

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

HS L 179:84



Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Hungary - 1959

25 April

Dear Mr. Ambassador,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd April 1959, in which you refer to the communication received by your Government from the Hungarian Government in connection with the application for admission to the U.N. of Hungary.
There is nothing I can do to assist in the communication received by your Government from the Hungarian Government in connection with the application for admission to the U.N. of Hungary.
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- A letter from D.H.

- A press clipping from The New York Times

25 April 1959

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

I have looked at the communication from the International League for the Rights of Man as well as at the press comments which were to be found in the New York Times of 6 April.

There is nothing I can add to what I said already. The communication received is given the established treatment of letters from private persons, or private associations, on questions on human rights. I do not find that this communication is one which invites a personal initiative from my side of the unofficial type which in practice may be open to me outside the formal rules laid down for the activities of the United Nations. As I have already told you, the impression conveyed by the newspaper article of a personal approach to me is unfounded.

The document received is not secret, and if that would interest you, you may perhaps find time to see Mr. Cordier who would show it to you so that you may read it in his office; it is not our practice to provide copies of such documents to Delegations.

Yours sincerely,

Dag Hammarskjold

His Excellency
Ambassador Peter Mod
Permanent Representative of Hungary
to the United Nations
10 East 75th Street
New York 21, N. Y.

'AMNESTY' CALLED TRAP IN HUNGARY

NEW YORK TIMES 6/4

Regime Accused of Seizing
Thousands of Exiles Who
Were Lured Home

By LAWRENCE FELLOWS

Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y.

April 5—The International League for the Rights of Man charged today that the Hungarian Government had imprisoned, exiled or executed 6,000 citizens who had fled the country and had returned with the assurance that they would not be harmed.

Roger Baldwin, chairman of the league, presented documents on the charge to Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld last Friday. The documents included affidavits and testimony obtained from refugees in Vienna by the Hungarian National Revolutionary Committee in Exile.

Most of the witnesses had fled Hungary after the rebellion in 1956. Some had returned with letters of amnesty and fled a second time. All drew pictures of deception and disillusion that were striking in their similarity.

Solti Pal, for instance, told of the return and subsequent arrest of his cousin, Loos Janos. Both had fought in the uprising. Mr. Pal was 21 years old then, Mr. Janos 20.

Pressure Brought to Bear

They fled to Austria in December 1956, and were unable to get good jobs. Their attempts to emigrate to Australia bogged down. Mr. Janos had borrowed money from a man who offered to cancel the debt if the young man would return to Hungary. Moreover, his mother had written from Hungary that only his return could save his stepfather's job.

He decided on repatriation and got his letter of amnesty from the Hungarian legation in Vienna. He crossed into Hungary last September and was promptly arrested. He is still in prison.

Sarkany Janos told of having been lured back from Switzerland by nostalgia and by promises by the Hungarian legation that he would be given a job and returned to his family home and vineyards.

After a few weeks in Hungary he had been deprived of all of them. When arrest seemed imminent, he fled with his wife and two daughters to Austria. One daughter was seriously wounded in the escape.

Amnesty Is Short-Lived

Most of the refugees who went back, like Sarkany Janos, got jobs and lived without disturbances for two or three weeks, according to the committee that took the testimony, but then were arrested and parceled out among known and unknown prisons.

Some were tried and executed. Some, especially among those with technical skills, were exiled to the Soviet Union.

The committee estimated that 6,000 of the 21,000 Hungarian refugees who went home with

letters of amnesty had been arrested.

In the internment camps of Kistarcsa and Recsk, the committee said, they are isolated as "Westerners" and put under special guard.

Mr. Baldwin said the league had sought the information since the General Assembly took up the Hungarian question last December.

In debate then, Janos Peter of Hungary said his Government would welcome back any refugees who returned with "sincere motives."