



Meeting of Jozef Tiso and Adolf Hitler in Salzburg



The influence of Vojtech Tuka increased after Salzburg. He even announce Slovak National Socialism



Inaugural audience of the new German ambassador, Manfred von Killinger

“Salzburg represents a blissful new time for Slovaks, as we are entering an era in which Slovak National Socialism – following the German model – will prevail. What is Slovak National Socialism? That is very easy to answer. Without work, you cannot live here. Everyone must work and receive decent pay. National Socialism means unity, discipline, and joy of work.”

V. Tuka
speaking about Slovak National Socialism on 30 July 1940 at a Slovak-German friendship meeting in Bratislava.

“Post-Salzburg changes in personnel represented only part of the Nazi’s broader aim to create a regime in Slovakia that complied with Nazi orders: completely, unambiguously, without hesitation, and in its own interests. The Nazis dropped calls for the immediate reorganization of the government, instead creating a quasi-protectorate and ending external signs of the Slovak state’s sovereignty.”

Ľubomír Lipták, historian



CHRONOLOGY

21 February 1940 – Mach submits his resignation to Tiso, who accepts it exactly three months later.

23 May 1940 – Ernst Woermann – Director of the Political Department at the German Foreign Ministry – informs his superior J. von Ribbentrop about the situation in Slovakia. He recommends German intervention.

28 July 1940 – A Slovak delegation meets von Ribbentrop in Salzburg and Hitler in Berchtesgaden.

29 July 1940 – Tiso removes Ďurčanský as Minister of the Interior and Minister of Foreign Affairs, appointing Mach and Tuka respectively in his place.

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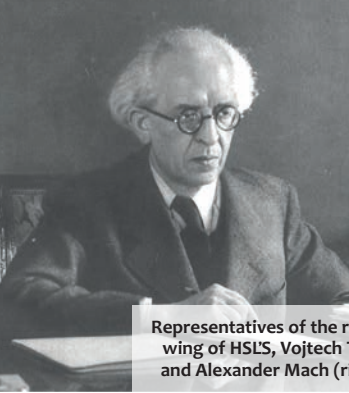
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Source of photos: Slovak National Archives, dossier Slovak Press Agency

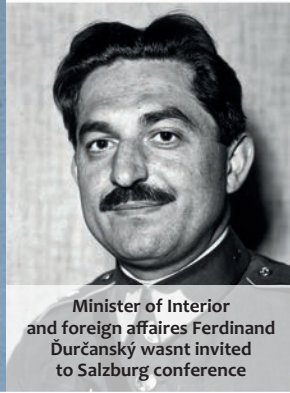
SALZBURG CONFERENCE

The „Salzburg Conference“ refers to delegate meetings between high-ranking politicians representing the Slovak Republic and Nazi Germany, which took place on 28 July 1940 in Salzburg and Berchtesgaden. These meetings resulted in the Germans intervening in the internal politics of the ruling Hlinka Slovak People’s Party (HSL’S) in a power struggle between radical and moderate wings.

1939



Representatives of the radical wing of HSL'S, Vojtech Tuka and Alexander Mach (right)



Minister of Interior and foreign affairs Ferdinand Ďurčanský wasn't invited to Salzburg conference



President J. Tiso leave to the Salzburg conference



Vojtech Tuka, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Jozef Tiso during the discussions at Salzburg

Spring 1940



Jozef Tiso (right) with Vojtech Tuka and Alexander Mach

July 1940



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Contemporary press paid high attention to the Salzburg conference

CONTRADICTIONS IN THE „UNITED“ HSL'S

By the end of 1938, the then-opposition HSL'S had become the sole official political party in Slovakia, and as such could introduce an authoritarian regime. Its leaders also subsequently enacted laws that referred to such regime as the tool through which the Slovak nation participates in the Slovak state's leadership and administration. Yet despite the party's apparent unity, a dispute raged between its moderate and radical wings. A group of radical politicians sought to approximate the Slovak state to its "model" – Nazi Germany, especially by completing the „Slovak national socialism“ revolution by removing what remained of the parliamentary system and resolving the 'Jewish and Czech questions'. Radicals such as Vojtech Tuka and Alexander Mach relied on the support of Germany as well as the paramilitary Hlinka Guard (HG) that united the most radical elements. HSL'S's moderate wing was represented by Jozef Tiso, Martin Sokol and Jozef Sivák, who aimed for a policy more independent of the Third Reich. Indeed, this position had majority support with the general public and party representatives.

THE DISPUTE REACHES A PEAK

The conflict between moderates and radicals culminated in

a dispute over the nature of the Hlinka Guard. Following December 1939's end of compulsory HG membership, from February 1940 its members began to display notices and enforce measures in certain Bratislava cafés that prohibited Jews from entering. A personal dispute over competence between Interior Minister Ferdinand Ďurčanský under which HG fell, and Alexander Mach, its chief commander, concluded with the latter's calculated resignation. President Tiso accepted Mach's resignation in May 1940, while Nazi Germany officials – preoccupied with the war in Western Europe – followed Slovakia's internal political crisis with annoyance. These officials also perceived as very problematic Minister of Foreign Affairs Ďurčanský's efforts towards the Slovak state's more independent foreign policy; although by the late 1930s he had fallen into line as a HSL'S radical. Intelligence reports, data from German ambassadors in Bratislava, as well as Vojtech Tuka, informed the Nazi authorities about the need for German intervention.

SALZBURG CONFERENCE

The Slovak delegation was invited to the conference after Nazi Germany had prevailed in the war in the West and thereby consolidated power in Europe. Slovak politicians travelled to Salzburg on 27 July 1940, including Ďurčanský,

the „uninvited“ Minister of Interior and Foreign Affairs. The first meeting took place a day later, with German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop ultimately telling Tiso that Ďurčanský must be replaced by Mach as Minister of Interior and that Tuka be appointed Foreign Minister. Tiso's initial reluctance to support this proposal was countered by Ribbentrop's threat of Hitler's intervention against the Slovak delegation. Tiso eventually relented, so the German Foreign Minister subsequently informed Tuka of the governmental changes and German advisers' deployment at Slovak authorities. Negotiations then continued at Hitler's Berchtesgaden mountain estate, where the Nazi Germany leader's rambling monologue was followed by Tiso's assurance of Slovak loyalty.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE GERMAN INTERVENTION

The Slovak politicians' return from the Third Reich immediately initiated the reorganization of power in the party and state – in favour of the HSL'S's radical wing. As von Ribbentrop had demanded, Ďurčanský was stripped of his ministry while Tuka became Foreign Minister and Prime Minister. Mach was appointed Minister of the Interior, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the HG, whilst withdrawing from positions such as Secretary-