

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

HS L 179:84



Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Hungary - 1958

1 - 3 July

a) Protitch, D. (Under-Sec., U.N.)

- memorandum from D.H., 1 July

b) - 1 memorandum from D. Protitch to D.H., 2 July

c) - 1 cable from Shaun to D.H., 3 July

COPY

To: Dr. D. Protitch
Under-Secretary

1 July 1958

From: The Secretary-General

Authority given Mr. Bang-Jensen
for handling of witnesses

1. On 19 February 1958 the Acting Director of Personnel submitted to the Joint Disciplinary Committee charges of grave misconduct against Mr. Povl Bang-Jensen. One of these reads:

"iii. in your preliminary interview with prospective witnesses, you either gave assurances to prospective witnesses which were in excess of your authority, or subsequently you made a wrong and unjustified interpretation of the assurances given by you, or both ..."

Regarding this charge the Joint Disciplinary Committee "decided that it had no option but to base its findings on this charge on the assumption that the necessary special authority had never been given him."

2. I realize that you have reviewed with me orally, from the time that the case first arose, the whole matter of the extent of the authority which you gave to Mr. Bang-Jensen concerning the arrangements for witnesses. In reference, however, to the above I should like you to reconfirm that in assigning him his duties you did not say anything to Mr. Bang-Jensen which might reasonably have given him the impression that he had such authority as he claims, and that you are not aware of any conditions or circumstances which might reasonably have induced him to draw this conclusion.

COPY

2 July 1958

MEMORANDUM TO: The Secretary-General.
FROM: D. Protitch, Under-Secretary.
SUBJECT: Bang-Jensen Case.

1. In reply to your memorandum of 1 July, I should like once more to reconfirm to you, for the record, as I also have already indicated in my conversations with Mr. Bang-Jensen in October and later before Mr. Gross' Committee, the following:

2. When I informed you about the arrangements relating to the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary which were being made, you stressed to me the necessity of being careful in safeguarding the names of the witnesses. My personal understanding of the situation was that the witnesses who desired to be anonymous should be protected against any publication of their names and any revelation of their identity to any unauthorized persons. There was never any intention that Mr. Bang-Jensen should be the only person in the Secretariat who would know their names, or specifically that the names should not be available to yourself, myself and the Secretary of the Committee. Mr. Bang-Jensen was instructed by me, after I had informed you, that he would be responsible for handling the practical arrangements for the hearing of witnesses and no other instructions to my knowledge were given to him on this point. This assignment, and some others relating to the work of the Special Committee, were given in writing in the form of a note by Mr. Jordan, Secretary of the Committee, to Mr. Bang-Jensen (if I recollect clearly the note was dated approximately 15 January 1957 and initialled by me). In addition there was Mr. Cordier's memorandum of 8 February 1958 concerning the payments to Hungarian refugees, but this dealt with the non-availability of the list of witnesses to the Controller's staff and not with the Secretariat of the Committee.

3. Mr. Bang-Jensen was never given by me, nor to my knowledge by anyone else, namely by the officers of the Special Committee or by the Secretary of the Committee, any instructions which would induce him to believe that he was "the only one in the Secretariat" to know the names of witnesses who wished to remain anonymous.

4. I am not aware of any conversation with Mr. Bang-Jensen at any time, when I was present and connected with the work of the Committee, during which he informed me that he was making, or requested my authorization to make, promises to the anonymous witnesses that he would be the "only one in the Secretariat" to know their names and certainly I would never have allowed such a request to pass without informing you, nor without clearly indicating to him that he had no such authorization. I heard about his "promises" for the first time in October 1957 when Mr. Bang-Jensen refused to hand over the list of the anonymous witnesses and I had a discussion with him on that subject.

5. Under no circumstances could Mr. Bang-Jensen reasonably have believed from my conversations with him that he was authorized to give promises to those who wished to appear anonymously before the Special Committee to the effect that he was the "only one in the Secretariat" to know the names of the witnesses who wished to remain anonymous, and I know of no conditions or considerations that might reasonably have induced him to draw any such conclusion.

C O P Y

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD
SECRETARY GENERAL UNITED NATIONS NY

THE FOUR POINTS THAT YOU MAKE IN YOUR TELEGRAM ARE ENTIRELY CORRECT
SO FAR AS POINT 2 IS CONCERNED MR ANDERSEN WILL RECALL THE MANY
HOURS WHICH WE SPENT TOGETHER RESOLVING POINT BY POINT EVERY SINGLE
ALLEGATION OF WHAT BANG-JENSEN DESCRIBED AS GRAVE ERRORS AND OMISSIONS
BEST PERSONAL WISHES

SHANN

3 JULY 1958