



Online Publication
July 2011

New Publication:

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THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956 AS REFLECTED IN THE
POLISH SECURITY SERVICE ARCHIVES

Originally published in:

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the Soviet Bloc Countries: Reactions and Repercussions

Edited by János M. Rainer, Katalin Somlai

The Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security, Budapest, 2007

ŁUKASZ KAMIŃSKI

THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956 AS REFLECTED IN THE POLISH SECURITY SERVICE ARCHIVES

To prepare for this paper, a search was made of the various archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Poland. These still contain documents produced by the communist security apparatus, but the results of the archive search failed to live up to expectations. All that were found were isolated documents on the reactions of Polish society to the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, special reports in the main.¹ The reports of the security apparatus for the fourth quarter of 1956 have not survived (and were probably never compiled) and either district or provincial level. Nor have any administrative documents (orders, circulars, etc.) connected with events or more thorough analyses been preserved.

This situation is quite different with the less dramatic events of the Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. There are hundreds of volumes of files of various types preserved from the period, from administrative documents to reports and analyses, allowing research to be done on social attitudes and on how the state security apparatus operated during an internal crisis for the communist regime.² With the Hungarian Revolution, it is only possible to investigate the first.

The reason can be sought primarily in the position of the communist security apparatus in Poland in the autumn of 1956. It had entered into a crisis as early as 1954. Several months after Colonel Światło, a vice-director of the 10th Department of the Ministry of Public Security (dealing with intra-party surveillance), had escaped from Poland to the West, he began to take part in Radio Free Europe broadcasts, which was used as a convenient excuse to restore party supervision and control over the security apparatus. In November 1954, the Ministry of Public Security was

1 In three cases (the Institute of National Remembrance in Katowice, Kielce and Kraków) searches by archivists yielded no results.

2 Majchrzak 2004; Kamiński 2005.

dissolved and its all-powerful head, Stanisław Radkiewicz, became minister for state farms, while a Soviet-style Committee for Public Security was headed by a party activist, Władysław Dworakowski. There began a gradual process of reducing the number of officers and secret informants, and the number of those in exposed positions was reduced significantly. Several officers who had shown exceptional cruelty were subjected to criminal investigation. All these events frustrated the officers of what had been an all-powerful apparatus. The internal decline intensified in the autumn of 1956, when many agents refused to cooperate. In November, the Committee for Public Security and its field structures were disbanded, and the Security Service formally became part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Thereafter the number of officers and secret informants was reduced even further. This all explains why there are no surviving documents for the final weeks of 1956 and why documents from subsequent months are extremely scarce.³

Most of the surviving documents contain information on the comments of Polish society on the situation in Hungary. What clearly dominated was approval, the simplest stating that, "Good things are taking place in Hungary." It was commonly thought that the revolution was a manifestation of the struggle for freedom. In Poznań, among workers at the Cegielski factory (where a strike had started in June 1956), the opinion was heard that Hungarians "are doing the right thing in getting rid of them [the Soviets] from their country and we should do the same, because as long as there are Russians in our country, it will do no good to us." Some comments were more direct: "We in Poland should also murder the communists, who are hated by the nation." The outrage caused by the Soviet intervention found an outlet in such statements such as, "I would willingly take part myself in shooting Soviets who are taking part in suppressing the revolution in Hungary."

Some people expressed satisfaction that events had developed differently in Poland than in Hungary: "If the changes in the Central Committee Bureau had not been speeded up in Poland, there would have been the same bloodshed here as in Hungary." The following opinions were reported from the city of Zielona Góra: "Poland has been the first to start thinking of improving the relations in politics and economy and of a different and better road to socialism, a kind of individual Polish road, and it has turned out to be serious and gained the approval of the whole world, and it has ended without significant riots, otherwise than in Hungary, and so despite our hot Polish blood, we have managed to pass the test of political maturity." Others, though, thought the threat of Soviet intervention had not passed and "there is a need to do something or the Russian tanks will crush us, as has happened in Hungary." Some

³ Ruzikowski 2003, 124; Zblewski 2003.

thought the Poles too should contract out of the Warsaw Pact as the Hungarians had. Some expected, “When the Russians have finished the job in Hungary, they will come to Poland and no one will be able to stop them, as the West is engaged in Egypt, and the Soviet Union does its job in its own territory.”⁴

Rumours spread all over the country about the situation in Hungary, usually about the scale of the Soviet atrocities, the possibility of the outbreak of war, etc. Students in Poznań reported, “A hospital with injured insurgents inside has been blown up and the Russian army is shooting at ambulances.” One rumour was that some of the Soviet troops had gone over to the insurgents, providing them with 200 tanks, and in their place the Soviets had deployed Kalmyks,⁵ who “are treating the people of Budapest in a bestial way, and many insurgents have been hung from the bridge over the Danube.” There was news of lynch law being employed against officers of the ÁVH, in connection with which it was rumoured in Poznań that the participants of the June uprising in Poland had singled out officers of the Office of Security (Urząd Bezpieczeństwa, UB), and “if need be, each will know what to do with them, as the Hungarians are doing now.”⁶

Although the Polish newspapers in October and November 1956 enjoyed a freedom unprecedented in the history of communism, many people found the published information on Hungary insufficient.⁷

Leaflets and graffiti appeared all over the country, expressing solidarity and support for Hungary. Examples in Lower Silesia read, “Hands off Hungary,” “Death to the invaders”, “No more shameful aggression by the USSR in Hungary,” “Murderous hands—off the Hungarians.” In Lwówek (Poznań Province), there were graffiti reading, “No more Soviet Army” and “Let’s follow Hungary’s example.” In Kościan in mid-November came the legends, “Down with Russians”, “Help for Hungary”, “Bulganin is a good scumbag” and “Down with Bolsheviks”. Apart from leaflets devoted solely to the revolution in Hungary, there were others where the Hungarian

4 Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Poznań (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Poznaniu, hereafter: AIPN Po), sign. 06/71–26, 140–41. Daily report, 30 October 1956; *ibid.*, 149–50. Emergency report 69, 5 November 1956; *ibid.*, sign. 060/44–62, 35. Information 7, 29 October 1956; *ibid.*, sign. 06/71–26, 160. Emergency report, 3 November 1956; Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Gdańsk (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Gdańsku, hereafter: AIPN Gd), sign. 0046/22/1, 167. Emergency report 1215; *ibid.*, 191, 193. Emergency report 1425, 6 November 1956.

5 Soviet soldiers of Asian descent.

6 AIPN Po, sign. 06/71–26, 153, 156, 160. Emergency report, 3 November 1956; *ibid.*, 165. Emergency report 72, 9 November 1956.

7 AIPN Po, sign. 06/71–26, 153. Emergency report, 3 November 1956.

revolution was mentioned. One leaflet in the Agricultural Machinery Factory in Poznań put forward 22, including “Poles, let’s commemorate those who lost their lives in the fights for the freedom of Hungary.”⁸

Some of the leaflets went beyond protest to call for more radical steps. In Lwówek Śląski, leaflets were found urging that Hungary be taken as a model and an armed rebellion started. In Mielec, leaflets read: “Comrades, let’s help our friends, the Hungarians, who fight justly against Soviets for their freedom and independence from Russia—Long live freedom” and called for starting common struggle. In the city of Jelenia Góra, leaflets called for a strike in solidarity with the workers of Budapest. When news came of the second Soviet intervention, the walls of Gdańsk were decorated as early as the afternoon of November 4 with 29 anti-Soviet leaflets calling for armed combat and support for the fighting Hungarians.⁹

The leaflets appeared in villages as well as towns and cities. For example, an “anti-Russian” leaflet posted in Różanka in the Strzyżów district took the form of a letter from the students of Warsaw to those of Hungary.¹⁰

Some reports mention Hungarian flags being displayed in solidarity, for instance by students from Łódź. The workers of the Pafawag factory in Wrocław tore down a red star displayed on the factory wall and replaced it with Polish and Hungarian flags. The display of flags seems to have been much more popular than the security service files suggest.¹¹

8 Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Wrocław (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej wrocławiu, hereafter: AIPN Wr.), sign. 053/772, 38. Information note on examples of hostile activities in territory of Legnica District in 4th quarter of 1956 and reaction of security service, 28 March 1957; AIPN Wr., sign. 053/459, 144. Special Bulletin, 26 October 1956; AIPN Wr, sign. 053/459, 3. Special bulletin on situation and attitude of society in territory of province of Wrocław in connection with events taking place in Poland in the wake of political transformations after 8th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party, 5 November 1956; AIPN Po, sign. 06/71–26, 148. Daily report, 30 October 1956; AIPN Po, sign. 06/71–26, 164. Emergency report 72, 12 November 1956; *ibid.*, 170. Emergency report 73, 14 November 1956.

9 Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Rzeszow (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Rzeszowie, hereafter: AIPN Rz), sign. 04/40, 196. Report 103/56, 7 November 1956; AIPN Wr., 053/459, 149. Special bulletin on situation and attitude of society in territory of the province of Wrocław, 5 November 1956; *ibid.*, 4. Information on anti-state activities in 4th quarter of 1956 in the territory of the province of Wrocław, 4 April 1957; AIPN Gd, sign. no. 0046/22/1, 188. Emergency report, 5 November 1956.

10 AIPN Rz, sign. 04/40, 199. Report 105/56, 12 November 1956.

11 AIPN Wr., 053/459, 149. Special bulletin on situation and attitude of society in territory of the province of Wrocław, 5 November 1956.

Only a few of the pro-Hungarian demonstrations and solidarity meetings are reported in the security reports. For instance, the largest demonstration in the province of Wrocław took place in the city of Wałbrzych, but the reports mention only the solidarity march in Jelcz. On October 27, the workers of the car factory held a rally “at which anti-Russian slogans were chanted and the banners expressed solidarity with the Hungarians.” They planned to attack the Soviet barracks in the nearby city of Oława, but this was prevented. Another rally, held on November 2 in the Cegielski Factory in Poznań was also very heated.¹²

A report from Gdańsk states, on the basis of intelligence from an informant, that the crew of a ship loading in Hamburg was approached by activists of a Russian emigré organization called the NTS, claiming that armed struggle would be “the best way to help Hungary.”¹³

Only isolated information was found in archive sources, for instance, on reprisals against people who had shown support for the Hungarian Revolution. Three people were arrested in Łódź on November 10, 1956: Stanisław Kłab, A. Chyliński and Hanna Kowalska. Two first had printed about 40 leaflets entitled “Hands off Hungary” using a primitive techniques, and stuck them up around the city. Hanna Kowalska had painted up the graffiti “October 1918–1956”, “Long Live Hungary” and “Russians Out of Hungary”, and next to them a symbol of Fighting Poland—an anchor. They were released after a several dozen hours.¹⁴

The sources yielded no information about the aid operation for Hungarian combatants, in which tens of thousands of Poles were engaged, other than a meeting on October 30, 1956 at a pottery in Dobrzechów (Rzeszów Province). When the fund-raising began, one worker declared “he would give nothing, because the money would be taken by Russia.” This probably resulted from a widespread rumour that the aid shipments were being intercepted by the Soviet army.¹⁵

Only isolated statements about Hungary were recorded in 1957, mainly in the form of comparisons between the gradual pacification in Poland and the revolution in Hungary. One former partisan commanders from Lublin Province said “he recognizes a need to create in Poland the kind of situation that occurred in Hungary—people would face up to the communists then.” The Hungarian context also appears in

12 Ibid., 148; AIPN Po, sign. 06/71–26, 152. Emergency report, 3 November 1956; AIPN Gd, sign. 0046/22/1, 164. Emergency report, 29 October 1956.

13 AIPN Gd., sign. 0046/22/1, 205. Emergency report, 10 November 1956.

14 Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Łódź (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Łodzi, hereafter: AIPN Ld), sign. 10/315, 215–17. Special report, 14 November 1956.

15 AIPN Rz, sign. 04/272, 166. Daily report 1173/56, 31 October 1956.

connection with riots that followed the October 1957 closure of a weekly paper called *Po Prostu* (Simply). One activist of the United Peasants' Party (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe) in Bydgoszcz Province called these riots "stupidity", as "they give the USSR an excuse and the USSR, if it only wanted, could do the same with Poland as it had done with Hungary." But he added that world events should be carefully monitored, and "when a favourable opportunity appears, we should start combat and face up to the oppressor."¹⁶

Interesting information appears in a security-service report from Puławy for the second quarter of 1957. The director of the Institute of Cultivation and Fertilization of Soils, based there, had brought with him from Warsaw a documentary film on the Hungarian Revolution, provided by the US Embassy, and shown it to trusted persons. It is unclear whether this was a single event or part of an organized operation by US diplomats.¹⁷

Censorship of mail brought various materials about the events in Hungary into security-service hands, such extracts from a UN report on Hungary, translated into Polish.¹⁸

The last time broad coverage of public reactions to events in Hungary appeared in the security archives was in June 1958, with the execution of Imre Nagy. The Poles were unanimous on this. Poznań Security Services reported to headquarters, "All information received on the subject indicates a negative attitude of speakers to the sentence. Among these are vulgar expressions used in reference to the Soviet Union." A subsequent report reads, "The sentence is seen as unjust and its severity a lack of sense of justice. The conviction that the sentences were passed by order of the USSR is clear." Those sentenced would have to be rehabilitated sooner or later.¹⁹

16 Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Lublin (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Lublinie, hereafter: AIPN Lu), sign. 0110/2, 39. Information note of second in command of Lublin Provincial Security Police, 27 April 1957; Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Bydgoszcz (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Bydgoszczy, hereafter: AIPN By), sign. 055/1, 4. Quarterly report on work of Dept of Security Service of Radziejów District Police for period 1 October 1957 to 21 December 1957.

17 AIPN Lu, sign. 041/54, 159. Report of work of Dept of Security Service of Puławy District Police in 2nd quarter of 1957, 27 June 1957.

18 Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw (Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Warszawie, hereafter: AIPN), sign. BU MSW II 4560, 1–4. Extracts from Report of UN Special Commission on the Hungarian Uprising, 195.

19 AIPN Po, sign. 06/71–142, 42. Report 14, 19 June 1958; *ibid.*, 44. Report, 20 June 1958; *ibid.*, 46–7. Report, 21 June 1958; *ibid.*, 50. Report, 22 June 1958; *ibid.*, 54. 23 June 1958; *ibid.*, 57. Report, 24 June 1958.

Further information on the attitude of the Poles to the Hungarian Revolution can be obtained from communist security apparatus materials, mainly thanks to publications by János Tischler. But as mentioned initially in this paper, the material is too scanty to give a complete picture and comparisons with other sources are required. Unfortunately, these too are incomplete. It will probably remain impossible to reconstruct many aspects of the solidarity shown by Polish society or the full spectrum of its reactions.

ADDENDUM

*Inhabitants of Poznań Province on the sentence in the case of Imre Nagy (extracts from reports)*²⁰

[...] Several pieces of information were received about the communiqué of the Ministry of Justice of the Hungarian People's Republic, intimating that:

- ◆ The communiqué evoked heated debate among the workers of the Hipolit Cegielski Factory in Poznań (HCP). Among others, Stachowiak (the ringleader in the case) used very vulgar language about the Polish and Hungarian governments in connection with the sentence meted out, stating, among other things, "The communists remove everybody. Imre Naggi has not been the person they describe; they have killed him now, but in six months' time, they will give him post-war awards. It was the same with the June events. They told us the workers were guilty of everything, when the government was to blame. Damn such rules.
- ◆ The workers of W-7 HCP said the charges were far-fetched. Some of them asked why they should care and avoided discussing the subject [...]"²¹

The informant codenamed Walewski states that "the inhabitants of Poznań have been concerned with the sentence in the case of Imre Naggi since yesterday. According to Przybył and Szulc, Poznań society has been outraged by the sentence, expecting there would be demonstrations over it in Hungary in the immediate future[...]"²²

20 The various spellings of the name of Imre Nagy have been retained (Naggi, Nogy, etc.).

21 AIPN Po 06/67-118 z 130, 68. Reports and information on M. T. P., 1958, Information note of Dept 3, signed by dept. head, Major K. Modelewski: 1st copy to second in command of Army Security Service, 2nd copy to Major Ciastoń, 3rd-5th copies to case files, 19 June 1958.

22 Ibid., 69.

18th this month. At a meeting of HCP workers with Comrade Rapacki, they asked about the stance of the Polish government on the Naggi case [...].²³

[...] What can be concluded from the information received is that the sentence on Imre Nagy is still being widely discussed. Among other things, we were informed:

The workers of Stomil are seriously moved by the Nagy case. They have expressed their outrage in discussions, and consider it lawlessness and a proof that Kadar has not kept his promises. Everyone agrees that the sentence was ordered by the Russian authorities. People talked ironically of Moscow's interference in Hungary's internal affairs. Some also stated that Gomulka could not do anything either without asking Moscow's leave and there was no hope of the situation improving; they were ordering them about exactly as they had done under Stalin's regime. They said no one would believe Moscow now, which would be reflected in international relations, etc. The statements were critical and firm, and additionally there were no statements supporting that act [...].²⁴

The workers at the HCP stated that Imre Nagy was sentenced unjustly. According to previous communiqués, he was unjustly sentenced. It did not derive from earlier communiqués that he aimed at a change of the regime, but rather that he wanted to separate from the Soviet Union and start his own politics. The Russian army interference in Hungary's affairs should not be a basis for sentencing anyone to death [...].²⁵

The workers of the PM, commenting on the Nagy case, stated, "They were executed only because of Moscow. It is Khrushchev who should be blamed. The Soviet Union has sent so many soldiers to Poland to prevent similar events in Poland. Poor Gomulka cannot get out of the hands of the Soviets and if this continues, they will destroy him, along with the nation. They will crack down on us because of the June events." The speech of Minister Rapacki on Nagy is interpreted as: "Imre Nagy was a good man and we do not know why he was executed."²⁶

One HCP worker compared the trial of Imre Nagy with that of the Rosenbergs [Julius and Ethel Rosenberg] claiming, "the trial is a great secret in this country, no one knew about that trial. Those were two trials for treason to the nation—it was heard openly there, but in that country they had no evidence and wanted to get rid of a man, so they sentenced him secretly. Socialism disgraced itself; the sentence was unjust."²⁷

23 AIPN Po 06/67-118 z 130, 68.

24 Ibid., 19 June 1958, 73.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 73-4.

27 Ibid., 74.

“The informant codenamed Maciej reports on comments on the communiqué from Hungary in the case of Imre Nodoga. Professor Studtterhe from the stand of GDR 122 (Lauzer Enterprise) said the news shook him. He had expected Imre Nagy to be interned to the Soviet Union. He thinks the death penalty is a warning to all others, and the revelation of this matter at this particular moment has to do, in his opinion, with a tightening of policy towards Yugoslavia [...].”²⁸

[...] The following information was obtained from the student body when they heard news of the execution of Imre Nagy and other people in that circle—there were no discussions noted among students apart from students of Poznań Polytechnic (Politechnika Poznańska) in a dormitory in Słowackiego Street. It can be assumed from data from the informant codenamed Arski that after the announcement of the communiqué, students of the Polytechnic living in that dormitory were to some extent outraged, as “the execution of Imre Nagy amounts to a violation of international law,” which was justified by the fact that “Imre Nagy was taken from the Yugoslav Embassy on the understanding that he would come to no harm.” In the course of that discussion, the following view was heard: “Nagy did not deserve such a punishment and it is one more proof that the basic principles of communism are not being followed”. Among those active in the discussions, the informant lists the following third-year students of construction: Maciejewski Konrad, Lass Romuald, Makojan, and Chmiel Ryszard. These students are still under agency surveillance [...].”²⁹

[...] Discussions on the sentence against Imre Nagy are still being held among workers in several factories. All information received on the subject indicates that discussion participants take a negative view of the sentence. It is said, among other things, “Hungary cracked down on Imre Nagy in a non-humanitarian way; Prime Minister Kádár killed his opponent for fear of being killed, one can hear “similar comments and speeches.”

Engineer Hartman, codenamed Earl, said: “The sentence in the case of Nagy proves the demise of culture and civilization. Under no circumstances should people be killed for their ideological views. The sentence is a warning to others, and apart from that, it connects closely with the policy of the Soviet Union on top-level affairs.”

The informant codenamed Arski states that after the report in the Polish papers of the communiqué on the execution of Imre Nagy, the discussions on the subject

28 Ibid., 74.

29 Ibid., 75–6.

heard among students in the Słowackiego Street dormitory ceased. The same was observed among students of the Dożynkowa Street dormitory [...].³⁰

[...] Many negative opinions on the execution of Imre Nagy can still be heard. The following characteristic statements deserve attention:

- ◆ Opinions that the sentence was “murder” of political opponents.
- ◆ Opinions that the sentence was an international provocation, designed to forestall a possible conference between East and West.
- ◆ Opinions that the sentence was provoked by a group of political opponents of Prime Minister Khrushchev, to compromise him in the eyes of the West.

Here are some representative opinions on the subject:

“Workers of W-3 HCP state that the Soviet Union and Khrushchev are to blame for the sentence. They refer in conversation to the death of Bierut in Moscow and to the murder of Polish officers in 1941, and they blame the Soviet Union. It will complicate the meeting of heads of governments.”

Among PWP workers, there are opinions that “Kádár cracked down on his political opponent and his colleagues fearing he might be ousted by him. Yugoslavia handed them over under the condition that no harm would come to them, and now Tito will have an argument to use against Khrushchev and other heads: what they say is not what they do.”

ZNTK³¹ (Rolling Stock Repair Shop): Barłogiej stated that “the creators of the October revival are sent to God in Hungary. It is hot again, as Russians start to rule again.” The PKP³² (Polish National Railways): “Western countries have suspended all treaties in protest at the sentence given. Hungary did it in consultation with the Soviet Union, and now Khrushchev has said on the radio that people arrested for such activity should not be sentenced to death.”

Pomet factory: “The sentence was certainly carried out much earlier, but it has been announced just before the summit conference, to frustrate the preparations and prevent the conference from happening.”

Budownictwo [Construction]: “[...] Workers and intelligentsia feel indignant at the sentence. They say he was unjustly sentenced to death. The sentence has discredited the socialist camp still further and complicated relations with Western countries. Allegedly, the sentence has been denounced by the People’s Republic of China and by Yugoslavia.”

30 AIPN Po 06/67-118 z 130, 20 June 1958, 80.

31 Zakłady Naprawcze Taboru Kolejowego.

32 Polskie Koleje Państwowe.

A journalist from *Trybuna Ludu*: “A group of Polish journalists was to go to Hungary. After the execution of Imre Nagy was announced, they refused to go in protest.”

Ginter—citizen of the GDR: “It is political murder. When Nagy took refuge in the Yugoslav Embassy, he was promised freedom, in the presence of the whole world. The politicians of the Soviet Union spoke most on the issue. The sentence is a political provocation against Yugoslavia, aimed at bringing conflict between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The sentence was prepared by a group wanting to discredit Khrushchev and other top leaders of the Soviet Union, who spoke on the matter in 1956. It is designed to cause tensions in relations with Yugoslavia, to provoke indignation in the Soviet Union, and to hamper the summit meetings. It refutes the argument that the Soviet Union [...] (i) it did not interfere in the internal affairs of other states, and it confirms that (ii) it considers all socialist states as its satellites. Something unexpected may result out of it.”³³

[...] “The informant codenamed Waldemar reports on the position of the Catholic Church in the current political situation: Priest Fikus, characteristic of the record and operational case (a monk of the 20th Congregatio a Resurrectione Domini Nostri Iesu Christi) [...] stated that the US knows what it is doing and there will certainly be no summit conference, as “the Soviet Union cannot be trusted” and in general, it is odd that the US still tries to negotiate with them [the USSR], because “it was no other than the Soviet Union that guaranteed the life of Nagy, and look what they did to him in the end.”³⁴

[...] It may be concluded from data provided by the informant codenamed El-Zet that the medical community whom he has met have assessed critically the sentence in the case of Imre Nagy and others. Doctor Mataczyński and Psuja (Blood donation centre) called it a crime and mentioned the case of Katyń on that occasion. Doctor Mataczyński attacked the idea of material socialism and said on that occasion that such crimes arose from differences of opinion. The opponents were destroyed completely and he does not believe that socialism is humanitarian. He gave the example of Gomułka (who also gives no quarter). He rose to power, and despite many promises, cannot get rid of his Soviet protector or take a stance on the CPSU as Tito did, who did not want to subordinate himself to Russian directives, and rightly does not see as the best proof the fact that the promise given to him by Kádár was broken (that Imre Nagy would not be punished). Cardinal Mintschenty [Mindszenty] is still in the English [US] Embassy in Budapest.

33 AIPN Po 06/67-118 z 130, 21 June 1958, 83–4.

34 Ibid., 22 June 1958, 87.

There were also discussions on the subject among advocates, according to the informant codenamed Sas. Kozłowski stated he does not understand how Russia could allow such a sentence or communiqué reporting such a sentence to be announced in Hungary while the summit is being prepared. Kuleczka added that our revolution consumed its own children, and so it happened in Hungary. Another example is a leading activist of the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), Nowak, who said that it is a typical case of vicissitudes. Russia inspired the events in Hungary. Nagy was subordinate to Russia, and now Russia has discredited and executed him. The same fate will be shared by Gomułka and Cyrankiewicz, who are also subordinate to Russia, which will not forgive them for the “October events” [...].³⁵

[...] A ZNTK worker, Daubert J., who was one of the organizers of the committee to celebrate the anniversary of the June events last year said, “This year I have distanced myself from participating in the anniversary preparations. Last year I was stupid, but no one will convince me to do it again. Those who want to celebrate the 2nd anniversary will anyway be arrested by the secret police, because this year it is forbidden to celebrate it. I do not want to follow Imre Nagy of Hungary [...]”³⁶

[...] The agent codenamed 738 states in connection with the announcement of the execution of Imre Nagy that the student body at the Medical University [Akademia Medyczna] from the dormitory in Grunwaldzka Street said, “The direct reason for the execution of Imre Nagy was the visit of Khrushchev in Hungary—China broke off diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia because of a discrepancy of opinions on the sentence.” The agent gave the names of students active in debates, including a leading figure, K. R. The group is still under agent surveillance [...].³⁷

The informant codenamed Janosik stated that in a conversation with citizen S. L., a worker at the Opera House, he received information that on the 21st of that month there was a leaflet displayed on the staircase with the following content: “Cross of Glory to the Hungarian heroes: Imre Nagy and Pal Maletér”. At the bottom of the page there was an inscription “We will not forget and we will avenge.” In the course of operation fulfilment, the data were not confirmed and the party and administrative supervisors of the Opera House know nothing of the above-mentioned information [...].³⁸

[...] The sentence in the case of Imre Nagy is still being commented upon in many factories. The statements on the subject are similar to those given in previous reports.

35 AIPN Po 06/67-118 z 130, 90.

36 Ibid., 23 June 1958, 94.

37 Ibid., 95–6.

38 Ibid., 96.

In general it is said that the sentence was unjust and it was carried out by order of Moscow, that it makes the summit talks difficult, and that many hostile comments on the subject can be heard [...].³⁹

[...] The following data was received on Imre Nagy: the agent codenamed 738 states that the leading figure in the record and observation case K. P. commented on the subject in his presence and that of two other students: “Comrade Gomułka is delaying on purpose the presentation of his stance on Imre Nagy, as he does not want to fall foul of Moscow.” The leading figure justified his opinion as follows: “he knows that Gomułka’s entourage take a negative view of the sentence on Imre Nagy, and only bitter Stalinists in the Central Committee support the decision.” Moreover, the leading figure said, “Postponement of the PZPR congress is being caused by the recent events in Hungary.”⁴⁰

[...] “The story that Gomułka will allegedly resign his post as First Secretary of the PZPR Central Committee is widespread and being commented on in factories, especially the ZNTK and PKP. The stories are corroborated by objections to the sentence on Imre Nagy, disagreement with the leaders of the KPZR, and the illness of Comrade Gomułka [...].”⁴¹

[...] “Last night a discussion about Imre Nagy was heard among 4 students of the Medical University living in Gospoda Targowa [Fair Inn]. The informant codenamed Barbara states that the said students condemned the execution of Imre Nagy in their conversation and said our papers had tried to hush up the case by making fuss about the Lebanese affair instead. There were calumnies said about the Soviet Union them including that “the Soviet Union is a specialist in removing unnecessary people.” The persons are still under agent surveillance [...].”⁴²

[...] “As far as the Catholic clergy is concerned, it may be assumed from materials obtained from the informant codenamed Zagórski that the curia clergy discuss the internal affairs of Poland as well as its foreign policy. The informant states that many priests “think well of” the government of the Polish People’s Republic “for its objective and very sober stance on the Hungarian trial.” The stance is a result of the fact that not all allegations about the case of Imre Nagy, enumerated in other sources, are presented on television and the radio. Priest Sikorski, a notary of the Curia and the leading figure in the record and observation case, called that type of approach one of several arguments “to prove the sovereign policy of our government.” There were

39 Ibid., 101.

40 Ibid., 26 June 1958, 110–1.

41 Ibid., 27 June 1958, 116.

42 Ibid., 116–7.

also opinions expressing doubts about those intentions. They wondered whether it is not a tactical move by the government, as it is hard to believe that Poles “want to fall foul of Moscow by adopting such a stance.”

The priest and mitred prelate Marlewski (leading figure in the record and observation case) stated that “the Hungarians certainly did not do it on their own; they must have been forced to do it by Moscow, which does not care about opinion in Hungary and has its own interests in mind [...]”⁴³

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