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**THE MORAL STALINGRAD
OF
WORLD BOLSHEVISM?**

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution in the Contemporary Press

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The 1956 Hungarian Revolution in the Contemporary Press

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution occupies a special place among the resistance movements in the Soviet sphere of interest as well as among those of Europe and the world. The persistent resistance, the country's unified stand, the great number of the victims as well as the bloody suppression and revenge, directed the attention of the whole world towards Hungary for several weeks. I would like to paint a picture of the reaction of the West to the Hungarian Revolution, how the West perceived it and judged Hungary's stand against the Soviet Union in the mirror of the contemporary press.

In order to introduce the 1956 revolution, I have chosen three international papers of significance which, in my opinion, mirrored the opinion of the West. The Anglo-Saxon viewpoint, the American interest, is represented the liberal New York Herald Tribune's (NYHT) European edition; from the region of continental Europe, the leading French daily, Le Monde (LM), and the well regarded conservative German Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland (FA) were utilized as source material.

No matter how important the role of the press in the forming of public opinion, its commentaries don't always coincide with general public opinion. One good example is the article of October 26 in LM which pointed out that in spite of the fact that the British daily wrote much about the events in Hungary, it seems that the citizens-at least in the beginning-showed little interest towards the Hungarian events-to the extent that one had the superficial impression that the British placed the upheavals in the Soviet Satellites on the same level of importance as the attempted revolution in Guatemala.

If we peruse the dailies, we can see to what degree the West was occupied by the Revolution and then the suppression and the passive resistance in Hungary. All along the West had paid interest to the fledgling destalinization in progress but their interest in the region starting in the Summer of 1956, was directed to Poland. The

western press was continually occupied by two other regions; in the Mideast, the long standing crisis of the Suez Canal and the North African conflicts - which were of particular interest to France. The Hungarian revolution burst into this landscape and from one moment to the next, the country became the center of interest. Never before or after was Hungary discussed so much as in these weeks. The case of Hungary became a part of the front pages for an extended period of time - it was only relegated to page 2 in the German and French press by the military intervention in the Suez Crisis. After the defeat of the revolution and the collapse of the resistance, the number of articles dealing with Hungary decreased continually until in January 1957 - just as before October 23, Hungary became only one of the East-European countries-only sporadically are executions and refugees reported in the daily press. A thorough discussion of the revolution's meaning is no longer published.

When we closely examine the daily newspapers, we find that in spite of the great distance and difficult situation, they contained exact information. But, I have to point out the partial misunderstanding that is evident in the NYHT's - detailed article about the demonstration of October 23, (even though the paper claimed to be well informed), it said: "the crowd was enthusiastic, everyone demanded freedom. The demonstrators sang the National Hymn and the Szozat by Kolcsey-that touching song which could not be heard during Stalinist times in Hungary. The demonstrators shouted the refrain of this song - "we swear, we'll no longer be prisoners."

Among the numerous articles discussing and commenting on the events, several more thorough reports and evaluations appeared as well which must've played a deciding role in the formation of public opinion about the Hungarian situation. The FA and LM considered the Hungarian events so significant that they discussed their importance in several leading editorials. Many studies dealt with the influence of the Hungarian Revolution on world Bolshevism and the Soviet Union. In the newspapers we find short summaries from other western papers and commentaries on the reports of the eastern press. After the defeat of the revolution many articles appeared on the refugees, the problems in the receiving countries and the interviews done with the refugees.

Using the daily papers as sources, we must keep in mind the time lapse, in our case 1 1/2 to 2 days, summaries especially in the columns of the NYHT there was often even more of a time differential.

The significance of the Hungarian Revolution is also shown by the fact that every important daily sent reporters to Budapest and the country as soon as the situation allowed for it. Thomas Schreiber, the reporter on location, sent his first report on November 2, from Budapest. After the Russian attacks, he was stuck along with several other French reporters in Budapest. Only on November 15, were they able to return to France where they received a hearty welcome at Orly. The FA published reports on October 31, already from the reporter of the AP in Budapest Endre Marton, and on November 2, published the report of Count Clemens Podewils about his experiences in western Hungary. The German daily's own reporter, Hanni Konitzer, filed her report from Budapest. Due to the Russian offensive, she left the country for Austria and then from December on, reported from the border about the refugees. In the beginning, the NYHT depended upon the news service of UP and AP, but after the normalization of the situation, it sent its reporter from Rome to Budapest as did other important papers. At the start, Barrett McGurn filed his report from Vienna on November 2. Due to the Soviet attack, he and six other journalists were stuck in the American Embassy and received permission to leave the country only on the 12th of November. From then on he continued reporting from Vienna with special emphasis on the refugees.

Since we want to describe the reception and judgment of the Hungarian Revolution in the West, it seems evident that we need to look at the terminology used by the newspapers to portray the events and the revolutionaries. The objective or neutral term revolution (English), *révolution* (French), *Revolution* (German), or uprising (English), *émeute* (French), and *Aufstand* (German) are most often used. The participants were equally described as rebels, and insurgents (English), *révoltés*, *insurgés* (French), *Aufstandischen* (German). In many instances adjectives were also added to pinpoint more exactly the nature of the revolution. For example-the NYHT consistently characterized the revolt from the start as anti Russian,

anti Communist as did LM “rébellion violemment ant soviétique.” The term anti Soviet National Revolution summarized the meaning of the revolt as demonstrated the surprising national unity and pointed to a positive evaluation of the revolution. Less often the expression fight for freedom was used to indicate the nature of the struggle for national freedom. The terms Hungarian patriots and *Freiheitskempfer* also indicate a favorable reaction. Occasionally we run across the less favorable designation *Bürgerkrieg*, civil war, but they are used only as synonyms for the revolution.

The Hungarian Revolution was received with great enthusiasm. First of all, while following the results of the liberalization of Poland, the West was not prepared for the military revolt which had started with peaceful demonstrations and the West was amazed to witness the persistent resistance. The newspapers followed with great sympathy the fight of the Hungarian people against communism and the Soviet empire and expressed appreciation for the courageous stand of the rebels. One opinion which surfaced was that it was due to the success of the policy of lessening of tensions of the Cold War that the process of destalinization in the eastern block along with the Hungarian rebellion were taking place. At the same time there was some concern that in case Hungary became independent, the situation would endanger the results of the lessening of tensions and would upset the equilibrium that had been achieved between East and West. From the moment when it became clear that the Soviet Union had no intention of letting go of its grip in Hungary, the West became concerned lest the conflict in Hungary should lead to a third world war. They were so afraid of this possibility that it became clear that “the western powers wanted to avoid everything that would arouse Moscow’s suspicion that the West wanted to take advantage of the moment to enter into the sphere of the Peoples’ Republics.” As the Canadian foreign minister stated “it would be naive to assume that Moscow’s empire is already crumbling.” The fear of a third world war and the Suez Crisis occupied the Western powers to such a degree that they did not act diplomatically where they perhaps could’ve. This duality-the sympathy for the revolution and the fear of a third world war-caused an inertia and certain pangs of conscience which they solved by providing pharmaceutical and food aid in considerable quantities. In England and France guilt was a part of the mix, since the military

policy in Suez gave the Soviet Union an opportunity and justification for its military intervention in Hungary. It was in part to assuage their conscience that the refugees were welcomed-if they couldn't or wouldn't support the fighting, resisting Hungarians, they at least could aid appropriately the fleeing fighters of the revolution.

As much as they had been surprised by the outbreak of the Hungarian Révolution, they didn't know what to do about its success achieved in spite of the Soviet intervention. At the moment of the outbreak of the rebellion, in the first days they didn't even consider that it would possibly succeed, so sure seemed the victory of the Soviet intervention. At this point they thought a relative freedom would be attainable in the Polish pattern, but the violent rebellion put this inner reform into jeopardy. Due to the persistent resistance of the Hungarian fighters, western opinion modified its estimate of attainable results. The free world considered the retreat of the Soviet troops from Budapest as the victory of the revolution as it did the promise of Imre Nagy to honor the demands of the revolutionaries; however, deep down none dared believe that this was the last word. They thought it impossible that the powerful Soviet Union would let go this easily of one of its satellites. From the end of October up to the second Soviet intervention, this duality characterized the commentaries and guesses on the subject of the revolution and also explains the extreme opinions which surfaced in this connection.

They all realized that the Soviet Union, if it wished, could suppress the revolution, so understandably the main question for the West was the reaction of the Kremlin. The enduring success of the revolution, its results, served as the basis for the discussion about the approaches that would induce the Soviet Union to give up this territory or defend it at any price. They did not exclude the possibility of the final victory of the revolution, but the final decision was awaited from the Kremlin.

COMMENTARY OF THE EVENTS OF October 23,-NOVEMBER 5

The West was surprised but not taken aback by the violent explosion in Hungary, since it had carefully tracked the destalinization processes in the communist zone and the events in Hungary did not escape its attention. They noticed the formation of the Independent University Association, the demands of the students and the planned demonstration but did not think it was anything more than the natural progression of liberalization at the outbreak of the revolution.

The most striking parallel was furnished by Poland, led by Gomulka, as the example to which the events in Hungary could be compared. The newspapers pointed out the similarities between the freedom movements of Poland and Hungary; their anti-Soviet stance and posed the question, could the Soviet Union afford to permit the repressed countries, the satellites, to go their own way. The NYHT called attention to the fact that although both Gomulka and Imre Nagy were communists, there were major differences in the possibilities for action for the governments of Yugoslavia, Hungary and Poland. Tito's government could take solace in the fact that it was a local product, but on the other hand Gomulka and Nagy's power was imported, thus without Soviet backing would their power, a national communism, survive. The American paper pointed out that Gomulka was attempting this when he wanted to achieve the withdrawal of the Red Army from Poland. In Hungary's case, the paper considered this solution questionable, because according to its sources-Nagy had called for Russian troops because he considered the probable rift too dangerous and contradictory; according to the author of the article, Imre Nagy could hardly change his position after the bloodbath.

Le Monde maintained that the Hungarian communist leadership was unified on the question of holding on to power, that differences of opinion existed only about the means of obtaining it. Neither did the FA see major differences among the various trends; it explained

the changes in the communist party by the extreme confusion among Moscow and Hungarian communists and said that only changes that they had affected were - a few exchanges of puppets. According to the German paper, the fear of an uprising could result in unity among the Hungarian communists and Imre Nagy could move to the Orthodox side as represented by Gero. But it did not exclude the possibility that- the outbreak of the true mood of the people might lead to softening of policies both the Russians and their local representatives in the manner of Poland. The NYHT expressed its anti-Imre Nagy point of view when it declared that just like Gomulka "he is a communist who took advantage of the national sentiments in order to seize power again." Imre Nagy explained the call for Russian troops as his fidelity to communism and the anti-Soviet thrust of the revolution and added that the fact of the request could put his government in jeopardy. The French paper on October 27, thought that the channeling of the reforms had been lost to the communists-the rebels were no longer satisfied with the reform of the regime, but their goal was the change of the whole regime.

The western press singled out two major reasons for changing the peaceful demonstration into a violent revolution. One was the already mentioned anti-communist public opinion which was no longer satisfied with internal changes in the regime. The NYHT pointed out that the Hungarian revolution had proven how easily the nationalist Titoist communist approach can change to a true nationalist anti-communist mood. It named the most significant result of this insight the postponement of the December 16th Polish elections. The other major reason- which truly gave a decisive push to the development of the ensuing events-was identified by the FA as the appearance of the Soviet tanks, without which, according to Le Monde, the nationalist revolution would have won in short order. With the intervention of the Soviet Army the revolution became a fight for freedom as well.

The deployment of the Soviet troops became necessary in no small measure because of the unreliability of the Hungarian army. The mistrust of the communists was justified later when the Hungarian troops sided with the revolutionaries or at any case did not oppose them. The FA considered another result of this fact that the Soviet Union henceforth would not trust the armies of the

satellites. Marguerite Higgins followed the same train of thought when she said: "the Soviet Union needs to face the fact that based on the Hungarian experience, in case of a new war, it would have to fight not only with the West but the very satellite armies that it had trained."

Western opinion was consistently being modified when it came to the possible successes of the revolution. After the death of Stalin and the agreement with Tito, *Le Monde* could see only the possibility of a certain degree of loosening of the Soviet Union. The German paper could only predict economic changes in the relationships of the Soviet Union. The foreign policy's independence was only a possibility if the Russian intervention was not requested by the Hungarian communists. The enduring resistance of the rebels caused the French paper to maintain that the Kremlin had to make a choice if the Hungarian leadership could not put down the revolution: either the country had to be placed under direct Soviet governance or the satellite had to be given up since they could no longer influence it by sheer persuasion. There appeared, in case of a favorable decision in Moscow, the possibility of a success exceeding the one in Poland. According to the FA it should not be forgotten that in the beginning the revolt had not been aimed against communism, only against the AVO (staatliche Sicherheitspolizei). Only the unexpected success of the rebels as well as the Red Army's and the AVH's brutal attempts at suppression increased the demands. The NYHT stressed that the chain of events starting with the riots of Poznan had yet to end, and possibly it could extend to the Kremlin. According to the American paper, the big mistake of the Soviet leaders was not to foresee that the Yugoslav example would provide cover for national rebellions. The question remained: would the Stalinist trend dominate or the liberal governmental positions strengthened? When the other papers talked about the victory and end of the revolution, the American paper only said, that although the revolution had not yet ended, the Hungarian people had achieved a great victory: "no matter what else happens in Hungary, the world can no longer be the same as before. A courageous nation gave history a new direction." The experience at any rate shows that liberties once granted are exceedingly difficult to revoke, if not impossible. Later the paper maintained that even if the promises are only partially fulfilled the tear in the Iron Curtain is widened and will

admit those ideas that would continue to unmask the regime.

Le Monde did not consider it entirely unimaginable the change in regime so much desired by the Hungarian people, but it thought it could only happen if the rebels presented a new governmental program. Watching the Hungarian situation, it noted with regret, that in the given situation, the spontaneity that gave the people momentum and had represented the power of the revolution, had become its weakness. A few days later, the paper pointed out again that the rebels could only turn their moral victory into a political one if they achieved order in their own ranks.

The FA also considered the political situation muddled, because in the battle for reform of political life, the anti-communist forces were without leadership facing the old communists who, led by Nagy, wanted reform. The situation was made even more complicated because Nagy's position in the central committee was apparently not assured vis a vis the Stalinists-therefore, Imre Nagy was unsure on what assistance he could count. The unclear situation in Hungary prevented the security council from taking a position and explains to a certain degree the lack of action by the Great Powers. According to Le Monde-it is this uncertainty which the security council experienced that prevented it from passing a resolution with which it normally would've closed its session. In spite of these actual difficulties, this explanation gives the impression as if the quoted article wanted to avert the responsibility of the West in its delay of a decision.

On October 30, Le Monde reported the victory of the revolution and stated that the withdrawal of the Soviet troops had opened the way for a change of government. On the other hand, the FA did not consider the partial withdrawal of Soviet troops from Budapest as the victory of the revolution, and thought that the attempt to induce a laying down of arms with this promise was a failure. True victory according to the German paper, was the promise to abolish the one party system-an offer which equals the capitulation of the government to the revolution. Similar to the other papers, the German newspaper held Moscow as the only hindrance to victory and thought the mistrust and reservations of Nagy and Kadar could only be resolved by the withdrawal of the Red Army. When the

Russians commenced their withdrawal the paper commented “the Soviet troops had to suffer casualties in Budapest before the leaders in Moscow realized the danger of a military intervention.” The Kremlin left things to develop to this point because it hesitated in making a judgment.

The NYHT dared only to state carefully that the moral victory belonged to the Hungarians, but the revolution wasn't over yet. In the same vein as the German paper, it also considered Moscow an important but unknown factor and it also mentioned another unknown, namely the Hungarian people. Because one cannot predict for how long Imre Nagy can stay in power while satisfying the ever increasing number of demands, and in addition who would replace him if he is swept away.

The author of the article -The Fruits of the Revolution- felt that even with the abolishment of the one party system the communist would repeat their tactics of 1947 and would try to dominate Hungary's political life. When he explained the willingness of the Soviets to withdraw their troops in light of this hopeful outcome, he forgot that even back then it was the Red Army that ensured the certain support for the Hungarian communists. In any case, he thought that the communist power play that took place at the end of WW2 could not be repeated because Hungary and the world had learned from the past.

In discussing the victory of the revolution the NYHT reminded its readers that the rebellion had been victorious on its own without asking for outside help. It makes reference to the communist Szabad Nep which denies the Russian propaganda to the contrary, i.e., it attributes victory only to the Hungarians and considers it a major insult to say that foreign powers had helped. From the above remark it can be seen, especially if we compare it to an article in which the paper stressed the importance of moral support of the West and its pressure on the Soviet Union: “ the Hungarians deserve the moral support which they received from the call of the Austrian government, the strong objections of Spain and the UN's pressure on the Soviet Union. This pressure has to be maintained and whatever political assistance can be given to Hungary, such as for example, the economic assistance offered by Dulles, should be continued.”

The West continued to regard the Soviet Union with mistrust after the victory of the revolution. As *Le Monde* questioned the sincerity of the troop withdrawal, the FA also asked: is not the local withdrawal of troops a sign of temporary tactical maneuver? The sincerity of the withdrawal seemed to be supported by the official stand of the Soviet government vis a vis the events in Hungary, in which they recognized numerous difficulties and errors committed in the relationship of Moscow and the Peoples' democracies. They also stated that the Soviet Union is ready to rethink the question of the status of troops stationed outside the country and the fate of Russian troops stationed in Poland and Hungary. The paper advises caution since the foreign troops are temporarily still stationed in the country. And as if it could have seen the future, a little skeptically asked: "temporarily? for how long?" The NYHT went even further with its typical anti-communist bent when it included Imre Nagy and company in its mistrust. It considered it possible that there was some sort of trick in the promises of the Hungarian leaders, that communists promise everything, so that when the rebels give up their arms, they can execute them one by one.

The mistrust grew even more upon the news of the arrival of new Soviet troops into Hungary. Even though *Le Monde* maintained that the new act of the Hungarian tragedy could not be predicted, it didn't think a new Russian intervention likely. As an explanation of the troop movements it thought it possible that the Soviet Union wanted to avoid the appearance that it had suffered a defeat and the revolution had chased it from Hungary. Another opinion held that with the troop concentrations the Kremlin only wanted to put pressure on the Hungarian government, so that the country would neither join the West nor declare neutrality. The French papers saw it in a similar vein because the Red Army could have easily closed the western border of Hungary if it had chosen to and that consultations had begun about withdrawal. In the final analysis the paper thought that as long as the moderate groups had a strong position in Moscow, the suppression of the Hungarian revolution was unlikely, especially since such an act would have incalculable consequences for the Soviet Union. In its reasoning it stressed the pressure brought on the Soviet leadership by world public opinion and the security council, forces that later events proved to be much overestimated.

The second Russian intervention caused consternation around the world and a certain amount of surprise since favorable news had arrived from the consultations. The FA found solace that in spite of the tragedy of the revolution, it had not been in vain. According to the daily, the Hungarian revolution is the moral Stalingrad of world Bolshevism- since the Soviets could not have proven more clearly to the world how little their word or their respect for international law could be trusted. Just like the German paper, the NYHT said that the Soviet Union had lost its credibility and suffered a moral fiasco because of its intervention, which was a sure sign for the illiterate masses of India, China and the Near East who had theoretically considered communism as something that would provide a special way out for the masses. Le Monde was wondering who in Moscow had made the decision for military intervention and wrote with some sense of shame, that perhaps the West's preoccupation with Suez had assured a favorable condition for an undisturbed intervention: "the only echo that Western observers in Moscow were able to ascertain was that because of the Suez situation, the Kremlin considered the conditions favorable for a test of power. Since the westerners were overly occupied with this affair, they were in no position to strike back, they cannot do anything except complain Platonically." The German paper explained the going back on their promise in the preparation of the attack was due to the fear of the Soviet leaders which was made possible by the fact that Hungary could not believe such viciousness. At the same time the paper considered the exaggerated Hungarian demands as the justification of the Soviet attack for which the West was not responsible." The tragedy of the Hungarian Revolution perhaps did not stem so much from the presence of Soviet troops, but that desire for freedom coupled with the hatred of the Soviet suppressors which burst forth and disregarded the limits of political common sense and tactics. The revolutionaries perhaps strained the limits of possibility. Maybe using slow consistent steps they could have attained that which the Soviets could not simply accept in one full swoop.

The final appraisal of the revolution was positive, but Le Monde thought that "the Iron Curtain had again descended." This did not mean the complete failure of the revolution, because on one had the Russians could not regain completely their power over Hungary and on the other hand, the results could not be fully revoked. The

French daily and the NYHT thought that the establishment of the Kadar regime in Hungary that there would be a few concessions to the revolution and it would continue the liberalization where it had left off on October 23,. This liberalization would follow the moderating Polish example, “ a la Gomulka.”

The Reaction to the Revolution

Using the review of the three dailies, we can also picture how Europe and the various countries of the world received the news of the Hungarian Revolution, how they reacted to the events inside and outside of the socialist camp. The picture of course is not complete, but it does show the reaction of the world to the events. Regarding the reactions of the individual countries, we have to differentiate between official statements and manifested public opinion of specific countries.

The outbreak of the revolution and the victorious uprising, in spite of Soviet intervention, received favorable reaction worldwide. Western leaders welcomed the events in Hungary and condemned the intervention of the Red Army. The sympathy of the West manifested itself quickly, increasing offers of aid, hospital trains, food, and tons of drugs streamed into Vienna to be forwarded to Hungary.

The reaction of the US was characterized by a double track policy. It welcomed the news of the Hungarian Revolution and its initial successes and tried to take advantage of the situation in domestic politics. So it played a significant role in the presidential campaign of Eisenhower, because the Democratic opposition accused the president of failure in the foreign policy of the Cold War. On the other hand, the Republican propaganda represented the Eastern European reform process as a victory of Eisenhower's foreign policy. Therefore Dulles could maintain that the events in Poland and Hungary were of special interest to him and the President. That is why Eisenhower stressed in his speech that he sympathized with the Hungarian people and regarded their struggle as the quest for freedom. That's why he underscored that the US had not forgotten Eastern Europe and it will never forget Senator Patrick J. Hillings stated that the Polish and Hungarian Revolts, and perhaps soon the Czech, were the very best examples of the success of Eisenhower's foreign policy. According to him, the Eisenhower administration inspired the peoples behind the Iron Curtain to revolt, because it had never accepted the status quo in Eastern Europe.

In contrast to the speeches heard during the election campaign, the actual possibilities for action were limited by the fear of another World War. In the meeting of the National Security council, the possibility of solely economic help was only considered if the country in question specifically were to request it and also could verify its independence from Moscow. From the beginning American help would have meant peace time economic aid. Dulles had referred to this condition in his infamous speech in Dallas, when he said--we do not consider these nations as potential military allies.- America in its fear of a Third World War, not only abstained from interfering, but did not even accord international recognition to the revolutionaries for fear of provoking the Soviet Union.

The SFIO, from 1905 to 1971 the name of the French Socialist Party, watched with interest the developments in Budapest, but on October 25, it still declared cautiously that definite conclusions could not be drawn. The French Communist Party's Central Committee sharply criticized the Hungarian communists for not controlling the situation.

According to the French daily, public opinion in London was not interested in news from Hungary and regarded the events with political skepticism. The demonstration of Hungarian immigrants in front of the Hungarian Embassy was received with neutrality and the majority called this gesture idiotic, regardless of its reasons, and condemned actions that caused disorder. According to the opinion of Whitehall, an overly definitive victory of the West or its satisfaction, would ruin completely the cause of Eastern democratization; the British, based on the experiences of Berlin, doubted the possibility of success and thought if the revolution went too far, it would not only threaten the fate of Hungarians or Poles, but would make the thawing of relations between the East and West impossible. From the start, Chancellor Adenauer had called the events the most important of recent history, expressed the sympathy of his country for the Hungarians and Poles fighting for their freedom, and expressed his hope that they would soon gain their liberty and that the Soviet Union would learn from these events.

General Franco warned in his declaration that the world cannot remain indifferent to the bloody intervention of the Red Army and

stated that indifference would mean the greatest shame for all the West. Thus, the UN demanded intervention. The Council of Europe also turned to the UN; at its session, the Belgian Socialist senator, Dehousse, pointed out that destalinization does not mean democratization. As a final objective, he proposed free elections with international monitors. Pope Pius XII in his apostolic message asked for prayers for Hungary and recalled the Eucharistic Congress held in Budapest in which he had participated.

Neighboring Austria, perhaps because it had till recently experienced the undesired presence of the Red Army, spoke up with courage and selflessness in Hungary's cause. Oskar Helmer, minister of interior, expressed his sympathy and Otto Tschadek, minister of justice, promised right of asylum to all refugees. This helpfulness was also characteristic of the Austrian people, when the Burgtheater was turned into a warehouse for the many contributions, because there was no other facility available in Vienna which had become the center for assistance, or when crowds of children donated their savings, the doctors their pharmaceutical supplies and the hospitals their disaster supplies. The sacrifice of the Austrians is best illustrated by the fact, that on a single day, 10,000 Viennese gave blood for the wounded in Hungary.

While the anti-communist university students demonstrated in Rome, Palmiro Togliati, the leader of Italian Communist Party, beholden to Moscow, defended the use of Soviet troops, even though the Italian communists found it regrettable that it had been necessary for the Hungarian government to ask for help from the Soviet Union. The countries of the Eastern block sided mostly with the Soviet Union. The East German press kept silent in the beginning about what was happening, then reported that the white terror has returned to Hungary--fascists, Horthy's Arrow Cross members and former SS officers--were fighting against the Hungarian people. Radio Berlin even attacked, very sharply, Imre Nagy. When in Rumania university students demonstrated against the Communist regime, the police arrested numerous students, since, as the New York Herald Tribune commented, everything had started with student demonstrations in Budapest as well. At the same time Peking declared that the Hungarian and Polish demands were completely justified.

In the first official Soviet communiqué, Foreign Minister Sepilov went farther than the official announcement which talked about a counterrevolutionary conspiracy. The Soviet foreign minister stated that there were many reasons for dissatisfaction in the background of the Hungarian Revolt, since there were troubles in the financial state of the people and bureaucratic administrative means had been used. He admitted that it was mainly the young and students who had demonstrated, but he added, that there were forces that tried to take advantage of these demonstrations to the detriment of the people. These forces organized meetings and provoked unrest which they had planned long before. The government was forced to use force in order to reestablish order. It used the army and the security forces. When the danger became apparent that these events would overthrow the life of the country, the government asked for the assistance of the Soviet troops. In any case-the earth continues to turn- he added mysteriously, according to the New York Herald Tribune. Later on, Pravda tried to mute the message of the revolution, while the press in the free world stressed the significance of the events, that the young,the workers, and soldiers fought together against the Soviets, the Soviet press reported that the workers are resisting the Horthyist officers, The victory of the revolution was explained by TASS as that of reactionaries, and informed the Russian people of the most frightening news about the anticommunist revolution-but at the same time did not report that Hungary had withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact.

The unexpected suppression of the revolution, the intervention of November 4, elicited a tremendous indignation around the world: the leaders, the press and the citizens of the West expressed their shock and indignation.

The American leadership stated its disapproval of the bloody oppression. According to Eisenhower, world public opinion suffered a major shock due to the attack and in his letter to Bulganin demanded the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. Stevenson, the Democratic candidate, urged the deployment of UN observers. The American report sent to the Investigating Committee of the UN on May 4, 1957, called the Hungarian Revolt a true revolution.

The French parties and political leaders reacted in diverse ways to the suppression of the revolution. Lafay, minister of health, along with Foreign Minister Pineau, who thought the conscience of the world must be awakened by the events, called for assistance to the refugees and the interned. While Daniel Mayer, one of the leaders of the left wing UDF, demanded a new policy toward the Soviet Union. Tixier-Vignancour, the right wing representative of the Basses Pyrenees region, went a step further and demanded the dissolution of the Communist Party and the breaking off of diplomatic relations with Moscow. Marcilhacy (Republican Independants) took advantage of the opportunity to ask for special united action and support of the government. The Socialist Party expressed its indignation at the intervention. The Communists greeted the events as the victory of the Socialist cause. The Frankfurter Allgemeine described the mood in France as one where Hungary was treated with appreciation and pity.

In England, in contrast with the previous disinterest the Soviet intervention was decried generally with indignation-the Labour Party's Daily Worker declared that there were no supporters of the actions of the Soviet Union in the British Isles. The left wing newspaper expressed the opinion that the British aren't convinced that the suppression simply meant reestablishment of the Iron Curtain. The daily's opinion was that for the Russians the punctum saliens was the demand for free elections: The Times likewise saw a threat for the Easter European states in the fact that the Kremlin could not permit free elections. The anti-Soviet attitude of the average English citizen can be illustrated by the episode of the refusal of the dockworkers of Liverpool to load a Russian freighter.

In Germany the president and vice-president of the Bundestag were criticized by many for the date of their trip to Bangkok and political and university circles protested against the overly Platonic tone of the proclamations in favor of the Hungarian revolutionaries. Well known politicians expressed their solidarity by not attending the Press Ball. The young Christian Democrats specifically called for the closing of entertainment establishments and dance halls, the university students organized a silent demonstration to which they invited their professors. As a sign of mourning, flags were lowered

to half-staff all across the country and the government as well as the Bundestag remembered in a special session the Hungarian fight for freedom.

Dutch public opinion was equally shocked by the second Soviet intervention. Across the country anticommunist demonstrations, silent night parades and burning of the red flags witnessed to the general indignation. The five major parties and the local authorities called for solidarity, for providing aid, and in the churches prayers for the Hungarian nation were offered. The radio also expressed its great shock by constantly airing the news from Hungary on that Sunday and replacing its popular music programming by Hungarian music. The Telegraaf maintained about the treachery of the Soviets-- history seldom has recorded such an example of Machiavellian action-.

The general tone of the newspapers was very passionate, the *Allgemeine Dagsblad* suggested the severing of diplomatic relations with Moscow. In Brussels, Spaak, former prime minister and foreign minister, in 1956, the president of the parliament of Montanunion, regretted that the Soviet Union was destroying the fledgling hopes for change. The whole country agreed, with the exception of the communists, with the Belgian politician, when he called the Red St.Bartholomew Night, the failure of the free world.

In Switzerland, the Conseil Federal, on Sunday night, in special session, issued a declaration , unique in the history of neutrality, according to the French newspaper. Gaetano, the Italian foreign minister, called the behavior of the Soviets cynicism of the highest degree, and the Socialist Nenni felt that the Kremlin should investigate the situation.

On November 5, Pope Pius XII said in his second letter that the just freedom of nations cannot be drowned in blood. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* issued a separate study on November 28, analyzing the foreign policy of the Vatican, came to the conclusion that the three apostolic messages written in a short time delineated a concrete political proposal to which not much attention was paid. According to the opinion of the Pope when the world was facing the Hungarian tragedy and did not know how to help, a defensive alliance is not sufficient- not that the Vatican could condone the interference of the Western powers by military means in Hungary.

Pope Pius was much more influenced by the notion, already developed in 1948, that the preparedness of peace loving peoples limits aggressive intentions. In the judgment of the Vatican, one cannot speak of coexistence after the bloody events in Hungary; the Russians had accepted the odious consequences of their intervention.

Le Monde gives us a taste of the reaction of socialist countries. Peking, even though at first it considered the Polish and Hungarian demands justified, after the second Russian intervention, probably, because it considered the success of the revolution dangerous, welcomed the steps of the Kremlin. The Chinese leaders stated that the Russian people had not hesitated to shed their blood in order to rush to the aid of a comrade, but the anti revolutionary forces were not completely liquidated. According to them, the Hungarian government called in the Soviets, who would not otherwise interfered in the domestic troubles of another country. The leaders of the Far Eastern communist state complimented the actions of the Red Army--We greet the Soviet people and Soviet Army that twice helped the Hungarian people to realize its freedom.

Even though Belgrade expressed its regret about the invitation to the Russian troops to intervene, it did not express surprise about the Soviet intervention. Yugoslav leaders criticized Imre Nagy and held the Hungarians partially responsible for the Soviet intervention. In their opinion the Russians were afraid of the demise of Hungarian communism and that prompted the intervention. Belgrade was of the opinion that the renewed intervention proved that the Moscow leadership this time unequivocally decided that decision was final.

The new military intervention was already being prepared by the half page editorial of November 4th, in Pravda. The article branded Imre Nagy a collaborator of reactionary forces. The newspaper faulted the Hungarian prime minister for withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact, but at the same time neglected to mention Hungary's request for the withdrawal of Soviet troops and its declaration of neutrality. Pravda stated that the Hungarian government had asked for the help of Soviet troops in putting down the revolution, citing the radio speech of Imre Nagy on October 25, where he justified this step as necessary to save Hungarian communism. The Soviet

newspaper added, that in spite of the fact that Imre Nagy had called the events as counterrevolution, he himself was a reactionary. According to the daily, a bloody terror was taking place in Hungary against the workers and the country was moving towards the victory of capitalism of the aristocratic class. Referring to the very same reasons - fascist atrocities - the Soviet Union later rejected America's protests and Bulganin said in his telegram to Eisenhower that the withdrawal of the units of the Red Army fell within the exclusive authority of the Hungarian and Soviet governments.

From the Danube to the Suez Canal

For a few days the deepening Suez crisis and its deterioration into an armed conflict pushed the events in Hungary to the back pages. The attack, long planned by Israel, Britain and France, was timed for this moment, because it was assumed that the Soviet Union, occupied in Eastern Europe, would not react appropriately. But the military intervention by Britain and France in the Israeli-Egypt conflict, emboldened the Russian leadership to act in a similar fashion in Hungary. The relationship of these two major events has been interpreted in various ways by the press of the time.

By November 3, *Le Monde* already thought that regardless of the outcome of the Egyptian affair, the UN will soon have to face an even more dramatic problem in Hungary. Did this statement witness the acuity of the French newspaper—in spite of the tense atmosphere and the flooding of Hungary by the Soviet troops for the dawn attack of November 4, or did it simply want to reduce the significance of the French military intervention—in any case, the French daily in its November 4-5 weekend edition considered the likelihood of further Russian intervention unlikely; the daily attempted a justification of the French intervention thus—we shall see if those powers that were so quick to judge the intervention of France and Britain in Egypt will be enthusiastic to the intervention of the Soviet Union in Hungary? We shall see if these powers for whom the respect for law comes before ideological sympathies and immediate interests; if these leaders are capable of separating their behavior in the Hungarian case from the moral and legal principles, the very ideas that caused them to decry those, from the standpoint of international law, very moderate steps which the French and English governments had felt obliged to take. In the edition following the Soviet intervention in Hungary, the paper admitted with some regret that perhaps the preoccupation of the West assured the favorable situation for an undisturbed intervention. On the other hand, British public opinion saw no connection between the bombardment of Cairo and the events in Budapest. In the analysis that appeared November 7, we can see the French viewpoint which tried to paint in more acceptable colors the—admittedly—lawless act,

which pointed to an even more lawless action by the Soviet Union. According to the author of the article, no nation rejects the use of force in the defense of its fundamental interests--there are only differences in the manner in which the force is exercised. Bourgeois society tries to save the appearance of law and show as moral immoral action, but a dictatorial system will act with brutality and less pretense. Le Monde maintained that the solution is to have policy that takes public opinion into consideration, since, for example, the Russians had unhesitatingly suppressed the Polish and Hungarian revolutions a hundred years ago--today they hesitated a long time before deciding to intervene militarily. The author considered the role of public opinion important because, according to him, the role of the UN is ineffective; there one state demands something from another, which in its own case it would not accept.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine compared the powerlessness of the UN to the League of Nations and found the reason being that it had no enforcement powers, at best, only small nations would feel constrained. According to the German newspaper, France, Britain, and the Soviet Union were relieved that the others had used force, and that this meant that the allies of Israel were not really upset by the Russian intervention--condemning all kinds of intervention, it cited the statement of the French Socialist prime minister Mollet--How beautiful international morality is--in the name of which one is certain to lose if a democrat, and certain to win if a dictator!

According to German public opinion, the indignation over the Soviet intervention was coupled with the hostile feelings about the British - French intervention in the Mediterranean region. They regarded the moral consequences for the two Western European states more seriously, because they had played the role of the traditional champions of freedom in the public mind; they couldn't expect any other action from the Soviet Union. Das Bild condemned the British-French policies and said: The victors of 1945, have hearts not cleaner nor hands more honest than those who were the losers that year.

Equally judgmental was the Swiss Federal Assembly, equating the Russian action with the Near Eastern British-French-Israeli intervention.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine contrasted the realpolitik of the Americans with the illusionary expectations of East and West Europe. Although the latter could not prevent the bloodshed either in Hungary or the Near East, perhaps it did deliver a final blow to the respect of the moral prestige of communism. America, in sharp contrast with Moscow, had not used two different measuring sticks to evaluate the two events-because in contrast to Moscow it avoided threats of war and condemned every violent solution. The Vatican also endeavored to avoid causes belli, and confrontation of Western, European-Arab in the Suez situation and to this end attempted a Catholic-Muslim cooperation.

The New York Herald Tribune also was of the opinion that the US had taken the right steps in the Suez situation, because it had attempted from the beginning to distance Nasser from the Soviet Union and when this did not succeed, it tried to avoid military conflict. The author of the article defended Dulles who was being attacked from all sides, for internationalism and pacifism. Dulles had always, as the champion of international cooperation, represented the interests of the American people. The paper also thought it was a victory of communist influence that during the UN vote, India and the Arab states, while voting for the condemnation of Britain and France, abstained from any resolution that condemned the Soviet Union for using force in Hungary, thus giving a free hand to the Russian government's actions in Eastern Europe. Another American commentator-(St. Louis Post Dispatch) considered the question of the Near East the first priority and maintained that the UN would be in a much better position to wrestle with the problem of terror in Hungary and reach a decision on the future relations with its brutal perpetrator behind the fraying Iron Curtain.

Colonialism and the Warsaw Pact

While the Soviet Union, as already apparent in the case of the Suez, accused the West of colonialism, it continued to build its own colonial empire in Eastern Europe under the auspices of the Warsaw Pact. *Le Monde* emphatically rejected the charges of the Soviet Union when the latter raised its voice against the North African colonies of France. The French newspaper maintained that the a country which keeps Central Europe in a colonial state has no business chiding France because of its colonies. The editorial pointed out that the demonstrations in the region against communism and the Soviets indicated the “liberators” had become oppressors in the eyes of the population. The thrust of the demonstrations was not aimed at the Russian people but at the overanxious Soviet system which was based on the exploitation of the states in the area. The second Russian intervention, although victorious, brought to light the brutal uncompromising, unerring quest for power hidden behind the smiles of the Kremlin’s bureaucrats, the lofty speeches about coexistence. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* wrote that the Soviet intervention had made unmistakably clear the interest in sheer power and panslavism in red disguise.

Only the Soviet military presence in the region assured the existence of the communist regimes serving the interests of Moscow. Since the basis for the presence of the Red Army in Hungary had ceased to exist with the Austrian Settlement, a new legal framework had to be found for its continuance. Thus the establishment of the Warsaw Pact became a necessity one day before the signing of the Austrian treaty. In compliance with the treaty, the presence of the troops in Hungary made the rapid intervention for the suppression of the revolution possible. Since the Warsaw Pact, as is the case for NATO, has as its official purpose, mutual aid against outside attack, the paper underlined the diplomatic protest of the UN which had condemned the intervention. That is why the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* thought Zukov and Sepilov’s statement very wise, referring to the spirit, not the letter of the Warsaw Pact in explaining the intervention. The German newspaper pointed out that the Soviet leaders could depend only on the call of the Hungarian

government, but that Imre Nagy accepted the proposals of the revolutionaries, the need for Russian interference had ceased to exist. After all this, the Soviets, who had claimed to honor treaties, would have to give up the border states of their empire or lose credibility even with those peoples who up till now had considered colonialism solely as one of the products of the Western world.

The Dilemma of the Soviet Union

The Polish and Hungarian demands made the basic goal of the Warsaw Pact questionable: they wanted to have the Russian troops withdrawn from their countries and thus created a serious dilemma for the leaders in Moscow. The more the Hungarian revolution approached victory, the more the Western press became preoccupied with the question as to which alternative the Kremlin would choose to solve the problem.

Le Monde, on October 27th, already called attention to the fact that the change of regimes would be too serious for the Soviet Union and therefore it decided to intervene. The New York Herald Tribune (NYHT) also considered the situation in Eastern Europe to be grave for the Soviet Union, but thought that the “peaceful revolution” in Poland that had taken place within the communist regime, put the Russians into a complicated situation, since this was a first. In the case of the open rebellion in Hungary on the other hand the communist leaders could rely on earlier experiences.

Watching the events, Western observers came more and more to the conclusion that restalinization would not occur, although the Kremlin could temporarily deflect the threatening consequences of the Hungarian revolution, it remained questionable if they could stop the so called liberalization and return to an absolute Stalinist dictatorship. Nevertheless if the Soviets came down on the side of suppression, new revolutions would follow. According to the NYHT, even though Stalin was capable of cleansing and murder among his own people and at the time could mislead the world, not even he would be able to get away with mass murder which would be necessary to suppress Eastern Europe permanently because the hope of reform had been awakened for these peoples. With the renewed suppression, the Russians would have to discard their smiling masks which they displayed to the “third” world and would need to lower the Iron Curtain again. For the Russian people they would have to invent a monumental lie “such as the threat of a third world war”, to justify their actions. The American newspaper also pointed out, that the suppression would also mean a new break in

the relations with Tito and it would also confront China, because China had expressed its approval for the Eastern European program for democratization.

The Frenchman Maurice Duverger, did not doubt that the Soviet Union if it wished could squash the Eastern European rebellions, since the Western powers, not wanting to risk a third world war, would only help the oppressed people with Platonic objections. According to the French reporter, the decision of the Kremlin not to suppress the Hungarian revolution could be based on three reasons. First, it would not derive meaningful benefits from extending its defensive perimeter, because with nuclear weapons, geographic distance does not count, second, the “strategy of a bulwark” is independent of the inner politics of the given country, the point is their diplomatic orientation. As an example, he cited the non communist Finland, which as a neutral border area fulfills the role as the Northern bastion of the Soviet Union. Third, if in order to safeguard the political equilibrium, the Russians would have to pay a heavy price for temporarily keeping the Stalinist regime in Eastern Europe. The adjective “liberating” would sustain heavy damage by reducing the communist influence in Asia and the near East, in sharp contrast with the temporary loss of prestige due to the withdrawal of troops. In the long run, it would be beneficial and perhaps the role of the Western Communist parties would also improve.

At the same time, the continuation of the process of democratization has its own dangers, the American paper maintained. Communism would collapse in short-order in Eastern Europe. “Bulgaria may be the exception” if Russian guns didn’t maintain them. The logical end result of democratization would risk the Eastern European empire of the Russians, since it is but an illusion to think that while they allow for liberalization in Poland and Hungary, they could maintain Stalinism in the other satellites. According to the NYHT they could gain very good neighbors, even if not they wouldn’t be communists.

In Le Monde’s opinion while the “moderate” group in Moscow keeps its strong position, it seems highly unlikely that the Soviet Union would drown the Hungarian revolution in blood; concurrently the Frankfurter Allgemeine (FA) found that although

two politicians who oppose Khrushchev had been sent to Budapest, it did not necessarily follow that Khrushchev was losing his influence, but there was a divided opinion in Moscow on the Hungarian events. According to the NYHT, while Moscow keeps silent, definite pronouncements should be avoided, but it couldn't be denied that the Soviet leadership was not completely united on the questions of reform. For example, Kaganovic and Molotov vehemently opposed from the beginning the "thawing" policy, but this did not mean the failure of liberalization.

According to the Western papers, the situation was made more complicated because the reactions and demands of the Polish and Hungarian people were unpredictable. The new Russian policy does not only depend on the decision of the Soviet leaders, but the will of the given nations also exerts influence. This will can have two aspects. Either it will force the Soviet Union to discuss as it came to that first in Warsaw, then in Budapest, or it will use force despite all difficulties. The French paper thought it was important for a people, not only to start but also finish a revolution. The author of the article wishes that the Budapest revolutionaries have wisdom commensurate with their heroism to see the limits that exist when they express their demands.

Alternative Solutions

Even though the second Russian intervention suppressed the Hungarian Revolution, it seemed as the result of the prolonged passive resistance and strike, the military intervention and the power of the Kadar government did not provide a final solution. In this ambivalent situation, the most varied ideas appeared in the western press as to how to master the crisis, what steps would bring peace and a solution in the situation in Hungary.

The most positive idea came from the FA, when it concluded that the Russians had to give up the country and withdraw. In its view, the Hungarian struggle was by no means over with the intervention, only after November 4, the fight did not continue with arms, but it became a question of whose nerves could outlast the other. In this “war of nerves”, the weapons of the revolutionaries, “the moral certainty of victory of a good and useful action” with which, the Russians, even though they possessed all the means of power, in the long run would be no match. “Patience, endurance is always characteristic of the stronger one”, the author reminds us. The West need not intervene, since “law and reason must force the Russians to give up the zone.” The American analysts did not exclude the alternative of complete surrender, even though in that case the Kremlin would have to face Hungary becoming an enemy country.

A degree more refined “and perhaps for that reason more realistic” opinion was voiced by *Le Monde*. The idea of neutrality had already surfaced after the temporary victory of the revolution, when the Nagy government, according to the French paper, because of pressure from the people stated its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. The daily also pointed out that the Soviet Union, legally, did not have to accept this, since the agreement had been established for twenty years; but after these events that had been rocking the communist world for three weeks, events that previously had been considered impossible now no longer existed. With this solution after Austria, with Hungary from Yugoslavia to Scandinavia a neutral zone would have come into being which could’ve served as a

watershed, a continental divide, between the two opposing powers. According to the French paper, Imre Nagy made a mistake when he referred to the Austrian example when he asked for neutrality. It would've been more productive to follow the example of Finland which was allied to the Soviet Union and maintained close economic relations, because this arrangement would've been more acceptable to Moscow. In any case, even in December 1956, *Le Monde* considered a possible alternative this "Finland type neutral Hungary", in spite of the strong anti Soviet mood of the population.

Ferenc Nagy, living in exile, issued a statement that the most realistic solution in case of the withdrawal of Soviet troops, "the only acceptable solution for Hungary would be to replace the Soviet occupation by UN peacekeeping forces."

The more moderate ideas included the settling the chaotic situation by holding free elections with the participation of the permitted parties; complete free election would not be allowed by the Russians, because they certainly had not forgotten the failure of the communists of the 1945 elections. *Le Monde* found one of the failures of Imre Nagy to be that he had promised completely free elections against Kadar, who was thinking of only Soviet style free elections which would be acceptable to the Kremlin.

In any case, it seemed certain, that Kadar could only remain in power with the help and presence of Soviet troops because the Red Army's withdrawal would signal the expelling of the puppet government. Because "Janos Kadar's puppet government had arrived in Budapest on a Soviet tank, it was unable to find enough Soviet loving Hungarian communists or opportunists to form a government." Several alternatives of a compromise arose. For one, the possibility that Kadar come to an agreement with Imre Nagy. *Le Monde* maintained that after these events, Imre Nagy could not become Prime Minister again, but perhaps would find a place in the Kadar government. In any case, it remained questionable, if Nagy would accept such an offer. In case they couldn't agree, theoretically a third person could've served as an alternative. Knowing the situation, one had to admit that to be able to find someone who would be acceptable to the Hungarian people and to the Soviets would be highly unlikely. The French analysts only mentioned the

name of Istvan Bibo as a possibility.

The NYHT assumed at the end of November that in this chaotic situation only a coalition government could rule in which non-communist members would participate. On November 24, the FA thought that after the acceptance of the first demand of the Workers' Councils, the situation "looks as if the Hungarian revolutionaries could save at least part of the freedom for which they had fought."

The continuation of moderate liberalization seemed a realistic possibility. According to the French paper, Kadar had to realize that in the middle of the twentieth century one could no longer govern with armies. On November 17, it stated that "objective observers today agree that a part of the common leadership in Moscow is ready to accept a status for Hungary similar to Poland's or even Yugoslavia's," if it preserved the foundations of socialism. On the other hand, contrary to widely accepted opinion, it can be easily imagined that Kadar and his ministers wished for the success of a faster democratization and a quick demise of Hungarian Stalinism, but "how can people have confidence in the sincerity of that man?", one who switched to the Russian side. The Americans did not consider it impossible that Moscow's control in Eastern Europe would slowly diminish if the West did not panic the Russians.

The American observers thought that during the revolution sufficient number of arms were obtained by the population so that they could continue in a manner of a guerilla war. "But if the resistance grows the US and its allies will have to decide what to do, if they wanted to do anything." "The Russians in this case have two options: if they wish they can create a Carthaginian peace, basically dispersing Hungary as a nation. But they cannot do half a job." The other option is to hold on to the larger cities and transportation lines and emanating from these centers attack the countryside and defeat the resistance. This is the policy at which the Germans didn't succeed, because the Allies supported the guerillas from the outside. It is certain that the Russians will defeat the resistance if the Hungarians do not receive outside help. And this is the fact, i.e., the Hungarian resistance that could make the West face a terrible choice. The author of the article pointed out that the support of the Hungarian resistance would necessitate approximately one hundred

and fifty sorties and logistic problems and in addition would risk a third world war. The other option of the West is to watch without taking action while the Soviets crushed the resistance. It is to be noted that the author stated though often “an inactive looking on may be the wisest solution”, at least one should not assure the Soviets as did Secretary Dulles about Poland that “we will never under any circumstances do anything except talk.”

Finally the American observers did not exclude the possibility of a process of restalinization. A few days before the Moscow visit of Gomulka, the observers had received the news from reliable eastern sources, that the Soviets were planning the invasion of Poland and Yugoslavia. According to them this would only happen if Gomulka acted in a very revolutionary manner, but the seriousness of the news was bolstered by the reports, that Tito had sent sizable units to the Hungarian and Bulgarian border, because in his opinion an attack could not be excluded, since leadership had been taken over by forces led by Molotov who supported a renewed restalinization. The American newspaper also thought that “it is obvious that the frightening situation in Hungary would push the Soviet leaders in a direction of restalinization.” The observers thought that if it is only a question of Hungary the Kremlin would certainly choose force, but crushing Poland and Yugoslavia would lead either to a new world war or a war against their own people. Even a month later the NYHT’s reporter in Belgrade reported that “momentarily the hard-liners, the Stalinists, the imperialists are in control, but they are not sure if they are right and it’s still possible that they would agree to discussions that were not military.”

KADAR AND HIS GOVERNMENT

The evaluation of the Kadar government which had come to office after the military defeat of the revolution became an important task for Western reporters. On the basis of the announced program of the new government, Western observers thought that Kadar wanted to continue the liberalization which had been interrupted by the revolution. The FA said that perhaps Kadar had come to an agreement with Mikojan in Budapest, that Hungary would be governed along the same lines as Poland was governed by Gomulka, because the Kremlin realized that consensus was required. According to the German paper the "Western observers in Moscow were of the opinion, that the Kremlin was ready to recognize the satellites' rebellion against a total Soviet supervision, so that it could agree to discussions about the withdrawal of Soviet troops and the transformation of the regimes into national communisms. The condition of all this is that the countries would remain communist."

At the same time they regarded with incomprehension the "about face" of Kadar, since he had "established the MSZNP in order to form a new political organization which could not be blamed for the sins of the past", for example the invitation by Gero to the Soviets to enter the country. Le Monde posed the question, asked by everyone, "who would've thought that three days later he would imitate the "criminal act" of his predecessor. The French paper also maintained that the Prime Minister's "first action was to deny the national communism to which he always refers." The sudden change of sides was even more difficult to understand because "Janos Kadar's presence and participation in the cabinet meetings showed that the later leader of the "Workers' and Peasants' Party" had not broken off relations with Nagy before November 1, as he is now saying". The French paper asked the question, incredulous and shocked, that "Kadar, the national resister, who approved Nagy's politics 48 hours before, and who in his speech stressed "the danger of a foreign army's intervention", could've called in the Soviet troops." The French could not judge Kadar categorically and questioned how "the famous victim of Rakosism, the gorilla of democratization

could really become in such short order simply the enforcer of Soviet suppression.” This question had arisen earlier for the German observers, who thought, Janos Kadar “served only as a mask for the order of occupation for the Soviets.”

The French paper explained the betrayal of Kadar by saying that in fact he and his partners did not want to save Hungary, but the communist party. If Imre Nagy’s program had been realized, free elections would’ve been unavoidable, which in turn would’ve meant the victory of the National Christian Front and the communists would not have obtained even the 5%.

In spite of the fact that the government of Kadar receive contradictory judgments, the West considered his government a puppet government which was unable to lead the country out of the chaos because it lacked any authority or support of the population. Ferenc Honti went as far as to suggest that perhaps pressure could be brought to bear on Moscow, if the Kadar government is not recognized and diplomats are recalled, since the Soviet Union considers it important that the Peoples’ Republics be recognized in the West. In this opinion, the presence of the diplomats does not inhibit the Russians, and the legal foundation would be formed by the intervention which violated the 1949 Hungarian constitution and the fact that the Hungarian people did not accept the government. And the Russians cannot use the Warsaw pact because that only provides for mutual support in case of foreign attack.

THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE REVOLUTION

With the goal of a better understanding of the revolution in mind, the press considered it fundamental to be able to present a picture of the participants of the revolt. The Western press agreed that numerous varied strata of society had participated. The common denominator among the different groups was the desire for change. This desire found expression by allowing the 1945 parties and the request for free elections. The most urgent task for reaching this goal was the establishment of a temporary government. Communists and anti-communists agreed that only Imre Nagy was capable of leading the negotiations for the temporary government and the withdrawal of the Russians. The desire for change united every class of the population behind the revolution: only the Russians and "a few Hungarian chechniks" opposed them.

The leftist journalist of *Le Monde*, Jean Roman, divided the participants of the revolution into 3 groups. According to him the first group was made up of nationalist communists, who were hoping for an easy victory; their goal, economic well being, independence, democratization and intellectual freedom. These are the people who obeyed immediately the call for cease fire upon hearing about the withdrawal of Russian troops. The second group was comprised of national forces who questioned socialism, who for the most part had strong positions in the western part of Hungary and wanted a complete abolishment of communism. Finally, "perhaps being misled by Soviet propaganda," he considered those armed resisters "a sort of maquisards", who perhaps were supported both with weapons and directed from abroad.

The FA and the NYHT looked at the situation from an entirely different point of view. The reporter from the German paper *Hanni Konitzer* as well as the American analyst *Marguerite Higgins*, pointed out that in her study *George Orwell* was wrong, that "in spite of all the brain washing" the Hungarians were not converted to communism, and those classes in particular on which the communists had counted the most had revolted.

Both dailies mentioned in the first place the young, since the 14-20 year olds started the revolution and maintained it with their élan and courage. And those young people who from the beginning had been raised in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, “this supposed main supporting column of the regime, the future hope of communism in Hungary developed creaking cracks and provided not only the most courageous fighters but also the intellectual leaders of the fight for freedom.”

Hanni Konitzer emphasized three more strata from among the participants of the revolution, while Higgins deemed it sufficient to point to the remainder of the population, that “Imre Nagy trusted his own people so little, that when the disturbances broke out, he did not call on the Hungarian army but on the Soviet tanks. Were there no capitalists there? The thousands of dead and wounded, which were a result of the indiscriminate firing, all belonged to the proletariat?” The German paper pointed out, that “the somewhat ambivalent behavior of the Hungarian army in the beginning was turned into support of the freedom fighters, not in the least by the heroic self-sacrifice of the young” and so, even the army which had been impregnated by communist ideology, took the side of the radical reforms. The often quoted “workers’ class unequivocally formed the wide basis of the rebellion.” The author of the article was the least surprised by the participation of the peasantry, a strata that tended to be conservative and little affected by communist ideology. So the rebels were not counter revolutionaries or provocateurs, but freedom fighters battling for the independence of the nation. All of these factors “must have been a frightening shock for the leadership of world communism.”

The FA thought that was the reason so many poorly educated people and youth were to be found among the freedom fighters, “because the anti-communist intelligentsia had either been eliminated or frightened to such a degree, that it does not dare show its face in the current murky situation.” The paper cites Sopron as an example where a 21 year old young man led the rebellion. Thomas Schreiber had the opposite opinion, the rebellion according to him was the work of the intelligentsia and the workers only joined later. The leaders of the revolution were weary of two things. Early on they were concerned that the old communists using their experience and

their power's influence were already at work poisoning the revolution and putting the anti-communist revolution under communist leadership. On the other hand, they did everything to prevent the return of emigrants from attempting to turn back the wheels of history.

The Western analysts concurrently tried to sketch how the mixed group of the revolutionaries had come into being during the enfolding of the rebellion. Jean Roman (previously cited) thought that anti-Stalinist revolution started by the workers, was joined by right wing elements and therefore this process " was drifting towards a situation where it no longer seemed impossible, that the victory of the elements working on the restoration of Horthy's Hungary would lead to the almost complete disappearance of the communist party." According to the journalist three reasons combined to cause the eruption of the revolution: it all started with destalinization, but the Stalinists were slow to hand over power to the nationalists, so the country that had become a colony, found that its population hated the Russians and united in rebellion. Since everyone took the side of the revolutionaries, the Nagy government was forced to promise the fulfillment of every demand. In the opinion of Thomas Schreiber the revolution got its impetus in the September events where the "Nagyists" compared to the ideas of the centrists wanted change too fast, because according to Imre Nagy the speeded up change was the only solution against the reactionaries and the only possibility for saving the foundations of the people's democracy. But those in power slowed down the process which caused dissatisfaction: this led to the revolution. The definitely anti-communist American George N. Shuster said " those who visited Hungary regularly and were in constant touch with the 'illegals' after the Austrian treaty, a great pressure came from within the country to have the Russians leave; the Hungarian communist leaders decided to nationalize communism in Hungary and allow national slogans. During the détente, they were extremely careful that only left wing intelligentsia and writers be allowed (was this a reference to the Petofi kor?) and not one truly liberal writer was allowed to open his mouth." Finally they decided to recall Imre Nagy to the cabinet, so as to assure their popularity. They themselves had organized the demonstration, but fell into their own trap. The author of the article maintained that their fatal mistake was

to free Bela Kovacs, “this man in his forties who was the legendary hero of the people and a sincere and ardent supporter of Cardinal Mindszenty,” and because of his popularity could not be rearrested. In the meanwhile, Titoist communists also joined the revolution, for example, the wife of Rajk, according to whom “ Imre Nagy, a Stalinist, cannot be trusted.”

THE ROLE OF MINDSZENTY

The series of articles already cited consider the role of Mindszenty exceedingly important in the outbreak of the revolution as well as in Hungary's future. George W. Shuster thought that the Cardinal had been imprisoned in 1948, because the uncompromising fight for human rights which he led would have caused many problems for the communists. But his arrest did not solve the problem because the peasants and workers started to resist passively by "neglecting to hand in their whole harvest and sabotaged industrial production" and so unrest did not start in Hungary with the death of Stalin. Therefore, in the summer of 1955, they offered the cardinal reinstatement in his office and freedom if he agreed to go to Rome in exile. When he rejected this condition, Rakosi "as party secretary", before his memorial July 18, sent Prime Minister Andras Hegedus to talk to him. The government, fighting for its survival, was willing to assume even this major humiliation. Hegedus visited Mindszenty four times - in vain - the Cardinal stated that he would never cooperate with a communist government. The situation was summed up by Shuster: even though Mindszenty had not participated actively in the revolution nor in its planning, "he was still under arrest at the time", the revolution showed that Mindszenty was and remained the only moral force in the country, regardless of his being in office or not. The revolution considered the Cardinal its key, because the rebels would keep on fighting until all their demands would be met, and one of these demands was the restoration to complete freedom of the Cardinal. If the revolution fails, another rebellion would follow, according to the American journalist, until the Hungarian people had these demands fulfilled. The goals of the leaders of the rebellion "whose majority was comprised of young workers or peasants" was to establish a true Christian democracy in which of course Mindszenty would not assume an active role, since he was not a politician, but he would support it as the greatest balancing force.

The freeing of Mindszenty was greeted by the American press as the most brilliant success of the Catholic church in its ten year struggle with communism, since as Cardinal and the religious leader

of Hungarian Catholics, “the majority of the population” had always been one of the possible rivals to this state led by communists. According to the NYHT Mindszenty had become everywhere due to his trials the effective symbol of spiritual resistance against communism.

While the American daily presented the role of Mindszenty in the revolution as perhaps even more significant than reality would dictate, what could be traced to the Hungarian sources of G.N. Shuster, the FA limited its reporting to merely the events surrounding the Cardinal, Le Monde criticized the actions of the cardinal. The French paper covertly faulted Mindszenty for encouraging forces wanting the radical, therefore unrealistic changes and thus played a significant role in the violent reaction of the Soviet Union when it talked about “the elimination of the ‘45 government.” After a pointless and lost war, a regime was established by force, whose inheritors now are branding every atom of it with denial, contempt and condemnation. The regime was swept from office by the whole of the Hungarian people. According to Thomas Schreiber, the author of the article, “because of the inept sentence, the Cardinal became the hope of all those Hungarians, who wished for the impossible, i.e., not only the change in the regime, but its complete annihilation. The less than diplomatic statements of the Cardinal contributed to a large degree to the mistrust of Moscow vis a vis Hungary.”

THE EVALUATION OF THE REVOLUTION

The West thought, that even though the revolution had failed, in the short and long runs it will have proven to have been not in vain.

The influence of the Soviet Union was judged in diverse ways. Le Monde concluded that on the basis of force used in Hungary, it was possible that its use was needed by the Russians, but in the short run it increased the influence of the new Stalinists in Moscow. Similarly the NYHT thought that as the result of the revolution the trend in Moscow could return to the old Stalinist line. In addition, it did not consider it impossible that a new government would be formed in Moscow based on Stalinist methods. The events in Hungary also showed the communist leadership that the armies of the satellites could not be unconditionally depended upon. This unreliability, according to the FA, could lead to the reinterpretation of the Warsaw pact. The chaotic situation that followed the intervention in Hungary made the American observers deduce that Hungary would be the source of constant economic and political travail for the Soviet Union.

Higgins, in his already quoted study, said that the success of the Hungarian revolution had a world wide effect, regardless of how it ends. "The most surprising result of the Hungarian revolution was the dramatic experience of seeing how wrong the forecasts (prophecies of Orwell's 1984) proved to be, according to which man can receive such brainwashing that he will accept a political dictatorship." In contrast, the Hungarian revolution unmasked the proclaimed front of the Russians and their allies, "workers' solidarity" which hid the suppression. The willingness of the Hungarians to sacrifice was not in vain in spite of the suppression of the revolution, because nothing will be able to rehabilitate the Soviet Union in the eyes of the non allied nations. Continuing along the same lines the NYHT called attention to this fact and suggested that the illiterate masses of India, China and Near East need to be made aware, thus the spread of communism could be blocked. One refugee to the West was of the opinion that the Hungarian revolution had blown away the myth of the communist dictatorship, and

pointedly added in his report to the American reporter that “only those are afraid of the Russians who are too far away to really know them.”

According to Western observers the revolution delivered the greatest blow suffered by communism itself in the long run. On one hand this should lead to the weakening of western communist movements. The decline's first signs became evident, for example, when after the intervention the British Labor party expressed its objections at the Soviet Embassy, and soon two leading persons quit the party. The weakening of the western communist movement was only a forerunner of that which the western papers had stated shortly after the defeat of the revolution: independent of the success of the revolution, communism itself had been destined to failure in the long run. Numerous western communists also thought that the Hungarian rebellion was equivalent to a fatal strike on communism, and on the edge of the communist camp, in Yugoslavia, they were convinced that the Russians had come face to face with a historically significant crisis. Milovan Djilas went as far as to declare: the communism that the world had known, including the national communism, is moving under pressure from democracy, towards extinction from the international stage.

Finally, the revolution did not disappear from Hungary without leaving its mark. The NYHT thought that even though every demand of the revolution will not be met, nothing will be able to reestablish the Russians in total control in Hungary, and some relaxation must follow. According to the American paper liberalization has two degrees in Eastern Europe. The first was satisfied with relative independence within the communist camp, such as Tito's Yugoslavia or Gomulka's Poland. The second degree is complete independence and freedom. The tragedy of Hungary was that it wanted to eliminate the first step, but the Soviet Union could not allow this, because it would put into question the complete hegemony of Eastern Europe. The author of the article stopped here: he did not derive the conclusion, that even though the granting of the second degree was too much for the leaders of the Kremlin, the first degree stayed within acceptable limits and therefore in the case of Hungary it was also a possibility for the future.

HUNGARIANS AS SEEN BY THE WEST

One of the greatest achievements of the revolution for Hungary was the change it had caused in the perception of Hungary in western thinking.

Due to the role of Hungary in the two world wars and the propaganda of the neighboring countries as well as the Soviet Union, the West considered the Hungarian people overly nationalistic. Soviet propaganda tried to exploit this idea when it pictured the situation in Hungary as “the struggle of two factions, on one side a few Fascists and landowners, capitalists who were in agreement with them; on the other side the procommunists”. In contrast, the Western press pointed out that this had been a war between the Soviet Union and one of its satellites, an anticommunist and anti-Russian rebellion. Although the Hungarians had exceeded the example of Tito and Gomulka, and common sense would have suggested a limited democracy, only a tiny minority wished for the return of Fascism or the “semi-Fascist Horthy regime.” Le Monde pointed out that even the emigrants filtering in through Austria, did not represent a “Fascist danger”, since their numbers could be put at a couple of hundred and the revolutionary committees, called Fascist by the Russians, had disarmed the “reactionaries”, not even considering the fact, that among the returning emigrants, there were numerous leftwingers. According to the French paper it was completely understandable that the revolution was nationalistic, since the Soviet repression and its external signs, for example, the identical military uniforms, “fed the flame of Hungarian nationalism which had never died out.” But this feeling of nationalism had not stopped the Hungarian leaders from giving asylum and citizen protection to many deserting Soviet soldiers.

It is an interesting phenomenon, that during World War II , when France and the USA were fighting the Nazis, their papers discussed the danger of Nazism, while Germany, on the opposing side, was preoccupied with the image of a possible completely communist Hungary. According to the FA “the West had up till now considered Hungary a restless but strongly Communist country. The occasional fights in the Communist leadership were considered in-

fighting which barely touched the lives of the apathetic people suffering under the Communist yoke." The lesson of '56 for us is exactly that these were the very classes on which the Communists had counted the most. The NYHT, on the other hand, maintained, "the diplomats had for months been convinced that after the failure of the communism which had been established by the Soviets in Hungary, there would not be more than a handful of Communists. Even among them, there would be opportunists."

The Western press agreed that in case of the victory of the revolution in Hungary "as it was shown in the elections of 1945", Christian-national leadership would have won, which at the moment of the outbreak of the revolution did not yet have a detailed program. the leading intelligentsia would have quickly provided one. At the same time, in the columns of Le Monde, opinions were voiced that the lack of a united leadership "already foreshadowed that as soon as the rebellion was over, the situation of the political leadership would become chaotic, that any solution may become impossible."

The more favorable image of Hungary was also due to the sincere respect, with which they regarded the heroic resistance. The papers reported the calm before the storm, the united, serious and steady determination: "if it has to be, we will fight again". At the outbreak of the storm, they portrayed in moving articles the courage of the Hungarians: "12 year olds are fighting against the tanks, they are battling the tanks with their bare hands." The west found it especially shocking and it caused serious pangs of conscience, that when it became apparent that they couldn't count on Western help, and so the hopelessness of the struggle became clear, they still continued to fight and many after saving their families by taking them to Austria, returned to the heroic fight. "The courageous Hungarians showed the world that even in the 20th century, it was not a given, that a people were powerless against a dictatorship", commented the American daily.

Hanni Konitzer, the special reporter of the German paper pointed out: "moved and ashamed, does the western visitor find that here in Hungary, freedom truly means as much as the good standard of living elsewhere." For the Hungarians, it is natural that for the sake of freedom, the glass is only half full. The NYHT wrote with equal appreciation that "the Hungarian miracle did more than reveal

the greatness of the Hungarian soul." The author of the article adds with a little shame, "now something has to be done", not only for Hungary which has earned so much goodness from the free world and has received so little." The students of the University of Mainz made reference to this also in their letter, when urging rapid aid, they pointed out: "it is the undisputed duty of the West to help the revolutionaries at least in this manner, because Hungary is fighting for our freedom also." The Hungarians' affection for the West "even after the Near Eastern war, which was a stab in the back, must put to shame every American and Brit. The pangs of conscience caused by the inaction and the lack of will to act, became clear in the story which the American reporter Barrett McGurn told: an officer leaned into the car of a journalist and said: "I'm not looking for weapons here, but something much more dangerous, that you have, your pen."

The more positive picture about the Hungarians were formed by many personal experiences. The American reporter was flabbergasted at the purity of the revolution, when he noticed that "even diamonds were left untouched in the broken window of the jeweler's shop." A statement of one of the reporter's colleagues went "I have never been part of a story where I have felt so personally involved." With great enthusiasm, Clemens Graf Podewils also wrote about his experiences in Western Hungary; he had crossed the Austrian border on November 2. The Hungarian professor who accompanied him was filled with "good will and hospitality". The meeting made him realize how close really are those who up till now had been separated by the Iron Curtain, and upon his return stated, that this was not a final goodbye, because Hungary was now free. After his personal experiences, the thinking of the West seemed to him removed and exceedingly stupid: "We're trying to understand what this Hungarian revolution is. We break it into outdated categories and do not understand it. This revolution throws our sociological wisdom to the winds, when it considers the workers red, the peasants white. Here a civil war took place, under the red, white, green flag."

SUMMARY

The newspapers cannot be used to give a true picture of the ideas, actual deeds and reactions of the western powers: for that the official documents need to be consulted. However, the press can provide a picture of the propaganda of the West aimed at public opinion and how public opinion viewed or was made to view the events. The goal of the apologetic articles could have been along with the alleviating of pangs of conscience of public opinion, the attempt to have the stand of leading circles accepted by the people; the articles which criticized the wide gap between the propaganda and the actual actions of the great powers, demonstrate the real opinion of the public, transmitted by one or the other journalist. With the help of the dailies, we can get an impression about the widely held illusions, wishes and alternatives that were considered possible solutions.

The average citizen often could not get a clear picture about many things since the important decisions took place behind closed doors; nevertheless, the average person often guessed the significant motive of action and the opportunities it provided. The hope that arose in the last days of October that the revolution could be victorious proved to be illusionary. But contemporaries proved to be correct when they maintained that the UN would be just as powerless as the League of Nations if a superpower did not support it with its economic and military prestige and pressure; its decisions in reality would at best be enforceable for small states. They clearly recognized the disillusionment with the Soviets of the Western left wing movements, especially the communists'. This rude awakening forced them to search for new paths that deviated from existing socialism. At the same time, they overestimated the influence of the Hungarian revolution and the Soviet intervention on the nonaligned states; as ensuing events demonstrated in the short run, the propaganda of the Soviet Union taking full advantage of the Suez crisis could point to successes which proved to be stronger than the loss of prestige suffered due to the military intervention in Hungary. Certain more realistic circles judged correctly "that what the leadership in the Kremlin had issued in its statement of October 30",

that for the Soviet Union only the Soviet style liberalization within the Soviet military pact would be acceptable, and any statements to the contrary only expressed wishful thinking. As the failure of the Hungarian revolution signified a disillusionment for the West's' left wing, it fortified the conviction of the circles that were free of any illusions vis a vis the Soviet Union. Finally, the opinion proved to be true that as a consequence of the revolution, the Stalinist trend in Moscow would become stronger at least for a time; but the events also indicated the validity of the careful predictions of the failure of the Stalinist leadership in the long run, and the political changes that would take place in the Soviet Union's sphere of interest, which in time would turn Hungary into "the happy barrack" of the socialist camp. There appeared also other opinions, evaluations in the press whose accuracy will need to be examined by future research.

The most significant emerging influence of the revolution can be seen on the basis of the dailies in the changing image of Hungary. In the days of the rebellion and its suppression the world demonstrated interest, sympathy, solidarity and even remorse and contributed decisively to the positive, or at least without ill will evaluation of Hungary by the West; changing the attitude which "especially due to the two world wars and the negative propaganda" considered Hungary nationalistic, a German satellite or completely communist. This positive image "beyond wanting to do something and the pangs of conscience," was the reason for the aide and the asylum offered to the refugees. Not only did the image of Hungary change in the West due to the 1956 revolution, but in spite of the failure of the revolution "and the myth and illusion associated with every revolution" the revolution had played a role and has to play a role that in the process of the Hungarian nation regaining its healthy self-respect in the twentieth century.

