

IN THE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ROSALIE SIMON, *et al.*,
Individually, for themselves and for all
others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF HUNGARY, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Case No. 1:10-cv-01770-BAH

* * * * *

DECLARATION OF YAFFA (SARI/SHEINDEL) PROPPER DASCAL

YAFFA (SARI/SHEINDEL) PROPPER DASCAL, under penalties of perjury and in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declares as follows:

1. I am over eighteen years old and I am competent to make this Declaration.
2. I am a citizen of the State of Israel and reside at nursing home located at 20 Chibat Zion Street, Third Floor, Room 303, Ramat Gan, Israel.
3. I have notified the attorneys for the Plaintiffs in the above-captioned action that I am prepared to join this lawsuit either as a named plaintiff or as a member of the plaintiff class in the event the Court decides to certify this suit as a class action under Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.
4. I am fluent in the Hebrew, Yiddish and Hungarian languages. I am not able to understand or read English. This Declaration was translated into Hebrew for me by Advocate Marc Zell so that I could understand its contents.

5. I was born in Dolha, Dovhe (Ilosva Region), Ruthenia, Czechoslovakia on 11 June 1929. My maiden name was Sari/Sheindel Propper.

6. I am the daughter of Tzvi Mordechai (Hermann) Propper (born Kovacsret/Kushnitza, Austria-Hungary, 1899) and Esther (Etel) Herschkovitz Propper (born Dolha, Austria-Hungary, 1902).

7. I am the sister of Chaya (Helena) (b. 1926, Dolha); Moshe (Moritz) (b. 1927, Dolha), Rivka Propper (b. 1933, Dolha), and Avraham Chaim Propper (b. 1939, Dolha).

8. My father owned and operated a general store in Dolha/Dovhe. When the Hungarians took over our town in 1939 they forced my father to close the store. He was forced to work at a bakery in nearby Kovacsret/Kushnitza. He could barely support us.

9. In April 1944, we were expelled from our home and sent to the ghetto in Beregszasz by gendarmes acting on behalf of the Hungarian government.

10. We were not a wealthy family, but we had valuable possessions which my parents had saved for over the years. The gendarmes confiscated most of our family's possessions, which included valuable items of judaica, jewelry, furniture and furnishings as well as other personal belongings worth then well over U.S. \$2,000.00. These items were taken from us by the Hungarian government and never returned to us. Nor were we ever compensated for their taking.

11. We were imprisoned in the Beregszasz ghetto for about six weeks. Then on about May 15, 1944 we were driven without notice out of the ghetto by Hungarian gendarmes and marched to the local railroad station that was owned and operated by the Hungarian State Railways (MÁV). I was almost 15 years at the time and remember

seeing the MÁV insignia on the trains and around the train station. We were allowed to take only a few bundles with some clothing and some food items. I remember that my mother hid some jewelry items that she had managed to conceal from the Hungarian gendarmes when we were driven into the ghetto.

12. When we arrived at the MÁV train station, we were forced to leave some of our belongings at the station because the cattle car in which we were forced to ride had absolutely no room to hold anything other than people. My estimation is that there were between 80 – 90 people crammed into the MÁV cattle car.

13. The train ride was horrible. I will never forget it. There was no air. There was hardly any water and only a bucket in which we were allowed to take care of our natural needs. That soon filled up. The stench in the car was unbearable. There was no room to sit. We could not sit. We sat on our mother for lack of space. I remember one of the MÁV workers trying to sell water to people in the car for money. But my parents had nothing left with which to purchase the water.

14. We rode on the MÁV train for about three days before we reached our destination which turned out to be Birkenau in Auschwitz.

15. When we arrived in Auschwitz, we were forced out the car onto a platform where German SS guards were waiting for us. I remember seeing the SS Doctor, Josef Mengele, making the selections who would live and who would be sent to the gas. My father Tzvi Mordechai (Hermann) and my mother Esther (Etel) together with my 11-year sister Rivka and my five-year old brother, Avraham Chaim, were sent immediately to the gas chambers together with my four grandparents, Leah Berkovich, Yaakov Berkovich

(my father's parents); Michsho and Pesya Hershkovitz (my mother's parents). I never saw them again.

16. I was the oldest child at home. My sister was in Ungvar and Moritz my brother was living in Budapest for lack of food and money.

17. When I disembarked from the train I saw a mountain of shoes and ran to the pile to get a pair of shoes. I was saved when I joined some older children from our village. We were sent to the barracks after our hair was cut off. I was told to lie about my age lest I be deemed too young to live.

18. I remained in Auschwitz for two months approximately. I was taken by the Germans to Gelsenkirchen near Essen in Germany. I worked in a building removing stones and cement until September 1944. We were taken to a place Sommerda in central Germany where we worked 12-hours a day seven days continuously in an ammunitions factory. We were bombed constantly by Allied airforce. In March 1945 were sent on a death march to Czechoslovakia. I barely survived the snows and cold weather. Many of us on the march died. When the war ended in May 1945 I found myself in the Sudetenland where I was liberated by Soviet troops.

19. After the war I returned to our home in Ruthenia, but it was impossible to live there. In December 1945 my sister Chaya and I returned to Germany where I lived in a displaced persons camp until May 1948 when the State of Israel was declared and we were able to emigrate to the Jewish State. I have lived here ever since.

20. In the 1960s and 1970s I attempted repeatedly to apply for compensation from the Hungarian government. I was assisted in this effort by the Association of Hungarian Emigres in Tel Aviv. They submitted various forms on my behalf to the

Hungarian authorities and in each instance they reported to me that the Hungarian government refused to pay my claims. I applied for myself and for my parents and grandparents as well as for my gassed brother and sister. I was denied at every turn. Sometimes the excuse was that they lost my forms. At other times the excuse was that I had filled out the wrong form. In short, I never received one florint from the Hungarians either for my own suffering or that of my family.

21. One occurrence is particularly appalling and I will never forget it. When I applied for compensation from the Hungarian government for the deportation of my father, Tzvi Mordechai, who was called Hermann in Hungarian, my application was declined on the grounds that my Israeli identity card showed my father's name as Tzvi Mordechai, while he was registered as Hermann in Hungary. Everyone knows that the Hungarian equivalent of Tzvi is Hermann. Despite this the Hungarian government consistently refused to recognize this simple fact and denied my claim. It is an absolute outrage. I even traveled to Budapest to pursue my claims with the government office supposedly in charge of reparations, but they treated me as if I were a piece of garbage and chased me out of their offices in the early 1990s.

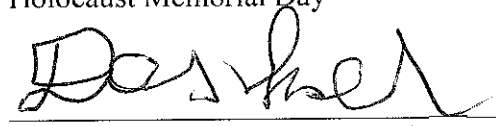
22. No compensation was ever paid to me or to those siblings who survived the war (now all dead) on account of what was done to my family (my parents, my grandparents, and my younger sister and brother).

23. It is impossible for me now to travel to Hungary to pursue my claims for two reasons. First, at my age, 82, and in my physical condition (I suffer from diabetes and have already had one leg amputated as a result) I am in no position to travel to Hungary. Second, and more importantly, even if I were in a position to travel to Hungary, the mere thought of appearing in a courtroom of the very people who murdered almost my entire family and refused to compensate me for the horrible losses that my

family and I incurred financially, psychologically and physically, is beyond my capacity to bear. This is not an idle thought, because I did make an effort to travel to Hungary in the 1990s to file my claims there and I was humiliated and abused by the Hungarian officials with whom I met. It is inconceivable that I would return to that place again (even if I could) and subject myself to the abuse and degradation that was shown me when I was last there. G-d forbid!

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing Declaration is true and correct.

Executed on May 2, 2011
Holocaust Memorial Day


Yaffa (Sheindel) Propper Dascal

