁴⁰

Masaryk, in his concluding remarks on the transfer debate, argued that this proposal would lead to the final solution of a thorny problem and would create an atmosphere of real cooperation between the two democratic countries. If the positions were reversed and Czechoslovakia was asked to receive 200,000 of her nationals, she would be eager for the transfer. The Potsdam Agreement had accepted the principle of compulsory transfer of populations, so there was no reason why the conference should not do so also.

In his speech, Masaryk repeated Clementis's assurances that it would be done humanely. In the name of the Czechoslovak delegation, he accepted the subcommittee's study that had as its task the design of the implementation procedures on the basis of the Czechoslovak guarantees. Subsequently, the Commission unanimously approved the American recommendation to refer the Czechoslovak proposal to a subcommittee.¹⁴¹

The Czechoslovak proposal ran into the veto of two Great Powers of the CFM charged with drafting the Hungarian peace treaty, Great Britain

¹⁴⁰ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 15th meeting, PRO FO 371.59040 R14309/2608/21, published in BARANYAI 1947c: 84–85.

¹⁴¹ BARANYAI 1947c: 86–88.

and the United States. Hence, the amendment could not be accepted in its original form. The position taken by the United States on September 9 and by the British on September 17 forced the search for a compromise solution with consideration of the Czechoslovak and Hungarian requirements. This gave Hungarian diplomacy a unique opportunity to take steps against victorious Czechoslovakia's excessive claims.

Between September 9 and 17, the subcommittee of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, which was charged with studying the Czechoslovak proposals intended to nullify the outcomes of the Vienna Award, was in session. Between September 19 and 28, the expansion of the Bratislava bridgehead was discussed at five meetings before the debate shifted to the population transfer. After the open clashes at the Paris Conference, it was the linking of these subjects that made the resumption of confidential political discussions possible.

The Hungarian and Czechoslovak diplomats informed the members of the subcommittee in detail about the position of their respective governments.¹⁴² At the first four sessions,¹⁴³ an amendment was made concerning annulment of the consequences of the Vienna Award in respect to matters of finances and public and private insurance. This had been transacted by several accords between or on behalf of the two states concerned or between respectable Czechoslovak and Hungarian persons, on the basis of the Vienna Award and in respect to the material handed over by the Protocol of May 22, 1940. Despite the reservations of the Canadian delegate, this was submitted to the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission on September 17.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² The subcommittee's chairman was Ptoukha, the Ukrainian delegate, the rapporteur was P. Costello from New Zealand, and the members were A.T. Stirling from Australia, General Pope from Canada, and Hajdú from Czechoslovakia. FRUS 1946/IV: 872; Conférence de Paris, CP (H/P), doc. 13, September 9, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 156, MAE AD.

¹⁴³ Conférence de Paris, C.P. (H/P), doc. 13, September 12, 14 and 17, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 156, MAE AD; journalist's confidential report about the September 12 meeting of the subcommittee, KÚM Béo 348/konf. ÚMKL.

¹⁴⁴ Conférence de Paris, C.P. (H/P), doc. 13, September 12, 14 and 17, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 156, MAE AD; journalist's confidential report about the September 12 meeting of the subcommittee, KÚM Béo 348/konf. ÚMKL; Report of the Subcommittee, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14217/2608/21.

In order to block the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians, the Hungarian peace delegation endeavored to win over the members of the commission and the subcommission. On September 15, Kertész discussed the disputed Hungarian–Czechoslovak questions with the Canadian general, Maurice Pope. According to the Canadian delegate, his country's sympathies were with Czechoslovakia because the two countries had fought in two World Wars side by side. Hungary belonged to the enemy camp, and the Canadian people were ashamed of the Munich events. Unfortunately, Czechoslovakia could see peace only at the cost of a forced transfer and, after the experiences of the past, this could not be condemned. According to the Canadian delegate, it was only their Puritan conscience and convictions that kept them from voting for the Czechoslovak proposal of forcibly transferring the Hungarians. In order to maintain their position, it was essential that Hungary make substantially greater concessions than Czechoslovakia. General Pope believed that if there were a Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement, a vote on the resettlement could be avoided. Kertész told him that in 1919, in violation of the right to self-determination and of the nationality principle, 1 million Hungarians were assigned to Czechoslovakia. T.G. Masaryk had reached an agreement with General Smuts about the Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) remaining with Hungary in exchange for the Bratislava bridgehead, but the Czechoslovak delegation then disavowed this agreement at the Paris Peace Conference. Kertész rejected any Hungarian responsibility for Munich: "It seems particularly indecent that the Great Powers, in order to soothe their consciences and their possible pangs of conscience for events in Munich, wished to punish the Hungarian population in Slovakia and Hungary itself." Kertész also stated that there was no free land in Hungary suitable for settlement. He believed that with this conversation, he weakened the credibility of some of the Czechoslovak assertions.¹⁴⁵

In his speech to the subcommittee on September 19, 1946, General Pope, referring to Bedell Smith's declaration at the September 9 meeting of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, moved that Rajka and Bezenye be given to Hungary to accommodate the economic and ethnic

¹⁴⁵ Kertész's report, September 15, 1946, KÜM B&O 859/konf. 1946, ÚMKL; KERTESZ 1985: 152–154.

complaint of the Hungarian delegation. The award of Horvátjárfalu (Jarovce), Dunacsún (Čunovo), and Oroszvár (Rusovce) to Czechoslovakia would satisfy the majority of the Czechoslovak claims and would also satisfy the condition that the border run along existing estate lines. Because Czechoslovakia used urban expansion and not strategic reasons for the expansion of the bridgehead, the Canadian delegate expected that the Czechoslovak government would give an area of equal size (*quid pro quo*) to Hungary, somewhere along the border separating the two countries. General Pope also considered it inevitable that the matter of the several thousand Hungarians who would come to Czechoslovakia with the territory transfer be discussed together with the Czechoslovak proposal of resettling 200,000 Hungarians. To coerce a defeated country to cede territory and population can be done only if it is legitimate and if the transfer can be made as humanely as possible. According to the Canadian delegate, somehow the agreement of the Hungarian government had to be obtained for all this.

Vavro Hajdú, the Czechoslovak delegate, rejected the idea of a territorial concession because none of the other Allied countries were forced to do this, but he was willing to make a commitment to respect the human rights of the Hungarians in the five villages to be transferred. Hajdú might have accepted a proposal to expand the Bratislava bridgehead by a smaller territory than originally demanded. According to the Czechoslovak delegate, an attempt had been made to obtain Hungary's agreement to the transfer, but the attempt was not successful. When Kertész was heard on September 21, he rejected the Czechoslovak urban expansion arguments and reminded the subcommittee that at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, Czechoslovakia had emphasized strategic considerations. Costello, the New Zealander rapporteur of the subcommittee, endorsed the American–Canadian amendment that limited the expansion of the Bratislava bridgehead to three villages.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Hungarian–Czechoslovak subcommittee's debate, September 19, 1946, KÜM BéO 741/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. At the September 24 meeting of the subcommittee, the Canadian delegate repeated his position. Wigress, the Canadian ambassador in Moscow, thought that the transfer of the three villages would be acceptable when he talked to Szekfü on August 23. See Szekfü's report, August 23, 1946, KÜM BéO 298/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. The Bedell Smith motion on Rajka and Bezenye of September 9 at the 9th meeting of the commission is published in BARANYAI 1947c: 21; BALOGH 1988: 236.

The Canadian delegate was favorable to Hungary not only because he linked the Bratislava bridgehead to the transfer question, because he joined the American amendment to give Czechoslovakia three instead of five villages, or because he raised the issue of territorial exchange, but primarily because he made transfer conditional on the agreement of the Hungarian government. In fact, on September 20, the Hungarian peace delegation decided that at the beginning of direct negotiations, it would declare: "For moral reasons, it could not accept the humiliating transfer as a basis for negotiations." According to the Hungarian delegation:

Czechoslovakia could get rid of its Hungarian minority to the extent considered necessary by the Czechoslovak republic if it ceded, together with the predominantly agricultural population, the land necessary for their maintenance. After cession of the territories most heavily populated by Hungarians, the Slovaks living there could be exchanged for Hungarians living in other Slovak areas. In order to facilitate further population exchange, Hungary would be willing to cede strips of territory inhabited primarily by Slovaks, perhaps with the resettlement to Hungary of the Hungarians living there. The Hungarian delegation was willing to accept additional Hungarians so that the population density in the ceded territory should reach the density of the rest of Hungary (100/km²). This would mean that the Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) would come back to Hungary. The Hungarian Government would accept two-thirds of the people with land and one-third without land. The population exchange would be extended by one month; the resettlement would be done with adequate preparation, humanely, with the movable assets being taken and with fixed assets being compensated for.¹⁴⁷

By late September, it was only the Italian peace treaty and the Bratislava bridgehead transfer question on which the Great Powers of the CFM could not reach agreement. Noting the position of America and Great Britain, and,

¹⁴⁷ Gyöngyösi's note: "The Position of the Hungarian Peace Delegation Concerning the Czechoslovak Resettlement Proposal and Its Discussion by Direct Negotiation between the Two Countries," September 26, 1946, KÜM BÉO 849/konf. 1946, ÜMKL.

in order to create a three-power consensus, the Soviet Union was willing to yield on the Czechoslovak demands. At the 10th, informal meeting of the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs held at the Quai d'Orsay on Sunday, September 22, 1946, at 10 a.m. Gladwyn Jebb stated: "We could agree to reject the Czechoslovak transfer proposal." According to the British deputy to the foreign secretary, if Vyshinsky objected, they would vote or hand it over to the subcommittee. In the latter case, a compromise could be reached that linked the territorial adjustments to the population transfer. Vyshinsky favored the subcommittee's debate. Couve de Murville considered the transfer possible only under rigid guarantees and he considered the subcommittee's task was to study these guarantees. The Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs agreed. Samuel Cohen, the American delegate, wished to refer the territorial adjustment and transfer to the same subcommittee. Vyshinsky wanted an agreement from the deputy ministers of foreign affairs of the Great Powers that would serve as the basis of the subcommittee's deliberations. As a personal opinion and a provisional suggestion, he presented a compromise solution: "Allocating some of the villages to Hungary and some to Czechoslovakia. If this was decided, Hungary might be conciliated by making an agreement that any transfer of population should be carried out under humane conditions." From the American side, Cohen saw the difficulty in "securing a solution without imposing a decision on either Czechoslovakia or Hungary." Therefore, the American delegation wanted the two sides to agree, and the subcommittee had to accomplish that. On the basis of Vyshinsky's recommendation, the deputy ministers of foreign affairs agreed that, prior to the previously discussed 15th meeting of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission on September 23, the views about the transfer issue would be coordinated in informal discussions. Jebb reserved the right of the delegations to vote openly on the Czechoslovak proposal at that meeting.¹⁴⁸

After the Conference of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the officials of the Foreign Office involved with the Hungarian draft peace treaty tried to get both interested delegations to come to an agreement.

¹⁴⁸ CFM, PPC D (46), 10th meeting, September 11, 1946, PRO FO 371.39040 R 14216/2608/21; CFM, PPC D (46) 11th meeting, September 13, 1946, PRO FO 371.39040 R 14216/2608/21.

On September 23, Jebb negotiated with Masaryk, who was willing to make some territorial concessions and to make the transfer a topic for bilateral discussions.¹⁴⁹ Clementis and Hajdú asked Marjoribanks, on September 27 about the conditions for accepting the transfer of the 200,000 Hungarians.¹⁵⁰ Lord Hood discussed with Kertész the chances of a vote on the Czechoslovak proposal. Kertész told him that if the proposal were accepted, it was likely that the delegation would leave the Paris Conference and go home. He added that, in that case, the fall of the coalition government would be inevitable.¹⁵¹

Gyöngyösi, Kertész, and Auer received a firm promise from Georges Bidault, the French minister of foreign affairs, that France would vote against the Czechoslovak proposal. Later, however, Auer found out from the secretary-general of the Quai d'Orsay that in this matter, the French delegation supported Czechoslovakia.¹⁵²

The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission's subcommittee discussed the minimum Czechoslovak territorial claims on September 24. The Canadian delegate again moved that the population transfer and the bridgehead be discussed together, and invited the Czechoslovak delegation to begin bilateral negotiations in order to cede to Hungary territory equal in size to the Bratislava bridgehead and somewhere east of that area. This would reduce the number of Hungarians involved in the transfer and might gain the agreement of the Hungarian government.¹⁵³

At the meeting of the subcommittee on September 26, Stirling, the Australian delegate, moved that the Czechoslovak claim be limited to three

¹⁴⁹ BALOGH 1988: 239.

¹⁵⁰ BALOGH 1988: 239. Zdeněk Fierlinger, the Czechoslovak deputy prime minister, asked Rosty-Forgách on September 20 about accepting the remnants of the Hungarians in Slovakia in exchange for cession of a part of the Csallóköz. See Rosty-Forgách's report, September 20, 1946, KÜM BéO 131/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹⁵¹ KERTESZ 1984: 217.

¹⁵² KERTESZ 1984: 218.

¹⁵³ "Statement made by the Canadian Delegate at the Meeting of the Subcommission of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission," September 24, 1946, Sándor Vájlok Papers. This document transmitted to the author by the widow of Sándor Vájlok; György Kósa's notes on the closed session of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak Subcommission's meeting, September 24, 1946, KÜM BéO 411/konf., ÚMKL.

villages. He also raised the possibility of a territorial exchange. He stated that the United States and Great Britain opposed the forced population transfer, and that Australia took the same position. He suggested direct negotiations about the population exchange. He reserved his final word on the matter because of the interrelationship of the bridgehead and transfer questions.

Hajdú tried to make the bridgehead enlargements appear as a minor economic matter. Costello, the New Zealand delegate, who on September 6 already supported the Czechoslovak claims, also supported Hajdú's position. General Pope acknowledged the Czechoslovak willingness to reduce the bridgehead, but asked for assurances on the status of the Hungarians who thus would be transferred. He continued to hold the Hungarian government's agreement essential for the resolution of this question. On Costello's proposal, the subcommittee recognized the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak demand for a cession of the territory (Canada objecting), but with a guarantee of the human rights of the Hungarians being transferred and with the size of the territory to be determined later.¹⁵⁴

According to a decision reached on September 24 by the CFM in Paris, the subcommittee was supposed to submit its report by October 2. The Great Powers made a last-minute effort to settle the Czechoslovak–Hungarian conflict. Minister Szekfű and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department Director Baranyai went to see Ambassador Bedell Smith on September 28 to discuss the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav proposals on art objects. Bedell Smith thought that this was an unimportant matter, but the matter of the transfer of the 200,000 Hungarians had taken a turn for the worse as far as Hungary was concerned.

Costello supported the Czechoslovak position, while Stirling the Hungarian one. The Canadian delegate took exception to the fact that the Hungarian peace delegation was bargaining already in its first submission. Bedell Smith was afraid that the Czechoslovak proposal would be affirmed by the vote. The United States wanted to avoid, at all cost, a situation where the transfer would produce a political crisis in Hungary and cause the present government to fall. For this reason, Bedell Smith asked for a voluntary

¹⁵⁴ The Afternoon Session of the Hungarian Subcommittee on September 26, 1946, KÜM BéO, 742/konf., ÚMKL.

Hungarian acceptance of a certain size and methodology of transfer, thinking that if Czechoslovakia rejected this plan, it would put itself in a bad position. Szekfű and Baranyai concluded that Bedell Smith was not opposed to a territorial compensation. Frederick T. Merrill, the secretary of the American Legation in Budapest, did not believe that a 1:1 ratio was possible and that Hungary would have to accept more people than those living in the transferred territory.¹⁵⁵

That same day, September 28, the British Commonwealth of Nations harmonized its position prior to the forthcoming Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations. In addition to the Australian, New Zealander, and Canadian members of the subcommittee, the leaders of the British delegation, Alexander and Jebb, participated in the discussion. Jebb wished to use the “bridgehead concession” as a bargaining chip in the transfer negotiations, and therefore he considered it regrettable that the subcommittee had accepted the Czechoslovak bridgehead proposal.¹⁵⁶ General Pope considered this an acceptance in principle only, dependent on certain conditions and the working out of a number of details. Costello considered that giving the river bank of the Danube to Czechoslovakia was a compromise solution.

Marjoribanks referred to a request Clementis made the previous day,¹⁵⁷ asking the British to request a recommendation from the Hungarians to resolve the problems. The British diplomat, responsible for working on the Hungarian peace treaty, hoped that on this basis, an agreement could be reached. Even if the Paris Conference did not approve of it officially, it might serve as a basis for future discussions between the parties. According to Marjoribanks, “under the present circumstances, the Czechs might be able to secure the adoption of their amendment as it stood with alterations.” Harold Alexander, the leader of the British delegation, expressed his doubts that British public opinion would accept the forcible transfer of a number of Magyars, including many Protestants.

¹⁵⁵ Szekfű's note to Gyöngyösi, September 28, 1946, KÜM BéO 758/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹⁵⁶ The Hungarian Subcommittee, on Costello's motion, accepted the bridgehead proposal on September 26. See “Meeting of the British Commonwealth Delegations in the Hotel George V, Saturday, September 28, 1946,” UK Circular no. 31, PRO FO 371. 59041. R 14537/2608/21.

¹⁵⁷ PRO FO 371. 59041. R 14537/2608/21, see also BALOGH 1988: 239.

For humanitarian reasons, Claxton, the Canadian delegation's leader, strongly opposed the transfer and believed that the situation would change if the Czechs were to yield territory in exchange (*quid pro quo*) and come to an agreement with the Hungarians. Otherwise, his instructions from his government were to oppose the transfer. Stirling, the Australian delegate, agreed with this position and, as a last resort, wished to put the transfer under UN supervision with very stringent conditions.

McIntosh, the leader of the New Zealand delegation, also opposed the transfer but viewed it as an exceptional situation. His government wanted to leave the implementation to Czechoslovakia and considered their endeavor to establish a national state as legitimate. He referred to the forceful resettlement of the Germans from Czechoslovakia and from Hungary. It was for this reason that the New Zealand delegation did not oppose Czechoslovakia. Costello added apologetically that the Czechs had an obsession with minorities and frontier difficulties as a result of their treatment under the Munich Agreement.

The British Commonwealth conference considered a Czechoslovak-Hungarian agreement possible only if it were forced upon them. It seemed unlikely that hearing the Hungarian peace delegation at the commission or subcommittee level would lead to a proposal that would be acceptable to Czechoslovakia. Marjoribanks submitted a compromise proposal that would give effect to a modified transfer of population, subject to stringent conditions, to the agreement of both governments, and to some mutual frontier readjustments. But it seemed clear that working out such an arrangement in detail would take longer than a week, and it seemed, therefore, that the members of the subcommittee should not, in the meantime, bind themselves to accept the Czech proposals as they stood.

Alexander, referring to an earlier Masaryk-Jebb discussion,¹⁵⁸ considered it possible that the Czechs would be satisfied with a reduction of the numbers proposed to be removed, and he thought that any reduction in numbers would be helpful. Even though, in general, the Czechs would reject the cession of territory, Alexander hoped that in this case they would accept

¹⁵⁸ BALOGH 1988: 239.

some readjustment of the frontiers. The Commonwealth members accepted the Marjoribanks compromise as a basis and wanted to make one more attempt to secure agreement.¹⁵⁹

The subcommittee's report was accepted on September 28, which greatly reduced the chances of the British mediation effort. On the basis of a motion by Costello and Hajdú, its work was completed on the Bratislava bridgehead, whereupon the British and American diplomatic discussions with the interested parties began regarding the modification of the transfer proposal. With four votes, Australia abstaining, the subcommittee considered the Czechoslovak border adjustment demand to be justified, limiting it to three villages, Horvátjárfalu (Jarovce), Dunacsún (Čunovo), and Oroszvár (Rusovce). On a Ukrainian recommendation, the Rajka dam was left to Hungary.

As a condition of the territorial concession, Czechoslovakia acknowledged the human rights of the residents and also their right to move. The subcommittee did not decide whether the latter stipulation should be included in the peace treaty or in the bilateral Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement. The Australian delegate appreciated Czechoslovakia's desire for a national state and for a just resolution of the minority question, as well as Slovakia's capital becoming a major river port. However, he believed that all this would cause serious ethnic and other problems for Hungary. Stirling stated: "It is our belief that Czechoslovakia should cede territory of equal value to Hungary somewhere else."

As far as the transfer of the 200,000 Hungarians was concerned, the Australian delegate shared the British and American position that it would be wrong to include a clause in the agreement allowing for the forced transfer of people contrary to the desires of the recipient country. For this reason, Stirling recommended a bilateral agreement.¹⁶⁰ The Australian delegate agreed with the British–American–Canadian view that there was a linkage between the bridgehead issue and the transfer. Consequently, he rejected

¹⁵⁹ Meeting of the British Commonwealth Delegations in the Hotel George V, Saturday, September 28, 1946, UK Circular no. 31, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14537/2608/21.

¹⁶⁰ MTI reporter Ábrahám's notes on the meeting of the Hungarian subcommittee, September 28, 1946, KÜM BéO 740/konf., ÚMKL.

the decision on the enlargement of the Bratislava bridgehead because the resettlement issue had not been placed on the agenda of the subcommittee.

Thus, the tactical directive agreed upon at the Commonwealth meeting was adhered to only by the Australian delegate. General Pope, the Canadian delegate, yielded to some extent, and Costello, the New Zealand delegate, whom Bedell Smith characterized as being far left-wing and strongly pro-Czech, completely gave up on linking the bridgehead with transfer issues. By accepting the reduced enlargement of the Bratislava bridgehead on September 28, Czechoslovakia hoped to weaken the Anglo-American bargaining position and sought, at all costs, to prevent the question of territorial exchange (and transfer) from being linked to the matter of the bridgehead. In closed session, the subcommittee decided that it would bring Hungary and Czechoslovakia together in an official capacity for direct negotiations aimed at a bilateral agreement on the Hungarians in Slovakia.

That same day, Marjoribanks met with the Hungarian peace treaty delegation and worked with the experts on the territorial arrangements.¹⁶¹ The following afternoon, he submitted the unofficial plans of the British delegation for resolving the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians to Gyöngyösi and Masaryk, in writing. He recommended that an area of 510 km² south of Rozsnyó (Rožňava) and Kassa (Košice) – with a population of 20,000, mostly Slovaks – be given to Czechoslovakia, and that an area of 1,130 km² east of the Garam River and south of Fülek (Filakovo) and Rimaszombat (Rimavská Sobota) – with a mostly Hungarian population of 78,000 – be given to Hungary.¹⁶² This initiative can be linked to a confidential American proposal that had been given to Szegedy-Maszák, the Hungarian minister in Washington, which also dealt with resolving the Hungarian–Czechoslovak population and territory debate. The American proposal suggested a bilateral territorial exchange, aiming to reduce the number of Hungarians and Czechoslovaks living under foreign rule. For the Hungarians living in the territory ceded by Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian government would accept an equal number of Hungarians from another area. The countries would

¹⁶¹ KERTESZ 1984: 216.

¹⁶² Vájlok's note on the Marjoribanks note given to Auer on the afternoon of September 29–30, 1946, KÜM BéO 766/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

faithfully implement the February 27, 1946, Czechoslovak–Hungarian agreement and complete the population exchange gradually, humanely, with respect for property rights, and under the supervision of the appropriate UN agency.¹⁶³

In his response, Szegedy-Maszák rejected the American proposal insofar as it assumed the acceptance of forced transfer, but agreed to accept more Hungarians with territory than Czechoslovakia, at a ratio of 2:1. He requested assurances regarding human rights of the remaining Hungarians and asked for UN assistance with the transfer.¹⁶⁴ The British mediation, originally initiated by Czechoslovakia, aligned with the Hungarian proposals, the American plans, and Vyshinsky's position of September 22.¹⁶⁵ Thus, in agreement with the Soviet Union, a Great Power compromise emerged for the partial implementation of the population transfer and for Hungary's territorial compensation.

Costello tried to convince Kertész on September 29 that the Hungarian peace delegation should accept the modified version of the transfer. The New Zealand delegate received instructions from his government to vote for the Czechoslovak proposal regarding the transfer of 200,000 Hungarians. He believed that, besides himself, France and the five Slavic countries would side with Czechoslovakia. Only the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and South Africa would vote against it, while Canada was vacillating and India would abstain. The New Zealand delegate proposed implementing the transfer of the 200,000 Hungarians over a 10-year period, considering it possible that this number might be reduced.

Kertész responded that forced resettlement was unacceptable for Hungary. "This was a matter of principle on which we cannot yield, even if Czechoslovakia would reduce the number of Hungarians to be transferred to a very small number." Kertész referred to the practical impossibility

¹⁶³ "Confidential, Privately Transmitted American Proposal for the Resolution of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak Population and Territory Debate," October 12, 1946, KÜM BéO 885/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹⁶⁴ KÜM BéO 885/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹⁶⁵ The Hungarian proposal was prepared on the basis of the position taken by the peace delegation on September 30. Summary of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak Subcommittee's debate, September 30, 1946, KÜM BéO 849/konf. 1946, ÚMKL; KERTÉSZ 1984: 216.

of the transfer and to the distribution of the land that had been vacated by the expelled Germans. When Costello asked what the Hungarian peace delegation would do if the Czechoslovak transfer proposal was approved by vote, Kertész openly stated, just as he had to the British delegate a few days earlier, that the delegation would demonstratively return home and await developments there.

When the New Zealand delegate pointed out that this would make the humane implementation of the transfer impossible, Kertész explained the reasons for Hungary's rejection of the proposal. "Humane transfer was not a question of providing rolling stock and heated wagons. A much more significant point was that tens of thousands of Hungarian farming families could not have their livelihood guaranteed. The implementation of the plan would be so catastrophic for the entire Hungarian regime that it would certainly collapse. We believe that Czechoslovakia does not care about stabilising Hungarian democracy, otherwise they would not insist on such a monstrous proposal." Costello expressed his fear that the entire Hungarian population in Slovakia might be transferred to a distant region of the Soviet Union. Kertész rejected this possibility.¹⁶⁶

Direct Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations began on the afternoon of September 29 at the Luxembourg Palace. The subcommittee dispatched General Pope as an observer and, at the request of both parties, he was asked to serve as chairman of the meeting. Gyöngyösi declared that he rejected the principle of unilateral expulsion, stating that it was contrary to the Atlantic and the UN Charter. Any transfer could only take place if accompanied by a border adjustment. As proof of its peaceful intentions, the Hungarian delegation was willing to accept a certain number of Hungarians without land, who wished to move voluntarily. The ratio would be determined based on the difference in population density between Slovakia and Hungary (100 to 66). The border modification could be made where the Hungarian population density was greatest, with Slovaks living in the transferred area exchanged for Hungarians. Gyöngyösi emphasized that he raised the matter of border modification only because Czechoslovakia insisted on resettling

¹⁶⁶ Kertész's report on the conversation with Costello on September 29, 1946, KÜM BÉO 860/konf. 1946, ÚMKL, in KERTÉSZ 1985: 156–157.

the Hungarians. In closing, he expressed hope that, in case of an agreement, Czechoslovakia would restore human and civil rights of Hungarians remaining in Slovakia. Masaryk rejected the Hungarian proposal, stating: "They also make demands on the territory of a victorious state and are suggesting something rather resembling minority rights for those Hungarians who would stay within the frontiers of Czechoslovakia ... we wish to finish with the minority problems and that we would like to create a national state. ... If the Hungarian suggestions were to become reality, it seems to me that no Hungarian would volunteer to leave Czechoslovakia, much preferring to stay there and to become guardians of the interests of Hungary." Auer asked for the Czechoslovak proposals, but Clementis announced that the basis for discussion could only be the Czechoslovak motions submitted for the Hungarian peace treaty plan. Sebestyén again rejected unilateral compulsory transfer and asked that Czechoslovakia grant the Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia the human rights it was obligated to respect under the UN Charter.¹⁶⁷

After this unsuccessful negotiation, the subcommittee took up the proposal on September 30, inviting the Hungarian delegation to attend this unofficial meeting. Sebestyén stated that Hungary had not submitted any territorial claims against Czechoslovakia at the Paris Conference and continued to be satisfied with the territorial, legal, and ethnic status quo. It was Czechoslovakia that demanded territory from Hungary, thereby departing from the status quo. The Australian delegate requested information about the practical aspects of border adjustment. The Hungarian delegation made it contingent on the number of people to be accepted – two-thirds with land and one-third without. A border adjustment could result in an ethnically unsatisfactory boundary and, therefore, the Hungarian delegation was prepared to adjust the current Hungarian border in areas with a large Slovak population.

The Canadian delegate, General Pope, expressed his willingness to mediate between the two parties to resolve the issue through mutual agreement. According to him, the Hungarian proposal to relocate as few Hungarians as

¹⁶⁷ Iván Boldizsár's notes on the September 29, 1946, Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiation, KÜM BéO 755/konf. 1946, ÚMKL, in BARANYAI 1947c: 89–85.

possible from their homes would be sympathetically received. However, as the Hungarian proposal appeared unilateral, he asked whether the Hungarian delegation would be willing to propose a mutual border adjustment. On behalf of the Hungarian delegation, Sebestyén confirmed their willingness. Speaking for the Czechoslovak delegation, Slávik rejected any direct negotiations and declared that linking transfer to territorial exchange was unacceptable to Czechoslovakia. "On the anniversary of Munich a new revisionism has come to life. The Hungarian delegates demand land for Hungarians in Slovakia. This is a provocative gesture that would resolve nothing." Slávik was willing to discuss only the methodology of the transfer directly with the Hungarian delegation. The Australian delegate reiterated his statement of September 28 and insisted that the bridgehead and transfer issues should be linked.¹⁶⁸

The Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission discussed the report of its subcommittee on the Bratislava bridgehead at its 18th meeting on October 1. The Hungarian delegation requested that the new frontier follow communal boundaries and that the lock of Rajka, connecting the Danube and the Little Danube, remain in Hungarian territory. Additionally, they asked that Czechoslovakia reimburse the costs of a new highway between Mosonmagyaróvár and Vienna and that the demilitarization prescribed by the Trianon Treaty be expanded to include the bridgehead. With the exception of the last two items, the Czechoslovak delegation was willing to accept the Hungarian claims. The rules for population exchange outlined in the February 27, 1946, agreement were to be applied to the eventual transfer of the residents of the bridgehead. The British and American delegations blocked a vote by insisting that the bridgehead and transfer matters remain linked.¹⁶⁹ As a result, the approval of the Czechoslovak proposal and the subcommittee's report was once again postponed.

At the subcommittee meeting on October 2, Czechoslovakia, taking stock of the American and British positions, accepted the compromise

¹⁶⁸ BARANYAI 1947c: 96–101. Report of György Kósa, a member of the peace delegation's information staff, on the closed meeting of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak subcommittee, September 30, 1946, KÚM B&O 411/konf., ÚMKL; BALOGH 1988: 239–240.

¹⁶⁹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 18th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14664/2608/21.

solution offered by the New Zealand delegate. During the subcommittee's debate, it became apparent that the Czechoslovak proposal, in its original form, would not have enough support, even though there was consistent sympathy for a permanent solution to minority problems and the creation of a Czechoslovak national state. Czechoslovakia proposed an amendment stating: "Hungary shall enter into bilateral negotiations with Czechoslovakia in order to solve the problem of those inhabitants of Magyar ethnic origin, residing in Czechoslovakia, who will not be settled in Hungary within the scope of the Treaty of February 27, 1946, on exchange of populations. In the event of no agreement being reached within a period of six months of the coming into force of the present treaty, Czechoslovakia shall have the right to bring the question before the Council of Foreign Ministers and to request the assistance of the Council in effecting a final solution." At the October 3 meeting of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, this text was unanimously accepted, thereby also approving the transfer of the Bratislava bridgehead.¹⁷⁰

The Czechoslovak delegation was moved by a combination of factors to withdraw its original proposal. Within the delegation, Masaryk was inclined to make territorial concessions to accomplish the population transfer, but Clementis rigidly rejected this. The Slovak leaders were willing to have the Bratislava bridgehead reduced and to approve the compromise proposal of the New Zealand delegate, replacing compulsory transfer with the acceptance of the "land with people" principle, even with minor border adjustments. This doomed the mediation attempts initiated by the Great Powers in the CFM, who were responsible for drafting the Hungarian peace treaty. In cases involving Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union came forward in defense of the interests of the Slavic Bloc at all public meetings of the Paris Conference. In the closing period of the conference, however, when the members of the CFM decided to speed up the work of this consultative gathering and were seeking a solution acceptable to the Great Powers, Soviet diplomacy was not willing to endanger the Big Three decision establishing a principle with a Trieste-like test in a matter that

¹⁷⁰ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 19th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14804/2608/21.

would introduce a new clause into the draft peace treaty constructed by the CFM to implement the real or imaginary interests of a minor ally. The British delegation implemented the position it had taken at the beginning of May and adapted its policies in Paris to the American line. Australia, and to a lesser degree Canada, supported the British position. At the beginning of September, officials of the Foreign Office still advised Bede that "the Czechoslovaks introduced their demand for the attachment of the five villages in order to make the transfer of the Hungarian areas of the Csallóköz to Hungary acceptable to Slovak public opinion."¹⁷¹ The Marjoribanks compromise formula, developed at the British Commonwealth group's meeting, was also based on the possibility of a territorial exchange. However, Czechoslovakia's rejection of territorial concessions and Hungary's adamant opposition to compulsory transfer ultimately caused the Anglo-American mediation efforts to fail.

The American veto, which wrecked the transfer, was based on a combination of theoretical and practical considerations. American diplomacy realized that it had made a mistake at Potsdam when it accepted the principle of a national community's guilt and punishment and agreed, on November 20, 1945, to accept 500,000 Germans from Hungary into its zone of occupation in Germany. Vyshinsky and Clementis cited this Potsdam precedent and the United States' acceptance of this responsibility when they emphasized the possibility of the compulsory transfer of Hungarians from Slovakia. The United States delegation was unwilling to repeat its earlier mistake. The resettlement of Germans from Hungary to the American zone was stopped in June 1946 and, after August, was tied to stringent conditions.¹⁷² The American and Hungarian positions rejecting collective guilt and responsibility coincided with the suspension of the transfer of Germans from Hungary. The Hungarian peace delegation, learning from

¹⁷¹ Bede's cipher telegram no. 88, September 3, 1946, KÜM BéO 339/res./Bé. 1946, ÚMKL.

¹⁷² BALOGH 1988: 99–100; FEHÉR 1988: 115–120. Fehér cites the August 26, 1946, American–Hungarian agreement. The Hungarian peace delegation used corrected data at the Paris Conference. See György Fráter's internal memo: "Data on the Resettlement of the Germans from Hungary with Particular Reference to the Hungarians in Slovakia," July 17–19, 1946, KÜM BéO 265/Bé. res. 1946, ÚMKL.

the experiences gained at the second Prague negotiations, put its objections to compulsory transfer on a basis of principle and was unwilling to accept even a partial implementation.

The threat from Prime Minister Nagy and the members of the peace delegation – that the democratic system might collapse – proved effective. In its support, limited to the transfer issue, the American delegation took into account that the democratic forces in Hungary were unlikely to survive the consequences of a forced population transfer.¹⁷³ The cooling off of the American–Czechoslovak relationship and the overt friendship of the Czechoslovak delegation with the Soviet Union strengthened the Hungarian position. In the last phase of the Paris Conference, decisions about the transfer and the bridgehead had to be made under the pressure of a deadline. By linking the two issues, American diplomacy managed to prevail using the same tactics Molotov had used at the CFM meeting. By delaying a decision until the last moment, they forced the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia to make concessions. The Czechoslovak president saw clearly that his delegation's endeavors were frustrated by American resistance. Beneš told Ambassador Steinhardt that "the US had supported Hungary, an Axis power, against Czechoslovakia, one of its allies." The Czechoslovak president said that his government was only too anxious to reach an agreement with Hungary through direct negotiation, but the Hungarians had become most intransigent since receiving support and encouragement from the American government. He believed their entire course of action was merely a smokescreen to ultimately enlarge Hungary at the expense of Czechoslovakia, and he was not hopeful that an agreement could be reached through direct negotiation. He said that under no circumstances would Czechoslovakia play into Hungary's hands by again granting special rights and privileges to minorities. He further argued that those who insisted that Czechoslovakia grant such rights were deliberately ignoring the disaster to which this policy had led in the past, as evidenced by the Vienna Award in 1938. He castigated those who did not bear the responsibility of governing a country and keeping peace but who nevertheless actively supported granting

¹⁷³ KERTESZ 1984: 196.

special rights and privileges to an ethnic minority whose loyalty should be to the country and flag of which they were citizens and not to a foreign power. He pictured disastrous consequences to a country like the US if each ethnic minority were granted special rights and privileges.¹⁷⁴ Since the Czechoslovak government was unable to have the conference in Paris accept its transfer plan, it decided to prepare for a unilateral population transfer within the confines of the state.¹⁷⁵ The Hungarians were fully aware that the American veto was decisive in blocking the transfer principle being introduced into the peace treaty plans. After the Paris Conference, Gyöngyösi expressed his thanks to the American minister in Budapest for the support the United States provided in this matter and added that Hungary would never forget the American stance.¹⁷⁶

From Hungary's point of view, preventing the transfer was the critical issue in the Hungarian–Czechoslovak conflict. The other Czechoslovak amendment was accepted by the members of the CFM. Return of the “spiritual heritage” items, historical archives, and artistic, literary, and scientific objects that came into the ownership of Hungary and Hungarian institutions after 1848 were mandated as a special clause (no. 11) in the Hungarian draft peace treaty.¹⁷⁷ The American delegate tried to refer this matter to a bilateral discussion between Hungary and the concerned nations, but the Yugoslav delegate, claiming that Hungary had not complied with the Trianon mandates, rejected this recommendation. The matter was referred to a Yugoslav–Indian–South African subcommittee, which submitted its report on October 1.¹⁷⁸

At the penultimate session of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission, Marjoribanks still endeavored to narrow the extent of the Czechoslovak–Yugoslav proposal in both time and space. Finally, at the 19th

¹⁷⁴ Steinhardt's telegram to Washington, no. 2008, December 23, 1946, FRUS 1946/IV: 240–241. See also VIDA 1989: 158.

¹⁷⁵ Memorandum of the Hungarian Government to the Council of Ministers, November 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59043 R 17639/2608/21.

¹⁷⁶ VIDA 1989: 158.

¹⁷⁷ Memorandum of the Hungarian Government to the CFM, November 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14309/2608/21.

¹⁷⁸ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 17th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14536/2608/21.

meeting of the commission, it accepted the joint Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, British, and French proposal as its recommendation.¹⁷⁹ The Australian proposals submitted for the Hungarian draft peace treaty, review of the agreements, creation of a commission to supervise the implementation of the treaty, and a court for human rights were withdrawn because of Soviet objections.¹⁸⁰ This brought the work of the Hungarian Political and Territorial Commission to an end, and on October 5, it unanimously accepted the report to be submitted to the plenary session of the Paris Conference.¹⁸¹

DEBATE ON ECONOMIC AND MILITARY REGULATIONS: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PARIS CONFERENCE

The debates on reparations, restitution, and the principle of most favored nation, which had been initiated at the plenary meetings of the Great Powers' Paris Conference, continued at the commission meetings. Based on the Italian precedent, the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission completed its recommendations in the sequence established at Potsdam. With due alterations, they entered the Bulgarian and Romanian economic clauses into the Hungarian peace treaty proposal, which allowed very little consideration of Hungary's catastrophic economic situation and the assessment of Hungary's ability to meet its financial obligations. Discussion of the Hungarian issues was left to the last few days of the Paris Conference, and the Hungarian peace delegation was not granted a hearing.

At the 40th meeting of the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission on October 2, 1946, Willard L. Thorp asked, on behalf of the United States, that the reparation to be paid by Hungary be lowered from \$300 million to \$200 million. A similar proposal was made on behalf of Finland two days later by Jacques Reinstein, the American delegate.

The response of the Soviet Union to the American proposal made it evident that the Soviet Union intended to punish Hungary. Gusev questioned

¹⁷⁹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 19th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14804/2608/21.

¹⁸⁰ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 16–18th meetings, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14830/2608/21.

¹⁸¹ PPC (46), Hungary (P&T), 20th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14868/2608/21.

the American contention that a 10–15% increase in the 1938 prices would increase the restitution payments by 50%, claimed that Hungary was well able to make the payments, and stated that his government did not want the reparation amount to be decreased. The Soviet ambassador felt that the political consequences of the American proposal would be a deterioration in the relationship between Hungary and its victorious Slavic neighbors and would assist “reactionary Hungary.” Gusev argued that the CFM took the armistice agreement as their starting point and that Hungary was compelled to meet its obligations. It demanded the same effort from the Hungarian workers and peasants as was demanded from the Russians in rebuilding their economy. He claimed that the American and Australian statements about Hungary’s inability to pay were without foundation, and reminded the group of his government’s April 21 indication of willingness to initiate a three-power investigation of Hungary’s economic situation. Gusev claimed that the return of Hungarian assets from the American zone of occupation was the only way to improve the Hungarian economic situation.

The Ukrainian delegate mentioned the destruction caused by the Hungarian army. The Byelorussian delegate spoke of Hungary’s war guilt and judged the present catastrophic economic situation to be the result of its participation in fascist aggression. He considered the American attitude to be unfriendly. The Czechoslovak delegate went so far as to accuse the Hungarian government of having caused the present economic difficulties intentionally to create sympathy for Hungary. Hajdú was unwilling to give up any of Hungary’s \$30 million reparation debt and, in view of the payment extension from six to eight years, demanded guarantees to strengthen the Czechoslovak–Hungarian reparation agreement. François Valéry, the French delegate, announced that he supported the imposition of the original reparation payment, and Ioannis Politis, the Greek delegate, demanded the maximum punishment for the aggressor but, in the end, abstained from the vote. Thorp tried to counter the Soviet arguments point by point. According to him, the Hungarian government had asked for the elimination of the disparity in damages and restitution demands, for the consideration of Hungary’s ability to pay, and for a sensible determination of the reparation sums. He felt the reparation would be detrimental to the

friendly relations between Hungary and its neighbors and would be the source of ill feeling.

The American delegate believed the Czechoslovak–Hungarian and other reparation agreements were made under the pressure of the armistice agreements and that the peace treaty could change and modify them. He estimated the value of the Hungarian assets in the American zone at a maximum of \$75 million and observed that only the Allied Control Council in Berlin could decide about their return. He reminded the group about the American restitution of Hungarian gold, the need for economic stabilization, and the catastrophic decline in Hungarian productivity. The American delegate demanded that Hungary be given economic assistance. Thorp's arguments proved to be futile. The Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission voted seven to five against it with two abstentions. Even Great Britain voted with the majority.¹⁸²

In spite of American and British reservations, the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission at its 42nd meeting on October 3, 1946, accepted the Czechoslovak proposal for the nullification of the fiscal and insurance agreements made after the Vienna Award and of the agreements made on the basis of the May 22, 1940, protocol and their legal consequences.¹⁸³ This new clause, which implied an additional burden of \$15 million, was added as a new article in the Hungarian draft peace treaty.¹⁸⁴ At Poland's request, the reparation article was amended so that the rights and interests of the Allies in Hungary would be restored to the conditions of September 1, 1939, and not to those of April 10, 1941. A Czechoslovak amendment, similar to the Greek one and based on the Italian and Bulgarian precedents, was approved. It provided that artistic, historic, and archaeological items that could not be recovered from Hungary had to be replaced with items of equal value.¹⁸⁵ The compensation for damages to the assets of the Allies

¹⁸² PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 40th and 41st meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14864/2608/21. India and Greece abstained and only the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa voted for it.

¹⁸³ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 42nd meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14866/2608/21.

¹⁸⁴ Article 25 of the Hungarian peace treaty.

¹⁸⁵ Article 25 of the Hungarian peace treaty.

in Hungary was accepted according to the American wording and French percentages proposed for Romania and Bulgaria. The 25% American and Soviet proposal received only five votes, while the French proposal demanding 75% received nine votes, versus the British 100% proposal's six votes.¹⁸⁶ On Romania's initiative, it was decided that Hungary had to pay for the damages suffered by the Allies or their citizens in Northern Transylvania when it was under Hungarian rule.¹⁸⁷

The Hungarian peace delegation was successful with only one of its mediation proposals. In connection with the resolution of the debt due to the bondholders of the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company, Hungary negotiated and reached an agreement with the interested French parties. A text of the settlement was submitted to the commission and was approved with a nine to four vote.¹⁸⁸

On October 4, the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission unanimously accepted a Czechoslovak declaration defining “citizens of the Allied Nations.” This maintained Czechoslovakia's permanent inheritance rights to the estates of those former Czechoslovak citizens who had been nationals at the time of the country's occupation but had lost their Czechoslovak citizenship after the liberation. This complex provision specifically applied to Germans and Hungarians. This time, the Soviet, American, and British delegates expressed their reservations, and due to opposition from CFM members responsible for the Hungarian draft peace treaty, the issue was not included as a separate clause but was instead recorded in the minutes as part of a Czechoslovak proposal.¹⁸⁹

On a British initiative, based on a precedent included in the Romanian draft peace treaty, and in spite of Soviet and Yugoslav opposition, Hungary was obliged to restore the assets of, or pay full compensation to, all persons who had been persecuted in Hungary for racial or religious reasons.

¹⁸⁶ Article 25 of the Hungarian peace treaty.

¹⁸⁷ Article 25 of the Hungarian peace treaty.

¹⁸⁸ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 43rd and 44th meetings, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14867/2608/21. The interests of the company was protected by Article 320 of the Peace Treaty of Saint Germain, by Article 304 of the Peace Treaty of Trianon, and by the March 29, 1923, Rome Agreement.

¹⁸⁹ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 44th meeting.

Hungary was not allowed to use assets or valuables left ownerless by the persecutions. The Hungarian delegation asked that the assets of Hungarian citizens persecuted because of their race, religion, or political convictions and presently abroad, as well as Hungary's reparation claims from Germany, be made available, but this was not supported by the members of the commission. In a memorandum dated September 28, 1946, the Hungarian delegation admitted the propriety of the British proposal regarding the Jewish property rights in Hungary but pointed out its serious economic repercussions. With two abstentions, the commission endorsed the British proposal eight to four.¹⁹⁰ The Soviet delegate opposed the liquidation of the Hungarian assets abroad but was voted down seven to four, and the British–French–American proposal, with an Australian amendment, was accepted by seven to four.¹⁹¹

The Soviet Union supported Hungary's reparation claims vis-à-vis Germany but lost nine to five to a British–American–French proposal to the contrary. The commission took a similar position on September 24 on a similar article in the Romanian draft peace treaty. Following the vote, Vyshinsky explained to Szekfű and Faragó on October 5 that

they had no reason to change their original position. They were convinced of Hungary's good intentions and willingness to comply and will give support at all levels. They have no hope to get a majority at the conference, not even at the plenary sessions, but pointed out that the Conference only made recommendations and that the final decision was in the hands of the Big Four. There he was prepared to continue to represent our point of view and the Soviet point of view that became manifest in the draft peace treaties and that were favorable for us. He promised to be emphatic but

¹⁹⁰ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 44th meeting. See also "First Preliminary Summary of the Economic Section of the Peace Delegation about the Economic Ordinances of the Peace Treaty Proposal," Paris, October 14, 1946, KÜM BéO 202/konf., ÚMKL. The British proposal became Article 27 of the final draft of the peace treaty.

¹⁹¹ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 44th meeting. See also "First Preliminary Summary of the Economic Section of the Peace Delegation about the Economic Ordinances of the Peace Treaty Proposal," Paris, October 14, 1946, KÜM BéO 202/konf., ÚMKL. The British proposal became Article 27 of the final draft of the peace treaty.

did not fail to point out that even at the CFM the Soviet Union did not have a majority.¹⁹²

Making Hungary yield on its claims vis-à-vis Germany called for an explanation from Great Britain in the form of a parliamentary question by Frederick Wilely, MP. The British foreign secretary responded by saying that Great Britain would like to assist in Hungary's economic recovery but, referring to the Italian precedent and to the January 24, 1946, reparation agreement,¹⁹³ did not believe that the Hungarian claims could be met.¹⁹⁴

For the rate schedule of and for all binding agreements to be made concerning railway traffic through Hungary, Czechoslovakia managed to impose the formula that the French had inserted in the Bulgarian draft peace treaty.¹⁹⁵ The British–American proposal on most favored nation status and the French proposal on air traffic were accepted. The determination of sensible fair prices for Hungarian reparations, recommended by the Americans, was opposed by Vladimir S. Gerashchenko, the Soviet delegate, and by the Byelorussian delegate, even though this clause was included in the Romanian draft peace treaty. At the vote, the proposal received a simple majority of seven to four with two abstentions.¹⁹⁶ At the next meeting of the commission, however, Josef Korbel, the Czechoslovak chairman, citing procedural rules, nullified the vote.¹⁹⁷ The Soviet delegation did everything possible to implement the original conditions. In accordance with the

¹⁹² PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 44th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14867/2608/21.

¹⁹³ See page 221.

¹⁹⁴ Interpellation of Frederick Wilely in Parliament on November 1, 1946, on the German commercial and fiscal debts vis-à-vis Hungary, notes of M.D. Hay, M.S. Williams, and C.F.A. Warner, October 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.59041 R 16191/2608/21.

¹⁹⁵ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 44th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14867/2608/21. Article 34 of the Hungarian Peace Treaty.

¹⁹⁶ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 44th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14867/2608/21. Article 34 of the Hungarian Peace Treaty. One of the abstainers was Great Britain. The most favored nation recommendation was accepted with a vote of nine to five, and the control of air traffic with seven to five.

¹⁹⁷ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 45th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14868/2608/21.

instructions of the Hungarian Council of Ministers, Gyöngyösi endeavored to have these changed by Molotov, but at their meeting on September 27, Molotov proved inflexible on the pricing of reparation shipments. He emphasized that the Soviet Union insisted on its rights as guaranteed by the shipping agreement. The armistice agreement authorized the application of the 1938 world prices, and the reparation payments were determined on this basis. He admonished the Hungarians to remember the devastations they had caused on Soviet territory. Finally, on the matter of prices, he stated categorically that those specified in the agreement were not going to be changed.¹⁹⁸

In order to resolve the reparation debates, the British proposal was accepted over the Soviet one. As for the international nature of the Danube, the French compromise proposal, submitted during the debate of the Romanian and Bulgarian draft peace treaties, received majority support. In essence, it declared that navigation on the Danube was free and that the details would be worked out by an international conference with the participation of the Great Powers and the riparian states.¹⁹⁹ During the debate about Hungary in the Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, Hungarian insurance, contracts, and negotiable instruments were voted on, according to the Romanian precedent, prior to the deadline of October 5, set by the CFM.²⁰⁰

In the debate on the economic articles of the Hungarian draft peace treaty, the Romanian–Bulgarian clauses were applied, and due to the differences of opinion among the Great Powers, the final resolution of the debates on reparations, restitution, and the most favored nation principle was left to the New York meeting of the CFM. Acceptance of the Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, and Romanian amendments made the peace conditions more oppressive, and relief was obtained only in the matter of the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company. The written comments by the Hungarian peace

¹⁹⁸ Gyöngyösi's note, September 27, 1946, KÜM BÉO 720/konf. 1946, ÚMKL. Szekfű and Alexander Lavrichev, the head of the Eastern European Division of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were present.

¹⁹⁹ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 45th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14919/2608/21. The French proposal was accepted eight to five with one abstention.

²⁰⁰ PPC (46), Balkan–Finnish Economic Commission, 45th meeting, PRO FO 371.59041 R 14919/2608/21.

delegation were ignored, and therefore, on October 8, 1946, Gyöngyösi addressed a statement to the president of the Paris Conference and to the head of each delegation in which he stressed Hungary's difficult economic situation and drew their attention to the fact that Hungary could not endure the burdens placed on her by the draft peace treaty without the danger of complete economic collapse.²⁰¹ The Hungarian arguments about the inability to pay were used by the Americans and British at the last meetings of the CFM in their final debates with the Soviet Union.²⁰²

The Military Commission discussed the Hungarian clauses on September 30, 1946. Amendments were proposed by Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the United States. Zoltán Baranyai was heard by the commission, primarily on issues regarding prisoners of war. The New Zealand delegate asked about the location of the prisoners of war in the Soviet Union, but no changes were made in the prisoner of war clauses.²⁰³ A Belgian proposal banned atomic weapons, sea mines or torpedoes, submarines, and assault crafts in clauses similar to the Bulgarian ones. The Czechoslovak recommendation to limit the Hungarian armed forces and forbid the construction of strong points within 20 kilometres of the border had to be withdrawn by Czechoslovakia under Soviet pressure. The Soviets wished to avoid a bad precedent in the negotiations about Bulgarian and Romanian armed forces reduction.

The Hungarian delegation protested against the further 38% reduction proposed by Czechoslovakia because "it affected the nation's dignity and made the defense of the borders impossible. ... Hungary would be a power vacuum and could be occupied at will any time."²⁰⁴ The Hungarian position could prevail because, in this case, it coincided with the other interests of the

²⁰¹ PRO FO 371.59042 R 15345/2608/21; Gyöngyösi's statement, October 8, 1946, KÜM BéO 835/konf. 1946, ÚMKL.

²⁰² Warner's notes of October 22, 1946, (EID) and October 25, 1946, (FO) and telephone instructions to New York, PRO FO 371.59042 R 15345/2608/21.

²⁰³ Intervention of Zoltán Baranyai, September 30, 1946, KÜM BéO 873/konf. 1946, 40/kat., ÚMKL; Hungarian Military Section. Summary report on the Prisoner of War situation. Paris, October 3, 1946, KÜM BéO 873/konf. 1946, 40/kat., ÚMKL; General György Rakovszky's October 1946 summary report on the military addenda to the peace treaty proposals.

²⁰⁴ Recommendations of the Hungarian delegation, October 7, 1946, KÜM BéO, 203/konf., ÚMKL; CP (Plen.), doc. 20, PRO FO 371.59040 R 14816/2608/21.

Great Power charged with drafting the Hungarian peace treaty proposals. The amendment concerning the obligation to return Polish military supplies was withdrawn after the United States made a proclamation on behalf of the CFM, according to which a promise had been made in the name of the Great Powers to distribute the surplus war materials of the former enemy countries among the most severely damaged allies. The American delegation did not insist that its proposal about the military graves be included in the draft peace treaty.²⁰⁵

The recommendations concerning the Hungarian draft peace treaty to be submitted to the CFM were voted on at the October 12, 1946, session of the Paris Conference. The Yugoslav, Czechoslovak, American, Soviet, and British speakers gave their views on the Hungarian–Czechoslovak arrangements, and the Australian delegate spoke about reparations and about rejecting the possibility of reviewing the peace treaties. The Soviet and American delegates engaged in a verbal battle about the amount of the reparations. Stanoje Simić, the Yugoslav delegate, reminded the audience that Hungary was not the only one responsible for Munich and the fascist war, but that the League of Nations and the Western Powers that signed the Munich Pact were equally accountable. He argued that they had delivered Southeastern Europe to Hitler. Simić considered it essential that Hungary regulate its relationship with its Slavic neighbors, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in the spirit of the new democracy. Clementis announced that his country did not wish to make a peace treaty with Hungary based on vengeance. The request for the removal of the Hungarians had been submitted because they were seen as a source of irredentism and revisionism, generating tension between the two countries. Due to the opposition of two members of the CFM, Czechoslovakia accepted a new proposal, allowing the Hungarian government to find a way to accommodate the Hungarians from Czechoslovakia. Additionally, the proposal ensured that Czechoslovakia might be protected against a fifth column and interference in its domestic affairs.

Because of the existence of certain reactionary Hungarian circles, Ambassador Gusev believed the Czechoslovak fears were justified. Ambassador

²⁰⁵ PRO FO 371.59041 R 14920/2608/21.

Bedell Smith defended the principle of bilateral negotiations and voluntary resettlement “even at the price of minor territorial adjustments in order to reduce to a minimum the number of those who had to be displaced from the land on which they and their ancestors had lived for generations.” Bedell Smith and his British colleague, Alexander, promised that if the parties could not reach a satisfactory agreement within six months and without violation of human rights, their governments would arrange for such a solution.

At the reparation debate of the plenary session, the Soviet and Ukrainian delegates reiterated the well-known arguments about the wartime damages caused by Hungary, the friendly relations of the neighboring countries, and the generosity of the Soviet Union. Thorp, the American delegate, did not insist on the acceptance of the \$200 million proposal but announced that he would vote against the reparation article. Alexander, the British delegate, held out the likelihood of the reestablishment of British–Hungarian economic contacts, which would help rebuild Central Europe and the Balkans.²⁰⁶

The plenary session of the Paris Conference accepted the following proposals with a two-thirds majority: the preamble; the Bratislava bridgehead; the prohibition of revisionist propaganda; the bilateral arrangement of the Czechoslovakian Hungarians’ issue; the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav cultural inheritance; the consequences of the Vienna Award; the Czechoslovak one on the fee schedule for railway transport; the British one on the protection of human rights and compensation of the persecuted; the Romanian one on restitution of Allied assets in North Transylvania; the American–British–French ones on expropriation of Hungarian assets abroad, on determining the procedures for resolving conflicts, and the giving up of Hungarian reparation claims vis-à-vis Germany; and the French one on international control of Danubian navigation. A simple majority carried the French proposals on reducing the compensations to 75% and the clause regulating the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company matter.²⁰⁷

The Paris Conference made the conditions of the Hungarian peace treaty proposals more stringent, particularly in regard to the Czechoslovak

²⁰⁶ PRO FO 371.59042 R 15141/2608/21 RDCP VII: 255–306.

²⁰⁷ RDCP VII: 347–408.

claims. These claims, from a country considered to be a victorious minor ally, were largely satisfied. The conference enlarged the circle of those participating in the peace treaties and, in this way, made the other allied countries, beyond the CFM, interested parties in the implementation of the treaties. Because of the delay in the German and Japanese peace negotiations, disproportionate importance was attributed to the negative role of Hungary in the war.

The “judgment” rendered by the gathering of the 21 Allied Powers came as a profound disappointment to the Hungarian peace delegation. The most painful matter was the fate of the Hungarians in Romania. In his letter to Molotov, on October 12, 1946, Gyöngyösi pointed out:

It is very disillusioning to Hungarian public opinion that, so far as the frontiers are concerned, the Peace Conference did not consider it important to take cognizance of the fact that in 1919, ignoring self-determination and ethnic principles, Romania received territory on which a very large number of Hungarians lived. The Peace Conference did not consider it essential to take steps, contrary to the 1919 ordinances, to regulate the institutional guarantees to assure the human rights and cultural and economic interests of 1.5 million Hungarians living in this area and representing 27% of the population. Finally, the Peace Conference did not consider it important to deal with the situation created by Romania, denying Romanian citizenship to a significant portion of the Hungarians living there and claiming that they were Hungarian citizens. Holding the assets of Hungarians living there improperly and illegally bond and creating disadvantages for the Hungarians in the economic areas, such as land reform and taxation. The Hungarian peace delegation had pointed out repeatedly that if the peace conference did not wish to become involved in the discussion of these matters, they could only be resolved by the direct negotiation between the two countries. It asked the Peace Conference to invite the Romanian delegation to engage in negotiations with the Hungarian delegation to resolve these matters and stated that it was prepared to engage in such negotiations. The conference did not consider this request even though a similar initiative was made by one of the delegations to the conference.

In his reply letter on October 27, Molotov advised Gyöngyösi that:

The regulation of the pending questions between Romania and Hungary were not pertinent to the activities of the Paris Conference particularly because the issues raised in the letter should clearly be on the agenda of negotiations between the Hungarian and Romanian Governments. As far as your statement that the Paris Conference did not deem it important to guarantee the democratic rights, cultural protection and assurance of economic interests of the Hungarian population living in Romania is concerned, I find it necessary to draw your attention to Article 3 of the Romanian draft peace treaty that prescribes the Romanian government's obligations to guarantee the rights and interests of the Hungarian population to the necessary extent.²⁰⁸

Groza promised Sándor Nékám, the Hungarian envoy in Bucharest, that the situation of the Hungarians who settled in North Transylvania after 1940 would be regularized. Nékám reported that Groza stated that

he was not interested in the Paris peace negotiations because he knew that the Transylvania matter had been settled two years before and was not going to be taken up again. Cooperation between the two countries was not dependent on where the political frontiers were located, but on whether a true symbiosis could be worked out and this is where he wished to serve as an example. This was the reason for his not going to Paris even though he was severely criticized for this decision. He did not want to appear in the public eye as the attorney for Romania but as the architect of the friendship between the two nations. He only smiled when his experts raised historical, economic and other arguments and let them take two railroad cars full of documents that were presently still somewhere in transit on the ocean, but he always knew that this was unnecessary and unimportant. The historical arguments were seen differently by the Hungarians and by the Romanians. Economic and other arguments had two sides for the two parties and it was

²⁰⁸ Gyöngyösi–Molotov exchange of letters, October 12 and 22, 1946, KÜM BéO 876/konf. 1946, ÜMKL.

not this that mattered but the security of living together that he would try to accomplish. This was why he got Transylvania and this was the path on which he wished to go forward.²⁰⁹

The October 22, 1946, assessment by the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs already contained arguments about the Paris Conference that continue to shape Hungarian public attitudes to this day. One of the most important Hungarian hopes mentioned by Gyöngyösi was that “the Peace Conference would be guided by forward-looking generosity and not by the short-term view of vengeance,” that they would recognize “the merits of Hungarian democracy purified in the fire of suffering,” that the principles of the Atlantic Charter and of the UN Charter would be implemented, and that Hungarian arguments in favor of a permanent peace in the Danube Valley would be taken into consideration. According to Gyöngyösi, the Great Power perspectives and interests prevailed over the basic principles voiced by the Allies. “No attempt was made to reorganize the Danube Valley and international order in general, prior to the fundamental differences between the Great Powers being worked out, so that the mutual relationships between countries could be placed on a healthy and firm foundation. The conference had only an advisory nature, and the discussions were based on a plan that was converting the armistice agreements into peace agreements with only the most essential modifications. ... The defeated countries had only minimally more rights than the accused at a trial.” None of the victorious powers accepted the Hungarian comments in their entirety. Gyöngyösi attributed the severe political attitude toward Hungary to the fact that within one generation, it had appeared twice as a defeated country at a peace conference following a world war – and this time, on the side of a country burdened by a series of crimes unparalleled in history. The Horthy regime was one of the most uniquely reactionary in the world. Its unfortunate revisionism and attachment to an illusory past closed its mind to all healthy ideas that could have moved the world forward and promoted understanding between the nations.

²⁰⁹ Nékám's report from Bucharest, October 19, 1946, KÜM BéO 201/pol. 1946, ÚMKL.

Responsibility for the war was not discussed because doing so would not have been desirable even from the perspective of some victorious states. Thus, it could not be shown that Hungarian resistance to German expansion and belligerent efforts was, among its neighbors, second only to the heroic fight of the Yugoslav people. According to Gyöngyösi, the role of former satellites in Germany's defeat became prominent, and from this perspective, Hungary appeared with the mark of Cain as the "last of Hitler's satellites." "The series of missed opportunities and the suicidal spinelessness of the Hungarian ruling classes ... our passive behavior on March 19, 1944, the failure of our proclaimed switch on October 15, and the fact that even after the formation of the Debrecen Government and the declaration of war on Germany on December 23, 1944, the Hungarian troops did not turn against Hitler's Germany and, in fact, a part of them continued to fight."

Gyöngyösi saw the protection of the nation's interests at the Paris Conference best represented by the submission of the minority protection code proposal, the blocking of the forced transfer of 200,000 Hungarians from Czechoslovakia, the reduction of the Czechoslovak territorial claims by half, and the firm stance on fundamental human rights. He felt that "the atmosphere that initially was distinctly unfriendly toward us, noticeably improved toward the end."²¹⁰

Hungarian peace preparatory diplomacy at the Paris Conference was confronted with the peace negotiation procedures established by the CFM. Under these conditions, it is understandable that instead of an assessment of the issues on merit and negotiations with the vanquished, the conference saw the realization of the conditions dictated by the victors to satisfy their interests. The Hungarians saw no real efforts toward a lasting peace or a peace treaty based on justice, equity, and democracy gaining favor in Paris.

The open clashes in Paris ceased with the closing session of the conference on October 15, 1946. An improvement in American–Soviet relations created conditions for the renewal of secret diplomatic activity between the Great Powers and the completion of the five peace treaties.

²¹⁰ Kertész's report draft on the Paris Peace Conference prepared from Gyöngyösi's outline, October 22, 1946, KÜM BÉO 364/Bé.res. 1946, ÚMKL.

THE NEW YORK SESSION OF THE CFM AND THE HUNGARIAN PEACE TREATY

After the Paris Conference, the Great Powers returned to the policy of mutual concessions and to a search for agreement in working out the final text of the five peace treaties. The East–West debates that had become manifest during the conference were again pushed into the background. Byrnes, in his radio address on October 18, 1946, and President Truman, in his speech to the UN General Assembly, emphasized that the United States and the Soviet Union voted the same way on many issues. They stressed that the differences in social and economic systems would not stand in the way of peace. Even Stalin attempted to minimize the importance of these differences when he emphasized that the American–Soviet relations had not deteriorated. In his press interview, Molotov stated that both parties were willing to meet halfway.¹

Yet, the members of the CFM viewed the validity of the Paris Conference recommendations in diametrically opposed ways. Byrnes, who had been struggling ever since the London Conference to get the peace conference underway, tried to show the results of the consultative forum as the “peace of the nations.” It was with the majority votes obtained at the Paris Conference that Byrnes tried to influence the Soviet position. In this hope, he was rapidly disappointed. At the third meeting of the CFM in New York, between November 4 and December 12, Molotov considered the Paris

¹ WARD 1981: 149.

Conference unsatisfactory and, as though the Paris Conference had never taken place, returned to a rabid defense of the July Soviet position. The secretary of state's hands were tied not only by his own avowed obligation to accept the two-thirds vote decisions of the Paris Conference but also by the change in US foreign policy orientation that was recommended by the Clifford Report, accepted on September 24. In the US administration, the view prevailed that no more concessions could be made to the Soviet Union because these were used for territorial expansion and because the delay in the peace treaties was used to legalize the stationing of the Red Army in the enemy countries.² The hardest bargaining of the entire peace treaty process took place at the new meeting of the CFM, and it almost came to a complete break over the Trieste question. They did succeed, however, in avoiding a complete rupture of Great Power cooperation. The "open diplomacy" employed in Paris did not keep the members of the CFM from changing their minds, and the French delegation could again play its role as the seeker of compromise solutions. Byrnes emphasized his inflexibility vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in his public utterances, but at the council sessions, he was willing to reach an agreement and to continue the negotiations on the basis of mutual concessions, in spite of the Clifford Report's recommendations. In case of the "second order" peace treaties, the CFM proved to be a suitable forum for the harmonizing of the Great Power interests, even at the price of major clashes.

Between November 4 and 11, the CFM in New York reviewed the recommendations of the Paris Conference. At the debate on the Italian peace treaty, regarding Trieste, reparations, and the Italian–Austrian agreement, Molotov completely ignored the recommendations made with a two-thirds majority and stated that this demonstrated that not every recommendation of the Paris Conference meant a satisfactory resolution of the problem. He asserted that it was the task of the members of the CFM to compose the final text of the peace treaties.³ Italian reparations were the only one that

² WARD 1981: 152–154; Clark M. Clifford: "American Relations with the Soviet Union. A Report to the President by the Special Counsel to the President," September 24, 1946, Papers of George M. Elsey, Harry S. Truman Library.

³ Minutes of the first session of the New York meeting of the CFM, November 4, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 981; CMAE, 1^{re} séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

both the American and Soviet ministers of foreign affairs opposed. This was the one that included the 75% compensation level recommendation put forward at the conference by the French and British delegations.⁴ All other items were postponed because of the American–Soviet differences of opinion.

On November 8 and 11, the ministers of foreign affairs reviewed the pending questions in the first draft of the peace treaty proposals for the Balkans and Finland. Molotov stubbornly defended the Soviet Union's interests in Southeast Europe. In Romania's case, he even rejected the Italian precedent, citing the difference in the size of the two countries and their participation in the war as his reasons.⁵ The clauses concerning human rights and the assets of the Romanian Jews, the fleet limitation, the renouncement of claims against Germany, the freedom of civil aviation, the reimbursement of the oil companies, the resolution of the debated issues, and the international system for the Danube were all postponed by the ministers of foreign affairs. The only progress made was in the minor matter of the determination of literary and artistic objects. Molotov flatly rejected the Anglo-American position, which was based on the two-thirds vote by the Paris Conference.⁶

The debate on the Bulgarian peace treaty proposal suffered the same fate. Only the matter of the fortifications on the Bulgarian–Greek border and the rail transit issue were discussed.⁷ It was during the discussion of the latter issue that the Hungarian peace treaty first appeared. Bevin argued for the inclusion of railway transit fees in the peace treaties because an identical proposal made by Czechoslovakia for Hungary had been accepted in Paris by a two-thirds vote. In this instance, Molotov wished to leave the determination of the fees to Bulgaria and its neighbors, not caring that, in the case of Hungary, he had approved the peace clause that was originally proposed by Greece for Bulgaria but was copied by Czechoslovakia vis-à-vis Hungary.

In his peculiar interpretation of the Paris decisions, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs went so far as to consider abstentions as negative votes in

⁴ FRUS 1946/II: 1003–1004; CMAE, 2^e séance, November 5, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

⁵ FRUS 1946/II: 1065; CMAE, 4^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

⁶ FRUS 1946/II: 1064; CMAE, 4^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

⁷ FRUS 1946/II: 1081; CMAE, 5^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

the Paris vote limiting Bulgarian border fortifications, thus strengthening his position by claiming that there was no two-thirds majority on this issue.⁸ The Paris Conference obviously did nothing to change the political decisions of Stalin and Molotov to solidify the position of the Soviet Union in Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary by their determination of the peace conditions. Without yielding anything from the original Soviet bargaining position, Molotov now endeavored to gain Anglo-American approval.

The CFM discussed the recommendations pertaining to Finland and to Hungary on November 11, 1946.⁹ At the beginning of the second review of these recommendations, the news arrived that Italy and Yugoslavia had started direct negotiations, and therefore the council changed its procedures and concentrated on the resolution of their principal problem. Between November 12 and 16, the council for all practical purposes became a "constituent assembly" for the Free Territory of Trieste. The roles were reversed, with Molotov urging the withdrawal of the Allied troops and the limitation of the governor's powers, while the British and American ministers tied the troop withdrawal to conditions, wished to give the governor practical powers, and subordinated the popular assembly to these.¹⁰

In the matter of Trieste and of the Italian reparations, Molotov went beyond the French compromise proposal accepted in Paris and defended the Yugoslav interests with unparalleled tenacity. He succeeded in having the territory demilitarized and neutralized. Only the Security Council was allowed to send troops in case of an emergency being declared. The governor's powers were limited and an interim regime was put in place until the peace treaty went into effect. Agreement was made possible by the November 25 meeting of Byrnes and Molotov. After negotiations lasting more than 18 months, and seeing the Soviet Union's obstinacy, Byrnes had just about given up hope of ever reaching an agreement with the Soviet Union on the five peace treaties. Molotov, however, was searching for a solution that was acceptable to Yugoslavia, objected to the adjournment of the New

⁸ FRUS 1946/II: 1082; CMAE, 5^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

⁹ FRUS 1946/II: 1095-1106; CMAE, 6^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

¹⁰ FRUS 1946/II: 1116-1290.

York meeting of the CFM, and forced the secretary of state to back off again. Byrnes, yielding to the tiresome tactics of the Soviets, agreed that for the interim period the United States, Great Britain, and Yugoslavia would each reduce their troops to 5,000 men. The following day, at a secret meeting, the CFM accepted the basic principles of an agreement on this basis and agreed on the time of legislative elections to be held in Trieste. This then opened the way for closure of the still open questions in all five peace treaties.¹¹

The matter of the Hungarian peace treaty was thus even further subject to the resolution of the Italian, Romanian, and Bulgarian peace conditions. Hungarian diplomacy endeavored to soften the recommendations of the Paris Conference that were disadvantageous for Hungary and to have them declared null and void. The British raised the question of the withdrawal of troops and the Americans of the amount of the reparations. Debate on the Hungarian peace conditions, however, was placed on the agenda only toward the end of the peace treaty discussions and only in connection with the debate on all the other matters before the council.

CLOSING THE DEBATE ON THE HUNGARIAN PEACE TREATY: REPARATIONS AND WITHDRAWAL OF THE SOVIET TROOPS

The Drafting Commission submitted the Hungarian peace treaty proposal to the CFM on October 22, 1946. It contained 37 articles and 6 appendices and also included the recommendations of the Paris Conference and the positions taken by the members of the council. In New York, the text was augmented by five articles.

Prior to the opening of the New York session of the CFM, the Foreign Office prepared arguments in favor of the American proposal to reduce the amount of the reparations and for the removal of the troops that protected communications with the Russian zone in Austria. The latter issue was brought to attention of London and Washington by the British and American ministers in Budapest. In a telegram sent to the Foreign Office

¹¹ WARD 1981: 159–164.

on October 26, Alexander Knox Helm, the British minister in Budapest, expressed his and his colleagues' concern about the various ways in which Article 20 of the Hungarian peace treaty proposal – dealing with troop withdrawal and retention of lines of communication forces – could be interpreted. He considered it inevitable that a considerable amount of time would elapse between the ratification of the Hungarian and Austrian peace treaties and their entry into force. Therefore: "It seems to us that the Russians could, under this article as worded, maintain effective control in Hungary and so indefinitely prolong the present very unsatisfactory situation." The British and American ministers urged that agreement be reached on this issue during the New York session of the council. Otherwise, "acute difficulties, leading to deadlock, will arise after the constitution of tripartite commission referred to in Article 34" [controlling the execution of the peace treaty]. The general nature of the present wording was based on the hope that in the meantime the Austrian peace negotiations would move forward. Knox Helm and Schoenfeld considered the lack of precise language in this article to be dangerous.¹²

On the basis of Anglo-American agreement, Great Britain was prepared to raise the questions of troop withdrawal and the American proposal for reparation reduction at the New York session. The territorial experts in the Foreign Office were sceptical about the chances of the first proposal. Williams forwarded the Budapest telegram to the British delegation but assumed that nothing could be done about it at this late stage of the negotiations.¹³ Bevin, thinking about Article 21 of the Romanian peace treaty proposal and Article 20 of the Hungarian one, realized that there was a chance to initiate the termination of the occupation of the two countries. According to the foreign secretary, "since we have now agreed to withdraw our troops from Italy, there is no longer reason to permit the Soviets to retain troops in Romania and Hungary."

Great Britain had reached an agreement with the United States to supply its zone in Austria across the United States zone of occupation. Therefore, during the Romanian and Hungarian peace treaty debate, Bevin wished

¹² Knox Helm's telegram no. 1178, October 26, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 15376/2608/21.

¹³ Williams's note, October 29, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 15376/2608/21.

“to raise the question anew when we come to consider the above Articles, suggesting their deletion from the Romanian and Hungarian Treaties on the grounds that such lines of communication as the USSR may still require with their zone in Austria could run elsewhere or be arranged for outside the Treaties. If I cannot secure the deletion of the Articles, I shall ask that they should provide for a limitation on the number of troops involved.”¹⁴ The Foreign Office was not convinced by the bellicose stand of its chief. John Rupert Colville, the desk officer of the Foreign Office Southern Department in Yugoslavia, considering the geographic realities, concluded that another supply route to Austria could be maintained only through Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia. He doubted whether the Czechoslovaks would be pleased to allow this and also whether the single-track Yugoslav line would be adequate to assure the supply route. He believed that an agreement outside the peace treaty would be best, but added: “I don’t see much hope of Molotov swallowing this.” Michael S. Williams thought that it would be beneficial to force Molotov into a defensive position, but he also considered it unlikely that the Soviet minister of foreign affairs would agree.¹⁵

The Hungarian government addressed memoranda to the CFM on November 1, 9, and 29, in which it asked that certain recommendations of the Paris Conference be ignored, that minority rights be protected, that unilateral actions against Hungary be stopped, that the economic claims be coordinated with the country’s ability to pay, and that economic claims be reduced.¹⁶ Aladár Szegedy-Maszák, the Hungarian minister in Washington, wrote a memorandum on November 1, 1946, on Article 4 of the peace treaty draft, which contained the Czechoslovak recommendation about “forbidding revisionist propaganda.”

Szegedy-Maszák considered this discriminatory because “the new Hungary decisively abandoned the methods of the revisionist policy of the former

¹⁴ Bevin’s telegram to the Foreign Office, no. 1510, November 7, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 16263/2608/21.

¹⁵ Colville’s notes, November 11, 1946, Williams’s notes, November 12, 1946, and Warner’s notes, November 13, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 16263/2608/21.

¹⁶ CFM (46), (NY)3, November 5, 1946, CFM (46), (NY)9, November 11, 1946, and CFM (46), (NY)35, November 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 16634/2608/21; also in FRUS 1946/II: 1073–1075.

governments, which methods have on many occasions been condemned by the authorized representatives of present-day Hungary.” He argued that Hungary would soon gain full membership in the UN. Therefore, it was contrary to the UN Charter to apply clauses that would allow a neighboring country to interfere in Hungary’s internal affairs – particularly in historical, literary, and cultural matters – under the ill-defined term of “revisionist propaganda.”¹⁷ The Hungarian protest raised no echo, and the Great Powers never responded.

The November 9, 1946, Hungarian memorandum turned out to be the only document from Hungary that was referenced by a Great Power’s minister of foreign in the entire history of the CFM. In the document, the Hungarian government asked:

- (1) The Hungarian–Czechoslovak border should be reestablished in its entirety according to the situation which prevailed on December 1, 1937, and the modification offered by the Paris Peace Conference to the first section of the Hungarian peace treaty should be rejected inasmuch as this modification is not justified either from a practical point of view or as a matter of principle.
- (2) As long as the problem of the inhabitants of Magyar ethnic origin residing in Czechoslovakia has not been settled either by an exchange of territory or in some other manner, according to Article 4 bis. of the draft peace treaty, the basic human rights promulgated in the Charter of the United Nations should be accorded to these inhabitants of Magyar ethnic origin in Czechoslovakia.
- (3) The third article of the Romanian draft peace treaty should be supplemented by a clause, according to which the rights of the Hungarian minority in Romania should be defined within a given period of time through direct negotiations between Hungary and Romania. Should these direct negotiations between Hungary and Romania result in failure the Hungarian Government should be given an opportunity to apply to the Council of Foreign Ministers for a final adjustment of this problem. On this occasion

¹⁷ CFM (46), (NY)3, November 5, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 16634/2608/21.

the Hungarian Government wishes to point out that the economic situation of these Romanian citizens of Magyar ethnic origin has unfortunately further deteriorated in the recent past.

(4) With reference to the communication of the Hungarian Peace Delegation, addressed to the Peace Conference in Paris (C.P. Gen. Doc. C. 5.) in the matter of the economic situation of Hungary, as well as with reference to the letter of the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated October 8, 1946, and addressed to the Chairman of the Peace Conference, the Hungarian Government on the basis of pertinent evidence is obliged to reaffirm that the economic burdens established in the draft peace treaty far exceed Hungary's economic capacity and can only result in the collapse of the Hungarian economy, with all that this would entail. Hungary's economy is utterly unable to bear burdens over and above the sums already allotted in the stabilization program for meeting the country's obligations under the armistice terms and the terms anticipated in the treaty of peace.¹⁸

Only the last Hungarian demand was supported at the council meeting, even though the memorandum was distributed very late on the day the Hungarian matters were discussed.

Article 21 of the Hungarian peace treaty proposal, dealing with reparations, was approved at the Paris Conference by a simple majority, with the American delegation voting against it. Referring to the Szegedy-Maszák memorandum, Byrnes stated at the 6th meeting of the council on November 11 that, according to the Hungarian government, the reparation demands exceeded the capacity of the Hungarian economy to comply and could lead to its collapse, with all the consequences thereof. Hungary was unable to shoulder burdens beyond the stabilization program in order to comply with its obligations under the armistice agreement and the peace treaty.

Molotov had not received the Hungarian memorandum by that time, but did not find the arguments convincing. "At the Paris Conference, the minister of foreign affairs of Hungary made a statement and he, far from raising any objections to the amount of reparation fixed for Hungary and

¹⁸ CFM (46), (NY)9, November 11, 1946, PRO FO 371.59042 R 16637/2608/21.

subscribed to by her, stated that the Hungarian Government considered it to be its duty to pay reparations.” Consequently, he recommended that when the CFM studied the reparation matter, the sum determined before the Paris Conference should be taken as the basis, as it had incidentally received the majority of votes at the conference. Byrnes urged that the merits of the Hungarian memorandum be studied, even though it had arrived very late.

Molotov responded with the well-known argument that if the Americans were so anxious to reestablish Hungarian economy, they should return the Danube ships and Hungarian property from the American zone. Byrnes replied that, several days earlier, the American government had issued instructions for the return of the ships. The return of Hungarian property from the American zone had been halted by an April 1946 decision of the Allied Control Council in Berlin, following a protest by the French representative. He had initially wanted to ensure that no French properties would be given to Hungary but had since changed his mind. Byrnes asked that the CFM reach an agreement on the return of Hungarian assets from the zones of occupation in Germany. Molotov interjected, stating that the Soviet Union had begun returning property to Hungary, Yugoslavia, and other countries from its zone. Bevin refused to continue the discussion, as the item was not on the agenda for the day. The council then adjourned the reparation debate until all delegations had the opportunity to fully study the Hungarian memorandum.

In parallel with the Romanian and Bulgarian draft peace treaty debates at the November 11 meeting, the following issues pertaining to Hungary were also discussed: clauses to forbid discrimination against Hungarian citizens, banning certain weapons, the amount of reparations, the matter of Allied properties in Hungary and Hungarian properties in the Allied and associated zones, the relinquishing of Hungarian reparation claims vis-à-vis Germany, civilian aviation, mutual agreements on railways, settlement of economic conflicts, the international regime for the Danube, and the interpretation of the peace treaty.

Molotov vetoed the issue of the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company article, which had been based on a France–Hungary agreement, as he wished to leave this matter to negotiations between Hungary and its

neighbors. The council deferred all open questions to a later meeting. At the same session, although not on the agenda, Bevin raised the matter of troop withdrawal:

When we discussed Italy, Molotov suggested that in order to get our troops out of Italy, Great Britain should make arrangements with US to go through Germany. I was wondering now whether it would be possible to review the retention of troops on the lines of communication in the Balkan countries, whether the Soviet Union would agree to alternative routes so that the whole area might be cleared of troops. We didn't agree on Article 20, but in view of the very useful suggestion made in the case of Italy, I raise the question as to whether the occupation forces couldn't be assigned less routes in Hungary and Rumania, and the other countries, and that the troops be withdrawn just as we agreed to withdraw from Italy. Molotov replied: I must say that there is no such question on our agenda and it is not possible to discuss it without the necessary preparations on the part of military authorities. The Soviet Delegation is not prepared to take this question up now.¹⁹

The Hungarian government's request for a reduction in reparation payments and the Foreign Office's suggestion for troop withdrawal came too late. The Soviet minister of foreign affairs swept the former off the table by referring to earlier Hungarian positions and to the Great Power decision made prior to the Paris Conference. He did the same for the latter, using Bevin's technique, by claiming that it had not been on the agenda. From Hungary's perspective, the only benefit of the CFM debate was that it opened a path for the return of Hungarian properties from Germany, which had previously been blocked by the decision of the Allied Control Council in Berlin and by the French veto. Having resolved the Trieste question, the CFM returned

¹⁹ On Article 20, the withdrawal of Allied Forces, in the draft peace treaty with Hungary, FRUS 1946/II: 1095–1105; PRO FO 371.59042 R 16637/2608/21; CMAE, 6^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD. For the French veto about the return of Hungarian assets from the Western zones, see telegrams from the French representative in Berlin, no. 232, September 7, 1946, and from the French representative in Vienna, no. 8849/ELO, October 3 and 28, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, Hongrie, vol. 23, MAE AD.

after November 26 to finalize the text of the five peace treaties. Following a meeting between Byrnes and Molotov, an attempt was made to resolve the reparation and compensation issues with mutually acceptable solutions. The matter of Italian and Bulgarian reparations and the Bulgarian–Greek border were discussed jointly. Molotov then inserted the Danube and reparations issues into the same package. Subsequently, Byrnes no longer insisted on reducing Hungary’s reparations, even though he believed that they were excessive and had hoped for some Soviet generosity toward one of its neighbors. After the secretary of state’s request to Molotov proved futile, the Hungarian reparations matter was closed. The American delegation accepted the recommendation of the Paris Conference and agreed to the reparation amount of \$300 million.²⁰ The reason for the American retreat was that Byrnes did not wish to link the Trieste matter to Hungarian reparations and thus further complicate the already very complex negotiations. After bargaining for more than a week, the CFM agreed on December 5 to close three pending matters. Greece was not invited to the Danube Conference, but the British and the Americans achieved the announcement of free navigation.²¹ With American agreement and despite British opposition, Molotov reduced the restitution rate to two-thirds. Yugoslavia and Greece both received \$150 million from Italy, while Albania received \$5 million from Italy and Bulgaria. The Bulgarian–Greek border remained unchanged.²²

It was at the 10th meeting of the CFM, on November 28, 1946, that the matter of the reparation claims of the former enemies against Germany was taken up. Due to Bulgaria’s difficult economic situation, Molotov recommended that the clause to give up demands vis-à-vis Germany not be applied to Bulgaria, as indeed it had been waived for Finland. Germany had exploited the Bulgarian energy sources without having paid for them. In his reply, Byrnes reminded him that in the Paris reparation agreement, the Allies had given up their claims vis-à-vis Germany and that Romania had

²⁰ FRUS 1946/II: 1294; CMAE, Réunion secrète, November 26, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

²¹ WARD 1981: 165.

²² FRUS 1946/II: 1348–1349.

done likewise. "Bulgaria was an enemy state and has claims against Germany. Why should Bulgaria be placed in a different class? The situation is quite different with respect to Finland. I do not see why a distinction should be made in the case of Bulgaria." As a compromise, Molotov suggested that the Bulgarian governmental claims be cancelled but that the individual clearing claims would be honoured. After Bevin's comments on German assets in Bulgaria, the issue was decided by Byrnes's stand on the issue:

Why should we make a distinction for Bulgarian nationals who might have sold armaments to Germany to use against the US or USSR? How can we say that Bulgarian nationals have claims against Germany and Rumanian nationals in the same situation shall not have the same rights? I don't want to show favoritism between enemies. Furthermore, how are these claims going to be paid? When we get to the German settlement we will have a very difficult reparation problem and it will be difficult to pay claims to Bulgaria and not Rumania. If the Soviet Union agrees to pay such claims out of their zone it would help our argument. But we are going to have trouble enough over reparations and I think we had better leave out of the picture claims of enemy states.²³

It is evident from the American arguments that, in accordance with the spirit of the Potsdam Agreement, they believed that these demands would have to be met from the Western zones. For this reason, it was the United States that moved to suspend the claims of the former enemy countries vis-à-vis Germany. When the suggestion was made that the Soviet Union might meet the claims from the Soviet zone of occupation, Molotov recognized that this could lead to a renewal of the debate between the Great Powers and therefore preferred to bow to the American proposal.

It was for this reason that Paragraph 4 of Article 30 of the Hungarian peace treaty included the Anglo-American proposal that the claims against Germany be tabled until final arrangements could be made within the framework of the upcoming German peace treaty.²⁴

²³ FRUS 1946/II: 1328, 1338.

²⁴ FÜLÖP 1987a: 97–98.

The economic and military clauses of the Hungarian peace treaty were drafted based on the Italian, Romanian, and Bulgarian precedents. A committee to harmonize the economic debates was set up according to a Soviet proposal made for the Italian treaty, with some American amendments.²⁵

As far as the fate of the enemy assets on Allied territory was concerned, Molotov asked that a compromise solution be accepted. He suggested that the clause requiring confiscation for Romanian assets be extended to Hungarian ones, while the article rejecting confiscation for Finnish assets be extended to Bulgarian ones. After a brief debate, the Soviet recommendation about Hungary and Romania was accepted. Molotov then withdrew his veto on the Hungarian–French text of the Danube–Sava–Adriatic Railway Company issue.²⁶ He objected to the clause on the restitution of Jewish properties in Hungary and Romania because it included the inheritance clause of the International Refugee Organization instead of the properties devolving on the states of Hungary and Romania. Byrnes insisted, however, that it was impermissible that “a state exterminates one part of its population and then confiscates their assets.”²⁷ At the next meeting of the council, Molotov again tried to have the clause thrown out but, after French mediation, he accepted Byrnes’s recommendation that transferred the inherited assets “for humanitarian purposes to an organization representing such individuals, organizations or communities in Hungary and Romania.” It was agreed to accept the first paragraphs of Article 24A of the Romanian Treaty, and of Article 23A of the Hungarian one, subject to the substitution of “fair compensation” for “full compensation,” and to defer decision on the second paragraphs of those articles.²⁸ Molotov also agreed that the article protecting the human rights of the Jews in Hungary and Romania be entered into the peace treaties.²⁹ He considered the

²⁵ Article 35 of the Hungarian peace treaty.

²⁶ Article 29 of the Hungarian peace treaty and Paragraph 10 of Article 26.

²⁷ FRUS 1946/II: 1365; CMAE, 12^e séance, November 30, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

²⁸ Article 27 of the Hungarian peace treaty, CMAE, 13^e séance, December 2, 1946, November 30, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

²⁹ Paragraph 2 of Article 2 of the Hungarian peace treaty, CMAE, 13^e séance, December 2, 1946, November 30, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

clauses in the Hungarian and Bulgarian peace treaties on railway fares to be unnecessary but, in this exceptional case, accepted Byrnes's reference to the two-thirds vote of the Paris Conference and withdrew his objections.³⁰ After a lengthy debate and correspondence on the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Finnish peace treaty stipulations, Hungary was forbidden to have torpedo boats.³¹

On November 29, 1946, the CFM debated Bevin's proposal, which turned out to be most important for the reestablishment of Hungary's independence and sovereignty, and that dealt with the withdrawal of Allied forces from the former enemy nations' territory. Gladwyn Jebb submitted to the CFM the report of the deputy ministers of foreign affairs concerning the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and this was immediately and vehemently rejected by Molotov. He considered it impossible to add this question to the list of unresolved items. He declared, in the name of the Soviet delegation, that he opposed the raising of this matter because it had already been resolved. Bevin, changing his November 11 position, admitted that he had agreed with the articles in the Hungarian and Romanian peace treaties mandating the withdrawal of Allied troops, and if there was no agreement with his proposal to review the matter, he would not insist that it be done.³²

On the same day, Aladár Szegedy-Maszák submitted to the CFM the protests of the Hungarian government about Article 4 of the proposed Hungarian peace treaty, which aimed to stop the forced domestic deportation of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia.³³ The diplomatic *démarche* of the Hungarian government had no effect on the Great Power peace negotiations.

At the 17th meeting of the CFM, on December 6, the five peace treaty drafts, including the Hungarian one, were handed over to the Drafting Commission, which, after one month of work, drew up the final form of

³⁰ Article 34 of the Hungarian peace treaty, CMAE, 12^e séance, November 30, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

³¹ Article 15 of the Hungarian peace treaty, CMAE, 12–13^e and 16^e séance, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

³² CMAE, 11^e séance, November 29, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD; FRUS 1946/II: 1352.

³³ CFM (46), (NY)35, November 30, 1946, PRO FO 371.59043 R 17639/2608/21.

the texts to be signed.³⁴ A single minor amendment was accepted on the last day, December 12, and this referred to the clause on the interpretation of the peace treaties.³⁵ Thus, the Hungarian peace treaty, consisting of 42 articles and 6 appendices, was finished.

At the New York session of the CFM, the central issues of European settlement, as well as the fate of Germany and Austria, were discussed between December 7 and 12, 1946. The United States delegation made one final effort to have the troops of the Red Army removed from Central and Southeastern Europe. Byrnes was successful in securing a meeting in London of the deputy ministers of foreign affairs for January 14, 1947, to prepare the German peace treaty and the treaty to be made with Austria. The deputy ministers would be able to hear the opinions of the other Allies on German borders, etc. They agreed that the 4th session of the CFM would be held in Moscow on March 10, 1947, to hear the report of the Allied Control Council in Berlin, determine the interim political regime to be established in Germany until the peace treaty was signed, and discuss the German peace conditions, the disarmament agreement, and the treaty to be made with Austria.

On December 6, 1946, the American delegation submitted its memorandum on limiting the number of Allied forces of occupation in Europe. The document envisaged that by April 1, 1947, the number of British and American troops would be reduced to 140,000 each, Soviet troops to 200,000, French troops to 70,000, and Soviet supply troops in Poland to 20,000. In Austria, after its independence was reestablished, each Great Power could station 10,000 soldiers and the Soviet supply troops in Romania and Hungary would be reduced to 5,000 in each country. "If the Austrian treaty so stipulated, troops could be removed even earlier from Austria, Hungary and Romania."³⁶ The Americans submitted these proposals after the peace

³⁴ CMAE, 16^e and 17^e séances, December 5 and 6, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 48, MAE AD. The decision was made on the basis of the recommendation of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Couve de Murville.

³⁵ FRUS 1946/II: 1533.

³⁶ CMAE, 18-22^e séances, December 8-12, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944-1949, vol. 48, MAE AD; the American proposal, CFM (46), (NY), doc. 59, PRO FO 371. 59043.

treaty discussions, without debating them with the British delegation, independently of any other question, and as a free-standing recommendation. They assumed that the treaty with Austria and the German peace treaty were imminent.

On the last day of the New York meeting, on December 12, 1946, Molotov vehemently rejected any discussion of the American proposal, claiming that to review the issue, he would need the appropriate documents and military experts. In response to Byrnes's request, Molotov made a somewhat obscure promise that he would be willing to discuss the matter in the final phase of the next meeting of the CFM, in Moscow.³⁷

The time and place for signing the peace treaties were also decided on the last day of the New York meeting, on December 12, 1946. Speaking on behalf of his government, Couve de Murville, the leader of the French delegation, suggested Paris on February 10, 1947. All affected Allies and Associated Powers, as well as representatives of the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish governments, would be invited for the signing at the Quai d'Orsay. Byrnes, who wished for the earliest possible date for the signing and ratification of the peace treaties, did not insist that the signing take place before the end of the third session of the council in New York.³⁸

The secretary of state wished to accelerate the process of signing, ratifying, and implementing the treaties because he knew that delays in the negotiations on the Austrian and German treaties would also delay the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe. Neither Byrnes nor the other members of the council realized that after the New York postponement, it would take a decade before an agreement could be reached on the Austrian question, that there would never be a German peace treaty, and that instead, on September 12, 1990, a "final settlement" would be signed with two Germans. Moreover, Soviet troops would remain in Hungary for almost half a century, until June 13, 1991.

The participants of the New York meeting at the end of 1946 were not thinking of the Cold War confrontations, the failure of the 1947 Moscow

³⁷ FRUS 1946/II: 1527–1528; CMAE, 22^e séance, December 12, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

³⁸ FRUS 1946/II: 1535.

spring, and London fall meetings, or the division of Europe and Germany into two parts. Instead, the successful New York meeting raised hopes for renewed Great Power cooperation and a revival of the spirit of Tehran and Yalta.³⁹

By delaying the Austrian–German debate, the Soviet Union sought to gain time to solidify its Balkan position hallowed in the peace treaties of the three Great Powers. Soviet diplomacy succeeded in postponing ratification of the peace treaties until the summer of 1947 and their coming into force – i.e., the formal deposition of the American, British, and Soviet ratification documents in Moscow – until September 15, 1947. This, in turn, delayed the withdrawal of the occupying forces until December 15, 1947.

The Soviet Union was also successful in arranging for elections in the defeated Balkan countries that, through grave abuses, ensured a majority for governments friendly to the Soviet Union. On October 27, 1946, in Bulgaria, a coalition of the Fatherland Front, the Communists, and the Zveno socialists and agrarians won the elections over Nikola Petkov's Radical Agrarian Party. In Romania, on November 19, 1946, Prime Minister Groza's National Democratic Front secured 84.5% of the popular vote against 7.75% for the opposition National Peasant Party.⁴⁰

In Hungary, the Smallholders' Party of Ferenc Nagy based its policies on the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Until this took place, fearing the Romanian and Bulgarian precedents, the prime minister did not even dare to hold municipal elections. Ferenc Nagy worried that an overwhelming Smallholder victory would turn the Soviets even more strongly against Hungary and provoke them to take action.⁴¹

The validity of Nagy's concern was demonstrated in the days following the New York meeting of the CFM. Leaving the question of the withdrawal of Allied troops open proved fateful for Hungary. During the peace

³⁹ Couve de Murville's coded telegrams from New York to Paris, nos. 1386–1393, November 30, 1946, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 48, MAE AD.

⁴⁰ LUNDESTAD 1975: 281; Roy Melbourne's report from Bucharest, no. 1265, November 27, 1946, National Archives, 871 00/II–27346.

⁴¹ Schoenfeld's telegram to Washington on his conversation with Nagy on November 21, 1946, no. 2194, November 22, 1946, FRUS 1946/II: 345; see also Warner's note, October 25, 1946, PRO FO 371.59008 R 15477/256/21.

negotiations of July 1946, the Soviet Union actively interfered in the domestic affairs of Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary to create a *fait accompli* situation before the withdrawal of troops. In early 1947, the approaching Austrian peace negotiations and the increasingly probable withdrawal of troops activated the Soviet Union's political machinery in Southeastern Europe. At the end of 1946, the Allies took steps to reduce the British–American–French forces in Austria. The Soviet Union unexpectedly agreed to an even distribution of occupation costs among the four Great Powers – a dramatic shift from its earlier position. In December 1946, they announced that they would return the houses where Soviet soldiers were quartered to their Austrian owners. General Vladimir V. Kurasov, the supreme commander of the Soviet occupation forces in Austria, told his American counterpart that with the signing of the Austrian state treaty, their mission in Austria would be complete and that “the time has come for us to leave.”⁴² Even the sceptical Bevin was hopeful. He wrote on January 2, 1947: “We can hope that the Soviet Government will be ready in the near future to sign a treaty with Austria.”⁴³

Around Christmas 1946, arrests began in connection with the Magyar Közösség (Hungarian Community) affair. At the same time, hauntingly similar events unfolded in Bulgaria⁴⁴ and Romania.⁴⁵ After the completion of the peace negotiations and before the imminent withdrawal of troops, the Soviet Union endeavored to solidify its influence and the position of the Communists. The New York meeting of the CFM marked the beginning of massive domestic policy changes in the parts of Europe under Soviet occupation. The clash of the Great Powers over the signing, ratifying, enactment, and implementation of the peace treaties, however, falls outside the scope of this discussion and is another story.

The New York meeting of the CFM brought to an end the drafting of the peace treaties but left the central issue of European peace negotiations

⁴² CRONIN 1986: 43.

⁴³ “Austria: Preparation of Peace Treaty,” CM (47)1, PRO FO CAB 128/9.

⁴⁴ FRUS 1947/IV: 148–149. In Bulgaria, the so-called Neutral Officers’ conspiracy was uncovered on December 11, 1946.

⁴⁵ LUNDESTAD 1975: 252–253.

and the question of withdrawing the Allied forces unresolved, opening the path toward the Cold War conflicts between the Great Powers. Byrnes considered it a personal triumph that in New York the CFM accepted 47 of the 53 two-thirds majority recommendations of the Paris Conference and 24 of the 41 simple majority recommendations. Yet, the Soviet Union agreed only to those matters that were of little importance to it and ensured that the important issues were entered into the peace treaty texts with significantly altered wording.

In the eastern half of Europe, the Soviet Union had achieved its war-time goals. The Balkan and Finnish treaties validated the Soviet positions, and in the case of the Italian treaty, the Soviet Union managed to secure significant advantages for Yugoslavia. The New York meeting of the CFM completed the five “second-tier” peace treaties – with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland.

On December 19, 1946, Byrnes submitted his, this time final, resignation, and on January 7, 1947, he yielded his chair to General George Marshall.⁴⁶ After the end of World War II, the rapid and systematic move from a state of war to a state of peace also meant the dissolution of the wartime unity. Instead of organizing and preserving peace and security and maintaining continued cooperation among the Great Powers, decades of conflict ensued.⁴⁷ The process of European peace settlements was interrupted for nearly half a century and could be completed only recently and under radically different circumstances.

POSTSCRIPT: THE CFM AND THE ILLUSIONS OF THE HUNGARIAN PREPARATIONS FOR PEACE

World War II was not followed by an overall settlement like the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. At the Potsdam Conference, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union formed the CFM, a forum for peacemaking. The council was responsible for preparing the peace treaties for Germany's

⁴⁶ WARD 1981: 170–179.

⁴⁷ See the declaration of October 30, 1943, page 9.

former allies and later for drafting the final texts of the treaties. Meanwhile, discussions of the Austrian and German cases, which would determine the entire European peace settlement, were postponed until 1947. The council's basic function, apart from the thorough preparation of peace treaties, was, according to the US State Department, to hinder the crystallization of exclusive spheres of interest. Yet, at the Potsdam Conference, at the meeting of the foreign ministers in Moscow, and at the second session of the CFM in Paris, a hierarchical decision-making procedure was established, with the United States and United Kingdom dealing with Italy, and the Soviet Union dealing with Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland. Each Allied power played a determining role in formulating the peace terms within its sphere. Each draft put forward in London in September 1945 by the armistice dictating Great Power became the negotiating basis of the peace treaties. Due to the hectic procedure of peacemaking, the main parts of this document were adopted into the final text.

The Soviet Union wanted to have the slightly amended version of the armistice conventions accepted, i.e., it wished to confirm the Allied agreements concluded during the war. The United States planned to reconsider the terms on the basis of a complete examination of the matter, offering large scope to the bilateral agreements of those states concerned. These two contrasting conceptions were harmonized during the one-and-a-half-year-long negotiations of the Council.

The Great Powers did not make a preliminary political decision that they would conclude a dictated peace with the defeated countries. Yet, this is what happened as a consequence of the agreements on the procedures for drafting the peace treaties, which were made by the Big Three at a later date. The Potsdam 4-3-2 formula restrained the circle of the decision-makers or, to use Byrnes's term, the circle of "judges": the members of the council were those Great Powers that signed the capitulation document with the enemy country concerned. The Italian draft peace treaty and its final wording were prepared by the British, American, Soviet, and French members. The Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian treaties were elaborated by the Soviet, American, and British ministers of foreign affairs, while the Finnish one was drafted by the Soviet and British foreign ministers. At the sessions of

the council, a certain peace treaty clause could have been accepted on the condition that a consensus between the involved Great Powers was formed.

The order of negotiations of the peace treaties – Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland – made it possible for the Soviet Union to induce its allies to compromise in the cases of the so-called Balkan treaties by slowing down the Italian peace negotiations and interrelating different matters. The principle of Great Power consensus also meant that in the autumn of 1945, the United States, and from the beginning of 1946, the Soviet Union could, at the same time, determine the extent of the progress of the negotiations and could thus exploit the willingness of the others to negotiate to its own advantage.

The 4–3–2 formula accepted at Potsdam excluded France from the circle of decision-makers, except for the Italian treaty, in which there was no place for the other Allied and Associated Powers. After the failure of the first session of the CFM in London (September 11 – October 2, 1945), the Soviet Union and the United States agreed at the Moscow meeting of the foreign ministers (December 15–27, 1945) to call the Paris Conference as a consulting forum, which was subordinated to the Council. This agreement increased not only the number of “judges” but also the number of “witnesses.” The Soviet Union did everything in its power to limit the circle of decision-makers and to reserve the final decisions for the Big Three. The American secretary of state finally convinced Stalin by saying, “we will be the judges ... so we can allow the small countries to speak without interfering with our interests.”⁴⁸

During the second session of the Council – including the London Meeting of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs (January 18 – April 20, 1946) and the two meetings of the CFM in Paris (April 25 – May 16 and June 15 – July 12, 1946) – a firm struggle arose between Soviet diplomacy and American foreign policy, which threatened the entire peace settlement. The former wanted to restrict the role of the small victorious countries to the bare minimum, while the latter aimed to promote a “peace of the nations,” setting limits on the Soviet Union, which was pushed into

⁴⁸ See page 109.

a minority position by determining the convocation and proceedings of the Paris Conference. The two-thirds-voting procedure and simple majority vote applied by the Paris Conference did not alter the principle of Great Power consensus.

In July 1946, the members of the Council submitted common peace treaty drafts to the 21 victorious powers and entered into an obligation not move an amendment to already agreed-upon articles. The Great Power character of the peace settlement was reinforced by the requirement that the treaties could only come into force if the Council members who had signed the capitulation document deposited their ratification documents. This meant that the peace treaties drafted by the CFM were enforced independently of the willingness and approval of the other victorious or defeated states. In this way, participants of the Paris Conference could express their proposals only on matters deemed “non-basic” by the Great Powers. Consequently, the emergence of the “Slavic Bloc” voting contributed to the formation of the “Western Bloc.” In drafting the peace agreements, the views of the small Allied nations were considered only when they were supported by one of the Great Powers and were accepted only when they met the approval of all of the members of the Council. The “witnesses” proposals regarding the defeated states in Paris tended to harden the conditions of “judgment.” At the third session of the Council in New York (November 4 – December 12, 1946), the Soviet Union, using its veto power, rejected all recommendations contrary to its interests or had them modified to align with its original, pre-Paris Conference position.

The procedural rules drafted by the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States in Potsdam, Moscow, and Paris did not allow the “defendants” to participate in their own “proceedings.” According to the original conception of the State Department, the terms of peace should have been discussed with Italy – and presumably with the other defeated states – before the positions of the victorious states had crystallized. In this way, the “ex-enemy states” could not have refused to execute the terms by claiming that the peace treaty was dictated.

Until the French minister of foreign affairs sent the three Great Powers his proposal at the beginning of 1946, no consideration was given at all to

allowing former enemy state representatives a hearing, except in the Trieste affair. At the Paris Conference, the leaders of the Italian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Finnish delegations submitted written proposals, but they participated neither in the conference proceedings nor in the activity of the commissions. These countries were invited to present their views only if directly initiated by one of the victorious powers. The drafting procedure of the peace treaties made it impossible for the defeated countries to participate in discussions of the recommendations of the Paris Conference as parties enjoying equal rights.

The consequence of the Council's procedures, contrary to American intentions, could not be anything else but a dictated peace determined by the Great Powers, reflecting the interests of the victorious states, and enforced upon the defeated. The principles of the peacemaking process did not stem from the original intents of the Allied Powers but from the contingencies of the CFM negotiations and the difficulties in harmonizing the peace aims of the Big Three. On the contrary, had any politically motivated intentions existed, they could have represented the plan to avoid a 1919-like peace conference with a Versailles-style punitive and dictated peace. Frequently changing procedures restricted interference for the victorious Great Powers.

The Soviet Union considered it a major concession that, in order to extend the wartime cooperation into peacetime, it allowed Great Britain and the United States some influence in drafting the peace terms concerning countries defeated by the Soviet Union, for the sake of maintaining cooperation between the three Allied powers after the war. However, in the case of Italy, Yugoslav interests represented by the Soviet Union conflicted with American and British ones. The hierarchy of the peace settlement – “judges,” “witnesses,” and “accused” – gradually emerged from the negotiations. It was only within this framework that individual issues could be discussed during the peace negotiations conducted by the Council.

The order of the peace negotiations was instrumental in drafting the peace treaties. Nobody disputed Bidault's statement that “the German question was at the centre of all peace settlement,” but in the absence of a central German government able to conclude a peace treaty, the logical order of peacemaking was reversed. It was not the “main criminal,” whose case was

never tried, but the questions of “secondary importance” that were given precedence.⁴⁹ The course of events in 1943–1944 had already separated the preparation of the armistice agreements with the satellites from the German capitulation, and the Potsdam decisions formally separated their peace treaties from the German one. The “second-rate” peace treaties, assumed to be ready in a few months, were supposed to serve as examples – acceptable or not – on the eve of the German and Austrian peace negotiations.

It was the avoidance of the central issue that brought the preparation of the Italian treaty to the fore in Potsdam. Great Britain and the United States considered it a primary task to conclude a peace treaty as soon as possible because Italy was the first of the Axis Powers to break off from Germany and materially contributed to its defeat.⁵⁰ The first test of tripartite European cooperation among the Great Powers was the control of the Italian armistice, which gave it the characteristic of a model. The negotiation order adopted in Potsdam – Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland – meant that the Italian treaty was always first in discussion, with Romania being the first of the Balkan ones.

Despite the dissimilarity of their war records, the five states were judged uniformly, and the determination of their peace terms became inextricably interwoven. The Allied Powers wanted to create a comprehensive peace system, which was evident in their insistence that the defeated states recognize all other peace treaties, whether already concluded or yet to be concluded. The preeminence of the Italian treaty not only gave the Soviet Union a strong bargaining position but also meant that, as the negotiations progressed, as the negotiations progressed, the Great Powers increasingly applied the commonly agreed clauses of the Italian and Romanian treaties to all other cases. Thus, the Hungarian treaty was not even discussed in the autumn of 1945. At the second session of the Council, during a critical juncture in the peace negotiations, there was only one independent discussion of the

⁴⁹ Bidault's statement to the council's session in London, September 26, 1945, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949, vol. 134, MAE AD; WARD 1981: 177. Preparation of armistice terms for Axis satellites, CAB 121/78 Armistice and Post-War Committee 1944–1945. In this note of January 6, 1944, Lord Hood wrote, “Germany is the main criminal.”

⁵⁰ SANA KOEV–TSIBULEVSKY 1972: 415.

Hungarian peace treaty. On the whole, the definitions of the Hungarian peace terms were given short shrift at the Council's peace negotiations, with scant opportunity to consider them on their merits due to the application of Italian and Romanian precedents.

The postponement of the debate over the Austrian treaty proved crucial for Hungary and Romania. It was late, only in the early spring of 1946 that American diplomacy took measure of the importance of the clause accepted at the session of the Council in London regarding the stationing of liaison troops in Austrian zones. Starting in April 1946, and ever since Great Britain and the United States raised the matter, the Soviet Union did everything to keep the Austrian peace negotiations off the agenda and to prevent the simultaneous settlement of the five peace treaties and the Austrian treaty. The Soviet Union preferred to delay the removal of the Red Army units from the eastern half of Europe rather than exclude this eventuality. On December 1, 1945, the Soviet and American troops were removed from Czechoslovakia. There were signs during the summer of 1946 and again in December that the Soviet Union was getting ready for the possibility of having an Austrian treaty in place and for the removal of Allied troops from Austria, Italy, Romania, and Hungary and for the reduction of the European occupation forces.

When the negotiation order of peace treaties was determined in Potsdam, it was still possible to link the Austrian question to the overall European settlement. At this time, however, Great Britain and the United States did not consider the procedures of the CFM in the function of eliminating the Soviet military presence in Eastern Europe. It would be improper to reflect the recognition that came several months later back to the events of the summer of 1945.⁵¹ The Austrian treaty, and especially the question of the German peace treaty, involved a conflict that led to the disintegration of cooperation between the Great Powers and to the Cold War confrontation. The postponement of the Austrian settlement, with British and American concurrence, legalized the stationing of Red Army units in Romania and Hungary for close to a decade.

⁵¹ KERTESZ 1953a: 186.

The major “illusion”⁵² of the makers of the Hungarian peace preparations, and of the leadership of the Smallholders, was that they based all their political calculations on the imminent withdrawal of the Soviet troops. It would be unfair, however, to attribute this to the ignorance or naivety of the Hungarian foreign policy leadership of that time. It was the Foreign Office, in the summer of 1945, that formulated its plans for a peace treaty at the earliest possible moment, to achieve the withdrawal of the Soviet forces and to reestablish the independence and sovereignty of the Central and Southeast European states. It is the irony of history that it was precisely because of this British proposal that the Soviet forces remained in Romania until 1958 and in Hungary until 1991.

From the spring of 1946, the United States desperately tried to remedy its earlier mistake, and even at the beginning of September 1946, in Paris, they promised Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy that the occupation forces would be withdrawn.⁵³ There was some uncertainty on both the Soviet and Hungarian Communist sides as well. Rákosi told the American envoy Schoenfeld on November 30, 1946, that he hoped the Hungarian peace treaty could be signed soon and that this would make it possible to free Hungary from the burden of the occupying forces and from the expense of the ACC.⁵⁴ As a result, until the winter of 1946, hope that the Red Army would be withdrawn was shared by Hungary and, outside Hungary, by the members of the Council. The Hungarian Communists also believed the withdrawal was likely – and feared it.

The Hungarian peace preparations suffered from another illusion, based on the wartime declaration of the Allies and on the 1945 Istria precedent. This illusion was about the establishment of ethnic borders and national self-determination. During World War II, Great Britain⁵⁵ and the United States⁵⁶ considered the appropriateness of ethnic “equity” principles even

⁵² Kertész used this term in the subtitle of his last book: “Hungary and the Illusions of Peacemaking, 1945–1947.” See KERTÉSZ 1984.

⁵³ See page 297.

⁵⁴ Schoenfeld’s telegram no. 2244, November 30, 1946, FRUS 1946/VI: 346.

⁵⁵ JUHÁSZ 1978: 321.

⁵⁶ ROMSICS 1992: 211–217, 296–297.

in the case of enemy Hungary. Victorious Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, however, rejected any border adjustment in Hungary's favor.

The adjustment of the Hungarian–Romanian border in Hungary's favor was initiated on September 20, 1945, in London by the American secretary of state, and this was supported by Great Britain and France. The latter two were actually responsible for the Peace Treaty of Trianon of June 4, 1920. The Soviet Union, however, wanted to reestablish the January 1, 1938, border, citing the Romanian ethnic majority and the political impossibility of maintaining the Second Vienna Award. The Soviet position, which until June 23, 1941, considered the possibility of a border adjustment in Hungary's favor, became unambiguous during the war and was finalized when the Groza regime was forced on Romania by the Soviets in March 1945.

Because of the unilateral Soviet action, contrary to the Yalta Declaration, the Hungarian–Romanian territorial settlement became subordinated to the debate between the Great Powers about the representative character and diplomatic recognition by the Allies of the Groza government. This led to the failure of the first session of the Council in London. The tripartite agreement reached in Moscow by the foreign ministers on Romania and Bulgaria made the reorganization of the Groza government and its partial diplomatic recognition possible. Consequently, Great Britain and the United States gave up the possibility of adjusting the borders of the Trianon treaty, with an American reservation that left the possibility of smaller border adjustments by bilateral negotiation open.

Harmonization of the position of the three Great Powers meant that the Hungarian–Romanian territorial settlement became final, and this could not be changed by the Moscow, Washington, London, and Paris visits of the Hungarian government delegation or by the Hungarian territorial memoranda submitted to the Council and to the Paris Conference.

The American proposal was put on the agenda in London, not as a gesture toward Hungary or to implement the ethnic equity principle developed during the war, but to weaken the Groza government and because it fit well into the scheme of the American–Soviet struggle for influence in Southeastern Europe. The Hungarian peace diplomacy could not know about the Transylvania debate of the CFM in London. The Hungarian

proposal on the equilibrium between nationalities, elaborated in April 1946, was based on the Istrian precedent, and the border adjustment proposal submitted to the Paris Conference at the end of August was based on an earlier American suggestion.

On advice from Moscow, bilateral negotiations were attempted, but the April 27, 1946, Sebestyén mission to Bucharest was unsuccessful because Groza, relying on Soviet support and having been informed about the Anglo-American position, refused to discuss territorial adjustments. Nevertheless, until the statement of the Council's position in Paris on May 7, 1946, there was some expectation in Hungary – false as it turned out – about the Soviet position. After the April 1946 discussions in Moscow, Prime Minister Nagy cherished an illusion that, in the matter of the Hungarian–Romanian territorial adjustment and the protection of the minority rights of Hungarians in Slovakia, the Soviet Union was siding with Hungary.

Until the spring of 1946, the Soviet Union, jointly with American and British policies, supported bilateral negotiations. However, when the peace negotiations of the Council and the Paris Conference made it inevitable to take a stand, the Soviet Union endorsed the Romanian and Czechoslovak positions.

The Hungarian peace preparation was imbued with the intention to make peace with the neighboring countries, particularly Czechoslovakia, and to assure the rights of the Hungarian minorities through multilateral international agreements. This illusion was rapidly dispelled by Beneš's presidential and the Slovak National Council's decrees enacted in Slovakia, which deprived the Hungarians of their elementary human rights.

Equally disheartening was the Czechoslovak submission to the Council, which asked the victorious Great Powers' approval for the compulsory transfer or sheer expulsion of an additional 200,000 Hungarians, above and beyond the number agreed upon in the population exchange agreement signed on February 27, 1946. Of all of Hungary's neighbors, Czechoslovakia was the one that worked most consistently to exercise the rights of the victors, to harmonize the political and ethnic borders by compulsory transfers of Hungarians, and to incorporate excessive economic, military, and cultural claims into the peace treaty text.

In this instance, the council procedures and the principle of Great Power unanimity worked toward moderating the excessive demands of the minor victor. At the Paris Conference, the United States and Great Britain prevented the forced transfer of 200,000 Hungarians from being included in the Hungarian peace treaty and reduced the Czechoslovak territorial claim as well. The Soviet Union supported the Czechoslovak proposals but, respecting the principle of Three Power decision-making, did not insist on their acceptance.

The Hungarian government submitted the Minority Codex, the draft of the minority protection treaty to be concluded between Hungary, its neighbors, and the Great Powers, to the Council and also, during the summer of 1946, to the Paris Conference. During his Western visits, Prime Minister Nagy asked both the Foreign Office and the Department of State to support the minority protection endeavors of the Hungarian government in order also to strengthen the position of the Smallholders' Party. At last, due to the Soviet Union's negative attitude and the American confidence in the implementation of the human rights articles, the Minority Codex was not accepted. The Hungarian minority protective position was weakened by the implementation of the transfer of the Germans from Hungary and by the acceptance of the Hungarian–Slovakian population “exchange” agreement that was based on the voluntary resettlement of Slovaks and the expulsion of Hungarians from Slovakia.

Initially, the Hungarian peace preparation was under the illusion that the peace treaty negotiation principles of the victorious Great Powers would allow for a negotiated peace settlement. Hungary based its entire argument on the principles allegedly accepted by the Allies. Until May 1946, when Kertész and Auer arrived in Paris, Hungarian peace preparations moved in parallel with the activities of the Council but independently of them. Kertész realized only in Paris that the procedural rules of the Council excluded the vanquished from presenting their views.⁵⁷ To some extent, this deficiency was made up during the Moscow and Washington–London–Paris visits of the Hungarian government delegation.

⁵⁷ KERTESZ 1984: 184.

The Hungarian government hoped for a “lenient” peace. The Soviet Union, however, gave its reparation claims the character of “punishment for aggression” and, in spite of American opposition, succeeded in having the reparation sum of \$300 million accepted. Great Britain shared the view that the defeated countries had to be punished by the reparation and territorial settlement. Even the “lenient” American attitude did not extend to the point where former enemy states were favored over the victorious ones.

Hungarian peace preparatory diplomacy endeavored to start out from the fundamentals of political realism and tried to gain the support of the Soviet Union for the Hungarian peace goals. The punitive Soviet attitude⁵⁸ and the preference given to the claims of Czechoslovakia and Romania, representing opposing interests, left no other choice for Hungary but an orientation toward the United States and Great Britain. Other than economic concessions, British and American foreign policy could not counterbalance the realities of power (the Soviet military, political, and economic presence) in the Central European area. Pushkin, the Soviet envoy in Budapest, prior to the Western visits of the Hungarian government delegation, told Nagy and Gyöngyösi to remember that “Hungary is occupied by the Red Army and surrounded by Slav neighbors.”⁵⁹

In Hungary, the Soviet Union was the only power factor because it controlled the armistice agreement limiting Hungarian sovereignty and, to use Stalin’s words, “in actual fact the Soviet Union could do pretty much what it wanted here.”⁶⁰ The only limitation on the Soviet freedom of action was the peacetime preservation of Three Power cooperation. It was for this reason alone that Stalin permitted free elections and multiparty systems in the countries occupied by the Soviet Union and promised that the Red Army would be withdrawn.⁶¹ In 1945–1946, Hungary did not fit into the Soviet Union’s ideas about a Cordon Sanitaire against Germany. Between 1943 and 1947, the Soviet Union’s policies relied on the victorious Slav

⁵⁸ KERTESZ 1984: 86–87.

⁵⁹ Schoenfeld’s telegram citing a report by Artúr Kárász, no. 1080, June 7, 1947, 711. 64/6–746, National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland, Record Group, 43.

⁶⁰ See page 116.

⁶¹ See page 31 and page 69.

states – Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Poland. This system of alliances, cemented by interlocking bilateral agreements between Moscow, Prague, Warsaw, and Belgrade, could be joined by the defeated countries, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, only between 1947 and 1949. Romania and Bulgaria were more important strategically to the Soviet Union than Hungary because they provided a route to reach the Eastern Mediterranean. The territorial status and the military-economic restrictions of the future allies of the Soviet Union were regulated by the peace treaties that the United States and Great Britain had accepted.

Hungary, as a defeated country, could not influence the decisions of the three Great Powers about the Hungarian peace treaty. The illusions of the Hungarian peace preparations were shared by the Allied Powers, and it was not the fault of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the readiness of the Hungarian peace delegation, or the steps taken by Hungarian diplomacy that the Hungarian peace treaty terms could not be ameliorated.

The peace negotiations of the CFM did not only settle the fate of the defeated states but modified the interrelationship between the victorious powers in Europe. The Hungarian peace treaty brought to an end the state of war and thereby also the temporary armistice period. It dissolved the ACC and reestablished the country's independence and sovereignty. The country's territorial and political status were recognized, Hungary could reestablish its international relations, and membership in the UN became possible. The Hungarian peace treaty drafted by the three Great Powers of the CFM – the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain – proved to be a solid pillar of European peace.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

The presentation of the Council of Foreign Ministers – Hungarian peace negotiations and the comparison of the sources were made possible by the fact that the foreign affairs archives of three of the four Great Powers involved in the European peace arrangements were opened to scholars and to the public during the 1980s. I gathered my diplomatic documents in Paris from 1980 to 2009, in London in 1988 and 1991, in Washington in 1991 and 2004, and at the Hoover Institution on War, Peace and Revolution, in Stanford (California) in 2007. These illustrated the policies of the Soviet Union, at least as far as its position at the meetings of the council, where it was the fourth member determining Hungary's fate. The Soviet archives remained closed even after the end of the Soviet Union, even though the postwar history of the small countries belonging to the Soviet sphere of interest cannot be understood without appreciating the internal motivations of the policies of the dominant Great Power.

The documents pertaining to the postwar international negotiations, including those of the Council of Foreign Ministers, are preserved in the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Archives et Documentation, série Y, Internationale 1944–1949. The minutes prepared for sessions of the council are more complete than the British or American minutes. In a number of places, it deviates markedly from the English text and both augments

it and modifies the picture emerging from the English text. The British delegation regularly informed the French about the so-called Balkan peace treaty negotiations. At the Paris Conference and at the discussions of the council, the French delegation was very well informed by virtue of its role as a mediator and it also played an important role in the diplomatic backroom activities. France was not invited to the Moscow's meeting of the Three Great Powers in December 1945, and thus they viewed the Anglo-American and Soviet diplomatic activities from a distance. The documents pertaining to Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania are located in série Z, Europe 1944–1949. Because of their position, the French diplomats were very well informed about Romanian domestic and foreign policies and about the politics of the minority question. France kept a consul in Cluj (Kolozsvár). This was due not only to the Latin “brotherhood” but primarily because France did not participate in the British and American efforts to oust the Groza government. By virtue of their alliance and because France did not compete with the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe after World War II, the French diplomats frequently received confidential information about the former enemy countries from their Soviet colleagues. Such information, at the time, highlighted the Soviet political intentions in Southeast Europe. French diplomacy frequently analyzed the Anglo-American Eastern European policies with an independent spirit and, frequently, with surprising acumen.

Knowledge of the French diplomatic documents was essential for the critical assessment of the British and American sources. In my work, I used the following volumes (number in parenthesis).

Série Internationale

- ♦ The CFM Meeting in London (134–136)
- ♦ The London Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meeting (137–139)
- ♦ The decisions, working papers, program, sessions, and informal sessions of the CFM in Paris (143–156)
- ♦ The meetings of experts. The sessions, decisions, documents, and working papers of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting in Paris (157–166)

- ♦ The minutes, decisions, working papers of the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs sessions, French diplomatic telegrams and correspondence at the CFM meeting in New York (167–176)
- ♦ European Advisory Commission (133)
- ♦ British–Soviet negotiations in Moscow in October 1944 (120)
- ♦ Yalta and France (121)
- ♦ Potsdam and France (126)
- ♦ Moscow Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting, December 1945 (127)
- ♦ Balkan policy of the Soviet Union, November 1944 – December 1946 (33–35)
- ♦ Relationship between the Soviet Union and the Allied Powers, April 1945 – December 1946 (44–46)

Série Europe

Hungary

- ♦ Hungarian armistice and foreign policy until January 1946 (13)
- ♦ Hungarian foreign policy January 1946 – June 1949. Soviet–Hungarian relationship. Hungarian–Yugoslav relationship (25–26)
- ♦ Preparation, ratification and implementation of the Hungarian peace treaty January 1945 – June 1949 (22–23)
- ♦ Hungarian–French relations. Defence (1 and 11–12)

Romania

- ♦ Hungarian–Romanian relations, October 1944 – December 1947. Reports from the French Consul in Cluj (Koložsvár), July 1944 – December 1947 (24–25)
- ♦ Romanian foreign policy, September 1944 – December 1946 (21 and 26)
- ♦ Romanian armistice and peace preparations, September 1944, September 1945 – November 1946 (28–29)
- ♦ Romanian domestic policy (8–10)

Bulgaria

- ♦ Foreign policy and peace preparations (16–19)

Finland

- ♦ Peace preparations (14–15)

The documents of the Foreign Office, together with the papers of the British Cabinet and of the prime minister, give a clear cross section of the history of the Council of Foreign Ministers, of the Allied policies vis-à-vis Hungary, and of the formulation of the Hungarian peace conditions.

My principal source was the political correspondence of the Foreign Office: Public Record Office. Foreign Office. FO 371. General Correspondence. Political. I studied the documents in London, in Budapest (Institute of Party History documents assembled by Éva Haraszti), and Sofia (English microfiche material about Bulgaria and the Balkans in the Archives of the Historical Science Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences).

Being a member of the Big Three, the British diplomats were fully informed about all questions concerning Hungary and the Hungarian peace treaty. With the thoroughness of their analyses, their exemplary preparedness, and their action-oriented foreign policy ready to grasp the most slender opportunities should have enabled them to play a major role in shaping the fate of the Danube Basin. Their military and economic power was not on a par with the depth of their knowledge, and therefore British diplomacy had to adapt itself to the American one and had act as an observer at the peace treaties, watching the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Churchill–Stalin agreement of October 1944 also tied the hands of the British. Yet, Great Britain became one of the shapers of the Hungarian peace treaty stipulations. The documents of the Southern Department (Symbol: R), the Reconstruction Department (Symbol: U), the Prime Minister and the Cabinet (PREM 3: Operational Papers of the Prime Minister's Office) faithfully reflect that by working for a peace treaty as soon as possible and for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, Great Britain was working to reestablish Hungarian independence and sovereignty. It is impossible to gain a clear picture of the Hungarian–Romanian territorial question or of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak conflict without having a thorough knowledge of the Foreign Office documents. The reports sent by the British minister in Budapest about the Hungarian political situation are very helpful in understanding the background of the Hungarian peace

treaty negotiations. On the basis of the uniquely valuable Foreign Office papers, every significant step in the Hungarian peace negotiations made by the CFM and by the Paris Conference can be reconstructed accurately. Of the huge amount of material reviewed, I will list only those items that I used directly in my work and that I cite as a reference:

In the following lists, the number on the left indicates the “box” and the one on the right indicates the “file.”

	<i>Reconstruction Department – 1945</i>	
50869–50870	Peace Treaties with the Axis Satellites	4557
50913–50922	Creation of the CFM	5559
50966	Withdrawal of the Allied Troops from the European Countries	10136
	<i>1946</i>	
57152–57160	Peace Treaties with the Axis Satellites	169
	<i>Included</i>	
57153	Romania and Transylvania	
57154	Economic and Financial	
57155	Czechoslovak–Hungarian Relations	
57202–57209	Deputy Ministers’ Discussions	264
57265–57283	CFM – Paris – First Session	
57366–57394	CFM – Paris – Second Session	
57334–57365	Paris Conference	5698
57400–57414	CFM – New York Meeting	7509
57395	Withdrawal of Allied Troops from Former Enemy Countries	6017
	<i>Southern Department–1946</i>	
58965–58966	Allied Control Commission	
59002–59008	Political Matters: Hungary’s General Status	256
59038–59043	Hungarian peace treaty composition: Paris Conference	2608
59053	Hungarian Prime Minister: Moscow Visit	3408

59063	Soviet–Hungarian Relations	6776
59064	Problems of the Hungarian Minority in Slovakia	7011
59069	Danubian Economic Federation	8803
59064	Problems of Reestablishing Hungary's Diplomatic Relations vis-à-vis Italy, Bulgaria and Romania	11154
59147	Transylvania Border Question	257

The documents of the American Department of State can be found in the National Archives and Record Administration II, Diplomatic Branch, in College Park (Maryland). The General Records of the Department of State (Record Group 59) are organized according to the Decimal Files System. Record Group 43 contains the conference and the Council of Foreign Ministers materials. The United States played an important role in the Hungarian reparation issue, the Soviet troop withdrawal, the Hungarian–Romanian border question, and in the Hungarian–Czechoslovak conflict, but the decisive word always belonged to the Soviet Union. I had the opportunity to study some of the materials that threw some light on American foreign policies concerning Hungary. I used these documents and source material publications in my work in reconstructing the American position. These are the materials I could study (series number in parenthesis):

- Reports from the American Representatives in Budapest on Hungarian Domestic Policies (864400)
- Czechoslovak–Hungarian Population Exchange (760 F.64)
- Hungarian–Romanian Relationships (764.71)
- American Economic and Credit Policies vis-à-vis Hungary (864.51)
- Soviet Economic Policy in Hungary. American Foreign Policy and the Hungarian Economic Situation (864.50)

The activities of the Hungarian peace preparation are reflected in the Hungarian peace preparation memoranda submitted to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Great Powers, in the speeches and written comments of the Hungarian delegation at the Paris Conference, and, mainly, by the complete,

original document collection in Budapest in the ÚMKL (originally National Archives, then New Hungarian Central Archives in the 1980s, now again National Archives [Országos Levéltár]). After 1986, I could study the activities of the Hungarian peace preparatory activities from the 1945–1946 minutes of the Peace Preparatory Department (PPD) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Council of Ministers. The quantity of material available makes the charge that Hungarian diplomacy was poorly prepared completely without foundation. The material of the PPD consisted of 88 boxes (XIX–J–1–a) and the material of the Hungarian peace delegation consisted of 31 boxes (XIX–J–1–c). The peace preparatory documents were prepared by the best experts of the Hungarian political and intellectual elite at a very high level. The material of the PPD has to be viewed with some critical reservations. Starting in November 1946, the original, consistent document sequences were disrupted by officials participating in the preparatory activities and in the peace delegation, when publications of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were prepared for publication to prove that everything had been done to improve the Hungarian peace treaty stipulations.

The materials of the department were first deposited in the National Archives and later in the ÚMKL. After several thematic rearrangements, the chronological sequence was destroyed and the papers were separated from the documents of the other Departments, including the Political Department. Consequently, both the availability and usefulness of the material have deteriorated. There is a reason, based on the conditions during 1945–1946, why we cannot study the documents of the PPD by themselves without the help of other, relevant documents. The leaders of the peace preparatory activities, Minister of Foreign Affairs János Gyöngyösi, István Kertész, and the non-Communist Hungarian diplomats abroad, were very much aware of the Soviet presence in Hungary, and – because of the Communist influence and political police supervision in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – omitted potentially significant communications from their reports, transmitted incomplete summaries and other written documents, and did not record some important moves or conversations. This becomes manifest when we compare the Hungarian record of the conversations of Gyöngyösi and others with the notes made by British and American

diplomats. In his last book, Kertész mentions a very large number of interesting and important communications of that time that cannot be found in the surviving documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Budapest but could be found at the archives of the Hoover Institute on War, Peace, and Revolution in California.

Of the documents of the Political Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I used the ones pertaining to the Hungarian–Romanian relations. Volume I deals with Hungarian–Romanian relations and volume II with the situation of the Hungarian minority in Romania from the end of 1944 to the end of 1947. The items from the material of the Department most often cited in these works are:

I-4	Preparations for the Peace Conference and Composition of the Delegation
I-5	Information for the Prime Minister about the Work in Progress for Peace Preparation
IV-5-21	Foreign Policy after Liberation and the Peace Treaty
IV-29-41	Notes and Essays on the Domestic and Foreign Policy of the Central European Countries

Relations between Hungary and the Neighbouring Countries

IV. 42-45	Austria
IV. 46-103	Czechoslovakia
IV. 104-115	Yugoslavia
IV. 116-125	Romania
IV. 174-183	Relations of Hungary and the Soviet Union
IV. 184	Bulgaria
IV. 185	Poland
IV. 186	Great Britain
IV. 188-189	United States
VI. 1	Document volumes of the PPD

From the Papers of the Hungarian Peace Delegation

II. 1-21	Activities of the Hungarian Peace Delegation and the Peace Treaty Documents
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In addition to Hungary, Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, and Finland all signed the Paris Peace Treaty on February 10, 1947. Among the archives of the defeated countries, it was only in Sofia that I could review the documents pertaining to the Bulgarian peace treaty preparations and the Paris delegation.

I could not have gained access to the archival materials and documents pertaining to the CFM–Hungarian peace negotiations and other documents relevant to Hungary without the help of Gyula Juhász, István Vida, Péter Sipos, the widows of Endre Torda and Sándor Vájlók, Jean Laloy, Paul Gradwohl, Tofik Islamov, Stoyan Pintev, the leading officials of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Hungarian Institute for Foreign Affairs, the directors, head librarians, and archivists of the archives in Budapest, Sofia, Paris, London, Washington, and the Hoover Institute at Stanford University. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks for their cooperation and assistance.

PUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCES

Only the source material essential for the study of this subject are mentioned. The minutes of the London, Paris, and New York meetings of the CFM and papers pertaining to them, as well as the more important documents relative to the Great Power debates about Hungary, and to the Hungarian–Romanian and Hungarian–Czechoslovak conflicts, were published in the volumes of the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), Washington. FRUS is unique because its systematic and careful selection of the most important documents assists the researcher in finding his way through the American diplomatic archival collections. Since the publication of the series, new materials have become available, and the compilers of the volumes were careful to present a coherent and consistent picture of American foreign policy. The minutes of the plenary session of the Paris Conference, commission decisions, and amendments and recommendations were published in seven “books” in the *Recueil des Documents de la Conférence de Paris: Palais du Luxembourg 29 Juillet – 15 Octobre 1946* (Paris: Impr. Nationale, 1951). Selected documents were published by the American government in *Paris Peace Conference 1946: Selected Documents* (Washington, DC: US Printing

Office, 1947). *The Publications Making the Peace Treaties 1941–1947* (Washington, DC: Department of State, February 1947), and *Recueil de textes à l'usage de la Conférence de la paix* (Paris: Impr. Nationale, 1946), contain the principal documents of the European peace settlements.

The collection of documents edited by Graham Ross – *The Foreign Office and the Kremlin British Documents on Anglo–Soviet Relations, 1941–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) – is unique for the purposes of this work in presenting a picture of the Anglo–Soviet relations from Potsdam to the Moscow Conference.

Following the peace negotiations of the CFM, the Hungarian peace preparatory documents were arranged in five volumes by the initiative of István Kertész. The title of the series was *Hungary and the Conference of Paris* and was prepared in English, French, Russian and Hungarian. In 1947, only the first three were published. The first one, *Hungary's International Relations before the Conference of Paris*, contained the memoranda addressed to the CFM on peace preparation, Hungarian–Romanian relationships, and minority protection. The second one, under the same title, contained the documents on the peace preparations regarding the Hungarian–Czechoslovak relations and the population exchange agreement. The third one, *Hungary and the Conference of Paris*, published the documents regarding the Czechoslovak proposal on the compulsory transfer of 200,000 Hungarians. István Kertész, who devoted his academic and scholarly work to the historic rehabilitation of the peace preparations, continued this work from 1945 to the end of his life. The crowning achievement of this activity is the collection of documents, *The Last European Peace Conference, Paris 1946* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985). Kertész collected the most important documents from American and French archives supplementing them with his own very extensive collection of the Peace Preparatory Department (PPD) documents. This makes the volume particularly useful for our purposes. The documents pertaining to the Hungarian preparations for peace concerning the Hungarian–Romanian relations with American and French border adjustment maps were published by this author and Gábor Vince: *Revízió vagy autonómia? Iratok a Magyar–román kapcsolatok történetéről, 1945–1947* [Revision or Autonomy? Documents on Hungarian–Romanian

Relations, 1945–1947] (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 1998). See also *Vasfüggöny Keleten: Iratok a magyar–román kapcsolatok történetéről, 1948–1955* [The Iron Curtain in the East: Documents on Hungarian–Romanian Relations, 1948–1955] (Debrecen: Kossuth, 2007), edited by Mihály Fülöp and Gábor Vincze.

The Soviet documents on Hungarian–Romanian relations are collected in *Transilvanskiy vopros: Vengero–Rumynskiy territorilanyy spor i SSSR, 1940–1946. Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000), edited by Tofik Muslimovich Islamov and Tatyana Andreevna Pokivailova.

The French diplomatic documents on Hungarian–Romanian relations can be found in Anna Fülöp's *La Transylvanie dans les relations roumano–hongroises vues du Quai d'Orsay, septembre 1944 – décembre 1947* (Cluj: Centre de ressources pour la diversité ethnoculturelle, 2006).

The collection of diplomatic papers, edited by Gyula Juhász, *Magyar–brit titkos tárgyalások* [Secret Hungarian–British Negotiations] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1978), is basic for our understanding of the preliminaries. A more recent publication contains the American peace preparatory documents: *Wartime American Plans for a New Hungary: Documents from the US Department of State, 1942–1944* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1992), edited by Ignác Romsics. The text of the Hungarian peace treaty in Hungarian was first published the year the document was signed in *Apárizsi magyar békeszerződés és magyarázata* [The Hungarian Peace Treaty of Paris and Its Explanation] (Budapest: Gergely R. Rt., 1947), edited by János Baracs et alii. It is also in a collection authored by Dénes Halmosy and edited by Béla Popovics: *Nemzetközi szerződések 1945–1982: A második világháború utáni korszak* [International Treaties 1945–1982: The Period after World War II] (Budapest: KJK–Gondolat, 1985), and in *Sorsdöntések* [Fatal Decisions] (Budapest: Göncöl, 1989), edited by András Gerő. For the English version of the treaty, see *Treaty of Peace with Hungary, Dated at Paris February 10, 1947* (Washington, DC: US Govt. Print. Off., 1947), published by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

GENERAL WORKS

The history of the Council of Foreign Ministers is illustrated through the activities of Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, in Patricia Dawson Ward's *The Threat of Peace: James F. Byrnes and the Council of Foreign Ministers, 1945–1946* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1981). Because of the major thrust of this work on the American foreign policy of 1945–1946, it contains little material concerning Hungary.

The Hungarian peace treaty is placed within the framework of the shaping of the Balkan treaties in Klara Leonidovna's *Podgotovka i zaklyucheniye mirnykh dogovorov s Bolgariyey, Vengriyey i Rumyniyei posle vtoroy mirovoy voiny. Diplomaticeskaya istoriya* [Preparation and Signing of Peace Treaties with Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania after World War II] (Kishinev: Shtiintsa, 1981). The Soviet–Moldavian author had no access to the Soviet foreign policy documents, and therefore in her work relied mostly on American documents.

To learn about the evolution of the essential elements of the Hungarian peace treaty, see Gyula Juhász's *Magyarország külpolitikája, 1919–1945* [Hungary's Foreign Policy, 1919–1945] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1988). It is a must reading. I have used his work as the model for my task and its furtherance was my obligation. An earlier English version of this book does not deal with the peace conference. The work of Bruno Arcidiacono – *Le “precedent italien” et les origines de la guerre froide: Les alliés et l'occupation de l'Italie, 1943–1944* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1984) – is exemplary in its perspective and places the preliminaries in the context of Allied relations.

A recent synthesis, *Az 1947-es párizsi békeszerződés* [The Paris Peace Treaty of 1947] (Budapest: Osiris, 2006), by Ignác Romsics, is based on an enormous amount of source material and to date is the most comprehensive work on the history of Hungary's preparations for peace. It examines Hungarian diplomatic activities from 1938 on and relates them to Hungarian domestic policy. It also presents a precise description of the peace preparatory activities of the Hungarian political parties and of the debates on Hungarian peace aims. A brief summary for university students about Hungarian peace preparatory activities and the implementation of the peace treaty can be found in *Magyarország külpolitikája a XX. században* [Hungarian Foreign

Policy in the Twentieth Century] (Budapest: Aula, 1998), by Mihály Fülöp and Péter Sipos, on pages 283–363 and 369–429. István Kertész played a key role in the peace preparatory activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the work of the Hungarian peace delegation in Paris. His last work, *Between Russia and the West: Hungary and the Illusions of Peacemaking* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1984), is both a major summary and a memoir that, in a perspective of several decades and with the use of hitherto secret diplomatic papers, traces the activities of decision-making Great Powers and the evolution of their peace terms Hungary was forced to accept. Kertész's work is honest and objective in tone, and we can detect any retrospective self-justification only in the dramatically tense discussion of the Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations. Kertész had close relations with the American experts responsible for the shaping of the Hungarian peace treaty, but did not have access to the minutes of the Transylvania debates at the London meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

The Hungarian domestic policy background is illustrated by the following works: Sándor Balogh's *Parlamenti és pártharcok Magyarországon, 1945–1947* [Parliamentary and Party Battles in Hungary, 1945–1947] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1975); István Vida's *A Független Kisgazdapárt politikája, 1945–1947* [The Policy of the Independent Smallholders' Party, 1945–1947] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1976) and *Koalíció és pártharcok, 1944–1948* [Coalition and Party Battles, 1944–1948] (Budapest: Magvető, 1986); Lajos Izsák's *A koalíció évei Magyarországon, 1944–1948* [The Years of Coalition in Hungary, 1944–1948] (Budapest: Kozmosz, 1986). About the Romanian peace treaty that paralleled the Hungarian one, see Ștefan Lache's and Gheorghe Țuțui's book *România și Conferința de pace de la Paris din 1946* [Romania at the Paris Peace Conference of 1946] (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1978). It is a summary reflecting the spirit of the time and place but its facts are useful. The Finnish peace negotiations are well rendered in Tuomo Polvinen's *Between East and West: Finland in International Politics, 1944–1947* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). The history of the Italian peace treaty can be found in the work of Ilaria Poggolini: *Diplomazia della transizione: Gli alleati e il problema del trattato di pace italiano, 1945–1947* (Florence: Ponte alle Grazie, 1990).

OFFICIAL HISTORIES, MONOGRAPHS AND MEMOIRS

Only the most important works and monographs are mentioned, essentially from the 1970s and 1980s.

The official history of British foreign policy can be found in *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* (London: HM Stationery Office, 1971), vol. 3, edited by Sir Llewellyn Woodward.

An early work showing the peace arrangements from a British perspective is Fritz August Voigt's *Pax Britannica* (London: Constable & Co., 1949). Using this work, combined with *The Political Settlement after the Second World War* (London: Macmillan, 1970) by Sir John Wheeler-Bennett and Anthony Nicholls, will give us a general picture of the British concepts about peace and the formation of the leading principles of the peace treaty plans. The *Central and South East Europe, 1945–1948* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1949), edited by Reginald Robert Betts, is a good summary of the British foreign policy ideas about Central and Southeast Europe.

An excellent analysis of Soviet foreign policy, as it pertains to our subject, can be found in Vojtech Mastny's *Russia's Road to the Cold War. Diplomacy, Warfare and the Politics of Communism, 1941–1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968). A good picture of the Soviet negotiating tactics used at the CFM can be found in *Negotiating with the Russians* (New York: World Peace Foundation, 1950) by Raymond Dennett and Joseph Johnson.

In the flood of publications analyzing American foreign policy, the outstanding one, from our perspective, is Geir Lundestad's *The American Non-Policy towards Eastern Europe, 1943–1947: Universalism in an Area Not of Essential Interest to the United States* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1975). John C. Campbell, who played an important role in the American preparations for peace and who also prepared studies on Hungarian–Romanian territorial issues, summarized the role played by the United States at the sessions of the CFM immediately after the peace treaties. See his *The United States in World Affairs, 1945–1947* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947). Of the many works about the role of American foreign policy in the genesis of the Cold War, I must mention Lloyd C. Gardner's *Architects of*

Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941–1949 (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1970); Daniel Yergin's *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977); John Lewis Gaddis's *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972) and *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Gabriel Kolko's *The Politics of War: Allied Diplomacy and the World Crisis of 1943–1945* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968); Bennett Kovrig's *The Myth of Liberation: East-Central Europe in US Diplomacy and Politics since 1941* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); and Lynn Ethridge Davies's *The Cold War Begins: Soviet–American Conflict over Eastern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974). There are new and stimulating essays about the concepts of American foreign policy accommodating itself to the spheres of interest in the periodical *Diplomatic History* that frequently contains articles essential for the understanding of the period. From our perspective, two articles are particularly significant: “Charles E. Bohlen and the Acceptable Limits of Soviet Hegemony in Eastern Europe: Memorandum of October 18, 1945,” by Edward Mark [*Diplomatic History*, 13(2) (Spring 1979)]; and “Paths not Taken: The United States Department of State and Alternatives to Containment, 1945–1946,” by Robert L. Messer [*Diplomatic History*, 1(4), (Fall 1977)]. There is a sharply critical analysis of the relations between the Allies in Annie Lacroix-Riz's *Le choix de Marianne: Les relations franco-américaines, 1944–1948* (Paris: Messidor/Editions sociales, 1985).

We can find information about the relations between the Great Powers, analyzed on the basis of British diplomatic sources, in Olav Riste's *Western Security: The Formative Years, European and Atlantic Defence, 1947–1953* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1978). For the debates of the Great Powers about the Austrian and German questions critical for the withdrawal of the Allied forces from Europe, the essential works are Walt Whitman Rostow's *The Division of Europe after World War II: 1946* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), and Audrey Kurth Cronin's *Great Power Politics and the Struggle over Austria, 1944–1955* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986). For the Allied policies vis-à-vis Italy, see *Italy and the Allies*, by Norman Kogan (Cambridge, MA:

Harvard University Press, 1956). An entirely new perspective for the Balkan policies and the sphere of interest issue is given by Bruno Arcidiacono, in his article "L'Europe balkanique enter guerre et paix: relations interalliées et partage en sphère," [*Relations internationales*, 47 (Fall 1986)].

The conflict of the Allied Powers over Romania was analyzed on the basis of secret British and American diplomatic documents by Paul D. Quinlan in his *Clash over Romania: British and American Policies toward Romania, 1938–1947* (Oakland, CA: American Romanian Academy, 1977). In the evolution of the Cold War, a major role was played by the Great Power debate over Bulgaria. On the basis of American sources, this is discussed by Michael M. Boll in his *The Cold War in the Balkans* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1984). The first publication about the Romanian peace treaty is Suzanne Bastid's *Le Traité de Paix avec La Roumanie du 10 Février 1947* (Paris: A. Pedone, 1954).

The most important British memoir for our purpose is *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972). This book contains the recollections of the senior Foreign Office official responsible for the peace negotiations. The memoirs of Sir Pierson Dixon, the foreign secretary's secretary, presents a fascinating picture of the atmosphere of the Council of Foreign Ministers meetings and of the preparation of the British decisions: *Double Diploma: The Life of Sir Pierson Dixon Don and Diplomat* (London: Hutchinson, 1968). For the memoirs of James F. Byrnes, one of the founders of the CFM and the principal actor at the negotiations, see *Speaking Frankly* (New York: Harper, 1947); it is replete with self-justification but gives a thorough discussion of the postwar American–Soviet conflict. In his memoirs, Dean Acheson, the deputy secretary of state, provides interesting data about the relationship of Secretary Byrnes with President Truman, and also about the American foreign policy decision-making process: *Present at the Creation* (New York: Signet, 1970).

Immediately after the events, the Hungarian prime minister, Ferenc Nagy, published his memoirs in the United States: *The Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain* (New York: MacMillan, 1948). The leader of the Peace Preparatory Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, István Kertész, published the first of his memoirs in the United States. See *Diplomacy in the Whirlpool*

(Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953) by Stephen D. Kertesz. Géza Teleki's two volumes, *The Hungarian Nation's Proposals and Basic Principles in Regard to the Peace Treaty* (in *Principles and Proposals of Hungary for the 1946 Paris Peace Treaty*, Budapest: Miniszterelnöki Hivatal, 1946), is not a memoir but it is a unique source for the Hungarian peace preparation process.

Mihály Korom's *Magyarország ideiglenes nemzeti kormánya és a fegyverszünet 1944–1945* [Hungary's Provisional National Government and the Armistice] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1981) is a monograph on the armistice. The first Hungarian work on Hungarian–American relations is Péter Várkonyi's *Magyar–amerikai kapcsolatok, 1945–1948* [Hungarian–American Relations, 1945–1948] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1971). The same subject is addressed by Ignác Romsics in his article “A State Department és Magyarország 1942–1947” [The State Department and Hungary 1942–1947] [*Valóság*, 34(11) (1991)]. The primary source material of the essay only goes to the beginning of 1945. The Anglo-American policy vis-à-vis Hungary is outlined in Stanley Martin Max's *The United States, Great Britain and the Sovietization of Hungary 1945–1948* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1985).

For the Hungarian–Romanian border arrangement, see István Kertész’ “From the Second Vienna Award to Paris: Transylvania and Hungarian–Rumanian Relations during World War II,” published in *Transylvania: The Roots of Ethnic Conflict*, edited by John F. Cadzow, Andrew Ludanyi, and Louis J. Elteto (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1983). Important for the study of Hungarian–Romanian relations are Dániel Csatári's *Forgószélben* [In the Whirlwind] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1969) and Béni L. Balogh's *A magyar–román kapcsolatok 1939–1940-ben és a második bécsi döntés* [Hungarian–Romanian Relations in 1939–1940 and the Second Vienna Award] (Csíkszereda: Pro-Print, 2002).

The history of the population exchange and resettlement of Hungarians from Czechoslovakia is handled comprehensively in the publications of Sándor Balogh. The position of American diplomacy on this issue is discussed by István Vida in his “American Diplomacy and the Hungarian Minority in Czechoslovakia, 1945–1947,” published in *Finns and Hungarians*

between East and West, ed. by Tenho Takalo (Helsinki: SHS, 1989). The *Beneš-dekrétumok és a magyar kérdés, 1945–1948* [The Beneš Decrees and the Hungarian Question, 1945–1948] by Árpád Popély, Štefan Šutaj, and László Szarka (Máriabesnyő–Gödöllő: Attraktor, 2007), and István Fehér's *A magyarországi németek kitelepítése, 1945–1950* [The Resettlement of the Ethnic Germans from Hungary 1945–1950] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1980), provide a lot of data about this unhappy episode of Hungarian history. On the basis of British and American documents, Péter Sipos and István Vida discuss the Western reception of the Soviet–Hungarian economic agreement signed on August 27, 1945, in their article published in *Külpolitika*, 12(4) (1985). The authors present the documents pertaining to the resumption of diplomatic relations with Hungary. Hungarian peace preparatory propaganda was treated by Csaba Békés, and the peace preparatory work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was discussed by Imre Okváth in their PhD dissertations.

Of those who shared their recollections orally with me I must mention István Borsody, István Gyöngyössi, Károly Ravasz, Iván Boldizsár, Lajos Jócsik, Kálmán Berecz, Csaba Skultéty, Artúr Kárász, Aladár Szegedy-Maszák, Sándor Vajlok, and Ferenc Wagner. Jean Laloy – who served as interpreter at the negotiations between Charles de Gaulle and Stalin, and who participated in the Central and Southeast Europe peace preparatory activities of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs – provided important data.

In preparing this work, I used a number of my earlier publications: “A Külügyminiszterek Tanácsa és a magyar békeszerződés” [The CFM and the Hungarian Peace Treaty] [*Külpolitika*, 12(4) (1985)]; “A kisebbségi kódex” [The Minority Codex] [*Külpolitika*, 16(2) (1989)]; “The Hungarian Draft Treaty for the Protection of Minorities,” published in *Shaping Postwar Europe: European Unity and Disunity, 1945–1957*, edited by Peter M.R. Stirk and David Willis (London: Pinter, 1992); “The Military Clauses of the Paris Peace Treaties with Roumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary,” in *From Versailles to Baghdad: Post-War Armament Control of Defeated States*, edited by Fred Tanner (New York: United Nations, 1992). On German reparations, see my introductory essay in my edited collection of documents, *A Németországgal szemben fennálló magyar követelések* [The Hungarian Demands vis-à-vis

Germany] (Budapest: Magyar Külügyi Intézet, 1987). I described the Hungarian–Romanian territorial arrangements in a two part essay: “A Sebestény misszió, I–II” [The Sebestény Mission, I–II] [*Világtörténet*, 9(3) (1987) and 10(2) (1988)]. For the English version, see “The Failure of the Hungarian–Romanian Negotiations on Transylvania in the Spring of 1946” [*New Hungarian Quarterly*, 34(118) (Summer 1990)]. For my reexamination of French foreign policy and the Versailles system, see “La diplomatie française contre le traité de Trianon” [*Revue Nouvelle Europe*, (2) (1991)]. On the Allied peace preparation policy, see “‘Késői bűnbánat’ Trianonért: Nagy-Britannia és Franciaország szerepe a magyar békeszerződés kidolgozásában” [“Belated Repentance” for the Trianon Peace Treaty: Great Britain’s and France’s Role in the Shaping of the Hungarian Peace Treaty Negotiations] [*Külpolitika*, 3(3) (1997)]; “A Quai d’Orsay 1945. szeptember 6-i Erdély-terve” [The September 6, 1945, French Plan for Transylvania] [*Századok*, 141(1) (2007)]; “Az Európai Tanácskozó Bizottság (1943–1945). A genesis és az olaszországi precedens” [The European Advisory Commission (1943–1945). Genesis and the Italian Precedent] [*Múltunk*, 50(2) (2005)]; and “Az Európai Tanácskozó Bizottság (1943–1945). A németországi megszállási övezetek” [The European Advisory Commission (1943–1945). The Occupation Zones in Germany] [*Múltunk*, 51(2) (2006)].

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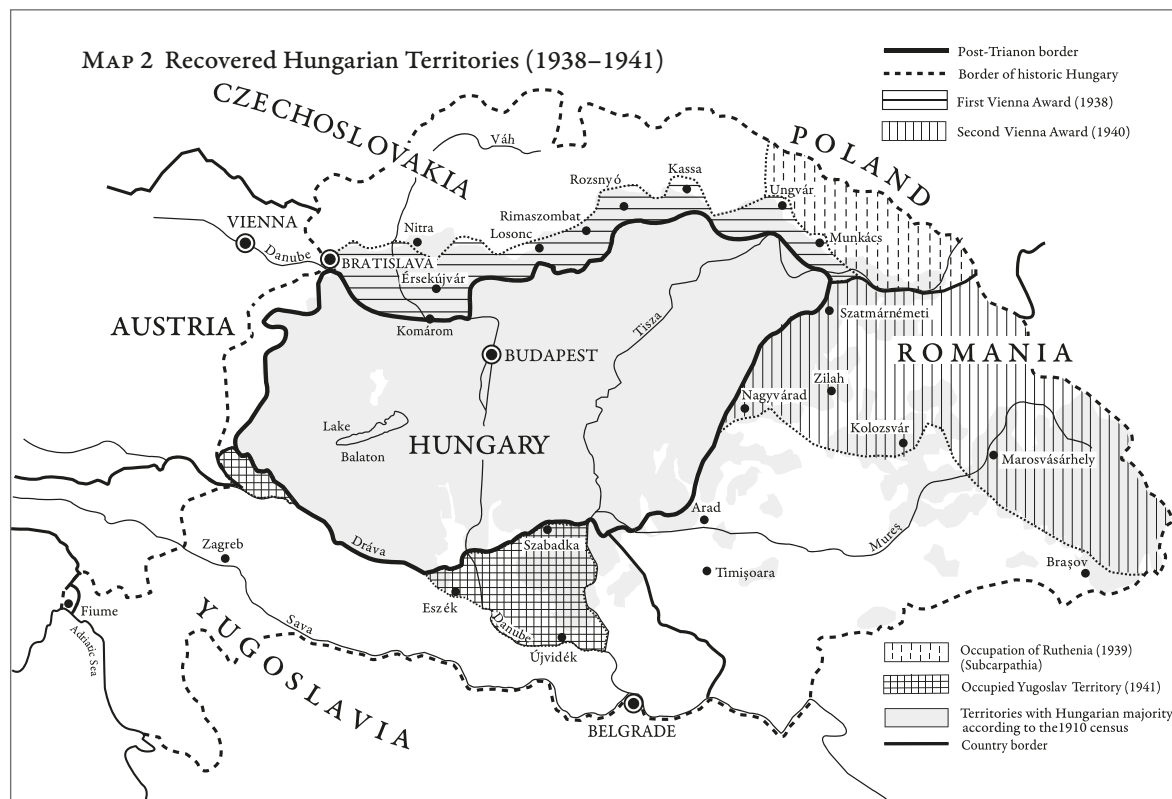
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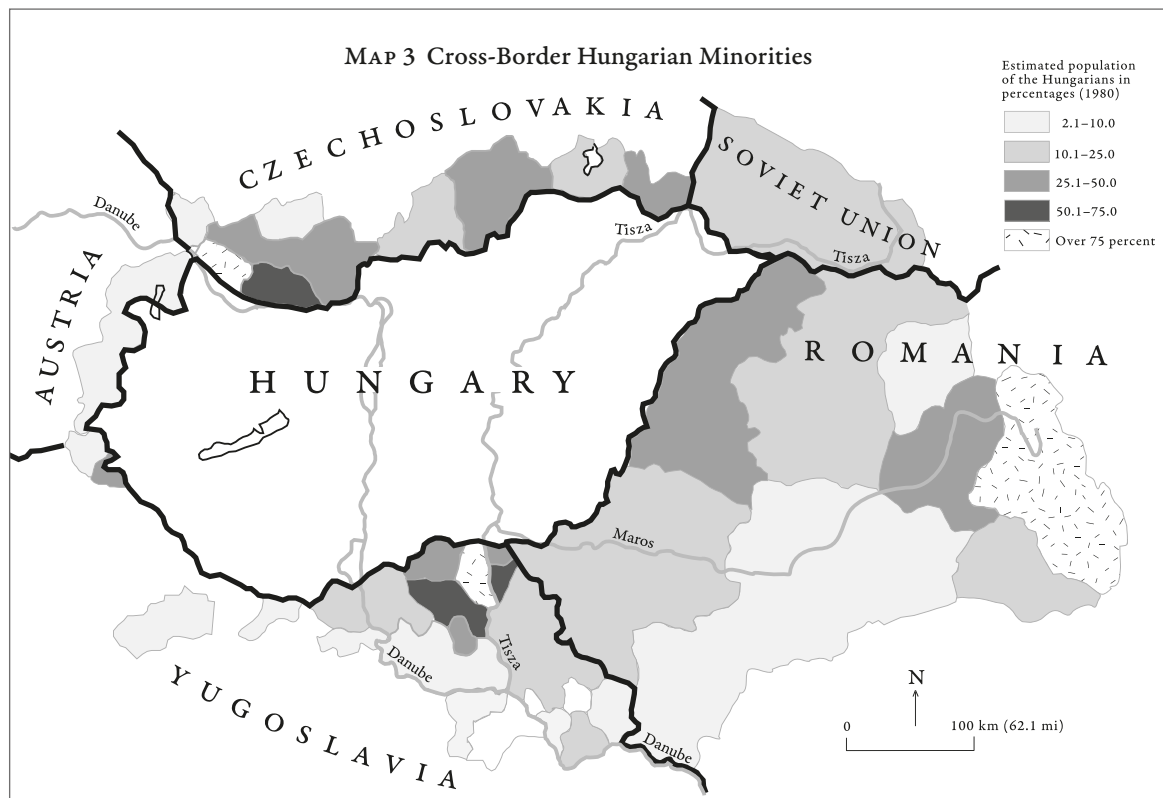
MAPS

- 1 The Regions of Historic Hungary
- 2 Recovered Hungarian Territories (1938–1941)
- 3 Cross-Border Hungarian Minorities
- 4 The Bratislava Bridgehead (*source*: ROMSICS 2006: 213)
- 5 American and French Proposals for the Romanian–Hungarian Border (1945)

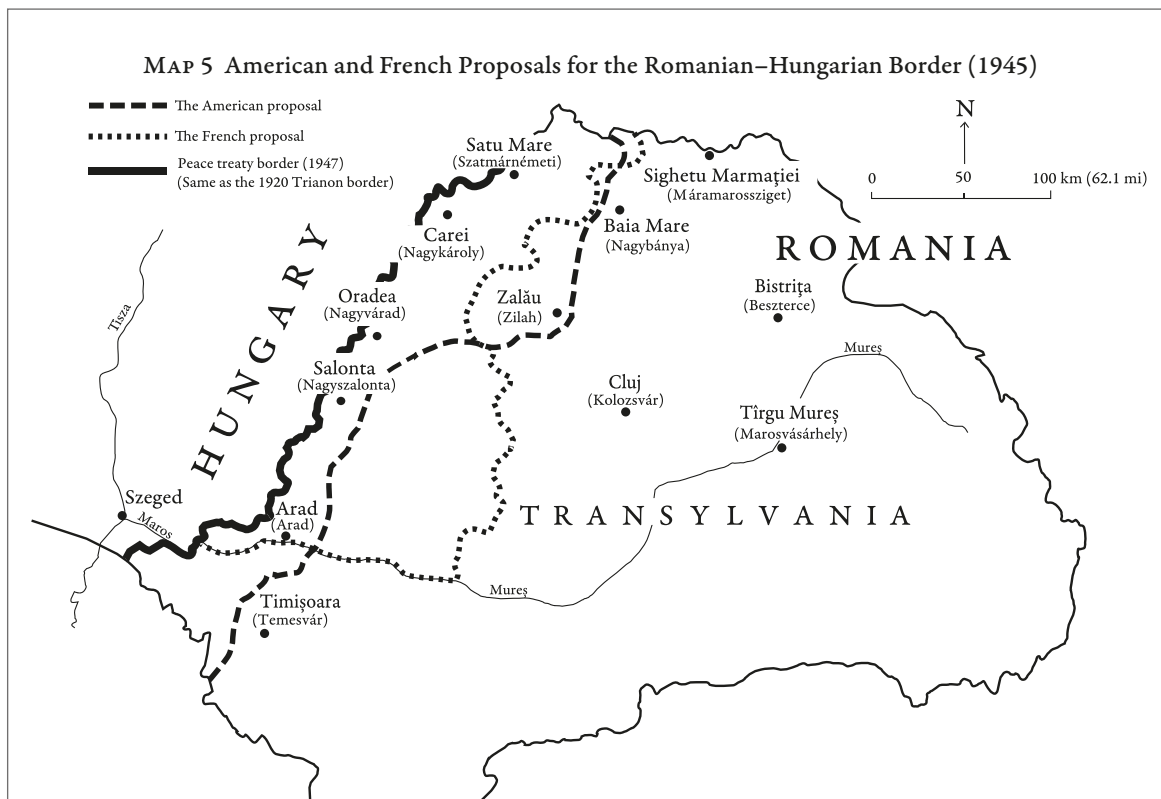
MAP 1 The Regions of Historic Hungary











POSTFACE: FROM THE TRIANON PEACE TO THE PARIS PEACE AND BEYOND

*Géza Jeszenszky*¹

Mihály Fülöp, a diplomatic historian with a distinguished record in both teaching and research, wrote a detailed (and exemplarily objective) history of the controversial Hungarian peace treaty signed on February 10, 1947, in Paris. His work is based on Soviet, American, British, French, and Hungarian diplomatic documents. While the focus is on Hungary, the book also touches upon the treaties with the other allies of Nazi Germany (Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Bulgaria, and Finland), pointing out the many similarities in the process, and the few differences. That makes it a comparative study.² He gave the title to this sobering book *The Unfinished Peace*. How justified is this title, we may ask?

The story begins not in 1945–1946, but in 1919–1920, with the peace treaties that ended World War I. Those agreements not only failed to bring real peace; they also led to lasting tensions among the countries of Europe and ultimately seeded another world war in 1939. The treaty signed with Hungary in the Trianon Pavilion in the gardens of the Palace of Versailles proved to be an “apple of Eris.” To explain: in Greek mythology, the goddess Eris (whose name means “strife”) tossed a golden apple as a prize for the most beautiful woman into the midst of a banquet of the gods. Three

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² JANOS 2016.

goddesses – Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite – competed for it, sparking a vanity-fueled dispute that eventually led to the Trojan War. In a figurative sense, Eris' apple (the "apple of discord") thus represents an object or topic that provokes conflicts or arguments among several parties.

At the end of World War I, the central area of Europe in the form of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy – and particularly the territory of the historic Kingdom of Hungary – was the "golden apple" tossed among the states emerging from the ruins of the defeated Central Powers. The Monarchy's breakup led to the creation of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia (initially called the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, but effectively a Greater Serbia); the enlargement of Romania (with Transylvania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia/Moldova); and the independence of the Republic of Austria and the Kingdom of Hungary. The problem which stimulated so many quarrels among the nations of Central Europe was not so much the appearance of a "New Europe" of smaller states but, rather, the unfair drawing of the borders between them.

American President Woodrow Wilson came up with what seemed like a simple and natural principle: the self-determination of peoples. This idea was first introduced, in somewhat ambiguous terms, as Point Ten of his famous Fourteen Points, articulated in an address to a joint session of both houses of the US Congress on January 8, 1918: "The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development."³ A month later, he clarified the principles he envisaged for guiding a new world order. On February 11, 1918, he made another declaration before the same body.

Peoples are not to be handed about from one sovereignty to another by an international conference or an understanding between rivals and antagonists. National aspirations must be respected; peoples may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. "Self-determination" is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril. ... The principles to be applied are these:

³ WILSON 1918a.

First – That each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential, justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent.

Second – That peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game, now forever discredited, of the balance of power; but that,

Third – Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims among rival States; and,

Fourth – That all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe, and consequently of the world.⁴

These were worthy intentions, but they proved most difficult to realize. Most territories in Central Europe were not homogeneous, inhabited by one ethnic group. Instead, they were ethnically mixed, with territories where several languages and religious denominations lived side-by-side, overlapping. Practically speaking, it was impossible to apply the principle of self-determination (with borders based on nationality) in a way that would be acceptable to all the affected countries.

In the treaties imposed, rather than negotiated, Germany (at Versailles, on June 28, 1919) and Bulgaria (at Neuilly, on November 27, 1919) suffered minor territorial losses, while Austria (at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, on September 10, 1919) became a small ethnic-German state and was denied the right to unite with Germany.

Based on questionable ethnic, historical, economic, and strategic arguments, on June 4, 1920, when the Treaty of Trianon was signed, Hungary was reduced to a quarter of its former territory and a third of its population. Moreover, the Trianon provisions transferred 6.5 million non-Hungarians

⁴ WILSON 1918b.

(together with 3.5 million protesting Hungarians) to the neighboring states. The reduction in population was accompanied by tremendous losses in natural resources: 88% of Hungary's forests, 83% of its iron, and all of its salt mines were ceded to its neighbors. In addition, former state infrastructure was expropriated: 74% of roads and 62% of the railway network. The new state was often referred to as "Rump Hungary." Stephen Borsody, an exiled former Hungarian diplomat and scholar, gave a succinct summary of the consequences of the Treaty of Trianon:

Legitimate rights to national independence in the Danube region could have been safely satisfied without placing near a third of the Hungarians under the foreign domination of triumphant neighbors. Justice as well as common sense dictated reconciliation. The peace dictated by the victors to the vanquished Hungarians perpetuated national conflicts. Trianon did the opposite of true peacemaking. Instead of encouraging regional union and cooperation, peacemaking in the Danube region after the First World War placed the issue of nation-state boundaries at the top of Danubian politics, thus fanning the flames of rivalry and territorial imperialism.⁵

The "principle of nationality" turned out to be simply a slogan. Its practical implementation favored only those states intended to counterbalance Germany or whose strengthening could reduce Hungary to a weak, powerless country, cementing the new *status quo*.

Recognizing that, in a number of places (Dobruja, Macedonia, Southern Slovakia, Vojvodina, Transylvania, Silesia, Western Czechoslovakia, and Eastern Poland), the national/ethnic principle was not followed even where it might have been possible, the Allies prescribed special treaties for the protection of the civil, educational, and linguistic rights of about 30 million people who, as a result of the new borders, became national minorities. These treaties were duly signed by the new – or newly enlarged – states, and the freshly established League of Nations was tasked with guaranteeing all provisions of the new European order.

⁵ BORSODY 1982.

In sum, the peace settlement combined what was probably necessary and inevitable with decisions contrary to Wilson's principles – decisions that were unnecessarily humiliating for the defeated countries. Beyond territorial losses, there was the moral and financial burden of “war guilt.” The peace treaties stated that sole responsibility for the world war rested with the defeated nations, who were therefore required to pay large war reparations. The losers were convinced that they were victims of grave injustice, and became determined to change or even overthrow the new territorial and political setup. The result was the perpetuation of Europe's division into hostile blocs. The birth defect of the new states was their national composition; they were not truly “national” states but, rather, multinational ones. According to their first census, their composition was as follows:

- *Czechoslovakia*: 14.7 million; 50.5% Czech, 15.7% Slovak, 22.5% German, 5.5% Hungarian (excluding Hungarian-speaking Jews), 3.5% Rusyn.
- *Romania* (which increased threefold): 16 million; 72% Romanian, 9.1% Hungarian, 4.5% German, 4.2% Ukrainian and Rusyn.
- *Yugoslavia*: 12 million; 47.7% Serb, 23.3% Croat, 8.5% Slovene, 5.5% Albanian, 3.9% Hungarian, 3.4% Macedonian.
- *Poland*: 27 million; 64% Polish, 16% Ukrainian, 11% Jews, 5% Belorussian and Russian, 4% German.
- *Hungary*: 8 million; 89.5% Hungarian, 6.9% German.
- *Austria*: 6 million; all German.
- *Bulgaria*: 4.5 million; 81% Bulgarian, 10% Turk.

It took time for the new borders to consolidate, and tensions and clashes arose between the new states over territory. These included disputes over Vilnius/Vilna (between Poland and Lithuania); the Banat (between Romania and Serbia); Macedonia (between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria); and Dobruja (between Romania and Bulgaria). Instead of attempting to win over or placate their minorities, practically all of these states mistreated them to differing extents.

The promises of minority rights were not kept. Land reforms were carried out to the detriment of the minorities, and efforts were made to assimilate

them through the school system and by implementing repressive measures (expulsions, denial of citizenship, refusing permission for the operation of minority institutions and press, etc.). Hungary's neighbors formed a "Little Entente" to ensure Hungary could not deal with them separately.

The new states were built on the centralist model, as opposed to the federalist one. Within them, autonomy was denied even to "brother nations." Thus, the Czechs denied self-government to the Slovaks and the Rusyns, and the Serbs to the Croats and Slovenes. Even the century-old Croatian Parliament, the *Sabor*, was abolished. Nationalism became a kind of religion, a mass phenomenon. "In each of the new states there prevailed a narrow official nationalism," and the repressive policies used against national, religious, and political minorities led to perpetual internal and external divisions and conflicts. "This state of generalized and mutual hostility provided opportunities for any great power intent on disturbing the peace."⁶ Rather than finding common interests, these "small, unstable caricatures of modern states"⁷ sought great-power patrons to either maintain or overthrow this new order.

In principle, the League of Nations could mediate in international conflicts and facilitate the peaceful adjustment of the new borders – provided there was either bilateral agreement for such change, or strong support from the Great Powers. However, only Nazi Germany had both the will and the strength to enable such changes.

Between 1938 and 1941, the political map of Central Europe changed substantially, largely due to the intervention of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. At the Munich Conference on September 29, 1938, Great Britain and France agreed that Czechoslovakia should cede its German-inhabited regions (usually referred to as the Sudetenland) to Germany. Pressed by the Appendix to the Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakia also gave up Těšín (Cieszyn) to Poland in October 1938. Meanwhile, Hungary acquired the predominantly Hungarian-inhabited southern rim of Slovakia in the Vienna Award/Diktat on November 2, 1938. On March 15, 1939, Germany marched into Prague, and in the wake of this event, Hungary also (re)occupied

⁶ SETON-WATSON 1981: 435.

⁷ HINSLEY 1963: 282.

Podkarpatská Rus (Subcarpathia). Slovakia, meanwhile, was left a nominally independent puppet state of Germany.

In 1939–1940, the Soviet Union and Germany divided Northeastern Central Europe between them in accordance with a secret deal. Following the fourth partition of Poland in September 1939,⁸ the USSR annexed the Baltic States and then took Bessarabia (Moldova) from Romania in June 1940. In order to secure both Romania's and Hungary's loyalty to Germany, Hitler (together with Mussolini) divided Transylvania into two parts on August 30, 1940. The North (having a slight Hungarian majority) went to Hungary, while the larger (southern) part remained with Romania.

In April 1941, Nazi Germany attacked Yugoslavia and carved it up, making Croatia nominally independent and giving some territories to Hungary (today's Vojvodina) and Italy. Most of these territorial changes had some justification from a historical or ethnic standpoint, but were carried out in an arbitrary, aggressive manner, without even nominally ascertaining the feelings of the populations affected. The disputes over territory and the treatment of national minorities (that "apple of Eris") seduced and corrupted the leaders and peoples of Central Europe, preventing them from presenting a united front to their aggressors.

All the countries involved paid a very heavy price for their selfish and short-sighted policies during World War II. An American historian coined an apt term for Central Europe, engulfed in conflict and war: "the bloodlands."⁹ In 15 horrible years starting in the late 1930s, tens of millions died on the territory of Poland, the Soviet Union, the Carpathian Basin, and the Balkans. They perished on the battlefield or were murdered in concentration camps, gas chambers, the Gulag Archipelago, artificially induced famine, and POW camps. The Holocaust was an attempt to exterminate an entire people – a true genocide. As Winston Churchill noted, "There is not one of the peoples or provinces that constituted the Empire of the Habsburgs

⁸ The Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth was partitioned toward the end of the 18th century in three installments (1772, 1793, and 1795) between the Habsburg Monarchy, the Kingdom of Prussia, and the Russian Empire. This ended the existence of the state and resulted in the elimination of sovereign Poland and Lithuania for 123 years.

⁹ SNYDER 2010.

to whom gaining their independence has not brought the tortures which ancient poets and theologians had reserved for the damned.”¹⁰ Churchill’s judgment initially appeared to apply only to the vanquished nations of World War I. By the end of World War II, however, it had sadly become true for all the “successor states.”

It would be most unfair to say that all the horror stemmed solely from the mismanaged peace at the end of World War I. Yet by sowing discord between nations – often ones related in language or history – it became easier for two larger and several smaller dictators to climb to power, precipitating the death of so many of their countrymen as well as their alleged enemies.

The lesson to be learned from all this is that at the end of World War II, what the world needed was a just and fair, and therefore lasting, peace. Throughout the war, in the countries occupied by Nazi Germany, there was strong hope that victory by Germany’s opponents would bring such a peace – along with reconciliation between the peoples of Europe. The Atlantic Charter, announced by the United States and the British Empire on August 14, 1941, promised that,

First, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;
Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;
Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them; ...

On September 24, 1941, these noble principles were endorsed by the émigré governments of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, as well as by the Soviet Union – countries either occupied by or engaged in a deadly fight with Germany.¹¹ With Germany’s defeat approaching, the three anti-Nazi allies (Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union) issued a declaration in early February 1945 at a conference held at Yalta in the liberated Crimea. It appeared to be based on the very principles of the Atlantic Charter.

¹⁰ CHURCHILL 1964: 14.

¹¹ The Atlantic Charter 1941.

The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of nazism and fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice. This is a principle of the Atlantic Charter – the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live – the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government to those peoples who have been forcibly deprived of them by the aggressor nations.

To foster the conditions in which the liberated people may exercise these rights, the three governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis state in Europe where, in their judgment conditions require,

- a) to establish conditions of internal peace;
- b) to carry out emergency relief measures for the relief of distressed peoples;
- c) to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of Governments responsive to the will of the people; and
- d) to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.¹²

Both in the United States and in Britain, there were serious attempts to turn those lofty words into practical arrangements for a new postwar settlement. Both countries planned not for a peace that punishes entire nations, but for bringing to justice only those personally responsible for the unprecedented crimes and misery. The two Western Great Powers sought long-term reconciliation and prepared for fair borders. Their wartime plans are now available for study.¹³

The results of the peace conference at Paris in 1946, however, had little to do with those plans. The peace treaties signed with Nazi Germany's allies 79 years ago (and above all the one with Hungary) completely disregarded the principles proclaimed by the victors. Why was there such a gap between

¹² Yalta Conference 1945.

¹³ KOVRIG 1988; ROMSICS 1992; BÁN 1996; 2004; BERETZKY 2024: 200–227. On the reactions of the British government to Hungary's attempts to leave the war: JUHÁSZ 1980.

the lofty aims proclaimed by the Allies during the war and the outcomes of the Paris Peace Treaties? At first glance, the explanation seems obvious: the West ceded Central Europe to the Soviet Union, first at the 1943 Tehran Tripartite Conference, and then at Yalta and Potsdam in 1945. However, this is a commonly held misunderstanding. The discrepancy between ideals and outcomes stemmed entirely from the aims, determination, and uncompromising stance of the Soviet leader, Stalin.

It should, however, be pointed out that the Western Great Powers did not give up Central Europe either voluntarily or easily. Rather, they did so only due to the military situation. By the autumn of 1944, the Soviet Red Army had already occupied Romania, Bulgaria, and large parts of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Milovan Đilas, a Yugoslav communist partisan, famously recorded Stalin's assertion during their wartime conversation in 1943: "This war is not as in the past: whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army can reach. It cannot be otherwise."¹⁴

At the end of the Tehran Conference (November 1943), President Roosevelt's decision, based purely on military calculations, meant that the plan for an Anglo-American invasion of the Balkans was finally taken off the agenda. With that decision, Hungary's fate was sealed. In October 1944, in the hope of limiting Soviet influence, Churchill made a controversial "percentage agreement" with Stalin. During the informal discussions preceding the official negotiations, the British prime minister proposed an understanding on the delimitation of British and Soviet interests in the countries allied to Germany. In Hungary, Churchill initially proposed a 50% division of influence, but the following day, during formal negotiations between Molotov and Eden, this was changed to 80% Soviet influence. Decades later, Frank Roberts, wartime head of the British Foreign Office's Central European Department, rightly told a Hungarian weekly that,

It is generally accepted ... the simplistic view that in Moscow Churchill "sold," or in other words "betrayed" Eastern Europe to the Russians. ... In reality,

¹⁴ ĐILAS 1962.

however, this was not the case. ... Churchill's aim was not to hand over peoples to Stalin, but to save what could still be saved! It was not our country, Stalin had everything in his hands, his troops had already occupied or were about to occupy these countries.¹⁵

It is even more widely believed that Roosevelt and Churchill agreed at Yalta to the permanent absorption of the Eastern Europe by the Soviet Union. In Stalin's view, the sphere of influence meant total domination. He declared that he would not care what was going to happen in Western Europe – but that the US and Britain should not interfere with what went on in Eastern Europe. Stalin's policy violated the Yalta Declaration, which he never intended to honor. The Western democracies rejected Stalin's interpretation, but they could have prevented the actual division of Europe only by force, and practically speaking, that meant resorting to nuclear weapons. After Hiroshima, they were unwilling to do so. Thus, instead of a lasting peace, a cold war began between the democratic world and the Soviet bloc.

Undoubtedly, Britain and the United States had little economic interest in Central Europe, which made it easier for them to resign themselves to unrestrained Soviet influence. There was even an ideological, historical, and political argument for this, expressed by Sir Orme Sargent, the Foreign Office's wartime undersecretary of state.

We had also to take into account the fundamental disagreement between ourselves and the Russians on the meaning of democracy and to remember that our form of parliamentary democracy with free elections, a free press, and freedom of discussion, had never established itself in Central and South-Eastern Europe, except in Czechoslovakia. The population of these areas was now so much exhausted and impoverished – one might say “proletarianized” – by the war that their one wish must be for secure and stable government even at the cost of political and private liberty. They were unlikely to fight for parliamentary institutions which in any case they had never learned to rely on or respect. ... If we insisted on trying to

¹⁵ ROBERTS 1995.

enforce our own principles, we should endanger our fundamental policy of post-war cooperation with the Soviet Union for an issue which was not vital to our interests in Europe.¹⁶

The refutation of Sargent's view was the heroic fight for democracy and independence waged in Hungary between 1945 and 1948 by the Small-holders' Party, the Peasants' Party, and part of the Social Democratic Party. In hindsight, this struggle was hopeless because, in the countries occupied by the Soviet Union (including Hungary), all power was in the hands of the occupiers and their Communist henchmen. In November 1945, the Communist Party leader Rákosi grossly overestimated his party's strength and agreed to hold (still free) elections: despite Soviet support, the Communist Party received barely 17% of the vote. This attracted a lot of attention and sympathy from the Western democracies, but it was not enough to cause them to break with their Soviet ally at the Peace Conference over Hungary.¹⁷ They, especially the Americans, were under the illusion that "at the end of hostilities an era of peace would be so deeply desired by those nations that had fought the war in unity that the inevitable difference of opinion could be resolved without serious difficulty."

István Kertész, one of the best-prepared Hungarian diplomats of the middle of the last century (b. 1904, d. 1986), was secretary-general of the Hungarian delegation to the Paris peace talks in 1946. In his book *Between Russia and the West: Hungary and the Illusions of Peacemaking, 1945–1947*, he rightly called it an illusion to believe that the treaties concluded in Paris with Nazi Germany's allies at the end of World War II would bring about real peace in Europe, particularly in Central Europe. What were these illusions?

- The first, and most important, was that after the signing of the peace treaties, the Soviet Red Army would withdraw from the territories it had liberated and occupied. Stalin, however, frustrated this by blocking the peace treaty with Austria: by doing so, he could invoke

¹⁶ Memorandum by Sir Orme Sargent, March 6, 1945, Public Record Office, London. FO 371/48217 [R3459/3168/67] and March 13, 1945. FO 371/48219 [R5063/5063/67]. Quoted by WOODWARD 1962: III. 564–565.

¹⁷ James F. Byrnes' naive assumption is quoted in KERTESZ 1984: xv.

the need to maintain a communication and supply corridor with the Soviet troops remaining there as an excuse to continue a military presence in intervening countries.

- The second Hungarian illusion was that the borders to be drawn would be based on national-ethnic lines, at least with Romania, which was also on the wrong side in the war. Slovakia, set up as a puppet state by Germany in 1939, remained loyal to Hitler to the very end. Given this circumstance, a case could be made for keeping the border established by the First Vienna Award, as it reflected the ethnic dividing line. Edvard Beneš, leader of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, however, successfully argued for the restoration of his country's pre-Munich (1938) borders. In the case of Yugoslavia, too, it would have been fair to leave the Hungarian-inhabited northeastern part to Hungary, yet Tito rejected this on the grounds of war merits.
- The third illusion was that since the number of national minorities in the eastern half of Europe would inevitably remain significant, the pre-war system of protection for national minorities would be renewed. Hungary put forward a well-thought-out international "Minority Code." This was rejected by the Soviet Union, while the United States considered that the inclusion of universal human rights in the treaties would provide sufficient protection for "persons belonging to minorities."¹⁸

Anyone who thinks that Hungarian plans for peace focused solely on demanding better borders and reducing reparations is mistaken. Hungarian society and the coalition government hoped to replace the old Central Europe of conflicts with a peaceful, cooperative Danube Basin, with its constituent countries linked in a customs union. During the later phases of the war, the Hungarians "proceed[ed] to plan for democratic reform, for Danubian co-operation or even federation, and for safeguarding the integrity of frontiers that bore a closer relation to the distribution of Magyar population than did the Trianon line."¹⁹ If the victorious great powers had embraced that

¹⁸ KERTESZ 1984: xi–xix.

¹⁹ KOVRIG 1988: 70.

(as Churchill and the wartime confederation plans had envisaged), the small Central European states might have been inclined to accept it.

The Soviet Union, however, in the spirit of the old policy of *divide et impera*, forbade the formation of federations or confederations (like what had been planned between Poland and Czechoslovakia) in the territories under its control. There was also an American illusion that postwar cooperation with the Soviet Union could be maintained. To this end, the Americans gave in to Stalin on issues they considered less important. The Hungarian peace treaty was one such issue.

No peace was formally concluded with Germany, because the Soviet Union did not agree to the eastern half of the country under its occupation becoming part of a new, democratic Germany. Thus, it was easier to make peace with Germany's allies than with Germany itself.

In the following pages of Fülöp's book, the story of these developments is recounted in detail with exemplary clarity. His work is not just about peace between Hungary and its neighbors. Rather, it is also a study on Soviet policy towards Central Europe. Therein, essentially, lies the origin of the Cold War.

Hungary's four-party coalition government – led by Ferenc Nagy, a farmer (Smallholders' Party) – was forced to sign the peace treaty on terms even more onerous than those of Trianon. Three additional Hungarian villages across the Danube from Bratislava came under the rule of the Beneš regime. The latter proclaimed and carried out the disenfranchisement of the Hungarian minority, along with the expulsion of more than 200,000 of them. Ignoring the right to self-determination, and unlike in 1920, this treaty did not even guarantee, on paper, the rights of the Hungarian population in the countries neighboring Hungary. The country's reparation burden of \$300 million (along with the 66.5% indemnity for property damage suffered by foreign citizens during the war) placed an extremely heavy economic strain on a country already ruined by the ravages of war and successive German and Soviet pillaging.

The signing of the peace treaty, however, was not merely an unavoidable obligation or a prerequisite for integration into postwar Europe; it also held an important promise. With the free elections of 1945, Hungary proved its

desire to live in a democracy based on civil liberties, a market economy, and peace and friendship with its neighbors and the victorious Great Powers. The peace treaty offered a chance to achieve this, as it stipulated that Soviet troops would have to leave the country within three months of the treaty's entry into force, namely, after the instruments of ratification were deposited in the Soviet Union. This is what the people of the country and the overwhelming majority of political leaders both wanted and hoped for.

Moreover, economic reconstruction was already showing promising signs: peace, even on harsh terms, offered the hope that the nation could recover from the terrible tragedies and hardships it had endured. Hungarians could look forward to finding their place in a Europe that had learned the lessons of war and was striving to adopt more just social conditions than ever before.

During the peace negotiations, the Hungarian delegation experienced both goodwill and ill will. The United States, Great Britain, and even France (the *spiritus rector* of the Trianon Treaty) proposed favorable modifications to the Hungarian–Romanian border drawn in 1920. The US and Britain opposed Czechoslovakia's plan to expel over 500,000 Hungarians from its territory, aiming to create an “ethnically pure” state. They also tried to moderate reparations claims. Through their representatives on the Allied Control Committee in Budapest, they protested against the actions of the Soviet Union and a handful of its Hungarian agents, who were undermining Hungarian democracy.

Yet, it cannot be said that the British were ready to revise their harsh judgment of Hungary's conduct during the war. They were, therefore, not too eager to stand up to Stalin's decision regarding the Hungarian–Romanian border. The Soviet Union stubbornly rejected even the most modest modification of that frontier.

What were the reasons for this? Was it perhaps a sense of insult and anger because Hungary had joined the German aggression on June 26, 1941 – even though, in 1940, the Soviet Union had consistently supported Hungarian territorial claims against Romania? People's Commissar (i.e., foreign minister) Molotov assured József Kristóffy, the envoy of Hungary, that Hungary's territorial claims against Romania were well-founded and that the Soviet

Union would support them at a future peace conference.²⁰ The Soviets clearly resented being left out of the August 30, 1940, decision (the Second Vienna Award), which transferred the northern half of Transylvania to Hungary.

On June 23, 1941, after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Molotov tried to keep Hungary out of the war by reiterating his support for Hungary's claims against Romania (which had joined Germany in its attack on the Soviet Union). His statement, "The Soviet Union is not opposed to the enlargement of Hungary's territory at the expense of Romania," was the bait.²¹

Nevertheless, fearing that in the event of a German victory, it would lose the territories gained in 1938–1941, Hungary entered the war against the Soviet Union on June 26, 1941. That turned the Soviet position on the future of Transylvania. During the visit by the British foreign secretary, Anthony Eden, in December 1941, Stalin insisted on the restoration of the 1941 Soviet borders: "The territory of Romania in the west must be extended somewhat at the expense of Hungary, where one and a half million Romanians now live. This would be a further punishment for Hungary's part in the war."²²

On June 8, 1943, Molotov communicated that position to Washington and London. He wanted to put a check on any inclination towards sympathy the Western Allies might show towards Hungary's peace feelers. He stated, "the Soviet government does not consider fully justified the verdict of the August 30, 1940, so-called arbitration in Vienna, the *diktat* of Germany, which gave Northern Transylvania to Hungary."²³ However, this still left open the possibility for the Soviets to modify the Hungarian–Romanian border, drawn in Trianon, in Hungary's favor. The phrase "does not consider fully justified" the cession of Northern Transylvania to Hungary may allow Hungary to retain part of it. Even in the Armistice Agreement with Romania (September 12, 1944), Article 19 stipulated the following:

The Allied Governments regard the decision of the Vienna award regarding Transylvania as null and void and are agreed that Transylvania (or the greater

²⁰ KERTESZ 1984: 113–114, 116; also, in details in Chapter 6 in the present volume.

²¹ FÜLÖP–VINCZE 1998: 8–9. Cf. FÜLÖP 2020.

²² FÜLÖP 2018: 24–25.

²³ JUHÁSZ 1978: 159.

part thereof) should be returned to Romania, subject to confirmation at the peace settlement...²⁴

In the armistice with Hungary (signed on January 20, 1945), Hungary was ordered to give up all the territories gained in 1938–1941.

Hopes rose in Hungary when Prime Minister Nagy visited the three victorious Great Powers. The vile Stalin misled the Hungarian party with his remark that the armistice concluded with Hungary left the question of the border with Romania unresolved. His sole aim in articulating this stance was to strengthen the position of the unpopular Hungarian communists. At the negotiations in Paris, however, the Soviet delegation was unequivocal in insisting on the border as it stood before 1940. By the time of the peace conference, Romania was already firmly in the hands of the communists (and thus anchored in the emerging Soviet bloc), while in Hungary the struggle was still ongoing. By the end of 1946, the decision of the peace conference on Hungary's borders was clear: Hungary had to acquiesce in accepting that nearly 3 million Hungarians, a very substantial part of the nation, would remain citizens of the neighboring states.

On learning the terms of the peace treaty Hungary was expected to sign, István Bibó, a highly respected political scientist (and later a member of Imre Nagy's revolutionary government in 1956), wrote in the widely read periodical *Válasz* [Response]:

Hungary will faithfully respect and carry out the peace treaty, once it is signed. It would be insincere to pretend that she has become an enthusiastic adherent of the grave dispositions of the treaty. But Hungary will not create an ideology or organize political campaigns for changing the borders, and will not pursue a policy which speculates in international crises or catastrophes, so that her territorial grievances could be remedied. Hungary will comply with the conditions created by the peace treaty without any reservations, except one: she cannot give up her political interest in the fate of the Hungarian minorities living in the states surrounding Hungary.²⁵

²⁴ The Armistice Agreement with Rumania; September 12, 1944.

²⁵ BIBÓ 1986.

By the time the peace treaty was concluded and the border issue settled to Hungary's detriment, the country's democratic forces were on the verge of defeat. The communists, with steady intervention from the Soviet occupation authorities, were arresting and even torturing the Hungarian politicians who spoke up resolutely against their efforts to Sovietize the country. The parliamentary debate on Hungary's foreign policy was a clear indication of what was in store for the orientation, and thus the future, of the country.

On March 20, 1947, the majority of the National Assembly expressed its support for Hungary's rejection of unilateral foreign-policy orientations. On the same day, the Political Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party took the position that the country should join the bloc formed by the Soviet Union. "Failure to do so will isolate us from the truly democratic countries. That would make it more difficult to further democratize the country and it would make it easier for Hungary to become a stronghold for the Anglo-American imperialist circles."²⁶

We know where the domestic establishment of the Soviet system led in all the would-be Soviet satellites, but the regime changes of 1990 opened the door to realize the lasting peace and prosperity, which the Western democracies sought (alas not resolutely enough) at the Paris Conference in 1946. The reconciliation of nations and countries in Western Europe after World War II offered a model to be followed in the eastern half of the continent as well. Economic integration would lead to political integration and to the "four freedoms" of the European Union. The "Schengen" system of free movement of peoples is the solution to the border and minority problems, which could not be resolved earlier – mainly due to Soviet opposition. If continued in earnest, the project of the European Union will eliminate "the apple of Eris" that the World War I (and the peace treaties which followed it) tossed into the midst of Europe more than a century ago.

Mihály Fülöp's monograph illustrates how, after World War II, even the best intentions reaped a bitter harvest in the conflict between the democracies and the Soviet dictatorship. For those studying such conflicts, reading this book is a must.

²⁶ BALOGH 1982: 268.

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This book offers a well-crafted exploration of a relatively neglected subject in English-language histories of the immediate post-World War II period. It tells the story of concluding peace treaties with the European allies of Hitler's Germany, originally designed to be a preliminary step toward a larger continental settlement. While the primary focus is on Hungary, the narrative embraces the experiences of five countries – Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Italy and Romania – which effectively makes it into a comparative study.

The book's conclusions are drawn from a detailed narrative supported by a huge footnoting apparatus, utilizing archival and printed materials from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Soviet Union/Russia, Hungary and Romania. A particular strength is the author's skill in balancing this rich documentation, so it does not overwhelm the narrative itself, making it accessible to any reader interested in the immediate post-war history of Europe. Academics engaged in researching the origins of the Cold War, or revisiting another chapter in the long sad saga of ethno-politics on the Continent's Eastern periphery will find it especially valuable.

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