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AIDE-MEMOIRE
HUNGARY
August 2, 1978

- 1) Received telephone call from Carl Schmidt, Deputy Director, Office of Eastern European Affairs (Tel. 202 632-3345). Mr. Schmidt stated that he was calling on behalf of Mr. William Luers, who had just received a message from the Embassy in Hungary: Ambassador Kaiser believes that the Hungarian Government may be willing to issue an invitation to the JDC, and a visit at this time would be "appropriate and even desirable."
- 2) If such an invitation is issued, it will come from Mr. Miklos on behalf of the Government or, if the Government decides that the Jewish community should issue such an invitation, it would be issued with the Hungarian Government's approval.
- 3) Mr. Schmidt wanted to know whether we would accept such an invitation, either directly from the Government through Mr. Miklos or from the Jewish community with the approval of the Government.
- 4) If we accept this general approach, the Ambassador and Mr. Luers believe that the best way would be to approach the Ministry for Foreign Affairs first and then work out the program of the visit with the Jewish community.
- 5) I stated that we would welcome an invitation from the Government but that either form of invitation would be acceptable to us, and concurred with the procedure suggested for approaching the Hungarian authorities. (In essence, this was in line with our request to Mr. Luers several weeks ago.)
- 6) Mr. Schmidt felt quite optimistic. He stated, "The Hungarian Government seems to be favorably disposed," and he believes they will be forthcoming with the invitation. He added that the State Department has had contacts with the Hungarian Government in recent months: he made reference particularly to the visit of Billy Graham and the Baptist group (see my previous memo). He also stated that currently there is a group of rabbis visiting Hungary.
- 7) Mr. Schmidt apologized for the delay in reacting to our request of June. I expressed our appreciation for the efforts of the State Department.

RIG:sm

cc: (bl) Mr. Donald M. Robinson
Mrs. S. Hassenfeld
Mr. M. Weinberg

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per.

AIDE-MEMOIRE

MEETING WITH MR. WILLIAM LUERS
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
June 15, 1978

Mr. Luers's Office: Room 6219 Tel. (202) 632-1752 Sec'y Rosemary Hodges

Participating: Mr. George Boutin, Economic Office for Eastern Europe
Room 5221 Tel. (202) 632-3191

In place of: Mr. Tom Gerth, Head of the Hungary Desk, who is
presently away from Washington

- 1) Although Mr. Klutznick had spoken with Mr. Luers about JDC in Hungary, Mr. Luers had very little detailed knowledge about the JDC and our work. I therefore first presented briefly the story of JDC and, in detail, the SSE Program in Hungary since 1954, terming our activities as "humanitarian," since the term "relief" is not an acceptable term in the Eastern Bloc.

- 2) I asked whether, in view of the changed atmosphere in relations between the U.S. Government -- referring particularly to the return of the Crown Jewels and the desire on the part of the Hungarians to achieve Most Favored Nation status -- does the State Department feel that this is an appropriate time for us as an American organization to seek direct relations with the Hungarian Jewish community, obviously with the full approval of the authorities. Mr. Luers's answer was a very positive "Yes."

- 3) I indicated to Mr. Luers that what we would like to have is an opportunity to have a resident representative in Hungary; but if this, upon the advice of the U.S. Ambassador and the State Department, was not possible, then at least we would like to have the same arrangements as we now have with Rumania.

4) Mr. Luers said that this was a good time for us to meet, in view of the fact that he's leaving later today for a trip overseas and will be seeing Ambassador Kaiser tomorrow morning. He will place this item on his agenda with Ambassador Kaiser.

5) After my meeting with Mr. Luers I spent a little more time with Mr. Boutin, who was charged with preparing the cable to Ambassador Kaiser. Mr. Boutin had taken notes, but he reviewed with me what he was planning to send. The following is not the verbatim text, but is a general outline of what Mr. Boutin said he would send:

The State Department believes that Ambassador Kaiser should approach the Hungarian authorities to encourage them to extend an invitation to JDC leadership to come to Hungary to discuss with the leadership of the Jewish community and the authorities the needs of the Jewish communities.

6) Mr. Boutin asked whether we insist on an invitation from the Government. I explained that we would obviously like to have an invitation from the Government and the Jewish community; but if, upon the advice of Ambassador Kaiser, this is not possible, we would like to have the invitation from the Jewish community, with the official concurrence of the Hungarian Government. Questions of formality or informality were not the issue, but the recognition on the part of the authorities that the JDC is coming in as JDC. What is important is for JDC to be able to determine its program of activity in Hungary and monitor it directly.

7) I asked Mr. Boutin whether there were any foreign resident representatives of agencies or commercial firms in Hungary. Mr. Boutin stated that he knows that there are representatives of commercial firms there. Mr. Boutin also referred to the fact that at the present time Martin Luther King is in