

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

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Yalta: 1956

It is frustrating to know that something big is transpiring in the Tito-Khrushchev conferences at Yalta and yet not to know the substance. The circumstances of the talks add to the mystery—first, Khrushchev's surprise visit to Belgrade, then the sudden departure of Tito and Khrushchev together on a "vacation" to Yalta, then the arrival of Soviet Prime Minister Bulganin and the new post-Stalin Prime Minister of Hungary, Erno Geroe.

This much is known: Tito has been unhappy that "de-Stalinization" has not taken place more rapidly in the Balkans particularly, and in the satellites generally. He also reportedly has been irritated by some of the efforts of the Soviet Communist Party to checkmate his liberalizing influence. It is a matter of record that Bulganin warned Poland against allowing too much criticism, particularly in the press.

It is not unlikely that the logical result of the denunciation of Stalin has been the creation of ideological blocs within the Kremlin and the international Communist hierarchy. Tito, since the obeisance of Khrushchev and Bulganin on their trip to Belgrade in June, 1955, has taken on almost coequal status in Marxist councils, and it may be that the Kremlin feels that it must try to win him or at least show him respect.

If Tito remains a dedicated Marxist, and if there have been signs that recent Soviet flattery may have gone to his head, it also is true that he has been a champion of Yugoslav independence. This is what brought him his status in the first place, and it is not likely that he will relinquish easily his ideas of a looser federation of national communism. Tito also is at heart a realist, and he knows that recent Yugoslav performance has caused many misgivings in the West, and that President Eisenhower must make a decision soon on whether continuation of American military aid to Yugoslavia is warranted. His presence at Yalta thus incurs a considerable risk of alienation from the West which he must feel is justified by the seriousness of the discussion and his ability later to make his views clear.

With no more evidence than this to go on, it is best neither to infer that Tito is standing up for Western-style freedom nor to conclude that he has gone beyond the pale, but instead to reserve judgment.

The N.Y. Times Oct. 4. 1956

HUNGARIANS SEEKING U. S. AUTHORS' BOOKS

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Oct. 3 (AP)—Ernest Hemingway is the start of a new look here at Western writers, if publishing and literary critics get their way. They talk and write as if they will.

With Mr. Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea" already a sell-out, the critics are belaboring the Communist Government for the delay in translating the Nobel Peace Prize novel. They are calling for publication of the works of other Western writers.

William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, Sinclair Lewis and Thornton Wilder are most frequently mentioned.

The head of the government publishing industry has promised it will be forthcoming.

The literary reviews deride both the Stalin era decrees that banned such authors in Hungary, and the Communists in the West who tried to influence their East European comrades against writers such as Mr. Hemingway.

The Literary Gazette said in a review:

"The well-known Howard Fast had the right to be wrong in his low opinion of the book (Mr. Hemingway's). It is the right of every Hungarian reader to make his own decision in accord with individual taste, conscience and point of view."

As yet, however, one cannot see new Western books by non-Communist authors in the bookshop windows, either in the original language or in Hungarian translation.

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Russia Lends \$25 Million To Hungary

VIENNA Austria, Oct. 4 (AP) Russia has granted an emergency credit of 100 million rubles (\$25 million at the Soviet-fixed exchange rate) to Hungary to help that Communist nation out of its growing economic crisis.

The official Hungarian news agency, MTI, said 60 million rubles would be available to Hungary in coke, cotton, synthetic rubber and lead, with the remaining 40 millions in a cash loan.

Repayment is to be made over five years, from 1960 to 1965, in goods, at an interest rate of 2 per cent.

It was the second time in two weeks that Russia has felt it necessary to go to the aid of a satellite with emergency credit. On Sept. 23 Moscow announced a 100-million ruble emergency credit to Poland, which has had to reduce exports of coal to keep industry going.

The Hungarian government acknowledged a fuel crisis has crippled public transport and threatens a cold winter. Hungarian oil fields are failing, and almost daily coal miners are scolded in the press for failing to meet production quotas.

Reports here have also suggested that the Hungarian harvest will not be as good as expected and that a bread shortage now looms for the winter, atop the chronic shortage of meat.

The Washington Post
and Times Herald
Oct. 7, 1956

200,000 View Coffins Of Hungarian 'Titoists'

By Endre Marton

BUDAPEST, Oct. 6 (AP)—Approximately 200,000 Hungarians marched for more than three hours today before the black coffins of former Foreign Minister Laszlo Rajk and three other top-ranking Communists who were executed seven years ago by their Communist rivals in a Stalin-era purge.

These men, taken from unmarked and dishonored graves, were given honorary reburial in a cemetery which is to become a national pantheon.

They had been executed for alleged treason, plotting with Yugoslavia's Marshal Tito and United States intelligence services. They have since been declared innocent and "rehabilitated," and the man who forced their trial, old Stalinist Matyas Rakosi, has been deposed as Hungarian Communist Party leader.

Today's parade differed from similar demonstrations of recent years in its spontaneity. There were only a few organized groups. Most of the people came individually, many bringing flowers, some only a single carnation.

[In Vienna, Western diplomats expressed the opinion that the march of the crowd was a silent demonstration against communism.]

The exhumed bodies of Rajk, Maj. Gen. Georgy Palffy, Dr. Tibor Szoeny, and Andras Szalai were placed on biers at the entrance of the Kossuth Mausoleum in Budapest's Central Cemetery.

Rajk was a member of the Communist Party's Politburo;

Gen. Palffy and Dr. Szoeny were members of the Party Central Committee, and Szalai was in charge of cadre affairs in the party. All confessed, were sentenced to death and executed in 1949, and were "rehabilitated" earlier this year.

Wives, children, and other relatives of the executed Communists clustered around the coffins in the icy wind. Julia Rajk, stony faced widow of Rajk, and her 8-year-old son Laszlo stood a little distance from the others. Former Premier Imre Nagy, expelled from the party by Rakosi, embraced Mrs. Rajk and kissed her.

The Hungarian Cabinet, headed by President Istvan Dobi and Prime Minister Andras Hegedus, attended the ceremony. Only the party's First Secretary, Erno Gero, who is reported still in the Crimea, where he conferred with Soviet party chief Nikita Khrushchev and Tito, was absent.

Speaking for the party and the government, Deputy Prime Minister Antal Apro said "There never was a more tragic duty than ours, rehabilitating our dead comrades whom we cannot resurrect.

"We deeply regret that we believed in malicious slandering that led to their martyrdom. We have called to account and will call to account those who were responsible for their fate. Never again shall such monstrous things happen."

He assailed the "personality cult, Stalinist blunders and their imitators in Hungary."

N.Y. Times

Oct. 7, 1956

SANDOR FUREDI, 81, VIOLINIST, IS DEAD

Player of Magyar Themes
Gave Concerts Frequently
at Aeolian Hall Here

Sandor Furedi, concert violinist, died Friday in his home at 804 West 180th Street. His age was 81.

At his retirement twenty years ago Mr. Furedi was well known as a player of classical Magyar themes as well as other concert works. Born in Hungary, he entered the Royal Academy of Budapest at the age of 13, and the next year won the Franz Liszt Scholarship, which carried him through college.

Mr. Furedi became a pupil of Jenő Hubay, whose music he was afterwards to play at concerts here. At 18 he gave his first concert, with Erno Dohnányi, noted Hungarian composer, at the piano.

After his graduation from the academy, Mr. Furedi became soloist and concertmaster of the Strauss Imperial Orchestra in Vienna. He gave many recitals in the capitals of Europe, and in 1903 won a gold medal and diploma at the International Wagner Festival in Berlin.

Mr. Furedi came to this country shortly after World War I and appeared frequently on the concert stage, particularly at Aeolian Hall. There his renditions of Beethoven's "Kreutzer Sonata" and Saint-Saëns' "Rondo Capriccioso" were well received. He also taught many pupils who later became eminent, including Erna Rubinstein and Sandor Roth.

He leaves his wife, Selma; two sons, Stephen and Colman; a daughter, Mrs. Emery I. Fried, and four grandchildren.

W. Y. Herald Tribune
Oct. 8, 1956

Aids Hungary on Fuel

VIENNA, Oct. 7 (AP).—Yugoslavia is helping Hungary to overcome a fuel crisis, Radio Budapest said today. It said two Yugoslav tankers carrying gasoline arrived at the Hungarian Danube port of Csepel yesterday. A third is expected tomorrow.

The Washington Post
and Times Herald

Oct. 11, 1956

Rajk-Case Police Jailed In Hungary

BUDAPEST, Oct. 10 (AP)—Four high Communist police officials were arrested Oct. 5 and charged with arranging the "fake trial" that led to execution of Foreign Minister Laszlo Rajk, it was announced today.

Those arrested include Col. Vladimir Farkas, former deputy chief of Hungary's secret police and son of disgraced former Defense Minister Gen. Mihaly Farkas. The others are Erdi Faludi, Gyoergy Szentes and Gyoerly Szanto.

Rajk was reburied with state honors last Saturday.

Sources said Vladimir Farkas was deputy of Gen. Peter Gabor, ousted chief of Hungary's secret police. Gabor now is serving a life term for "anti-state activities."

[In Vienna, Hungarian refugees said Farkas was known for his cruelty in interrogation. He was reported to have arrested and tortured a Party Central Committee member, Janos Kadar, who recently was rehabilitated and is now a member of the Politburo.

[Radio Budapest, monitored in London, said meantime that the Hungarian Supreme Court has freed Bishop Lajos Ordas of the Evangelical Church. The bishop was sentenced in 1948 for currency offenses, Reuters reported.]

The N.Y. Times Oct. 11, 1956



ATTEND REBURIAL RITES IN BUDAPEST: Zoltan Vas, left, and Gyula Kallay, right, at services held last Saturday in the Hungarian capital. They were among the Communist leaders who took part in services for Laszlo Rajk and three other top Communists who were executed in the Stalin era for alleged treason, and who since have been "rehabilitated." Their bodies were removed from unmarked graves to capital's central cemetery. About 200,000 persons joined cortege, in what Western diplomats called anti-Red gesture.

Associated Press