

Hungary & Eastern Europe - Sixty Years Ago A Press Review by a Hungarian Refugee

"To argue with a Russian is simply a waste of time."
1955. 12. 16–31.

- Review and Outlook. Great Day
- A.P. Newsman and Wife Tried Secretly in Hungary
- Trip Behind the Iron Curtain
- Hungary Communist, People Are Not
- Stephen's Late Sprint Beats Iharos at 3 Miles
- Plan Yule Broadcasts to Hungary
- Shift in Soviet Policy Challenge to the West
- Sweden And Hungary to Trade

REVIEW *and* OUTLOOK

Great Day

Great jubilation greeted the United Nations' admission of sixteen new members the day before yesterday. Some U. N. officials called it a "historic day."

Perhaps it was. But perhaps not exactly in the sense intended.

Most likely the Soviet Union reversed itself and permitted the entry of the sixteen after it had long and loudly insisted on eighteen or none because of a combination of considerations. An important one may be that the Soviets perceived the possibilities of a very tricky gambit for later use.

This would consist of using Japan, whose entry the Soviets denied, as a club to force the door for Communist China. As long as the United States keeps Red China out of the Security Council and uses its influence to keep it out of the General Assembly, the Soviets could keep out Japan. In time this situation might get awkward for the United States. In the meantime, there is already plenty of pressure in the U. N. to oust Nationalist China, which would naturally further facilitate the admission of Communist China.

In still another way this week's vote improved Peiping's prospects. It whitened the U. N.'s moral basis for continuing to exclude the Chinese Communists. True, the U. N. did not admit the phony "state" of Outer Mongolia. But it admitted Albania, which is

hardly less a fraud. It admitted Communist Bulgaria, which runs the most savage of the East European police states. It admitted Communist Hungary and Communist Rumania.

Like Communist China, this unappetizing quartet stomps on every U.N. ideal every hour of every day. If the U.N. could admit these four without any concern for what they are, it has less reason to refuse Communist China on the ground that this regime fails to conform to minimum U.N. standards.

Communist China, of course, still carries the special onus of being labeled by the U.N. an aggressor in the War Against the U.N., a war still technically on. But that is a matter of degree. The Soviet Union and its European appendages did their bit in that war. The Soviets were not evicted on that account, and now four more satellites are in.

One answer to all this is that the whole concept of U.N. membership has changed from the maintenance of entry standards to universality. This, it is said, is more realistic. It is also a convenient gloss for the failure of the U.N. to deal with its built-in contradiction—the impossibility of uniting two worlds which do not agree even on the meaning of human existence.

If the day before yesterday helped speed the entry of Communist China, it may indeed prove a historic day for the U.N. But it was hardly a day for jubilation.

Evening Star 16 XII 255



ENDRE MARTON



ILONA MARTON

A. P. Newsman and Wife Tried Secretly in Hungary

LONDON, Dec. 16 (AP).—Reports reaching London from Vienna yesterday said Endre Marton and his wife, correspondents in Hungary for American news services, went on trial November 28 before a secret Hungarian military court.

The reports did not disclose the specific charges against the couple. The Hungarian government said last July, however, the Martons were arrested on charges of spying for United States intelligence.

Mr. Marton, 44-year-old Hungarian national, had been Budapest correspondent for the Associated Press since 1947. He apparently was arrested last February. The Associated Press has been unable to reach him by normal telephone or telegraph

channels since that time. It reported May 5 there were indications he was under arrest.

Mr. Marton's wife, Ilona, had been correspondent for the United Press. The last telephone call from Vienna to her was on June 19. Soon after that reports circulated she also had been arrested.

N. Y. Herald Trib 18XII 25

Trip Behind the Iron Curtain

We believe it is highly important that the American people get the best possible information on what the millions behind the Iron Curtain are doing and thinking. Only that way can there be real understanding on this side of the barrier. But such understanding depends on knowing what is actually going on.

Mr. William Benton, former United States Senator from Connecticut and now chairman of the board and publisher of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, has some good ideas on this subject. He recently spent a month in Russia, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. This newspaper is pleased to begin publication today of a series of articles in which Mr. Benton tells what he saw and heard among the Russians and their satellites.

This American traveler gives a grim picture of controls and tyrannies, of ig-

norance of the true nature of the outside world, and of the appalling self-hypnotism that controls the Soviet mind. To argue with a Russian, as Mr. Benton says, is simply a waste of time. Yet he thinks it might be possible to crack the shell if one or two of the top leaders at a time could be induced to visit the United States and see for themselves. Mr. Benton looked around for himself and was everywhere told that exchanges of people, especially students, would improve Russian-American relations. But this tough-minded Connecticut Yankee prefers sending the Soviet Presidium over here in small batches and for the Kremlin to give an absolutely free hand to American newspaper men. There is plenty to be learned. Mr. Benton, as our readers will find, has made a valuable contribution.



This photo of Mrs. Benton walking with a cane was taken by her son, John, in Budapest. Mrs. Benton, who had broken her leg before leaving the United States, made part of her tour of Eastern Europe in a wheelchair.

N.Y. Herald Trib 20 XII 55

Hungary Communist, People Are Not

(William Benton, chairman of the board and publisher of the Encyclopaedia Britannica and former United States Senator from Connecticut, returned recently from a month-long tour in Russia and three Eastern European satellites. This article, the third of four, tells some of his impressions and experiences in Hungary.)

By William Benton

Western diplomats in Hungary estimate that in an honest and secret election, the Communist party would poll only from 5 to 10 per cent of the vote. Criticism of the regime by the man in the street is surprisingly open. And yet, profession of Communist faith is sufficiently necessary and widespread to make this story currently popular:

A teacher found written on his blackboard: "Down with all you Communists." He erased it before the class arrived. Next day he found: "You Communists are all liars." He erased that, too. The writing and erasing became a daily occurrence. Finally in irritation one evening before leaving, he wrote on the board: "Why are you such a coward that you only write at night? Why don't you come out in the daytime and say these things that you put every night on the blackboard?"

The next morning when he arrived at school there was written on the blackboard: "Oh, but I am a Communist in the day time."

Government Officials Are Full-Time Reds

I suggest, however, that to be a government official in Hungary, as in other satellites, a man must be a Communist by night as well as by day. I don't think he can take many hours off. He has made his bet on Russia and on the East vs. the West.

Recently in Budapest—that beautiful but jaded, tired queen of a city, a queen who has lost her crown and wears a 1925 dress—I had a ninety-minute chat with a Mr. Uzhely, director of the motion-picture division in the Ministry of Culture. I pressed him for the tie-up between the Ministry of Culture and the Party. He explained this very simply: "The ministers and most of the top officials in the Ministry of Culture are members of the party." Mr. Uzhely, himself, is a member of the party. He said calmly, "I know its aims."

However, Mr. Uzhely assured me that he feels just as free to reject a Russian film as he does an American film. But on any such rejection he always writes a memo of explanation. He added that he has bought eight films from Red China since the war.

Hungary Doesn't Get Many American Films

It's plain that the Hungarians aren't seeing American movies. Mr. Uzhely said that "The Little Fugitive" was the only American movie shown in his country this year, unless one counts Chaplin's film, "Monsieur Verdoux." The Communists are boosting Chaplin everywhere, and Mr. Uzhely said negotiations are under way for two



William Benton and his son sightseeing in Budapest during their recent tour of the Hungarian capital.

more Charlie Chaplin films and also for "Marty."

Most American films he would not take if he could get them for nothing. To find out more about the reason, I asked him what was the matter with American Westerns. I had always heard these were popular in Europe. He told me that the earlier ones were all right but later ones showed the Indians in most unfriendly and unfavorable ways, and that he didn't want to exhibit films that raised the question of "color discrimination."

Hollywood Movies Not 'Realistic' Enough

His basic complaint about most American movies is that they are not "realistic." By this he means they don't follow and preach the ideal of "socialist realism" which, as I have often had explained to me, is "art (or movies or literature) which is realistic and for the masses of the people." Mr. Uzhely went on:

"You cannot say that Marxism-Leninism isn't in our life; it is. If we show in the movie only love in the life of our people, and don't deal with administrative problems, then we are going to make an unrealistic film. But if we show only the interest of the people in production—with no love, no family—this too will be an unrealistic film."

I asked whether the Russian films didn't overdo tractors and machinery and productivity at the expense of love and the family. Mr. Uzhely replied that many Russian films are, by his definition, "realistic . . . but if they are monotonous or are not

artistic, if they lecture or show subjects which will bore the Hungarians, or which will bore us, we reject them."

Mr. Uzhely complained also of block-booking by the American film industry. I told him that block-booking was imposed to prevent him from selecting merely films putting the United States in a bad light, such as gangster films. I told him we didn't want him to use our films against us unless he also used them in ways favorable to us.

Top officials in Hungary as in Russia call on Marx and Lenin though the giant photographs and paintings of the Russians above their heads are often missing. They bring in quotations gratuitously, by the heels as it were, in all countries I visited. Thus a comment of Mr. Ibos, the officer in charge of the live theater in Hungary's Ministry of Culture, helps further explain Mr. Uzhely's views on the goal of Hungarian movies. Mr. Ibos remarked that "the aim of the whole system of our culture is to build Socialist realism." I asked for the source of those words and he replied that they were "by Gorki from Marx and Engels and out of Lenin."

Professor Repeats Communist Line

With Prof. Urduig-Gruez Tibor, Minister of Education, I sought to get down to basic concepts. He told me that the curriculum in Hungary's schools has been reorganized along "the lines of dialectical materialism." Again and again I would find that just when I thought

that maybe I was beginning to achieve some small basis for mutual understanding with a Russian or satellite official, he would toss in Marxist or Communist propaganda phrases or slogans and no meeting of minds was possible.

I asked Prof. Urduig-Gruez about foreign students. He said that about fifty Hungarians had gone to Russia to study this year and about half that many Russians were enrolled in Hungarian schools. I was astonished when he told me that there are between two and three hundred Chinese and Korean students in Hungary, many concentrating on the Hungarian language and literature. This offers an interesting field for speculation. Mao and his lieutenants must be looking a long way ahead.

Russian Compulsory In Hungarian Schools

The professor, a tall man of about forty, conceded that it is compulsory for Hungarian students to learn the Russian language from the sixth grade on. Small children on the streets of Budapest, as in Warsaw and Prague, conversed in Russian with my interpreter. Over the decades, the knowledge of Russian will, of course, help orient these countries toward Russia—first toward Russian literature, movies, radio, theater, etc., and then toward Moscow itself. (The French Foreign Office for perhaps a century has subsidized the study of French in many areas of the world; the knowledge of French or desire to learn it have greatly helped develop the prestige of French culture, not to mention the French tourist trade.)

When I asked the professor whether he would like to send students to the United States, he replied, "We must examine that more closely." Manifestly, this seemed to him a political question. The party line had not been clarified as yet in Budapest as it had in Moscow.

Rebellious Streak Under the Surface

Just as Budapest is physically a tired-looking and neglected city, with great stretches of beautiful old buildings gutted and desolate, still unrepaired even at this late date, so the spirit of the people seems indifferent, although there is evidence that the rebellious streak is just under the surface. Industrialization lags; complaints by overseas buyers are commonplace on the lack of quality in Hungarian steel and engines; fierce resistance holds back the collectivization of farms and it is believed the Communists couldn't poll 1 per cent in rural areas; pilferage is rampant in the factories and cities.

I was told the story of a freight train crossing the country. Every time it stopped, and it stopped often, people would swarm into one of its coal cars and run off with buckets of coal. An armed guard on the train was asked why he didn't stop the people from stealing the coal. He shrugged and said, "Why can't they have it? It's their property."

© 1955, New York Herald Tribune Inc.

(A fourth article will appear tomorrow.)

N.Y. Herald Trib. 22 XII 55

Aussie Timed in 13:37.6

Stephens' Late Sprint Beats Iharos at 3 Miles

MELBOURNE, Dec. 21 (AP).—the Iron Curtain star who has been the year's track sensation. Dave Stephens, Australia's "flying milkman," ran the great Sandor Iharos, of Hungary, into the ground for the second time in five days today when he won a special three-mile race in raw, biting rain.

The twenty-four-year-old geology student, who used to run without shoes, staged a blistering finish to win the event in 13 minutes, 37.6 seconds. He streaked the final quarter-mile lap in 61 seconds.

Iharos, who bettered six world distance running records during the last year, came in thirty yards behind in 13:42.3, badly beaten after leading in the middle stages of the race. Dave Power, another Australian, was third, 19.2 seconds back of Stephens.

Stephens, who has replaced miler John Landy as Australia's No. 1 foot racer, was not ready to exult over his successes over

"I must do much better if I am to do anything in next year's Olympic Games," Stephens said. "Iharos has an injured ankle and has not been able to train properly. When he is fit he will be much harder to beat."

The young Australian beat Iharos and his Hungarian teammate, Laszlo Tabori, in a 5,000-meter race last Saturday, finishing thirty yards in front with a clocking of 14:07.2.

The three-mile and 5,000 meter distances are two of the events in which Iharos bettered world records in Europe during last season. The Hungarian also topped world marks in the 3,000 meters, 1,500 meters and two miles in addition to sharing the world record with his teammates in the 6,000 meter relay.

In today's spectacular through rain-dampened race, Stephens jumped off to a lead after one mile and was trailed closely by Iharos and Power until he changed tactics. He dropped back during the second mile and once fell thirty-five yards back of the arm-waving Hungarian, who appeared a certain winner.

But in the final mile he moved up to three yards of Iharos and then spurted like a sprinter on the final lap to win with space to spare. Australians gave him a tremendous ovation.

N.Y. Herald Trib 23 XII 25

Plan Yule Broadcasts To Hungary

Messages From Relatives in U. S.

The Iron Curtain will lift a little Monday when Christmas messages are broadcast to villagers in Hungary from their relatives in the United States.

For the last few weeks Tibor Florian, Hungarian poet, has traveled with his tape recorders to towns in the eastern United States, gathering messages in Hungarian homes.

The day after Christmas these greetings will be beamed by Radio Free Europe to people in Hungary who have already been alerted to tune them in.

Mr. Florian has recorded messages in New York City, Yonkers and Hastings-on-Hudson, N. Y.; Fairfield, Bridgeport and South Norwalk, Conn.; Woodbridge, N. J., and Elyria, Ohio.

In the recorded messages, individuals in Hungary are identified by catchwords and nicknames known only to the families or persons addressed. For instance, "God Child of Uncle Sam" to "Red Forest," or "This is my birthday" to "Evangelical Forest." Names of small towns and villages are never given, though the counties and larger cities are called by name.

Mr. Florian said that if the letters received from Hungarians are an indication, whole villages of people will be gathered around their radios Monday, hoping to hear the voices of their absent loved ones.

Letters refer to the program in guarded language. Though it is not illegal to listen to Radio Free Europe in the satellites, it is unlawful to listen in groups or to disseminate information from the programs, he said.

Shift in Soviet Policy Challenge to the West

(This is the second of three articles on the situation in the Middle East by Don Cook, head of the London bureau of the New York Herald Tribune, who has just returned from an assignment in that area.)

By Don Cook

LONDON.

Soviet communism, in opening what the British Foreign Office has called "a new act in the drama of the struggle for power"—a drive to subvert the Middle East—has adopted an entirely new technique that has left Western diplomacy and the United States in particular at loss for a "counter concept, momentarily at least.

The instrument of Communist power in Europe has been strong, disciplined and militant Communist parties. East of the Elbe River these parties, backed by the Soviet Army, have successfully swallowed one democratic government after another. In Western Europe the threat of internal subversion has been successfully met and halted by the Marshall plan concept and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—twin pillars of economic and military strength.

Warfare One Instrument

In the Far East the Communist instrument of power has been open warfare: In China, Malaya, Burma, Indochina, Indonesia, Korea and the Philippines fighting has been incited to create the chaos and the conditions for Communist accession to power which the Communist parties themselves have not been strong enough to achieve. One by one these threats have also been met in the Far East, and if not defeated at least stabilized and contained.

Now in the Middle East this new phase of the struggle for power is featured by a sort of Communist "Marshall plan" technique in reverse. It is almost as if the Russians had studied the lessons of Western Europe and found that closer friends could be gained with unfettered aid than with strings attached. Aid, trade and assistance offered on remarkably free and generous terms are the current Communist weapons in the Middle East. This is a new technique, and it requires a new answer from the West and from the United States in particular.

Certainly "massive retaliation" is no answer to this situation unless it be massive economic retaliation. And even if the answer lies purely in a new Marshall plan for the Middle East, there has to be boldness and sweep and action.



Herald Tribune—United Press

Egyptian Prime Minister Lt. Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser, who made the arms deal with Czechoslovakia.

longer is there nowhere else for Arab governments to turn for military equipment or economic aid. No longer is the West in a position to do business here on a take it or leave it basis.

Change Called For

What this means in how the West does business in this part of the world is part of the hard thinking that must now be done in Washington and London. One thing is certain: The West cannot do business the way it has and expect to meet Communist competition.

It is altogether too easy in the Middle East these days to understand why Col. Nasser "had to make his deal with the Czechs." (He would have been deposed by the Army and his successor would have made a far worse deal.) Or to understand how it is that 14,000,000 bales of American surplus cotton hanging over the market have depressed things so that Egypt has no outlet for its No. 1 crop unless the Communist bloc takes 25 or 30 per cent. Or to recognize that any government is essentially free to seek aid wherever it wants.

There is very little inherent loyalty in the Middle East today to "democracy" or the "free way of life" as a concept for the

will not be sufficient to meet the Soviet Union in the economic contest opening in the Middle East.

Ineffective Arguments

While it may be perfectly true to reason that the Soviet Union cannot deliver effectively on its promises, or is a bad performer and not the sort of economic partner one gets along with comfortably, none of these arguments is of itself going to stop the Arab nations from embracing Soviet aid.

A case recently in Egypt illustrates the point. The Egyptians are in need of diesel locomotives. The United States has a \$40,000,000 aid program to Egypt and was prepared to give locomotives. The Egyptians said they wanted diesel-hydraulic locomotives. The United States aid authorities said diesel-electric would be better. The Egyptians said they had some British diesel-electrics that were no good and they preferred diesel-hydraulic. The United States said they would only give diesel-electric locomotives, and anyway American diesel-electrics were better than British diesel-electrics.

So the Egyptians, after weeks of such exchanges, agreed to take the diesel-electrics. Then bids went out in the United States, but when the bids closed it was found that they had not been distributed widely enough under the law. So the bids were canceled and the contract reopened. The same thing happened a second time, this time the cancellation resulted from the writing of the specifications.

Hungary Wins Out

Three times the contract verged on completion. Meanwhile, the Hungarians entered the picture with an offer to supply locomotives in a cotton-barter deal. Less than three weeks ago, the Egyptians announced that they were obtaining eighty locomotives from Hungary—no strings attached, no argument over specifications, and a chance to unload surplus cotton.

This is the sort of thing that the Arab governments talk about when they complain over "interference in internal affairs," and this is the sort of free-wheeling economic incursion which Communism is enjoying in this part of the world.

Exactly the same thing happened in the Egyptian arms deal with Czechoslovakia. Prime Minister Lt. Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser told the American and British governments four months before he closed his deal that he was considering it. The American counter-offer had so many strings attached he would not go along. And he turned then to the Communists for his arms.

This is not to say that plain blackmail should be paid to the Arab states. But it does mean that no longer do the Western powers have things their own way in the Middle East. No

simple reason that very few people in this part of the world know anything at all of these concepts. The political structure is feudal. Whether aid comes from feudal Communist or a free system makes little difference to the Egyptian peasant hoisting water by the bucket from the Nile—nor, evidently, to his Premier.

Time for Playing Boldly

To instill new loyalties, to demonstrate and dramatize the inherent worth of a free system as opposed to a Communist system, to stir imagination and hope and attachment—these are the first tasks of meeting Communist competition in this part of the world. This will require not only positive action, but also some negative action.

Some people in the Middle East are going to have to be told they are bad boys, and others are going to have to be rewarded. But one way or another a process of sorting friends from enemies, liabilities from assets, is going to begin. This will take some hard decisions and cause some difficult times in the conduct of foreign policy. But until the Western powers assert in strong terms what the test of friends is to be and what rewards will follow, the Middle East is going to remain shifting and incoherent.

By no means are all the cards in Communist hands. But unless the West plays boldly it may find itself folding on a winning hand.

(The last article will appear tomorrow.)

Times 24 XII 1945

Sweden and Hungary to Trade

VIENNA, Dec. 26 (Reuters)

—Under an agreement signed in Budapest today, Sweden will supply Hungary with cellulose, iron ore, ball-bearings and special steels in return for textiles, food, agricultural produce, half-manufactured aluminum and certain machinery. This was reported tonight by the Budapest radio.