

CANADA AND THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956 A CANADIAN CHRONICLE

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23 October–4 November 1956¹

In writing about the reaction of Canada to the Hungarian revolution of 1956 one does not need to write revisionist history; the topic remains unexplored to date. The role Canada played in the history of the Suez affair so thoroughly overshadowed other events at the time, that the story of Canadian-Hungarian relations during the revolution has not yet found its way into the annals of Canada.

Probably due to the lack of accessible archival resources at the time of publication, Professor N. Dreisziger's book on the Hungarian-Canadians (1982)² devoted only five pages to the decade of the 1950s. James Eayrs' excellent analysis of the period was written in the late 1950s³ without access to memoirs and the archives of External Affairs. The memoirs and other published writings of L. B. Pearson, J. W. Pickersgill and L. St Laurent⁴ speak little about the Hungarian revolution. A different approach can be observed in the New Delhi reports of Escott Reid, one of Canada's senior diplomats, who took up the cause of the Magyars in 1956.⁵ Although the relevant papers in the National Archives of Canada have been available since the late 1980s, the more recent publication, *Breaking Ground: The 1956 Hungarian Refugee Movement to Canada*⁶ contains no new archival material.

The recent accessibility of archival material concerning Canadian foreign and immigration policies in the mid-1950s now makes possible the examination of the Canadian position on the Hungarian revolution of 1956. External Affairs, albeit preoccupied with the Suez crisis, was forced to pay some attention to events in Hungary because of public pressure. The interruption of the political "thaw" that started with the death of Stalin in 1953 and threatened the interest of the wheat growers of Canada, however, forced the Canadian government to deal with events in Hungary. L. B. Pearson, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, opposed the American-led anti-Soviet propaganda campaign. He preferred a hands-off policy regarding Hungary in 1956. He did not want to provoke the Soviets and cause a rupture in Commonwealth relations. Many third-world commonwealth nations equated the Suez affair with the Hungarian problem. When some Canadian diplomats such as Escott Reid and Jules Léger, who were sympathetic

Canadian diplomats such as Escott Reid and Jules Léger, who were sympathetic to the plight of the Hungarians, proposed negotiations for mutual troop withdrawals between NATO and the Soviet Union, they were unable to make an impact on the cabinet.

In March 1944 the Germans occupied Hungary. A year later they were expelled and their place was taken by the Red Army. Within two years the liberators put their agents and local communists in charge of the government in Budapest. Mátyás Rákosi, the veteran Hungarian communist, established a totalitarian satellite state based on the Soviet model. The regime maintained itself with the support of a powerful secret police organization and the army of the USSR. In 1953 the Cold War began to "thaw," and the East European satellites of the Soviet Union were allowed to take a new "course." In Hungary a new prime minister, Imre Nagy, introduced reforms and moderated the oppressive features of the regime. Rákosi, however, remained at the helm of the communist party, the governing institution of Hungary. Taking advantage of the post-Stalin power-struggle in the Kremlin, Rákosi managed to remove Nagy. He then planned to arrest his followers in the summer of 1956. By now Khrushchev had begun to consolidate his leadership in Moscow. He ordered the removal and replacement of Rákosi in Hungary, not by Imre Nagy, but by another Muscovite, Ernő Gerő. This was a serious political mistake. Hungarian intellectuals who had kept the public in turmoil since 1953 would not embrace the new leader. The weak hand of the Kremlin, the temporary paralysis of the State Security Police in Hungary and the events in Poland encouraged and emboldened students, writers, poets, journalists and professors, to challenge the regime day-by-day. Once the working class joined their movement this challenge turned into a revolution. That happened on 23 October 1956.

The Canadian government watched the events in Hungary with the help of the British embassy in Budapest. Canada had not maintained diplomatic relations with Hungary since the 1941 declaration of war on Canada by the Hungarian government. After the Second World War, Canada participated in the drafting of the Hungarian peace treaty of 1947. During the discussions in Paris the Canadian delegation tried to moderate some of the harsher terms the Great Powers imposed on Hungary but with meager results. During the early Cold War days Canada looked upon Hungary as one of the satellites of Russia. All Hungarian attempts to revive the pre-World War Two commercial contacts failed. The show-trial of Cardinal Mindszenty particularly angered the Canadian Catholics and the Canadian-Hungarians. Nevertheless, Canadian diplomats in Prague, Moscow, Belgrade and Warsaw watched events as they unfolded in Hungary. It was not a coincidence that one of them arrived at Budapest on the eve of the revolution.

Tuesday, 23 October 1956

Party Secretary Gerő and János Kádár, present puppet premier of Hungary, returned from talks with Tito to find Budapest the scene of active demonstrations by students, workers and soldiers. Gerő in a radio address rejected student demands for greater national independence. Demonstrators at radio station and army officials who tried to intervene fired on by Security Police (AVH). Soldiers provided arms and ammunition to the rebels and fighting spread through the city.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁷

"On Tuesday, October 23, my wife and I, in our car, crossed the Hungarian border just beyond Subotica," reported A. F. Hart, Chargé d'Affaires at the Canadian Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, to Lester B. Pearson, the Secretary of State for External Affairs. "It was an afternoon of bright, warm sunshine and the golden brown tints of autumn gave the countryside a peaceful, tranquil appearance... By the time we entered Budapest... darkness descended... in the centre we ran into complete confusion: large bodies of students were marching in chaotic fashion here, there and everywhere."⁸ The chargé stayed until October 26. By then he understood the surprising events that took place in Hungary.

Hart was astonished that an uprising of such large proportions could take place in a Communist-controlled state under Soviet occupation. This is surprising considering events in Poland days earlier. The diplomat characterized the revolution as an anti-Communist, an anti-Soviet and a nationalist insurrection. Hart considered the rebels realistic because they did not advocate the immediate eradication of Communism, but accepted communists like Imre Nagy and János Kádár as transitional leaders. The diplomat correctly predicted that freedom fighters would soon seek to go further and discard all traces of Communism.

One can only speculate how this report could have influenced the attitude of the Canadian government if it would have arrived before it actually did on October 30.

Wednesday, 24 October 1956

Soviet armoured column entered Budapest at 4:30 a.m., reportedly at the request of Gerő. Imre Nagy appointed Premier to succeed Hegedűs. Kádár accused demonstrators of trying to restore capitalism and warned them to surrender. Fighting continued.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons November 26, 1956.⁹

Canadians first read about the outbreak of a revolution in Budapest in their daily papers. "Hungarians Riot All Night" headlined the early morning edition of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.¹⁰ *The Montreal Star*¹¹ placed the news on the front page: "350 Dead in Hungarian Riot" *The Winnipeg Free Press*¹² gave a romantic characterization of the Hungarian people: "Hungarians unlike the Czechs are the least calculating, the most fiercely impetuous and romantic of European peoples... They are not satisfied to snatch a few apples from the tree of freedom; their instinct is to shake the tree until the fruit rains down."

The prominent members of the Hungarian-Canadian community promptly set to work on behalf of their kinfolk. Within hours Prime Minister Louis St Laurent's office had received numerous telegrams. "In the name of the Grand Committee of the Hungarian Churches and Societies of Montreal, I beg Your Excellency and the Canadian Government, to intervene and protest with the Russian government..." pleaded Dr. Francis Saad, the spokesman of the Montreal Hungarians.¹³ The president of a small Toronto cultural association, the Hungarian Helicon, also addressed St Laurent: "Dear Prime Minister:" he telegraphed Ottawa, "We request you to take immediate action against Russian interference in Hungarian internal affairs and to give all possible help to the Hungarian people fighting for freedom and independence."¹⁴ The Prime Minister's Office could not act promptly. L. B. Pearson had to be consulted at External Affairs and more information was needed from diplomatic posts, from Canada's NATO allies, especially in London and in New York.

Meanwhile, Canadian editorialists advised caution. *The Winnipeg Free Press*¹⁵ warned: "With perils abounding in Eastern Europe, the Western powers will be wise to follow a policy of quiet wariness. It is no time to add the provocations of an aggressive diplomacy to those of the Budapest streets." The Conservative *Globe and Mail*¹⁶ in Toronto was more phlegmatic: "The change we appear to be witnessing in Eastern Europe is very gradual." Both of these influential papers suggested the adoption of a wait-and-see policy. They saw no reason for the disruption of the gradual "thaw" in East-West relations during the past three years. The renewal of the Cold War, the interruption of reviving commercial contacts and the provocation of Russia were all undesirable options.

Thursday, 25 October 1956

Russian party leaders Mikoyan and Suslov arrived in Budapest and Gerő was replaced by Kádár as Party Secretary. Unarmed demonstration in Parliament Square fired on by Security Police and by Russian tanks. Hungarian army units refused to shoot students and workers and joined revolution in large numbers. Kádár and Nagy appealed for end to violence, promising amnesty.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.¹⁷

Two days of disturbances on the streets of Budapest were not enough to interrupt the tranquillity of Canada. News reports indicated that the Hungarian government with the support of the Red Army of the Soviet Union was able to keep the situation under control. *The Montreal Star*¹⁸ headlined: "Deaths Soar As Hungary Riots Continue" but its editorial showed continuing distrust and skepticism: "Long-time Communists are still in control. The freedom resulting will be limited, but hopes have a new perspective already." The *Toronto Globe and Mail*¹⁹ declared that [the] "Budapest Riots Quelled," and for the West nothing left to do but to "...press home the propaganda advantages they have been given." The Canadian organization Mutual Co-operation League sent letters to the US Secretary of State J. F. Dulles and to L. B. Pearson, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, warning them against being too optimistic about the changes going on in the "red realms." The authors claimed that the communist collective leadership and not the revolutionaries still guided events in Budapest. In their view little had changed east of Vienna. Tito and Khrushchev were directing things in Hungary.²⁰ Neither did the Canadian-Hungarian community had faith in the new politicians and the intellectuals of Hungary who attempted to steer their country towards reform between 1953 and 1956. The community was willing to support the revolution provided the ruling elite was swept away. They had no faith in Imre Nagy at this conjecture. On this point the cautious attitude of the press and the Hungarian community differed little. While Hungarians from Hamilton presented a petition of protest to Senator W. Ross Macdonald with the request that it be sent to the United Nations, Toronto's Hungarian United Church held a special prayer service for the restoration of peace and democracy in Hungary.²¹ On that day, October 25, the Prime Minister's Office had received just one demand for action from a small local association, the Toronto Hungarian Sport and Social Club, which safely could be ignored.²² Ottawa was more interested in reaping the results of the "thaw" and did not wish to upset the trade agreements achieved in the previous six months. The Canadian cabinet concluded on that day: "Whatever happened in Hungary at the moment should not affect Canadian action on the [trade] agreement" [just concluded with Hungary].²³

The ministers were reacting to the presentation of Lester B. Pearson, who reported to the cabinet that a provisional agreement had been reached on the text of a trade agreement with Hungary. The treaty, which was yet to be ratified, was to cover a period of three years during which Hungary was to purchase 300,000 tons of wheat and, in turn, establish a commercial office in Canada. Pearson suggested that, in view of recent developments in Hungary, it might be desirable to delay the signing of the agreement for a few days. If the Russians were suddenly to re-impose full control over the country, the present would not be the moment

to take this formal step.²⁴ During the same day the *Winnipeg Free Press*²⁵ commented that Hungary had just been granted most-favoured-nation status. The paper also quoted an unidentified Ottawa source: "A Canadian government trade official noted that the new regimes being established in Poland and Hungary would probably be anxious to provide more food and other necessities for the average man in their countries. This could lead to increased purchases in Canada of wheat and other commodities."

The trade agreement was brought to a satisfactory conclusion one day before the outbreak of the revolution. This happened although Hungary needed no wheat (the grain was bought for re-export) and had very little cash to pay for the transaction, despite the anger of Canadian Catholics over the imprisonment of Cardinal Mindszenty on trumped up charges by the Hungarian Communist regime and the justified fear of Canadian officials of Communist subversion. All these factors were overlooked in hope of a new market for Canadian wheat. Tomorrow could bring an end to the disturbances in Hungary or victory for the rebels. In either case, the sale appeared secured. The deal been negotiated with the representatives of the communist government but, in case the government was overthrown, the recognition of a new regime could confirm the deal. Uncertainty, however, was counterproductive to business. The revolution acquired a nuisance value.

Friday, 26 October 1956

Fighting spread to provinces. Rebels aided by Hungarian troops, claimed control of Western Hungary. Revolutionary delegations called on Premier Nagy to press demands for a more representative government, free elections, equality of status for Hungary, withdrawal of Soviet troops and economic reforms.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.²⁶

On that day the fighting in Hungary continued unabated. The international community began to pay close attention to events in Budapest. Canadian-Hungarians viewed their old country more sympathetically and intensified pressure on their government to get involved in the affair.

Canadian press headlines showed enthusiasm for the revolution: "Most of Hungary Under Rebel Control" (*Montreal Star*)²⁷, "Russia Without Mask" (*The Winnipeg Free Press*)²⁸, "Massacre in Budapest" (*The Globe and Mail*)²⁹ but the inside pages reflected the deep suspicion of communist eastern Europe. *The Winnipeg Free Press* warned that the rebel students in Hungary were the tools of Titoist leadership. *The Montreal Star* warned that "there is no doubt of the outcome [of the Hungarian uprising]. The limit of Moscow's concession is "Socialist

equality," not freedom. "Whatever has to be done to suppress the rebellion will be done... A tightening of the reins is to be expected." Pearson showed little interest in the events that took place in a far away country. When he addressed a group of journalists that day he warned them about threats to freedom of the press, a rather irrelevant topic for the moment, but made no statement about Hungary. The journalists did not ask him about Canada's position on this matter (*The Montreal Star*).³⁰

The silence was deafening. Only the minorities of East European origin cried out. The prime minister's secretary informed St Laurent about the receipt of 32 telegrams begging for action on behalf of a free Hungary.³¹ The members of the congregation of the First Hungarian Presbyterian Church in Toronto held a general meeting on that day. They sent a telegram to the prime minister asking him to protest the Russian army massacres in Hungary at the Security Council of the United States. The congregation suggested that Louis St Laurent request the Security Council to compel the Russians to evacuate Hungary.³² The Port Colborne Hungarian Roman and Greek Catholic Association also requested the prime minister to turn to the UN.³³ "The Western democracies, apparently unconcerned and without protest, speechlessly watch the trampling underfoot of human rights and dignity by the communists. Not realizing that if our people fall the gate is open for the communists to the west... We are asking you Mr. Prime Minister to raise your voice in the name of humanity, against this tyranny and condemn the Budapest and Moscow communists for their deeds," protested and pleaded the Hungarian Canadian Christian Association of Niagara Falls, Ontario.³⁴ They asked their local member of parliament, W. L. Houck, to forward their demand to the prime minister's office.³⁵ Other Hungarian associations sent telegrams of a similar vein.³⁶ The Canadian Citizens of Lithuanian Origin in Toronto was the only non-Hungarian organization that made representations on behalf of Hungary.³⁷ All this activity on behalf of a "communist" nation made certain civil servants wary, regardless of the humble style of the telegrams that mainly requested diplomatic action.

The Department of Citizenship and Immigration prepared a list of Hungarian organizations in Canada identifying them either as pro- or anti-communist.³⁸ The Department of External Affairs informed the RCMP about a planned demonstration of the Hungarians before the Soviet Embassy. They did not want to upset the Russians. In the eyes of some Hungary was not only part of the communist empire but also the last ally of Nazi Germany during the Second World War. When the Toronto-Hungarians placed a wreath for the dead of Hungary at the Toronto City Hall Cenotaph, Canadian veterans protested against this "desecration" by the members of a former enemy nation.³⁹

Meanwhile, in New York the UN representatives of France, the UK and the USA met secretly at the initiative of the United States and agreed to launch a new propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union. They prepared a letter re-

questing the President of the Security Council to convene an urgent meeting for the consideration of an item entitled, "The Situation in Hungary."⁴⁰ Despite Pearson's dislike for the State Department's initiative, which he characterized as "unfortunate," once the major powers had made their move, Pearson felt obliged to react.⁴¹ Domestic pro-Hungarian activities, despite their limited nature, also prompted him to respond.

T. Wainman-Wood, the prime minister's secretary, informed St Laurent that Pearson was ready to call on him in the afternoon concerning a statement the Secretary of State was planning to make on Saturday.⁴² Earlier that day W. H. Agnew of the Citizenship Branch informed Pearson's office that Hungarian-Canadians were planning to demonstrate in front of the Soviet Embassy on Sunday, October 28. A Hungarian delegation, the representatives of the National Hungarian Federation, was pressing for an interview with Pearson. He agreed to receive them.⁴³ The Secretary's office was mobilized for the domestic phase of Pearson's counter-offensive. Preparations were made to provide background material on Hungary to Pearson for his Saturday speech at the Toronto Rotary Club. A night telegram was sent to each of the protesting Hungarian organizations.⁴⁴ The revolution received Canadian approval. Then Pearson and his advisors turned their attention to the United Nations.

Pearson preferred to let Hungary work out its own affairs internally and provide no excuse for further intervention by the Soviet Union. He had delayed any open condemnation of Soviet action in Hungary as long as he could. He had recently contributed to the thawing of the Cold War when he visited the Soviet Union. His staff worked intensively for months on wheat deals with that country as well as with Poland and Hungary. Neither did he wish to undo his own achievements nor disturb good relations with the non-aligned members of the Commonwealth, whose positions often contained strong pro-Soviet components. Until the Hungarian Revolution there had been a warm relationship between Canada and India. This special relationship had been supported by Canadian public opinion and particularly by liberal and left-wing intellectuals.⁴⁵ The Indian representative at the United Nations held the view that "the eastern European states had no right to national freedom and independence since the Soviet Union had a right to have satellites on its western borders."⁴⁶ Once the American initiative was made, however, he supported the USA, the country he considered the pivot of Canadian security. He was now ready to clarify Canada's position on the Hungarian question to his UN delegation and Canada's other representatives abroad. External Affairs sent instructions to the Permanent Representatives of Canada at the United Nations ordering them to protest the Soviet use of force, the violation of human right and of the Hungarian Peace Treaty of 1947 to which Canada was a signatory. Pearson warned his diplomats that only constructive steps should be taken. The American propaganda campaign must be toned down.

The Security Council should keep the situation under review or form a fact-finding committee. He continued:

We are interested in this idea especially if India and Yugoslavia take an active part and would see some advantages in inviting USSR to join in sponsoring this or amended proposal although they would probably reject it. If they did by any chance accept, it might provide only foreseeable context in which Hungarian leaders could talk officially to the West. In any case we would hope UN action might facilitate an end to the fighting...However, if USSR would participate fact finding committee might have more than propaganda value.⁴⁷

Pearson wanted the fighting in Hungary to stop and to obtain Moscow's recognition of the new Budapest regime. At that point the recently negotiated commercial treaty between Canada and Hungary could have a firm basis despite the revolution.

Saturday, 27 October 1956

Nagy broadened his cabinet by bringing in Béla Kovács and Zoltán Tildy of the Smallholder's Party, but Politburo remained predominantly communist. Fighting continued. Soviet reinforcements moved in from Roumania.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁴⁸

On this day at a private meeting in Paris the representatives of the United Kingdom, France and the US informed the members of the NATO Council that their governments had agreed in principle to raising before the Security Council the question of Soviet military action in the Hungarian uprising. The Council was unanimous in agreeing that NATO should now take no action whatsoever on this issue, beyond that members keep each other informed. Paul Henri Spaak of Belgium suggested that "Third-World" leaders be asked to intervene with the Soviet authorities but the Council rejected this proposal.⁴⁹ Several factors caused major distractions from the events in Hungary. The American election campaign was in progress. Israeli, French and British military authorities were in the process of planning and organizing the invasion of Egypt. Furthermore, the uncertain political situation in Hungary dictated a cautious great power attitude towards Hungary.

Telegrams of concerned Canadian-Hungarians and other citizens and their organizations demanding action on behalf of the Hungarian revolutionaries were arriving at the Ottawa ministries. The Council of Canadian Hungarian Churches and Societies of Manitoba telegraphed the prime minister:

...we beg you and the Canadian government to intervene and protest at the USSR government against the illegal Soviet domination in Hungary and request to intervene with UN to protest right of a member for independence...⁵⁰

The Canadian Croatian Club also sent a telegram. The telegram of another East European emigré association read: "In unity with our Hungarian brothers whose country was subjected to the criminal actions of Soviet imperialism, all member nations of the Mutual Cooperation League demand your help for the liberation of all nations enslaved by communism."⁵¹ Meanwhile, in Montreal the large Hungarian community began a day of feverish activity. A requiem mass was celebrated at the Church of Our Lady of Hungary in memory of those who fell in the anti-Soviet rebellion. The priest urged his parishioners to do everything humanly possible to help the victims. A blood-drive was initiated. Militant Hungarian-Canadians started to organize a legion to fight the Russians in Hungary. According to The Montreal Star's reporter, close to 100 persons signed up on that day.

By noon Pearson was ready to inform the public and an anxious Hungarian delegation of his thoughts concerning events in Budapest. He addressed the members of the Rotary Club in Toronto. "In Hungary," he began, "it is hard to know what is going on behind the smoke and fire of the popular uprising which is being fought out to the end with all the fierce pride and reckless courage for which the Hungarian people are famous. But it is clear that here too [as in Poland] the hunger for freedom, personal and national, has fired a people's demand for the breaking of the shackles that bound the country to Moscow." After praising the heroic and patriotic students and workers of Budapest he continued: "...the effect of whatever happens will surely not be lost on the uncommitted countries whom the Russians have been wooing in recent months..." "It would be naive to imagine that the Moscovite Empire is already crumbling..." Nagy said he is building national communism. Can national communism and the Russians live side by side? "We can only hope that they will... What can we do in Canada, and other free countries; what should we do in such a situation? This is a question which I know presents itself with a special, an agonizing urgency to Canadians of Polish and Hungarian descent; citizens of our country who, though Canadians first in loyalty and devotion, cannot forget their homelands; and cannot help but be deeply stirred by the heroism and the tragedy of what is going on there now." He rejoiced in seeing cracks in the Iron Curtain, but, he said, "...our first concern must be for the present position of the peoples involved... Rash and ill-judged foreign intervention or interference from the West, however well intentioned, would not help these Poles and Hungarians... It might indeed hurt them by provoking a cruel and powerful reaction from those who may be waiting for an opportunity to move in and destroy these new liberating and national forces, using the excuse of foreign threats or interference from our side. But we *can* let the people of these nations... know that we are following with deep and strong admiration their struggle... We can also express our condemnation and abhorrence of brutal and repressive measures taken against them, especially by foreign forces from Russia." The US consulted Canada and others about bringing the issue to

the Security Council. "The view of the Canadian government is that this should be done...in order to prevent further bloodshed and to enable Hungary [to] choose its own course as a new member of the United Nations." Russia should work for this too. "The force of world opinion must be mobilized in favour of the forces of national freedom in these countries and against foreign intervention, and foreign domination. The United Nations is where this should be and can be done." Communists and fellow travellers in Canada should take a second look. The West must be united and unprovocative.⁵²

Pearson delivered two messages. Canadian-Hungarians were told that their people were famous, proud, fierce and courageous. The minister, however, spoke against intervention. He reassured the public, generally anti-Soviet and anti-Communist, that no risks would be taken. He accused the Red Army of brutality, and asked Moscow to mend its way to please international public opinion which wanted peace and fair treatment for the Hungarians. Canada offered sympathy without action.

Following the delivery of his speech Pearson met a group of Canadian-Hungarians. A six-man delegation asked him "to compel the Soviet government to withdraw its troops from Hungarian soil." The petitioners asked that the Canadian Government officially denounce the brutality of the Soviet armies and provide some medical aid and food supplies to the Hungarian insurgents. Pearson was encouraging but made no commitment. He told the delegation that he was pressing the UN on behalf of the Hungarians but everyone should beware of "hasty and illadvised" action.⁵³

In New York the United Nations Security Council was summoned to meet at 4 p.m. EST to consider the Hungarian situation. The president of the Council issued the call after Britain, France and the United States requested an urgent meeting to deal with "the situation in Hungary." A courier from the American delegation handed in the official request at UN headquarters in the early afternoon. Earlier, Spain had protested to the UN against recent Soviet troop actions in both Hungary and Poland.⁵⁴

At sundown several hundred Canadians of Hungarian origin gathered in the Polish War Veterans' Hall in Montreal to hear speakers laud the rebels' struggle against Soviet oppression. Dr. George Lengváry, a local community leader addressing the crowd, demanded that the United Nations intervene and organize free elections in Hungary.⁵⁵ In Toronto 3,000 Hungarians marched through city streets to place a wreath at the Cenotaph to honour their former country men killed in Hungary the preceding week. A requiem mass was celebrated at the St. Elizabeth Church. Eight hundred Magyars dressed in mourning took part in the solemn ceremony. The more militant members of the community wanted to give armed support to the revolutionaries. The Legion of Freedom, a brigade of war veterans and volunteers, was founded that day. Several hundred strong on paper, the brigade opened a recruiting campaign at its headquarters at the Hungarian

Sports Club in Toronto. Eugene Tömöry, a retired Hungarian general and president of the Rákóczy Association, an organization of Hungarian war veterans, headed the Legion of Freedom. Initially, the Canadian Hungarian Federation sponsored this Legion. About 100 Hungarians from Montreal indicated that they also wished to join. "The main problem is getting to Europe,' a spokesman for this group said to a reporter from The Montreal Star. 'Once we get there, we know we'll be able to secure arms.' He said that Hungarian sources in Ottawa would be contacted in the hope that air transportation might be arranged."⁵⁶

The Canadian government could not tolerate the establishment of a private army to fight a war abroad against a country with which Canada was at peace. The problem had to be treated delicately since public opinion by now was pro Hungarian.

Sunday, 28 October 1956

Fighting eased as Revolutionary Councils gained control of provincial towns. Nagy denied [the] Russian claim that [the] uprising was [a] counter-revolution and named it "an all-embracing unifying, national and democratic movement." He asked for immediate withdrawal of Soviet forces from Budapest and promised to disband the secret police. Soviet intervention [was] condemned in the U. N.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁵⁷

On October 28, five days after the start of the Hungarian revolution, the Security Council began debating an American-British-French protest proposal against the Soviet armed intervention in Hungary. The proposal had the tacit support of several Western countries, including Canada.⁵⁸ Canada had private reservations about the usefulness of an anti-Soviet propaganda campaign on behalf of Hungary, but the delegation in New York would not openly challenge the American approach at this time. During the course of the Security Council debate, a diplomat from South East Asia suggested off the record to the Canadian delegation that the main purpose of the exercise was to convey to the people of Hungary that their struggle for freedom had the attention of the western powers, who were following developments with the most sympathy. Canadian diplomats at the UN were told that the Council debate could strengthen the hand of the Hungarian government in its negotiations with the Soviet Union. Some accused the US of exploiting the situation for domestic purposes while others claimed that the Council's action was necessary to head off a possible request for support from a rebel government in Western Hungary.

Through its junior diplomats the USA solicited support for a UN resolution. Canada was approached. The Afro-Asian bloc showed no enthusiasm. P. J. Nehru, prime minister of India, believed that there was a civil war in Hungary and there should be no interference in Hungarian domestic affairs. Nevertheless, an agenda to discuss Hungary was adopted by a vote of 9-1-1. The Council was to be reconvened at the discretion of the President. Private talks on the matter were scheduled for Monday.⁵⁹

The prime minister's office in Ottawa was still receiving telegrams on behalf of Hungary, but none were sent by the mainstream Canadian organizations. Messages came from the Estonian Society of Montreal, the Loyal Finns of Canada, the Lithuanian Canadian Federation, the Canadian Council for Free Europe and by local Hungarian groups.⁶⁰ Canadians sympathized but feared confrontation, feared war. Canadian veterans remembered that Hungary was a German ally during the Second World War and many Hungarian-Canadians were veterans of the anti-Allied armed forces.

Canadian-Hungarians took to the streets to demonstrate their support for the new Hungarian revolution and to demand Canadian and, especially, UN action to protect the new freedoms achieved in Eastern Europe. A rally was held in Ottawa with the participation of 600 Hungarians. These were joined by groups representing most of the satellite countries, who declared their solidarity with the Hungarians. The Ottawa police refused to authorize a march on the Soviet embassy, so the participants drove by the Soviet Embassy. Then the procession moved to the national war memorial. The demonstrators laid a wreath, listened to speeches and sang "God Save the Queen." A young man began singing the Hungarian national anthem, "God Bless the Hungarians."

Similar Ontario demonstrations were also held in Hamilton, Welland and Windsor. The Montreal police prevented a Hungarian protest march, much to the dismay of the French press, which showed considerable sympathy for the Hungarians.⁶¹

While talks continued in New York and demonstrations in Canada, ominous signs appeared on the Middle Eastern horizon. Israeli tanks approached Egyptian territories. "Israeli Army Launches Drive Into Egypt," read the headline of the next day's *Montreal Star*.

Monday, 29 October 1956

Rebels refused to lay down arms till Soviet troops left Budapest. Some Soviet artillery and tank action continued. Pravda denounced the revolutionary forces.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁶²

The Globe and Mail reported on Tuesday: "Up to late yesterday close to 1,000 persons, mostly of Hungarian extraction, had signed to serve in a Legion of Freedom." Across Canada some 3,000 Hungarian-Canadians expressed a desire to fight for Hungary. Leaders of Montreal's Hungarian community were seeking ways and means to provide transportation for some 100 volunteers. In Toronto 500 enlisted at the temporary HQ of the Legion. The Hungarian leadership in Winnipeg was more cautious. They decided at their meeting on that day, that money – not men – was urgently required to help their former countrymen in strife-torn Hungary. After they discovered that the week-end recruiting drive for volunteers to join the revolutionaries in Hungary had yielded no more than ten men, the Council of Canadian-Hungarian Churches and Societies decided that it was useless to send men to fight.⁶³

The idea of Canadian citizens fighting in Hungary disturbed a number of civil servants in Ottawa. Prime Minister Louis St Laurent's secretary, T. Wainman-Wood, informed External Affairs about two telegrams just received regarding the entry of volunteers from Canada into the struggle in Hungary. One came from the Hungarian Liberation Committee in Vancouver and the other one from the Canadian Hungarian Veterans Association in Welland. "I should appreciate the advice of the Department as to the nature of the reply to be sent to these particular telegrams raising as they do the specter of the problems which we had over volunteers for Israel a few years ago," concluded T. Wainman-Wood.⁶⁴ External Affairs now decided to find out how the US was planning to deal with the potential international complication. Jules Léger was preparing a memorandum for Pearson concerning Canadian editorial comments on Poland and Hungary. He found that most editors simply analyzed events and demonstrated sympathy for the Hungarian people but demanded no action. Only *The Winnipeg Free Press* proposed "large-scale aid and quiet diplomacy."⁶⁵ This proposal was taken to heart. Ottawa concentrated on quiet diplomacy. In public, however, Canada could not afford to disagree with its NATO allies.

External Affairs sent instructions to the Canadian delegation at the United Nations in New York to associate Canada with the action that the governments of France, the UK and the USA had taken in the Security Council on October 28.⁶⁶

In the Middle East all was ready for the invasion of Egypt.

Tuesday, 30 October 1956

Hungarian Air Force issued ultimatum and Soviet forces began to pull out of Budapest. Premier Nagy promised free elections and an end to forced collectivization of agriculture. Cardinal Mindszenty was freed. Moscow published its October 30 declaration on relations with the satellites and announced its will-

ingness to negotiate withdrawal of its Warsaw Pact troops from Hungary, Poland and Roumania. But satellites were to remain "peoples democracies" and stay in Soviet bloc.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁶⁷

The first suggestion of *The Winnipeg Free Press*, material aid to Hungary, was welcomed and acted on by Canadian-Hungarians. A delegation of 30 members of Montreal's Hungarian community gathered at the Montreal Dorval airport at noon Tuesday, October 30, to bid Godspeed to an RCAF North Star loaded with two tons of medical and hospital supplies. In Toronto the plane took on another three tons of supplies destined for the relief of those wounded or injured in the Budapest fighting. The value of the shipment was \$40,000. The Canadian Red Cross asked the International Red Cross to arrange future deliveries to Hungary through Vienna.⁶⁸ At the same time well-informed UN and Red Cross representatives began to reinterpret the situation. Peter Casson, United Nations High Commissioner, forecasted to members of the Canadian Progress Club of Montreal that European refugee camps would soon be swamped by 'freedom seeking' Hungarians. The Canadian Red Cross began to coordinate its activities with the International Rescue Committee.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, in Ottawa a more formal arrangement with Hungary was under consideration.

The Canadian-Hungarian trade agreement was ready for signature. According to the draft press release on the proposed treaty, Hungarian goods entering Canada would be entitled to Canadian most-favoured-nation tariff rates. Three hundred thousand tons of wheat would be purchased by Hungary within three years. Canada had agreed to the establishment of a Hungarian trade office in Montreal. The Agreement was to become the first bilateral trade agreement between Canada and Hungary since the Second World War. Previously, Hungarian goods had been subjected to the rates of duty of the Canadian General Tariff. Trade between Canada and Hungary had been at a low level. In 1955, Canadian exports to Hungary were valued at \$165,000, consisting mainly of clover seed, raw hides, wool rags and textile waste. Imports from Hungary totalled \$125,000 and consisted mainly of cut glass tableware, broom corn, brooms and toys. In the first half of 1956, Canada exported to Hungary 30,000 tons of wheat along with smaller shipments of other products. Tibor Barabás, leader of the Hungarian trade delegation, informed Budapest of Jules Léger's reservations that aimed at the avoidance of a political settlement between the two contracting parties. Léger suggested that the office in Montreal was to be a branch office of a Hungarian import-export agency or agencies with a staff of no more than five persons without diplomatic or consular immunity. The office would only remain in existence for the duration of the trade agreement.⁷⁰ This was quiet diplomacy: cold war in public, business in private.

The question of Hungarian volunteers still persisted. A morning paper headlined: 1,000 Ready to Serve in Legion of Freedom.⁷¹ In response, Pearson decided to hold a press conference and bring the question to the cabinet the next day. "No legal prohibition exists which would prevent Canadian citizens from proceeding to Hungary to fight alongside the insurgent forces," said Pearson, answering inquires mainly from Hungarians in Toronto and Montreal. "No Canadian citizen wishing to go to Hungary need 'worry' about being allowed to return later," said the minister to reporters. In any event, Pearson doubted that the matter would have practical application. He believed that the trend of events in Hungary indicated that the strife in that country might soon be at an end. Officials at External, nevertheless, were not in a hurry to issue passports to potential Canadian-Hungarian freedom fighters.⁷²

On this Tuesday the American Secretary of State J. F. Dulles telephoned Pearson. Dulles, according to Pearson, was in a state of shock on learning about the British-French ultimatum to Egypt. Israel, England and France were readying their troops to invade Egypt in response to the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Dulles said, that "as a result of their brutalities in Eastern Europe, the Russians were on the run, but now the British and French had done something which, it would be argued, was comparable to the kind of action which the Russians had taken or were accustomed to take in situations which they claimed to be of an emergency kind." Pearson agreed wholeheartedly but would not yet inform the public.⁷³

Wednesday, 31 October 1956

Soviet tank forces regrouped outside Budapest. In response to demand from Army Revolutionary Council, Nagy asked Russians to negotiate immediate withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary and termination of Hungary's participation in Warsaw Pact. Nagy dropped Stalinists from Cabinet and brought in Social Democrats.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁷⁴

The cabinet met in Ottawa to discuss the planned Hungarian army of Canada. Pearson opened the session by stating that there had been a number of requests from persons of Hungarian extraction for information on the possibility of going to Hungary to fight against the Russians. Under the Foreign Enlistment Act, passed in 1937, it was an offence for a Canadian to enlist in the forces of a foreign state at war with a friendly nation. It was not, however, clear whether there was a war at present between Hungary and the Soviet Union. According to the Act, it was not an offence to take part in civil conflict in another country un-

less an order-in-council specifically prohibited participation. The Minister said no such order had been passed in regard to the Hungarian conflict nor was one contemplated. Legally, Canadians could go to Hungary to join the Hungarian liberation forces. Of course, persons from Hungary who did not yet have Canadian citizenship might have difficulty returning to Canada, and people of Hungarian origin with Canadian citizenship might also find it difficult to travel to Hungary. The number of requests for passports would probably slacken as the Russians withdrew from Hungary. Cabinet consequently proposed to explain that the legal situation be clarified with the mention that they did not intend to pass the type of order referred to above.⁷⁵

Concurrently, a Toronto spokesman for the volunteers stated that his group was harmonizing action with American-Hungarians and was currently waiting for the signal from New York. Léger asked the State Department if they were discouraging, encouraging or ignoring the budding Hungarian Legion. The State Department replied that they had no objection to the formation of a Legion of Freedom but noted that US citizens had been prohibited from travel to Hungary since February 3, 1956.⁷⁶

NATO also continued, with full Canadian acquiescence, to show little interest in the Hungarian revolution. Canadian Ambassador to NATO, L. D. Wilgress, reported from Paris: "Undoubtedly developments in Hungary and the satellites would have occupied much more of the Council's time had not developments in Palestine become so pressing. As a result discussion at the private session of Council on October 31 concerning Hungary was rather brief and confined to the exchange of info. Both Portugal and ourselves stated that our govt had written to the Secretary General of the support of the approach taken by Britain, France and the USA in the Security Council on this subject."⁷⁷ This was not necessarily a negative development as far as East European affairs were concerned. There was an air of optimism everywhere following the issuance of the Moscow Declaration of October 30th, which recognized separate ways to socialism. Optimism also prevailed in Ottawa.

Jules Léger, Under-Secretary of State at external Affairs, informed most Canadian diplomatic posts that Canada's aim to end bloodshed in Hungary had been accomplished. External Affairs wanted to postpone all discussion on Hungary in the Security Council until the situation became clearer or, at least, until an authorized Hungarian trade delegation representing Imre Nagy would reach New York. "I hope when discussion is resumed that the Western Powers can avoid the temptation to score a propaganda victory," concluded Léger.⁷⁸ The second aim of Canada, of finding a satisfactory solution to the Hungarian question, remained unresolved. For the moment cabinet considered the question of economic aid.

The Globe and Mail and *The Montreal Star* made inquiries at External Affairs asking whether the minister contemplated aid to Poland and Hungary and, if so,

would the aid be given directly by Canada or via NATO.⁷⁹ Wider Canadian public support emerged for the Hungarian revolution. The 1,050,000 member Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) joined a plan to help East European workers to establish free trade unions. President Claude Jodoin said all CLC affiliates would be asked to contribute to "an international solidarity fund to assist European workers who are victims of Soviet domination."⁸⁰ In Montreal, the Hungarian community obtained the support of Senator A. K. Hugessen, Cardinal Léger and Major General Ernest G. Weeks to support the International Rescue Committee. The recently established Hungarian Relief Fund had collected \$10,000 and contributions were pouring into the Montreal office of the Rev. Michael Feher, an officer of the Fund.⁸¹ CCF leader M. J. Coldwell condemned Russia and suggested that economic aid should be given to Hungary. The Hungarian trade delegation was lingering in Montreal, hoping for the resumption of trade discussions.⁸² In Ottawa the credentials of the four-member Hungarian trade delegation were reconsidered and declared valid, which could have been interpreted in the circumstances as a *de facto* recognition of the Nagy government of Hungary.⁸³ At his press conference Pearson encouraged the Hungarians. "The Canada-Hungary trade pact had been agreed to and simply awaited signing." In Hungary the situation is "working itself out" and individual nations, he suggested, could better contribute by aiding the people directly, let us say through the Red Cross, than directly to the Budapest regime. In case of NATO involvement the Russians could claim the West was interfering. This should be avoided.⁸⁴ Pearson's hands-off policy did not mean lack of diplomatic activity on behalf of the Nagy government. The minister cabled Ambassador Escott Reid in New Delhi suggesting that he persuade Nehru not to postpone a public denunciation of Soviet actions in Hungary.⁸⁵ Third world countries could not, however, be relied upon to help Hungary once Egypt had been invaded.

Thursday, 1 November 1956

Earlier rumours of Russian troop movements confirmed as armoured columns moved into Hungary from Rumania and the Ukraine. Nagy denounced Warsaw Pact, declared Hungary's neutrality and called United Nations for support.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.⁸⁶

The planned Canadian-Hungarian Legion frightened not the Russian invaders of Hungary but the hesitant Magyar emigré leaders and their civil servant patrons in Ottawa. In the morning Pearson's representatives met Hungarian leaders in the minister's office. The president of the Canadian-Hungarian Federation said

that their leadership was "discouraging individuals from attempting to go to Hungary as volunteers. They are taking their names and addresses and asking them to stand by in case their services might be needed later. They are firmly of the opinion that it would be foolish to encourage this movement and think that after a week or two the fervour of all except a few individuals will have dissipated."⁸⁷ The ministry, however, left nothing to chance. R. A. D. Ford, head of the European Division at External Affairs, informed Pearson that he had taken steps in favour of using administrative delays to avoid issuing certificates of identity for travel to Hungary.⁸⁸ By then Ford had written to the Consular Division of his ministry asking them to sabotage any Hungarian travel request. "We understand that you are preparing a memorandum for the Under-Secretary on the question of issuing passports or certificates of identity to applicants seeking to go to the Hungarian area and that you wish to include a section on the political aspects of the problem." "This would seem to be the worst possible time for even a token force of volunteers from Canada or the United States to attempt to join the rebels in Hungary." Their presence could provide excuse for repression; their arrival could endanger negotiations and could widen the conflict in the area. The creation of administrative difficulties re passports would be useful. Individuals should be encouraged to postpone their trips and, in any case, applications should be delayed or refused, advised Ford.⁸⁹

The Hungarian legion affair, despite the potential to become an international embarrassment, was only one of the obstacles to the immediate signing of the Canadian-Hungarian trade agreement. At the cabinet meeting it was reported that Pearson had been asked by the head of the Hungarian delegation if the signature of the trade agreement could be deferred until the latter had had an opportunity to communicate with their government from Paris. The Minister recommended, with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance and the Acting Minister of Trade and Commerce, that the Canadian Ambassador in France now be authorized to sign.⁹⁰ External Affairs immediately telegraphed the Paris Embassy. "A trade agreement has been negotiated in Ottawa between Hungary and Canada which must be signed in Paris to allow Mr. Barabás, head of the trade delegation, time to contact his government. The agreement is to be signed by Mr. Desy and Mr. Barabás. Full powers have been issued authorizing Mr. Desy to sign."⁹¹ The problem lay with Barabás, who did not know for sure on whose behalf he would sign — Imre Nagy's government or the previous regime.

Paris was not to be the centre of Canadian diplomatic action this day. The Security Council went into session in New York. The Canadian delegation reported little chance of an agreement on the Hungarian question. Unexpectedly, the first secretary of the Hungarian mission turned up as a representative of Hungary and was queried by the Chinese and the American delegations. He had a telegram from Nagy accrediting him as Hungarian representative at the emergency special session of the General Assembly but not accrediting him to the

Security Council. He was expected to be allowed to sit but not to speak until his credentials could be clarified by the Secretary. Assuming a Soviet veto, a General Assembly meeting on the topic became likely on Sunday or Monday.⁹² The Canadian High Commissioner in London discussed the question of UN action with the head of the Northern Department in the British Foreign Office. The British welcomed the declaration of Hungarian neutrality but expressed no desire to provide guarantees. The UK delegation was instructed to let the USA set the pace and decide on tactics.⁹³ In New Delhi the Canadian High Commissioner, continued pressuring India to condemn the Soviet intervention in Hungary. Reid, according to his own testimony, was the only diplomatic representative in Delhi who had expressed criticism of Indian inaction concerning Soviet aggression in Hungary. He had done this without explicit instructions from Pearson.⁹⁴ At the UN no independent Canadian foreign policy on Hungary had been declared. Many Canadians wanted one.

Events in Budapest deeply embarrassed the communist movement in Canada; "...the presence of Soviet troops in Budapest served to infuriate the people and spread the revolt. National self-determination is an inviolable principle due to every Hungarian as it is to every democratic-minded person in this world. It is our hope that peace will be restored, but a black mark has been left on the name of socialism," editorialized a communist paper in Toronto.⁹⁵ The Hungarian-Canadian communist paper celebrated the departure of the Red Army from Budapest and appealed to all Hungarians to aid their mother country.⁹⁶

Most Canadians had begun to pay more attention to events in Hungary. At a large rally in Toronto at Massey Hall "the cheers were for the statement of Allan Grossman (PC, Toronto-St. Andrew), who said Canada must let Hungary and millions still under Communist tyranny know that not only moral support but the kind of support that wins battles is forthcoming." Mayor Phillips spoke for Toronto of the need to contribute moral support, wealth and lives. People contributed on the spot to the Canadian Red Cross Hungarian Relief Fund. A wire was sent to St Laurent expressing gratitude but a demand was made for international guarantees for Hungary.⁹⁷ J. Léger, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, assured the Rt. Rev. Steven Horvath, pastor of the Welland Hungarians, that the Canadian government would try to alleviate the plight of Hungary and promote sympathy for its people.⁹⁸ He offered blood plasma and medical supplies to the Canadian Hungarian Veterans Association of Welland, Ontario, but warned them:

...while we understand your interest in sending volunteers to Hungary it is possible that such action might raise legal difficulties because of the Foreign Enlistment Act of Canada which forbids Canadians and aliens living in Canada to enlist in foreign armed forces involved in conflict abroad to recruit Canadian residents for this purpose, or to transport them.⁹⁹

Regardless, most Canadian-Hungarians paid more attention to what Pearson was saying and doing. They credited him for keeping the world's attention on Hungary. A popular Hungarian weekly even invented a Pearson statement, which stated that if the Soviets would not give in to world pressure, then the Hungarian freedom fighters will receive the armed support of the West.¹⁰⁰

Friday, 2 November 1956

More Soviet forces poured into Hungary, sealed off Austrian border, cut communications, took control of highways, airports, railways. Tass complained of "counter-revolutionary activities" in Hungary. Nagy made second appeal to UN.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.¹⁰¹

Once the anti-Communist nature of the Hungarian revolution became obvious the Canadian political establishment espoused the work of the Hungarian-Canadians on behalf of the freedom fighters. Public opinion in Canada suddenly became most sympathetic. To the federal Liberal Party, in particular, the Hungarian revolution suddenly became a political asset since they wanted to distance themselves from the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, J. Pickersgill, sponsored a Hungarian delegation, which wanted to have a hearing at External Affairs. In Toronto, Paul Hellyer conveyed an encouraging message to Pearson much to the applause of local Hungarians.¹⁰² The Canadian Press reported from Vienna that the RCAF North Star had delivered five tons of Canadian Red Cross supplies to Budapest the previous night, adding that "the flight, was personally authorized by Prime Minister St Laurent."¹⁰³ The public praise that followed warmed the Liberals. The pro-Liberal *Montreal Star* was pleased to publish this letter to the editor:

Sir, On behalf of the Hungarian-Canadians I extend our deepest gratitude to External Affairs Minister Honorable Lester B. Pearson for his spontaneous readiness to take our appeal to the Security Council of the United Nations. For his generous act I promise to do everything that is in my power to bring to the knowledge of all of Hungary, that we have found a great man in the West, who was willing to help us in our struggle for his name is never to be forgotten!
[A] Hungarian.

The same Friday afternoon issue of this paper headlined: "Red Troops Pour Into Hungary".¹⁰⁴

Saturday, 3 November 1956

With Soviet forces in Hungary now increased from original two divisions to a reported seven or more divisions totalling 200,000 men and 4,600 tanks, including three divisions deployed around Budapest, Hungarian General Maléter began negotiations with Russian commander for withdrawal of all Soviet troops. Maléter and colleagues subsequently reported arrested.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.¹⁰⁵

That day the Canadian government became aware that the demise of the Hungarian revolution was at hand. Jules Léger, now in charge of East European policy planning at External Affairs, reported to Pearson:

The Russians pulled out of Budapest. The entire Hungarian army and airforce went over to the rebels. It is still uncertain how much prestige or authority this government has...the rebels are violently anti-Russian and anti-Communist. Soviet armoured columns have entered from the USSR and Roumania. Our military intelligence estimates Soviet strength in Hungary has increased to at least three divisions. Armoured columns have closed off the Austro-Hungarian border and telephone communications between Vienna and Budapest appear to have been cut. The main airports, railways and highways are said to be controlled by Soviet forces. Nagy is asking for UN support; withdrawal from Warsaw Pact; neutrality; Our information is that Warsaw Pact had no provision for withdrawal...¹⁰⁶

The Canadian press blamed not only the Russians but the West as well. According to the *Le Devoir* [Montreal] the Suez crisis stimulated Moscow's reaction against de-Russification in Central Europe and the Balkans. Now that the Russians had re-entered Budapest, the principal victims of the aggression at Suez became the Hungarians.¹⁰⁷ *The Globe and Mail* attacked the Americans, whose "...shortsighted lethargy," wrote the editors that Saturday, "has borne tragic fruit. Budapest is once again ringed by Soviet steel...the Hungarian situation was shrugged off for some future debate. By Tuesday the Middle East crisis had intervened. But there was no dragging of feet by the U. S. State Department there." The Canadian-Hungarian *Kanadai Magyar-ság* in its Saturday edition also blamed the US and the West for not aiding Hungary. The connection between the Suez crisis and Soviet intervention in Hungary was also considered in Ottawa.

Jules Léger believed the violent overthrow of the Nagy government could have been prevented. He explained to Pearson on the eve of the second Russian intervention that the Anglo-French defiance of the United Nations will put Moscow in a stronger position to resist United Nations demands and to insist on a measure of Soviet control. In his view, one of the most disastrous consequences of the Middle East adventure became the chance given to the Russians to regain at least partial control of their satellites. In his view Moscow would not tolerate

the division of their Satellite empire, the loss of Hungary, and the turning of Hungary into an anti-Soviet base of which the neutrality declared by Imre Nagy simply was the first step. Léger believed that it was not in the interests of the Western powers to attempt to push things too fast in Eastern Europe, although the West, including Canada, was completely passive in the events, which had been played out in Budapest. Léger also blamed the Hungarians for severing their relations with the Russians too quickly after Moscow had announced their willingness to renegotiate the basis of their relations with the Eastern European countries and their willingness to negotiate the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania all before the Suez crisis really broke. If it had been possible for the West to take a diplomatic initiative at this time, this would have been the best moment to announce NATO's willingness to negotiate the withdrawal of Western forces from Germany in return for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Germany and all of Eastern Europe. The collapse of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe would have followed the withdrawal of Soviet forces. The West would have gained a tremendous political victory. In any case, some political initiative and support would clearly have been of great moral and political aid to the Hungarians.¹⁰⁸

Escott Reid, Canadian High Commissioner to India and an admirer of the Hungarian freedom fighters, also remained optimistic. In preparation for the UN emergency session he practically demanded of his government that "the Canadian delegation to the special session of the General Assembly should immediately join with other delegations in pressing as hard as possible for resolutions in respect of the Soviet intervention in Hungary [which would be] as strong as the resolutions on the intervention in Egypt of Israel, the UK and France."¹⁰⁹

Belatedly, unaware that the death sentence of the Hungarian revolution had been pronounced, Tibor Barabás, head of the Hungarian Trade Delegation, still in Montreal, began to act as a representative of the revolutionary Nagy government. Commenting on the trade negotiations Barabás wrote to Léger:

It is my most sincere hope that these talks can be regarded as the first step to closer ties between our countries. On this occasion may I assure you that the Hungarian people will always appreciate the readiness of the Canadian nation to alleviate the sufferings of our country in the present struggle. We are also touched by the deep sympathy with which this nation is watching our striving for democracy and independence.¹¹⁰

Indeed, democracy and independence were the cornerstones of the revolutionary Nagy government's programme by November 3, 1956.

Meanwhile, following appeals from the Nagy Government in Budapest, the Security Council was again convened to consider a Western resolution condemning Soviet military interference in the internal affairs of Hungary. The resolution passed but was vetoed by the Soviet Union. The question of Hungary was immediately referred to the second emergency special session of the General Assembly

which was to consider the same resolution on November 4th.¹¹¹ *The Globe and Mail* editorial writer reacted quickly: "The value of debating the Hungarian uprising at the UN was not that the United Nations could intervene in any physical way. The value was that the hard, cold light of the world's indignation could be focused upon it. The re-entry of tanks might have been, if only temporarily, forestalled. No less important, Russia's shadow allies, the so-called neutral nations, were spared the responsibility of stating their position firmly and unequivocally." They neither denounced Russian colonialism nor dismissed it as unimportant. They considered the Hungarian problem a Russian domestic or at most a European affair.¹¹² Reid in New Delhi found this attitude unacceptable and wanted to rally the moral opinion of the world against Soviet colonialism in Eastern Europe. He asked Pearson to put India's representative, Krishna Menon, on the spot at the General Assembly by pressing hard on the Hungarian question immediately.¹¹³

Hungarians in Toronto went farther. A crowd of 12,000 marched in front of the Legislature where speeches were made demanding military support for Hungary. Ontario Attorney General Roberts suggested that NATO should send an army to Hungary.¹¹⁴

Meanwhile, Pearson informed the cabinet that the Russians were now occupying Hungary and were showing the true character of their regime.¹¹⁵ At External Affairs, Léger began preparing the East European segment of Pearson's speech to be delivered the next day, November 4, at a special session of the United Nation's General Assembly. Léger thought that Pearson should say the following:

I hope that the Soviet leaders will recognize the need to grant freedom and equality to the peoples of Eastern Europe. They have said in a statement from Moscow that they are prepared to re-negotiate their relations with Eastern Europe on this basis. The re-entry of Soviet troops in force into Hungary is certainly a poor augury of this, and I should like to make a plea to the Soviet leaders to respect the rights of the Hungarian people, and to honour that statement.¹¹⁶

Sunday, 4 November 1956

At 4:00 a.m. Soviet tank forces launched heavy assault on Budapest and other rebel centres. Under threat of bombing Budapest, demanded surrender of the Nagy government by noon. Set up puppet government under János Kádár backed by several Rákosi associates. Hungarian people were informed of the change via Radio Moscow. Nagy reported to have found refuge in Yugoslav Embassy; Cardinal Mindszenty in United States Legation. United Nations called on Russia to withdraw troops... Armed uprising crushed by overwhelming odds except for a few pockets of resistance.

Calendar of Events in Hungary prepared by the staff of the Department of External Affairs for use in connection with the Special Session of the Canadian House of Commons: November 26, 1956.¹¹⁷

Within five hours of the Soviet attack on Budapest, at 3 a.m. in New York, the Security Council met. The General Assembly of the United Nation was in session by 4 a.m. to discuss Hungary. But Pearson's eyes were rigidly focused on the Middle East even when the fate of the Nagy government was fleetingly the centre of his attention. He wanted the West and the unaligned countries to take a united stand against Russia on the Hungarian question. He telegraphed Ottawa from New York: "There is no need to underline the significance for the UN and for the relations between western and Asian countries of this vote [concerning Hungary]."¹¹⁸ Reid in New Delhi understood Pearson's thinking. He pressured India without specific instructions from his minister. At first Reid tried to convince the Indian government to issue a strong statement at the opening of the UNESCO conference held in India. He sent a verbal message to Nehru asking him not just to deprecate Soviet intervention in Hungary but, as the voice of the conscience of mankind, to speak out at the UNESCO "against the Russian martyrdom of the gallant Hungarian nation."¹¹⁹

Pearson, to prevent the alienation of the Asian members of the Commonwealth, refused either to approve or to condemn the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt, a Third World country whose sovereignty was, to India, more vital than that of Hungary's. A new anti-imperialist propaganda campaign, in the absence of any hope for the restoration of the Nagy government after November 4, remained a realistic basis for international cooperation with India. If the Third World wanted the West out of Suez, adopting a quasi-parallel treatments for East and West could accelerate the process. The trick was to equate the remedy without equating the phenomena. Pearson's approach fitted the bill ideally.

The Hungarian case was brought to the UN assembly where the majority rule applied after the Russians, at an unprecedented pre-dawn meeting of the Security Council, had vetoed a US proposal calling for an end to the fighting in Hungary. Mid-afternoon on that day, 4 November 1956, a second emergency special session of the General Assembly considered the United States resolution calling on the Soviet Union to desist from armed attack on the people of Hungary and to withdraw Russian forces without delay. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to investigate and to assess the need for medical and relief supplies and then report on the situation. The Governments of Hungary and the USSR were called on to permit the United Nations observers to enter Hungary. The resolution also asked all members of the United Nations, as well as humanitarian organizations, to provide emergency relief to the Hungarian people.

In a statement supporting the resolution, Pearson, as Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, portrayed the armed intervention in Hungary as "one of the greatest and grimmest betrayals in history." He contrasted the Soviet action, in

contravention of the principles and ideals of the United Nations, with the decision of the United Kingdom and France to hand over their police role in Egypt to a United Nations force, and he appealed for the admission of the United Nations' observers into Hungary and for freedom for the Hungarian people to choose their own form of government. The United States resolution was adopted by a majority of 50 in favour (including Canada), 8 against (the Soviet bloc, except Hungary, whose representative was absent), with 15 absentions. Many of the Asian and Arab countries abstained, but, as a result of international pressure, certain Asian nations such as Indonesia, India and Ceylon took a firm stand against Soviet intervention in Hungary.¹²⁰

The Hungarian community in Canada despaired as the news of the Russian invasion of Hungary reached them. Five hundred signatures were attached to a telegram addressed to Prime Minister Louis St Laurent:

In the name of Hungarian citizens and people of Hungarian descent living in Edmonton Alberta and district we implore you to do everything within your power to aid our countrymen who at this time are being attacked by Russian forces in Hungary. Hungarians throughout Canada and the world will be grateful to you and your government as long as they live for any help you may give to our homeland which is dying. Long live freedom!¹²¹

Canadian citizens of Lithuanian origin in Toronto also appealed on behalf of Hungary against Soviet brutality to the prime minister. They asked the government to support and help the Nagy regime. The Canadian Hungarian Federation, on this day of reckoning, would not make a strong stand. They pledged to support the prime minister on whatever measures he thought would be required to serve the cause of freedom and peace. On Sunday, over two thousand representatives, former citizens of the Soviet Union now living in Canada, held a demonstration of protest in a Montreal sports arena. The clapping, sobbing participants stood in deafening ovation at the Palais des Sports when they were told a possible solution for the present strife in their homeland lay in the hands of the United Nations. "...If only one United Nations soldier were sent, there would be possibility of success," said Dr. George Lengváry, the president of the Canadian Hungarian Federation's Quebec branch. He informed the prime minister's office that the people at the gathering identified themselves with the Hungarian cause and declared their readiness to serve it with all appropriate means within their power. The Montreal police did not share their enthusiasm. They refused permission for a torch march that evening. The Canadian Hungarians in Port Colborne (Ontario) also held a protest meeting and sent a message to Ottawa. In their telegram to the prime minister they thanked the government for condemning Russian aggression in Hungary and urged St Laurent to instruct Mr. Pearson to press for United Nations action to bring about immediate withdrawal of Russian forces from Hungary. In Regina (Saskatchewan), where the local Hungarian Grand Committee called a meeting for Sunday only sixty people attended.¹²² Suspicion

concerning the nature of the revolution lingered on; the Montreal police suspected communists among the Canadian-Hungarians, while some Canadian-Hungarians worried about Imre Nagy's communist past.

In the evening on that fateful day for Hungary, Canada's prime minister delivered a televised post mortem speech to the Canadian people:

Our aim is that the people of Eastern Europe should be free to choose their own form of government, a basic human right they have not enjoyed for years. The Soviet Union's resort to military force against a neighbouring nation is a most serious threat to the peace which we have solemnly pledged ourselves to preserve and defend in signing the Charter of the United Nations.¹²³

The prime minister tried to soothe the ruffled feelings of Canadian-Hungarians and to explain Pearson's conduct at the United Nations. The public's concern was not so much the defeat of the "gallant and unarmed people of Hungary" but Pearson's independent anti-British and anti-French stance on Suez.¹²⁴

Pearson's pledge to separate Canada's Russian foreign policy from useless anti-Soviet propaganda remained unfulfilled. The proposals of Reid and Léger were ignored.

Post Mortem

After 4 November 1956 there was little anyone could do to save the Hungarian revolution and to sustain the Nagy government. Hungary was quickly occupied by the Red Army and Moscow installed loyal communists. Refugees in the tens of thousands began crossing the border to Austria.

More could have been done in the previous thirteen days. In the opinion of the Montreal *Le Devoir*, the presence of Western troops, that is NATO units in Western Europe, including Canadians, could have provided arms for the rebels. Instead, they attempted to resurrect the old Empire by the invasion of Egypt.¹²⁵ Escott Reid came to similar conclusions when he wrote that, in return for Russian withdrawal from Hungary, the West could "agree to the withdrawal of western troops from Germany, thus creating a buffer zone in Europe."¹²⁶ Léger at External Affairs also believed that "some kind of political initiative and support would clearly have been of great moral and political aid to the Hungarians."¹²⁷

After November 4 Canada politicians wanted to keep the spotlight of world opinion on the issue without raising false hopes of liberation by force.¹²⁸ Segments of the public still demanded action. Fifteen hundred Catholic students of the Cathedral High School of Hamilton (Ontario), expressed surprise at the apparent complacency of the Western nations. In their telegram to the prime minister they called for action, not words.¹²⁹ The Hungarian M. D. F. Udvardy, chairman of a protest meeting of several hundred people claiming to represent a cross-section of British Columbia, also urged the government to dispatch immediately

United Nations forces to restore freedom in Hungary. He reminded St Laurent of his alleged promise made along these lines and accepted in good faith by the Hungarians.¹³⁰ Another telegram, this one from the Canadian branch of the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America, demanded an end to hostilities in the Middle East, an immediate cease-fire in Hungary and the withdrawal of the Russians.¹³¹

Not everyone supported such demands. *The Montreal Star's* editorial writer on November 5, a day after the invasion of Hungary, showed great understanding of Soviet imperialism. "Moscow is prepared to work out new and more liberal relations with its satellites. It is not, however, prepared to stand by while an anti-Communist regime takes over. Hence, when the anti-Red patriots took complete control of the revolution and looked to the equally vehement anti-Communist, Cardinal Mindszenty as their leader, the Russians made up their minds." In the writer's view, Kádár was not a Stalinist, but a Titoist and, in any case, he wrote, Nagy went too far. On the same day *The Winnipeg Free Press* declared that the United Nations could not do anything for Hungary because of the risk of a hydrogen bomb holocaust. "No generation has ever know so fearful a dilemma and no man, surely, can be condemned for thinking twice before voting in his own mind to save freedom in one country at risk of destroying the world." The Catholic Women's League of Canada offered a conciliatory approach, and, at the same time, a way out of the dilemma for Ottawa. The message to the prime minister read: "On behalf of the 100,000 members of the Catholic Women's League of Canada we wish to express our deep admiration for the people of Hungary in their struggle for freedom against a foreign oppressor and urge that every possible aid be given to alleviate their sufferings."¹³² The League's views reflected mainstream Canadian sentiments. Communist-persecuted white Christian European refugees were the proper candidates for integration into Canadian society.

On 7 November 1956 the Cabinet met in Ottawa. The Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs recommended that an offer of assistance of one million dollars should be made through the Red Cross "for relief purposes in Hungary or among Hungarians who had left their country since the uprising began." During the discussion in cabinet it was made clear that "it would be undesirable for any contribution to be made at this time for relief purposes in Hungary itself."¹³³ Aid to Hungary was opposed but refugee support was approved.

On November 9 Nehru made an unfriendly speech about the Hungarians. Pearson sent a telegram to Reid. Pearson commended Reid's "...prompt and effective efforts to bring to Mr. Nehru's attention the apparent discrepancy between his attitude to the situation in the Middle East and that in Hungary...we should not, I think, press further at the risk of turning the Indians sour. You must protect your excellent position in Delhi and not endanger it too much on the Hungarian question."¹³⁴ On Tuesday, 13 November, Reid received another telegram from Pearson. By now the minister considered it unwise to continue to

campaign on the Hungarian question any longer and instructed Reid not to take any further initiatives.¹³⁵ In preparation for a speech on Hungary Pearson scribbled for himself a few notes: "keep spotlight of world opinion on the issue; not raising false hopes of liberation by force."¹³⁶ At this point Canada's foreign minister considered the Hungarian revolution a closed chapter in history for which it would have been foolish to jeopardize Canada's good relations with India or with any other Third World country.

Reid, however, who did not share Pearson's realism, continued to plead with St Laurent for diplomatic action on behalf of Hungary. St Laurent replied on November 7 but the dispatch reached Reid only on the ninth. "The message from St Laurent did express appreciation of the way the Indian and Canadian delegations in New York had cooperated on the Suez issue but the sole reference to Hungary was banal – that St Laurent had read with great interest the references in your statement at the opening session of UNESCO to the recent tragic events in Hungary."¹³⁷ St Laurent blamed both the Russians and the West for the Hungarian tragedy. In November, he said in Toronto: "It would be idle to deny that the Middle East crisis did serve to obscure in the minds of many people around the world and especially in the nations of Asia the enormity of the vicious Soviet intervention in Hungary..."¹³⁸ According to Reid, "If St Laurent had his way it is possible that Canada would not have applied a double standard but would have publicly condemned both aggressions."¹³⁹ St Laurent did not agree with Pearson's stance on the two issues but was "persuaded by Pearson and other members of the cabinet to tone down the protest he wanted to send to Eden as soon as he heard of the British aggression and he suppressed any public demonstration of his emotions until the crisis was over."¹⁴⁰ Prime Minister St Laurent's sympathies for the insurrectionists is emphasized by Professor N. Dreisziger with the laconic afterthought that he "could do nothing to help the people of Hungary in their struggle for independence."¹⁴¹ The biographer of Louis St Laurent, Professor Thompson, believes that the future behaviour of the pro-British segment of the Canadian electorate, that is, the fear of losing the next election to the Conservatives, which did indeed become a reality in 1957, guided the prime minister's behaviour in late October and early November.¹⁴² Professor Thompson also speaks of St Laurent's concern about the fighting in Hungary and his frustration "at the inability of the Western nations to come to the assistance of the insurrectionists."¹⁴³ The partially quoted letter of St Laurent does not justify this description of the prime minister's views. True, he did send a message to Premier Bulganin in which he expressed Canada's 'horror' at the suffering of the Hungarian people,¹⁴⁴ but he also added to the same letter, originally drafted by Lester B. Pearson, but not containing the soothing phrases, that "It is not, however, my present purpose to attempt to pass judgement on the actions that have been taken but to ask you in the name of humanity, to use your influence to alleviate the sufferings..."¹⁴⁵ He

ignored Pearson's view that Canada should take advantage of the difficulties which the Soviet Union was facing in its European empire.¹⁴⁶

In his New Years' Eve message Pearson said: "One thing in the record of 1956 is clear. When the free governments failed to work together we lost ground in our search for peace and stability and progress."¹⁴⁷ Pearson never believed that the revolutionaries could succeed in Hungary. He mused publicly on October 27: "It would be naive to imagine that the Moscovite Empire is already crumbling..." Nagy said he is building national communism. "Can national communism and the Russians live side by side? We can only hope that they will." "What can we do in Canada, and in other free countries; what should we do in such a situation?" "The force of world opinion must be mobilized in favour of the forces of national freedom in these countries and against foreign intervention, and foreign domination. The United Nations is where this should be and can be done."¹⁴⁸ He suggested no independent role for Canada. It was through the United Nations that he wished to act and to enhance the international role of his country. Lack of imagination at first drifted him towards empty propaganda gestures, but he never felt comfortable with such a stance. His constructive thoughts for Hungary came too late – on November 4th, when the multiparty government in Budapest was overthrown. "Yesterday my government proposed the intervention of a United Nations force for peaceful purposes in the Middle East..." "Why should we not now establish a United Nations mission or United Nations supervisory machinery of an appropriate kind for the situation in Hungary?"¹⁴⁹ Years later when Pearson was writing his memoirs he was still unable to correctly analyze the problems he had faced in the autumn of 1956. Then Suez was his main concern. "If I had not been so deeply involved in Suez, I would have been much tempted to see if we could get a resolution to have UN Assembly Committee fly straight to Budapest with the UN flag and some men in UN uniforms."¹⁵⁰ Pearson as Secretary for State of External Affairs would not have made such an unrealistic proposal while in office. In 1957 he said: "The reason the United Nations did not save Hungary was that it could not; not that it would not." "If we had intervened in Hungary by force, the first victims would have been the Hungarians themselves, and the rest of the world might have followed into the abyss." If the UN pressure did not save Hungary "it had some effect and what in had was good."¹⁵¹ He does not elaborate on the positive. The straw enemy had been constructed and successfully demolished. The constructive proposals of Jules Léger and Escott Reid were filed away and eventually put to rest within the walls of the National Archives of Canada.

But there were results. Afro-Asian members of the Commonwealth outraged about the Suez affair mellowed once the USSR invaded Hungary. Canada had a role in the pacification of the third world members. In the coming months Canada remained active in the United Nations in pressuring Moscow to ease repression in Hungary. Pearson's people, however, stumbled onto an new success story

for Canadian external affairs; the sponsoring of the Hungarian refugees who in droves, from November 4th, began to leave Hungary in search of freedom abroad. Otherwise, in Ottawa, business was as usual.

On 13 November 1956 External Affairs fired off the following telegram to one of its European embassies: "Would you please tell Swartz [C. O. Swartz, of Northern Sales Limited, Winnipeg] and Mr. Barabás [of Hungary] that we are still anxious to sell wheat to Hungary but that we would prefer to delay for two or three weeks any negotiations (particularly any involving credit) until the situation in Hungary is somewhat clearer. If you are able to see Mr. Barabás we would be interested in knowing what he has in mind concerning wheat purchases in Canada."¹⁵²

Notes

1. This project was made possible by financial assistance from Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada and the Research Institute for the Study of the Hungarian Revolution 1956, Budapest.
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3. James Eayrs, *Canada in World Affairs, October 1955 to June 1957* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1959.).
4. J. W. Pickersgill, *My Years with Louis St Laurent: A Political Memoir* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975.); J. W. Pickersgill, *Seeing Canada Whole: A Memoir* (Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1994.); Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson. Vol. 2 1948-1957*. Ed. John A. Munro and Alex. I. Inglis. (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1973.); Dale C. Thompson, *Louis St Laurent: Canadian* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1967.).
5. Escott M. Reid, *Hungary and Suez, 1956: a View from New Delhi* (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1987, 126.).
6. (Toronto: York Lanes Press, Inc., 1993.).
7. National Archives Canada, NAC [cited hereafter as NAC], Privy Council, RG 2, [cited hereafter as RG 2], 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
8. "The Red Star Falls from Hungarian Skies," 1 November 1956, National Archives of Canada (cited hereafter as NAC), Department of External Affairs RG 25 [cited hereafter as RG 25], 86-87/360, Box 32, 8619-40, part 3: 1 November 1956 to 7 November 1956; An earlier sojourner's report from Budapest reached Ottawa on October 30, but the Canadian chargé who completed his trip on October 17 could only say "...that the outbreak that occurred a few days later was not expected." (Chargé d'Affaires a. i., Canadian Legation, Prague to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 30 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84/85/150, Box 111, File 8619/40, part 2: from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956).
9. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
10. 24 October 1956.

11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. Telegram to the Prime Minister, 24 October 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 108, File H-17-1.
14. *Ibid.*
15. 24 October 1956.
16. *Ibid.*
17. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
18. 25 October 1956.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 26 October 1956.
22. Telegram to the Prime Minister, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 108, File H-17-1.
23. Cabinet Conclusions, October 25, 1956, NAC, RG 2, Vol. 5775, Canada Cabinet Conclusions, Top Secret, Vol. 51: 3 August 1956-3 November 1956.
24. *Ibid.*
25. 25 October 1956.
26. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
27. 26 October 1956.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*
31. T. W. W.'s [T. Wainman-Wood] Ottawa, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 108, File H-17-1.
32. Reverend Calma [Kálmán] D. Toth's telegram to the PM, Toronto, 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 108, File H-17-1.
33. James Majors, Port Colborne, Ont. to PM, 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 108, File H-17-1.
34. Telegram to PM, Niagara Falls, Ont., 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Vol. 123, File H-17-1.
35. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Vol. 123, H-17-1.
36. Dr. Francis Sas, Grand Committee of Hungarian Churches and Societies of Montreal, Rev. F. W. Metzger, Canadian Hungarian Reformed Ministerial Association, Vancouver, Gábor Temesváry, Canadian Hungarian Federation, Toronto, Géza Kertész, Hungarian Self Culture Society, Welland, the President of the Hungarian Helicon, Toronto, K. Törgey, Hungarian Sport and Social Club, Toronto, Honfitárs [Hungarian journal], Toronto, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Vol. 108, File H-17-1.
37. *Ibid.*
38. W. H. Agnew to T. Wainman-Wood, *Ibid.*
39. A. S. McG., Office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs to The Under-Secretary of State, Ottawa, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 111, File 8619-40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
40. Telegram from the Canadian Permanent Mission in New York to External Affairs, 29 October 1956, NAC, RG 25. 84-85/150, Box 111, File 8619-40, part 2: from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.

41. Telegram from External Affairs to London, Paris, Washington, New Delhi, Canberra, Belgrade, Pretoria, Wellington, New York; approved by L. B. Pearson, CAN, RG 25, 84–85/150 Box 111, File 8619–40 part 2: from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
42. T. W. W.'s Memorandum for the Prime Minister, October 26, 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Vol. 108, File H-17-1.
43. A. S. McG., Office of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Under-Secretary of State, 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84–85/150, Box 111, File 8619–40 part 2; from January 2, 1952 to October 31, 1956.
44. Memorandum for the Minister, 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84–85/150, Box 111, File 8619–40 part 2; from January 2, 1952 to October 31, 1956; NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Vol. 108, File H-17-1.
45. Reid, *op. cit.*, 126.
46. *Ibid.*, 88.
47. Telegram from External Affairs to London, Paris, Washington, New Delhi, Canberra, Belgrade, Pretoria, Wellington, New York, approved by L. B. Pearson, 26 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84–85/150, Box 111, File 8619–40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
48. NAC, RG2, 90–91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
49. D. Wilgress' telegram from NATO, Permanent Representative to the NATO Council, Paris, to External Affairs, 27 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84–85/150, Box 111, File 8619–40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
50. NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Box 108, File H-17-1.
51. *Ibid.*
52. NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b); *Winnipeg Free Press*, 27 October 1956; *The Montreal Star*, 27 October 1956.
53. *Ibid.*; *The Globe and Mail*, 29 October 1956.
54. *The Montreal Star*, 27 October 1956.
55. *The Montreal Star*, 29 October 1956.
56. *Ibid.*
57. NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
58. *Canada and the United Nations 1956–57* (Department of External Affairs).
59. Telegram from the Canadian Permanent Mission to External Affairs, 29 October 1956, NAC, RG, 84–85/150, Box 111, File 8619–40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956; *The Montreal Star*, 29 October 1956; Reid, *op. cit.*, 37.
60. NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154 vol. 108, File H-17-1.
61. *The Montreal Star*, 29 October 1956; *Le Devoir*, 29 October 1956.
62. NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
63. *The Winnipeg Free Press*, 30 October 1956; *The Montreal Star*, 30 October 1956.
64. T. Wainman-Wood, Secretary [PM Louis St Laurent] to Mr. A. S. McGill, Minister's Office, Department of External Affairs, October 29, 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90–91/154, Box 108, File H-17.
65. 29 October 1956.
66. Telegram from the Canadian Permanent Mission in NY to External Affairs, 30 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84–85/150, Box 111, File 8619–40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.

67. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
68. *The Montreal Star*, 30 October 1956.
69. *The Gazette* [Montreal], 31 October 1956.
70. Commercial Agreement between Hungary and Canada; Most Favoured Nation, part 2; from March 8, 1956 to May 30, 1960.
71. *The Globe and Mail*, 30 October 1956.
72. NAC, RG 25, 84-85/150, Box 111, File 8619-40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
73. Reid, *op. cit.*, 33.
74. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
75. Cabinet Conclusions, October 31st, 1956, NAC, RG 2, Vol. 5775, Canada Cabinet conclusions, Top Secret, Vol. 51, 3 August 1956-3 November 1956.
76. Heeney from Washington to External Affairs re Volunteers to fight in Hungary, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956; From External Affairs to Washington, 1 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
77. From NATO to External Affairs, 31 October 1956 NAC, RG 25, 84-85/150, Box 111, File 8619-40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
78. Jules Léger to London, Washington, Paris, 31 October 1956, NAC, RG 25, 84-85/150, Box 111, File 8619-40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
79. NAC, RG 25, 84-85/150, Box 111, File 8619-40, part 2; from January 2, 1952, to October 31, 1956.
80. *The Montreal Star*, 1 November 1956.
81. *Ibid.*
82. *The Globe and Mail*, 31 October 1956.
83. *The Gazette* [Montreal], 31 October 1956.
84. *The Montreal Star*, 31 October 1956.
85. Reid, *op. cit.*, 41.
86. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
87. *Ibid.*
88. Volunteers from Canada for Hungary, R. A. D. Ford to the Consular Division, 1 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
89. *Ibid.*
90. Cabinet Conclusions, 1, November 1956, NAC, RG 2, Vol. 5775, Canada Cabinet Conclusions, Top Secret, Vol. 51, 3 Aug. 1956-3 Nov. 1956.
91. Commercial Agreement between Hungary and Canada; Most Favoured Nation Treatment, post-war, 1 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 62, File 9376-A-40, part 2; from March 8, 1956, to May 30, 1956.
92. From the Permanent Mission in New York to External Affairs, 1 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
93. From London to External Affairs, 1 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.

94. Reid, *op. cit.*, 46.
95. *Wochenblatt*, 1 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
96. *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, 1 November 1956.
97. *The Globe and Mail*, 2 November 1956.
98. 2 November 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154 vol. 108 H-17-1.
99. The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Nicholas Esso, Canadian Hungarian Veterans Association, Welland, Ont., November 2, 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, vol. 108, File H-17-1.
100. *Kanadai Magyarság*, 3 November 1956.
101. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
102. Mary E. Macdonald to Mr. Day, Visit to Ottawa – Delegation of Canadian Hungarian Federation, November 2nd, 1956, 10 a.m. Minister's Office, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
103. *The Montreal Star*, 2 November 1956.
104. *Ibid.*
105. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
106. Jules Léger's memorandum for the Minister; Situation in Hungary, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, part 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
107. 3 November 1956.
108. Jules Léger's memorandum for the Minister; Situation in Hungary, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, part 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
109. Escott Reid from New Delhi to External Affairs, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
110. Tibor Barabás, Head of the Hungarian Trade Delegation, Montreal, to Jules Léger, Ottawa, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
111. 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, vol. 152, File 5475-dw-51-40, vol. 1.
112. 3 November 1956.
113. E. Reid, New Delhi to External Affairs, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
114. *Kanadai Magyarság*, 10 November 1956.
115. Cabinet Conclusions November 3rd, 1956 NAC, RG 2, Vol. 5775, Canada Cabinet conclusions, Top Secret, Vol. 51, 3 Aug. 1956-3 Nov. 1956.
116. J. L.'s suggestions to L. B. Pearson for his speech (East European part), 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
117. NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, File H-17-1 (b).
118. L. B. Pearson from New York to External Affairs, 4 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, pt 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
119. Reid, *op. cit.*, 54-55.
120. April 23, 1957, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, vol. 152, file 54-75-dw-51-40, vol. 1; L. B. Pearson's Statement in Special General Assembly, Prime Minister's address to the Na-

- tion [see Middle East Collection], 4 November 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, Box 47, H-17-1 (b); *The Globe and Mail*, 5 November 1956.
121. Telegrams to PM, 4 November 1956, NAC, RG 2, 90-91/154, vol. 108 H-17-1.
122. *Ibid.* *The Montreal Star*, 5 November 1956; *Kanadai Magyar Ujság* [Canadian Hungarian News, Winnipeg, Man.], 6 November 1956.
123. Extracts of the Address by St Laurent on the CBC, November 4, 1956, Arthur E. Blanchette, ed. *Canadian Foreign Policy 1955-1965; Selected Speeches and Documents*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977): 18.
124. Dale C. Thompson, *Louis St Laurent: Canadian* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1967): 477-478.
125. 6 November 1956.
126. Reid, *op. cit.*, 55.
127. Jules Léger's memorandum for the Minsiter; Situation in Hungary, 3 November 1956, NAC, RG 25, 86-87/360, Box 32, File 8619-40, part 3; from November 1, 1956, to November 7, 1956.
128. Speech notes, NAC, MG 26: L. B. Pearson, N9, Volume 11, file 1956 October-December.
129. Telephone call to PM, 5 November 1956, NAC, RG 2 90-91/154 vol. 108 H-17-1.
130. *Ibid.*
131. Telephone call to the Prime Minister, 6 November 1956, *Ibid.*; *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, 15 November 1956.
132. 6 November 1956, NAC, RG 2 90-91/154 vol. 108 H-17-1.
133. NAC, RG 2: Cabinet, Volume 5775, file: 5 November 1956 to 19 December 1956.
134. Reid, *op. cit.*, 77.
135. *Ibid.*, 85-68.
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137. Reid., *op. cit.*, 70.
138. *Ibid.*, 94.
139. *Ibid.*, 133-4.
140. *Ibid.*
141. N. F. Dreisziger, *et. al. Struggle and Hope; The Hungarian-Canadian Experience* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982): 203.
142. Dale C. Thompson, *Louis St Laurent: Canadian* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1967): 477.
143. *Ibid.*, 482.
144. *Ibid.*
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151. Lester B. Pearson, "The Present Position of the United Nations." *External Affairs* 9, No. 5 (May 1957): 182-186.
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