DOCUMENTING LIFE AND DESTRUCTION

HOLOCAUST SOURCES IN CONTEXT

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2. *Children during the Holocaust*, Patricia Heberer (2011)
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Holocaust Sources in Context

THE HOLOCAUST IN HUNGARY
Evolution of a Genocide

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too much for Horthy: he dismissed Jaross and appointed State Secretary Miklós Bonczos of the Ministry of Justice as his replacement. On August 8, Baky resigned, and two weeks later Endre was relieved of his post as well.

The personnel change did not make a substantive difference to the situation. Sztójay informed Veessenmayer that within a week or two the deportations could resume. At the August 10 government meeting, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mihály Jungerth-Arnóthy, up until then considered relatively moderate, proposed that in order to satisfy the German demands, “50–60 thousand Jews from Galicia seeping into the country” should be deported. On August 19, Minister of the Interior Bonczos promised Eichmann that the deportations could start on August 25. He also told the SEK commander that all Jews were to be deported except three thousand exempted by the regent and those who had converted to Christianity before August 1, 1941. The government, with Horthy’s approval, even drafted an agreement with the Germans regarding the resumption of the deportations.


The Hungarian royal government—after obtaining the approval of His Highness, the Regent—is ready, as of August 28, to put at the disposal of the government of the German Reich

a) all Jews drafted for labor service whose families are already in Germany (ca. 55,000–60,000)

b) Jews with criminal records or Jews representing a danger to the public (this will be established by the Hungarian government), whose presence endangers public order, the general food supply, and the domestic safety of the country,

116. Minutes of the meeting of the Council of Ministers, August 10, 1944, HNA K27, box 262.
117. Horst Grell’s telegram to the Reich Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 19, 1944, in Juhász et al., A Wilhelmstrasse és Magyarország, 897.
118. Karsai notes that this phrase originally read, “The Hungarian government will establish whether a previous conviction exists.”
to be deployed in the German war industry—beginning August 28, 1944.

[. . .]

The Jews to be placed at the disposal of the German Reich will be handed over to a Hungarian-German joint commission in collection camps located in Hungary, and their deportation and trip to the Hungarian border will be conducted under the supervision of the same.

[. . .]

II.

The Jews remaining in Hungary will be placed under protective custody outside Budapest, housed in camps, and utilized in the Hungarian war industry.

III.

The Hungarian government asks [the German government] to be entrusted with the further solution and implementation of the Jewish question in Hungarian lands. The Hungarian government would therefore welcome if

1. in order to sustain friendly Hungarian-German relations, the German secret police operating in Hungary—but especially the unit operating under the leadership of SS-Obersturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann—was ordered to leave Hungary
2. a) Jews in German custody in Hungary were handed over to the Hungarian authorities, b) the camps and prisons set up by the Germans in Hungary and still operating were disbanded, and c) the so-called hostages held in them were also handed over to the Hungarian authorities.119

The draft suggested deportation of “dangerous” Jews and also specified that the Hungarian authorities would determine who fell into this category. This simply would have enabled the deportation of all remaining Jews. The document, drafted by the Regent’s Cabinet Office and sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was signed by Gyula Ambrózy, the head of the office, one of Horthy’s most important confidants.120 This clearly indicates that the regent approved the draft agreement.

According to the recollections of Budapest Jewish Council leaders, all this was part of a plan they had allegedly worked out with László Ferenczy, who had switched sides and started to act for the benefit of the Jews. Horthy was also

119. Point 2/c refers to those non-Jewish politicians, high-ranking officials, and officers who were arrested in the days following the German occupation.
120. See Benoschofsky and Karsai, Vádirat a nácizmus ellen, 3:451–53.