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THE QUESTION OF HUNGARY

Report of the General Assembly's Special Representative on the Hungarian Problem

In paragraph 9 of its resolution 1133 (XI) of 14 September 1957, the General Assembly requested me, the President of the eleventh session, as the General Assembly's special representative on the Hungarian problem, to take such steps as I deemed appropriate, in view of the findings of the Committee, to achieve the objectives of the United Nations in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1004 (ES-II) of 4 November 1956, 1005 (ES-II) of 9 November 1956, 1127 (XI) of 21 November 1956, 1131 (XI) of 12 December 1956 and 1132 (XI) of 10 January 1957, to consult as appropriate with the Committee during the course of my endeavours, and to report and make recommendations as I might deem advisable to the General Assembly.

I now have the honour to report to the General Assembly the steps I have taken in this connexion.

The objectives which it has been my aim to achieve are: (1) humanitarian treatment in Hungary; (2) return from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of deportees; (3) withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary; and (4) free elections in Hungary.

I was aware of the difficulties of my task and I realized that I would have to proceed step by step and that this would take time. I was hopeful, however, that an appeal to one of the essential purposes of the United Nations would meet with a favourable response, and that is that the United Nations is a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of the Organization's common ends,

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including international co-operation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

My first step, therefore, was concentrated on humanitarian treatment in Hungary.

It was with this approach that, on 30 September 1957, I contacted the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union and made an appeal for humanitarian treatment in Hungary. His reply was that this did not concern the Soviet Government.

Then I made a humanitarian appeal for the return from the Soviet Union to Hungary of the deportees. His reply was that the deportations were a made-up story and that the item on Hungary constituted an interference in internal affairs and was "illegitimate": he could not discuss it.

I offered to pursue the discussion with him in Moscow. He repeated that he could not discuss the Hungarian item.

I made a similar approach to the Foreign Minister of Hungary, on 10 October 1957, by making a humanitarian appeal for more lenient treatment of prisoners, of persons detained in concentration camps, and of persons awaiting trial and for due judicial process in trials, for admission of students to universities without discrimination, and so on, and, finally, for an amnesty for political offenders. His reply was that these were matters for the Hungarian Government to determine by virtue of its sovereign rights. But I pointed out that that did not preclude an exchange of information and views in the United Nations as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations. Finally, he said that if I would draw up a memorandum enumerating the questions on which I wanted information, he would supply the information. I said that I would do so, and I also mentioned that I could proceed to Budapest to pursue the discussion with him there. His reply was that, as the Hungarian Government could not admit observers from the United Nations, they could not give me a visa.

On 22 October 1957, Mr. Horvath told me that he was returning to Budapest but I could see Mr. Sik, who, however, would not be able to answer questions on Hungary, because the Hungarian Government considered the General Assembly resolution on Hungary illegal.

Mr. Sik confirmed to me, on 15 November 1957, that Mr. Horvath had instructed him not to accept the memorandum of questions from me. He, however, agreed to ask for instructions from the Hungarian Government; and on

2 December 1957, he informed me that his Government confirmed its former attitude that it would not negotiate on a matter which was an internal affair of Hungary and that, therefore, he could not accept my memorandum of questions.

As no question involving the Special Committee has been raised, I have had no occasion to consult with the Committee.

I wish to record my warm appreciation and thanks for the facilities and assistance which the Secretary-General and the Secretariat have given me.

I regret that so far I have not been able to find an opportunity for negotiations. I cannot believe, however, that the Hungarian and Soviet Governments will remain insensible to the voice of world opinion and the conscience of mankind which continues to make an insistent and righteous appeal for the freedom of the Hungarian people. It is my hope, therefore, that as the international tension relaxes, I would be given an opportunity to assist in establishing full international co-operation in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Hungary.

(Signed) Wan WAITHAYAKON
General Assembly's Special Representative
on the Hungarian Problem

9 December 1957.
