

Hungary 1956-1959 - correspondence, resolutions, General Assembly and Secur...

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12 - 13 Nov.

2 interoffice memoranda - The Situation in Hungary.

a.) Philippe de Seynes, Under-Sec. for ECOSOC
- to D.H.

b.) D.H. - to W. Mc. Caw, Acting Controller

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Dag Hammarskjold,
Secretary-General

Date: 12 November 1956

FILE NO.: SO 530

THROUGH:

FROM: Philippe de Seynes, Under-Secretary
for Economic and Social Affairs

Ph. de Seynes

SUBJECT: The Situation in Hungary

The following is a brief progress report on the developments, and the steps I have taken since being asked by you to undertake responsibility for the implementation and follow-up of the relief provisions of the resolutions adopted at the Second Special Emergency Session on the situation in Hungary.

A. Refugees

1. Austria - the last official estimate from the High Commissioner's Office was that as of 5 November, there were 15,000 refugees from Hungary in Austria. Relatively few have passed through the frontier since that date, but we understand that there may be more coming now. We do not know how many have arrived since then, but up-to-date figures should be available from the Deputy High Commissioner when he arrives at Headquarters on Thursday morning. Refugees are being cared for by voluntary organizations and by the Austrian Government. The High Commissioner's Office in Vienna is serving as Chairman of a Co-ordinating Committee of all concerned with this operation. In addition to agencies dealing with the care of these refugees, there are present in Vienna voluntary agencies and representatives of the Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration, and the U.S. Escapee Programme, who are concerning themselves with problems of re-settlement.



Movement of refugees from Austria has already started. It is reported that over 500 refugees have been moved to Switzerland. Other Governments are reported to be making plans for rapid evacuation of a certain number of refugees.

2. Yugoslavia - A conversation was held today with Dr. Brilej, at our request, and he reported to us that there are between two and three hundred refugees from Hungary in Yugoslavia. After consulting his Government, he informed us that the Yugoslav Government agrees that these refugees may migrate to the West, remain in Yugoslavia, or return to Hungary if they wish. For those who are to be re-settled, it would appear to be desirable that they be moved to Austria where they can be processed and re-settled with the bulk of refugees already there. It is not clear yet whether the Yugoslav Government will prefer to deal with the United Nations on this matter or will be willing to undertake negotiations directly with UNHCR.

3. Offers of help - Contributions in cash or kind are being made and pledged by Governments, agencies and individuals to the United Nations, UNHCR, ICEM and to voluntary organizations. The United States has pledged one million dollars, Canada - \$200,000; (\$100,000 of which is at the disposal of the UN); Australia - \$67,000; Philippines - \$2,500; Belgium - 25,000 francs belges.

The following 16 countries have offered asylum to a total of refugees exceeding the present known number:

Belgium (4,000); Sweden (1,000); Holland (1,000); Switzerland (2,000); United States (5,000); Australia (3,000); Argentina (3,000) refugee children); France (as many refugees as may wish to go); West Germany (3,000 - not known whether permanent or temporary); Israel (all Jewish refugees); Italy (2,000); New Zealand (5,000); Canada (will give priority to applications coming from Hungarian refugees); United Kingdom (2,500).

B. Relief in Hungary

In a telephone conversation with Mr. Boissier on 10 November, he said that he was reluctant to become the agent of the United Nations for distributing aid to the Hungarian people for he was anxious to retain the strictest neutrality, but he would probably be willing to accept, under a suitable formula, United Nations money and supplies for use in bringing relief. Since then, the first convoy has entered Hungary and today we have received the Hungarian Note which includes a reply to the note verbale handed by you on Saturday to the Hungarian Representative, which welcomes assistance of the United Nations agencies and the International Red Cross. Tomorrow morning, we have scheduled a meeting with Mr. I. Horvath and, depending on the outcome of our conversation with him, we will then have a clearer picture of whether or not we can approach the International Red Cross as the principal channel for relief to Hungary.

Mr. William McCaw,
Acting Controller

13 November

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Dag Hammarskjöld,
Secretary-General

The situation in Hungary

1. In connexion with the Special Account being opened pursuant to the General Assembly resolutions dealing with emergency assistance to Hungary and to Hungarian Refugees, I wish to inform you that Mr. Philippe de Seynes, to whom I have delegated responsibility for these activities, will control expenditures from this Special Account and is authorized to draw from it.

It will be appreciated if you will keep Mr. de Seynes advised on a daily basis of pledges and contributions received to this Special Account.