

THE GREAT POWERS AND THE HUNGARIAN CRISIS OF 1956

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On November 4, 1956, Marshall Koniev, Commander-in-Chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact instructed the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union to put down the first armed uprising against Soviet rule in Eastern Europe after the Empire had been built there in the aftermath of World War II. The crisis in Hungary had been building up since the summer of that year and reached its climax on October 23rd. Koniev's words echoed official Soviet propaganda: "Reactionary and anti-revolutionary forces incited revolt in order to smash the people's democracy and restore the old feudal-capitalist order." Fascism was reviving in Hungary with the active participation of "former Horthyites." The generals, officers and enlisted men of the Red Army were not to forget Hungary's attack on the Soviet Rodiina "alongside Hitlerite Germany" when "rendering aid to local authorities in securing order and restoring the country's normal life."¹

Koniev's words echoed those of Grand Duke Paskiewicz a little over a century before. Then, the Czar's army undertook the restoration of law and order in revolutionary Hungary at the invitation of the Habsburg monarch, Francis Joseph. Now, with the Habsburg Monarchy long gone, the Czar's heirs were intervening on behalf of their own empire – a formation far more brutal, yet more shaky than the Austrian precursor. As events in Poland, Hungary, and earlier in East Berlin showed, it did not enjoy even a token of popular support, but was kept in place by bayonets, terror and the complacency of the West. For Khrushchev, losing the strategic periphery of Eastern Europe, a reward of the victorious struggle against Nazi Germany, was unthinkable. Stalin's legacy had to be kept together. In face of the dual crises in Poland and Hungary, the question was how. Making a special appearance in Warsaw after having made military threats, he was able to come to terms with Gomulka. To a country of lesser importance he dispatched his minions – Anastas Mikoyan, Mikail Suslov and Ivan Serov – but still he found it difficult to see the situation with any degree of clarity.

The hasty decision to crush the revolution by military force has puzzled historians for close to four decades. Even recent treatments of the issue tie the decision to intervene to the declaration of Hungarian neutrality and the lack of Western recognition thereof.² Now, new evidence from Russian, American and other archives help us come closer not only to that answer, but also reveal the diplo-

macy behind one of the most important crises of the 1950s from a multi-dimensional perspective.

Events in Poland and Hungary were regarded in the State Department to be "among the most important events in Eastern Europe since the war. They are the first challenge to Soviet control in countries occupied by Soviet troops."³ A similar conclusion was now drawn by NATO. Indeed, any degree of Soviet withdrawal would have fulfilled a major American goal: the reduction of Soviet military threat in Central Europe. As NSC 58/2 put it in late 1949: the countries of Eastern Europe derived their importance to the United States by virtue of the fact that they extended Soviet military power "to the heart of Europe," a statement reaffirmed by all subsequent NSC position papers. In the early fifties, as in the late forties, economic blockade and psychological warfare were seen as the main tools of softening Communist grip on Eastern Europe. The rhetoric of anti-Communism suggested active American interest in terminating Soviet control of the region and propaganda broadcasts nurtured the belief of the subjugated populations that they would not be forsaken by Washington. The period between 1953-1956 saw a gradual relaxation of America hostility toward the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The new attitude was reflected in the alleviation of economic warfare and a willingness to expand contacts with those regimes. Yet, this changing attitude was not reflected in the propaganda directed at East European populations. Thus, there emerged a dangerous dichotomy between what was said in top secret policy papers and what was being communicated to the captive peoples. The tension between words and practice remained unresolved and the price for double talk was paid by those, who took words at face value and rose up against the foreign and domestic oppressors.

Following the Export Control Act of 1949 and the Cannon Amendment of 1950, which made it possible for the United States to deny financial or commercial aid from countries which were engaged in trade activity endangering peace (i.e. trade with the enemy), the Mutual Defense Assistance Act was passed in 1951. The Act, also known as the Battle Act, provided for a *suspension* of aid to countries which according to the Battle Act Administrator were shipping commodities of primary strategic importance to the Soviet bloc, except in cases where a suspension of aid would be at odds with the interests of the United States. According to an agreement that had been signed before the law was enacted, no sanctions were to be used if the country in question exported strategically important goods. The President and the Administrator were also to consider the transgressor's "contribution to the mutual security of the free world," the American aid's role in "the security of the free world" and, moreover, the "strategic importance of the goods received from the Soviet bloc, as well as its ability to control exports to the Soviet zone."⁴ The stipulations were flexible enough for the American administration not to have to resort to sanctions. This would have been difficult anyway – practically all the Allies and friendly nations

were involved in some kind of illegal trade with the East — and when such cases became known, no sanctions were taken. Breaches of the embargo did not involve the most sensitive items anyway, but it irritated the U.S. administration nonetheless. When after 1956 Hungarian refugees were flooding the West, the State Department tried to hunt down individuals who might have been involved in Hungary's illicit trade with the "free world."

The United States did manage to dissuade her Allies from selling weapons, munitions or commodities related to atomic energy; other less important but still embargoed goods did find their way past, primarily under old treaties that had been signed *bona fide* earlier. Thus e.g. Holland sold \$240,000 worth of oil exploration equipment to Poland. Denmark did the same with one oil tanker to the Soviet Union, but the Battle Act was not invoked. Similarly, they turned a blind eye to Great Britain's shipment of Malaysian rubber to the Soviet Union in return for lumber and wheat.

Illegal trade was more of a problem: between 1948 and 1952, 200 legal actions were taken against firms involved in such activity. Often times embargoed goods found their way to the Soviet zone by way of third countries. Furthermore, what made the export control even more difficult to enforce was the fact that some of the Western European countries badly needed lumber, coal, wheat, manganese and other products from the Soviet bloc and some of their own export items found a market in Eastern Europe. Even so, a report to Battle Act administrator Harriman stated that although Soviet armament could not be halted, the production of Moscow's war industry was in fact slowed down.⁵

In 1952 one more piece of legislation was passed on economic defense. The Kem Amendment extended the scope of commodities under export control. The new law elicited protests both inside and outside the United States. Strict restrictions came to be questioned, since the low efficiency of economic warfare could not offset the harm it caused to the Western alliance.

One year after Stalin's death the CIA came to the conclusion that a relaxation of controls would improve the strategic position of the Soviet bloc, but would not at the same time significantly increase its aggregate product in goods and services nor production in the war industry. It was presumed that the bloc's military potential would grow only to a small extent. Yet, on the other hand, benefits would outweigh costs: a reduction of controls would improve relations among the Allies and CoCom members would cooperate in upholding remaining controls more enthusiastically.⁶

President Eisenhower had come to the same conclusion right at the beginning of his term. When a document advocating the tightening of controls was put on his table, he brushed it off immediately. He justified his position by arguing that economic controls were causing far more hardship to Allied economies than to the economy of the United States, and were in fact hampering Western European economic growth, the cohesion of the Western Alliance was being jeopard-

ized. American politics should no longer diminish the standard of living in Western Europe, if America wanted those nations to stand by it in her struggle against the Soviet Union. Eisenhower was skeptical about economic defense measures being able to halt Soviet armament. At his initiative the National Security Council reviewed the policy of economic warfare and in July 1953 a "graduate and moderate relaxation" was put on the agenda. This revised policy had visible results: CoCom and the American positive list were reduced by half.⁷

The President's initiative ran against the preferred policies of the military leadership, which continued to insist on the most complete embargo possible. Their idea was based on a very legitimate concern, namely that it was hard to distinguish strategic goods from non-strategic ones. They also believed that export control was causing a bottleneck in Soviet military industry.⁸ The military leadership's concern was not alleviated by the fact that Great Britain and other Western European countries were exporting a significant amount of copper to the Soviet Union and were, in such a way, contributing significantly to Soviet military development. In May 1956 the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned the British Chief of Staff that Western copper shipments provided 25 percent of Soviet copper output, while their export of copper wire constituted 80 percent of the Soviet Union's production of that strategically important commodity. It was argued that this was an important Western contribution to the development of the Soviet industrial, military and energy sectors, to the production of fissionable material and multi-megaton warheads, as well as the security of Soviet communication systems.⁹ Arguments against the relaxation of controls did not end with the notion that even existing controls were not stringent enough. The Operations Coordinating Board was of the opinion that American policy and concrete measures designed to moderate satellite contribution to Soviet power were not altogether unsuccessful. An OCB report stated that the strategic control of east-west trade was able to diminish the Satellites' contribution the Soviet bloc's economic and military potential, since the restriction on technology transfer compelled the Bloc to use largely outdated equipment and production methods. And, at least as importantly, trade controls exacerbated the Satellites' economic lot and in this respect helped realize America's concrete political objectives relating to the Satellites. Even so, it was admitted that economic warfare would not be decisive in bringing about the professed end of terminating Soviet power in Eastern Europe. Its significance was in serving as a complementary element of a programme consisting of other measures.¹⁰ This analysis led to a new paradigm in America economic diplomacy announced in June 1956. From then on economic *incentives* were to be given a higher priority in promoting American interests.¹¹ That is, the American leadership would be able to ask for political concessions in return for a development of trade links. Going against the recommendations of NSC 58/2 the new line was building on *expanding*, rather than reducing the volume of trade.

As far as Hungary was concerned, the new policy made sense. Hungarian economy had been in dire straits ever since autarchy had been introduced. Her debts toward non-Socialist and Socialist countries alike were growing. Indebtedness towards "capitalist" countries reached 250 million rubles in 1953, and Hungary would have needed to pay 44.3 million rubles to service her debt and interest in 1954. Hungary's debt to Bloc nations – or "friendly countries" as they were called – were at 251.7 million rubles in the same year, Hungarian clearing account being in the negative towards nearly all Communist states, including the Soviet Union and China.¹² Hungary's forced industrialization required Western imports of machinery, which she was unable to purchase elsewhere or to pay for in currency, forcing her to sell agricultural products (e.g. wheat to France) to raise the necessary funds. Yet, while the policy of selling agricultural commodities to earn hard currency led to food shortage and unrest at home, it remained insufficient to meet Hungarian appetite for hard currency. Because of strained political relations, trade was kept to a minimum, and Budapest was forced to make political overtures to the West, including to Washington as early as in 1953. There it was correctly suspected that Communist approaches were prompted by economic motives.

In order to implement the new policy, NSC 5609 proposed that Congress should relax trade restrictions for Soviet bloc countries which were to be treated *individually* and that they should be granted even the *most favoured nation status* if circumstances of required. What this meant was that the Soviet bloc was no longer to be treated as a homogeneous bloc, but on a nation by nation basis. As a first step, the State Department worked out the ground rules of expanding barter trade with Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Rumania. For political reasons only the import of certain raw materials was deemed acceptable, but not of industrial goods. One reason was that a number of products from Eastern Europe fell in the category of goods produced by slave labour, the entrance of which was barred by legislation. A concrete proposal for trade expansion was made only to Poland.¹³

One of the most contradictory aspects of American policy toward the Satellites was that of psychological warfare. The charge was later leveled against Washington that America was exploiting the misery of the Satellites for selfish ends, namely it was raising false expectations of American willingness to free Eastern Europe of Soviet domination while those promises lacked all substance. Nowhere did this issue arise more forcefully than in relation to the record of RFE during the fateful days of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

The professed objective of psychological warfare was to keep alive the spirit of anti-Communist resistance and the *belief* that dictatorships were not there to stay. Yet, the dilemmas of psychological warfare were not lost to those who formulated it and were summed up in a handbook prepared for RFE in 1951.

According to the guidance provided by the handbook Eastern European peoples saw no hope of liberation without an armed conflict between the free world and the Soviet Union. All reports which confirm Western readiness for an offensive against the Soviet Union tend to improve the audience's state of mind, whereas all reports signaling Western tendency to "appease" Moscow reduces their hopes, the handbook argued. Theoretically at least, Radio Free Europe ought to have observed political realities, namely that Western Europe was longing for peace and feared war, that armed intervention was ruled out in the Soviet zone. RFE reporters had no easy task: they were to be aware that for their listeners peace and disarmament were equal to their abandonment to Moscow. Émigré leaders who were given a chance to speak to their compatriots were not allowed to promise military intervention since that would be a "radical" misrepresentation of Western policy and would "ruthlessly" mislead the audience.

Yet, speakers were supposed to make it clear that no lasting peace could be possible until "the tide of Soviet imperialism" was in some means or another made to recede from its audiences' lands. It had to be stated that Western powers would stand up to Soviet-Russian aggression on any part of the globe, and finally, appropriate sources were to be quoted to demonstrate the intent of "liberation" – with the exception of a pledge for armed intervention.¹⁴

A sociological survey was made of the broadcasts of the other American propaganda station, Voice of America (VOA), in 1953 by Columbia University. It was concluded that Hungarians who defected from Hungary had not found the programmes of BBC and VOA aggressive enough against Communism, their hopes for their country's liberation had not materialized, and for this they held the British and American governments and their radios responsible. The survey came to the conclusion that VOA should strive to formulate its programming so that the people listening to it should not expect what could not happen now but neither should they give up hope in a better future.¹⁵ Yet, 1956 demonstrated that the fine line between keeping hopes alive and arousing unjustified expectancies was often blurred. Guidances given to programmers was ambiguous and allowed for irresponsible promises made by reporters carried away by events.

Psychological warfare was given greater priority by the new doctrine of "liberation" espoused by the Eisenhower administration. "Liberation" did not necessarily mean either a departure from the Truman administration's policies or a more bellicose attitude towards the bloc. As we have seen, the word "liberation" had been used in connection with propaganda broadcasts aimed at the Satellites, i.e. the operation side of U.S. policy under Truman, already being a slogan before the Republicans ever came up with it. Furthermore, economic warfare was relaxed as compared to the previous administration's line, while under Eisenhower, on the other hand, the objectives, i.e. weakening Communism, remained the same.

Nonetheless, the new élan was brought by the new President, but that élan did not necessarily translate into sensible action. The balloon offensives were launched, the first of which, "Operation Prospero" sent 6500 balloons over Czechoslovak territory with 12 million flyers bearing the following message: the regime is weaker than you think, the hope lies with the people. The balloons caused irritation to the Czechoslovak leadership since even the air force was used to eliminate them. The balloons were used in Hungary too, but all they achieved was to add to the long list of outstanding issues between the Hungarian and the U.S. governments. Nonetheless, the balloon affair in Czechoslovakia was an ominous sign of the darker side of "liberation": inciting resistance against a brutal Communist regime with no back up, not unlike in a battle where the commanding officer having given the order to assault to his infantrymen ducked behind cover leaving the men without leadership. The wording of the "messages" was vague enough to shun responsibility were someone to question the wisdom of such policy. Fortunately, the balloons caused little harm — and caused very little good.

In Berlin, 6 million food packages were shared out between July and October 1953 to reveal the low standard of living in East Germany¹⁶ — something that was public knowledge anyway. Based on the assumption that liberation would come about through the correlation of forces within and outside the Satellites, they sought to provide the "domestic forces," that is the "captive nations," with more spiritual strength. Thus, within Operations "Veto" and "Focus" 10 and 12 demands were transmitted to the peoples of Czechoslovakia and Hungary to level against their governments.¹⁷

But psychological warfare did not only consist of sending balloons. Another aspect was the use of refugees for propaganda purposes. First and foremost, individuals who by virtue of their positions or special training could provide information on Iron Curtain areas and could be used for psychological offensive purposes were sought after. Yet, it sometimes turned out that those who did get out from behind the Iron Curtain were not used. One Hungarian managed to escape from the forced labour camp at Recsk in Hungary and made it to Austria. When he called on American authorities to tell about the camp and the conditions there, his story was dismissed in disbelief.

The National Security Council came to the conclusion that since defection of Soviet citizens would undermine the political leadership there, the United States had to induce the departure of the greatest number of people possible from all over the Soviet Union and her armed forces. For this purpose American propaganda was to convey the message that the United States would not return defectors, but would assist in obtaining political asylum. This kind of propaganda was not to be pushed towards the Satellites, the reason being that the strongest antidote to a Soviet type system was supposed to be internal dissatisfaction and not emigration. The potential basis for future resistance had to be kept intact and

settling a large number of refugees would have caused problems therefore, a support of mass defection from Eastern Europe was deemed inexpedient.¹⁸ There is no doubt that the most important reason for this was to keep the most militantly anti-Communist elements at home, even if some of them were sitting in jail or working in labour camps. Anti-Communist resistance potential was there, e.g. in 1951 news reached the State Department that an anti-government plot was uncovered in Hungary, the participants of which were planning an armed revolt on the national holiday on March 15.

Congress had different ideas about refugees. In 1951 the Kersten Amendment allocated \$100 million for the military organization of refugees from the Soviet zone. The President of the Psychological Strategy Board, Dr. Gordon Gray, praised the Amendment as the first positive step against Soviet aggression since World War II including the Marshall Plan and the Korean War which were, in his view, only responses to Soviet initiatives.¹⁹

On December 18, 1951, the Secretary of Defense instructed the Joint Chiefs of Staff to take the necessary measures to implement the Congress resolution, which as an economic defense was more hawkish than the administration on matters of psychological warfare as well.

Twenty-five light regiments were to be set up with 14 thousand men. These were later to be integrated into a NATO military framework. This move was seen necessary because it was believed – under what premises is hard to imagine – that the Soviet Union did not look upon NATO as an offensive organization and, therefore, would not view these units as manifestation of aggressive intent.²⁰ Each armed service prepared its own report, thus, e.g. the air force, worked out its own programme to encourage and foster defection by the personnel of East European and Soviet air forces.²¹ The Kersten Amendment was supposed to have been carried out in July 1957 and until mid-1955 some 60 thousand volunteers were to have been given military training. Those with the best results were to be used in psychological, intelligence, and non-conventional military activity. The plan never materialized. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff presented the project to the Secretary of Defense, they signaled that they had their doubts about its practicability.²² He thought it unlikely that Western European governments would be favourably disposed to having the refugee units stationed in Europe and viewed their relationship to NATO and the then not yet defunct EDC problematic.²³ Therefore, the Chiefs of Staff reexamined the ideas relating to the Kersten Amendment's implementation and in September 1952 concluded that they could not be put into practice in the course of the following year. American military commanders in Europe joined the Secretary of Defense in arguing that setting up refugee units was neither desirable nor practicable.²⁴ Although the Assistant Secretary of Defense gave an order to work out the concrete military plan to implement the Kersten Amendment, the Joint Chiefs of Staff again turned down the project on the grounds of the legal, political, and financial difficulties involved.

In June 1953 President Eisenhower decided to set up an organization called Volunteer Freedom Corps, but this idea remained on paper as well, even though its aim would have been to increase anti-Communist resistance and undermine the power of puppet governments behind the Iron Curtain. The idea of the Freedom Corps kept reemerging – e.g. in December 1956 – but always stumbled on the resistance of the military, which was unconvinced of its utility.

The early 1950s were the Cold War's most freezing years. The "loss" of China and the Korean War convinced many that there existed an international Communist plot centered in Moscow, which was out for world mastery. In 1951 the CIA concluded that Moscow's final objective was a Communist world ruled by the Soviet Union, and that the Kremlin was of the opinion that its vital interests could be realized only if it annihilated all governments it could not control. It was argued that because of these reasons no peaceful coexistence between the two world systems was possible. In order to achieve its objectives, the Soviet Union would augment its preparedness for war, attempt to extend the territory under Soviet control, and work to undermine and gain control of governments not yet under its influence. It was further stated that the Soviet army was capable of overrunning Continental Europe, the Near, and the Middle East with the exception India and Pakistan. Moscow would use all means short of a world war to achieve its ends, but the possibility of war could not be ruled out either.²⁵

Operation "Ironbark," a military contingency plan for the case of Soviet attack on Western Europe was worked out with the basic assumption that the Red Army would occupy the western part of the Continent, and American troops would have to land in the Europe in order to liberate it. This operation would be followed by the occupation of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Ideas were worked out for the administration of those countries, the elimination of Communist regimes, and the restoration of their links with the West.²⁶

The State Department shared the military establishment's gloomy outlook. The Policy Planning staff asserted that "the basic conflict" between the two powers (i.e. the Soviet Union and the U.S.) cannot come to a final end as long as those two great powers survive in their present form. The exigencies of their political systems in respect to the world surrounding them put them in such an antagonistic opposition that the conflict between them could not be solved until one or the other was destroyed by decisive defeat or an internal transformation amounting to defeat. In an armed conflict America would aim to overthrow the Soviet system, as a result of which the Soviet Union would withdraw behind its 1938 boundaries.²⁷ If the United States were drawn into a war against her will she would be guided by "final victory" unless this led to her own annihilation. Clearly the A-bomb bore heavily on the mind of the one who drafted the paper. War was a realistic possibility and the fear of war was omnipresent. Secretary of State Acheson entertained a person for longer than one hour, who asked him to convey a message to the President that a little girl who had paranormal capabilities

predicted a Soviet-American war on Yugoslavia. Acheson was so agitated by what he heard that he passed on a long summary of the discussion to Truman. Yet he did not find time to receive Robert Vogeler who had been released by Hungarian authorities after spending two years in prison, although Vogeler allegedly had important information on developments in Hungary.

It was the openly avowed objective of the United States to eliminate Eastern European Communist regimes and to roll back Soviet influence. Numerous ideas were put forward to this effect but few held out hope of success. Liberation seemed such a distant goal that only common places were ever said about what liberated Eastern Europe's place would be in a "free world." Not even its eventual liberation of Soviet control brought any clarification of this latter issue; and almost 45 years have elapsed since the doctrine of liberation was officially announced. Five years have gone by since the Iron Curtain came down. The Soviet Union ceased to exist, but there is still confusion in the West about what to do about Eastern Europe. It even seems that in many capitals Soviet control of that region in retrospect is seen as a happy alternative to the present state of affairs.

The Republican administration propagated a new, dynamic policy to "roll back" Communism in Eastern Europe instead of the alleged passivity of the previous administration. The new policy was born in a favorable international setting: the death of Stalin ensued by a power struggle in Moscow, disturbances in East Berlin, and Czechoslovakia. The doctrine of liberation emphasized aggressive psychological warfare, including a tougher rhetoric. When, after the 1956 revolution was crushed and emptiness, the utter failure, even immorality, of this policy was raised within the U.S. and abroad, PPS found it necessary to explain the real essence of liberation. According to that version, the unchanging objective of American policy over the years was to keep alive the spirit of hope and liberty but *not to initiate Eastern Europe's forceful liberation.*²⁸

When in September 1956 Adlai Stevenson raised the "pledge" of liberation in his election campaign, John Foster Dulles was quick to respond: "There was no such 'pledge.'" According to Dulles, "...United States policy as one of its *peaceful* purposes looks happily forward to the genuine independence of the captive peoples. The policies we espouse will revive the contagious, liberating influences which are inherent in freedom. They will inevitably set up strains and stresses within the captive world which will make the rulers impotent to continue in their monstrous ways and mark the beginning of the end" (emphasis is mine). Dulles claimed credit for the VOA in "creating strains and stresses within the captive world."²⁹ Although American policy was bold in the interpretation of propaganda broadcast, in its practical steps it was far more cautious in recognition of the fact that unless a miracle happened very little could be done to achieve its ends. *That recognition made the Americans less than eager to antagonize the Soviets over Eastern Europe.* Over this issue Dulles's line was not at all in step with the Cold Warrior image vested on him by his adversaries at home and abroad.

The State Department regularly received inquiries from East European émigré groups, politicians and individuals on American policy toward their native lands. They were, without exception, given a standard answer that lacked the rhetoric of statements made for public consumption and revealed that the new doctrine was no departure from old policies. According to the prefabricated response the people and the government of the United States “was filled with constant, deep anxiety” about the fate of “captive nations” in Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe. “Responsible officials” of the administration have repeatedly affirmed that the United States does not accept “the slavery of East European nations” to be a permanent condition and is “looking forward” for the peoples of the region to regain their “freedom and independence.”³⁰ This was hardly the activist, robust policy popularly attributed to the Eisenhower-Dulles line.

As far as free elections were concerned in Eastern Europe – which were the long term objectives of American policy there – it was admitted that “no concrete proposal or programme” had been worked out about that issue.³¹ Ferenc Nagy, the former Hungarian prime minister approached the State Department with a request for a high ranking official to speak at the ceremony organized by Hungarian émigrés to commemorate the 1945 democratic elections of Hungary. The State Department did not want anything to do with this since it did not want to identify “publicly and officially” with views and ideas that might be expressed by Hungarian emigres.³² The speakers were likely to talk about Hungary’s liberation from Soviet and Hungarian Communist mastery, and the State Department shunned identification with an aim that it had been pushing since 1949.

The Eisenhower administration’s goals in Eastern Europe were spelled out in documents prepared by the National Security Council. NSC 158, on the exploitation of unrest in Eastern Europe was inspired by events in East Berlin and Czechoslovakia. *It was the United States’ most important aim to nurture anti-Communist resistance that was not to reach the level of a rebellion.*³³ The document advocated a psychological offensive, but the parts pertaining to the details have been excised and are not available for research.

It was believed that the greater part of Eastern Europe’s population was anti-Communist, governments there depended upon Soviet weapons for their survival, but their own armed forces were unreliable. Nonetheless, it seemed that the Soviet Union was firmly in control, and it did not seem possible that there could be a series of new “Yugoslavias.” The consequence were drawn in NSC 174, which replaced NSC 58/2 as the official statement of American policy toward Eastern Europe. The significance of the region was once again defined in its augmenting the Soviet Union’s political, military and economic power and extending its influence to the “heart of Europe.” For this reason, it was deemed that a permanent soldification of Soviet control in the region posed a serious threat to the security of the United States and Western Europe. Consequently, it was in

Washington's fundamental interest to *eliminate* the Soviet Union's *dominant* influence over the Satellites.

A restoration of East European independence was spelled out as a long term objective; in the shorter run America strove to "undermine" local regimes, create favourable conditions for liberation, and preserve those forces which could contribute to independence and the realization of American interests. More ominously, the ground had to be prepared for possible armed resistance against the Soviet Union. No military means were contemplated in realizing these objectives. Instead UN forces were to be used for those purposes, and a new element was introduced – negotiations with the Soviet Union. In encouraging passive resistance care had to be taken so as not to incite "premature" rebellions, and no promises were to be made as for the timing and nature of American measures to liberate the peoples of Eastern Europe. Little wonder, since those measures were likely to have been clouded by mystery even to those who formulated American policy. The opportunities presented by disturbances were to be exploited and *nationalist sentiments*, the "natural enemies" of "Soviet imperialism" were to be supported in an undisclosed manner as a means of resistance. NSC 172 made a distinctly interesting observation, which proves that American policy makers were not altogether blinded by the Cold War paradigm. Namely, in the field of supporting nationalist sentiments the United States was not to assume responsibilities that would be at cross purposes with post-liberation American aims. That is, nationalist dictatorships were no more desirable than Communist ones. In this rare instance of clear sightedness were foreseen events that would happen forty years later: the reemergence of extreme nationalism in Eastern Europe, which had in the interwar period proved to be its undoing and would again threaten the peace and stability of the region. At the same time, this observation pointed to a fundamental dilemma. Democratic elements in Eastern Europe were either driven out into exile in the period *immediately* following Soviet occupation or were vegetating in penitentiary institutions. In some countries democratic traditions were feeble, and consequently, there was little in between the Communists and extreme nationalists. This point is underscored by recent developments in Rumania, Bulgaria and Slovakia.

Finally, conflicts within Communist leaderships were to be exploited, dissatisfaction was to be fostered in the ranks of the armed forces, preparations were to be made to take advantage of Titoist deviation, not to mention prompting key personalities to defect. There is, as yet, no evidence that practical steps were actually taken to put into effect these guidelines.

In fact, the means at the disposal of the U.S. Legation in Budapest were in stark contrast to the ambitious plans. Propaganda activity ceased altogether, people visiting the mission were under police surveillance, which dissuaded most people from visiting the Legation. The best the American minister in Budapest

could think of was to ask for a more expensive automobile, which would impress Budapesters even more than the one he was driving presently.

Assault on the Soviet system was to use diplomatic, political, propaganda, economic subversive and military tools. Recommendations for the latter two are not yet open to research. Document NSC 54/2 called upon the United States to develop underground resistance, guerrilla activity and make sure that in the case of war the forces of resistance would be available in areas threatened by or under Communist rule.³⁴

As documents on American policy are revealed, we are finding out that the Eisenhower administration's stance vis-à-vis the Soviet Union on the issue of Eastern Europe moved from confrontation to an accord through accommodation, negotiation. A solution to the problem of Eastern Europe by a negotiated arrangement was alluded to by NSC 74. There were two alternatives. One was to take advantage of the transition, the power struggle in Moscow. Recent literature points out that in fact Beria may have been amenable to easing East-West tensions by making concessions on post-war Soviet territorial acquisitions. His initiative, which evokes the eerie memory of Himmler's secret approach in 1945 was cut short by his arrest and subsequent execution.³⁵

It was argued that in the present stage of Soviet history, negotiations could lead to great concessions from Moscow at the price of smaller concessions from the United States. Even the Iron Curtain might be made to recede if the EDC were not extended to the Soviet boundary.³⁶

The alternative approach argued that the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Eastern Europe could be achieved by observing Moscow's security interests. This was an interesting argument, since less than a decade before Moscow's "deciding voice" in East European affairs was recognized exactly with regard to the security needs — real or imagined — of the Soviets. Another line of reasoning was put forward by the PPS to the effect that the periphery of countries running from the Baltic Sea to the Black, Aegean and Adriatic seas can be viewed from the Russian perspective as a security zone, a cordon sanitaire against the West, which would be hard to give up because of defense considerations. Yet, Western demands were for free elections, which could be menacing to the Soviet Union because governments could come to power that would be hostile to Moscow.³⁷

From the above it followed that concessions would have to be made to satisfy Soviet security claims, and in return Western objectives would become realizable Eastern Europe. Thus, if the United States was to make an agreement on the countries making up the periphery, Russia's legitimate claim that her European neighbours could not be openly and actively hostile towards her and could not participate in activities detrimental to Soviet security interests, had to be recognized. In return, the West would demand that the Soviet Union's "totalitarian rule" should cease in Eastern Europe, being a constant threat to European democracy and security. As a compromise solution it would be acceptable if the

Soviet government withdrew its troops from the zone of security and could return only in case they were invited by freely elected governments. Existing governments would be disbanded and elections would be held under international auspices. The new governments would have a free hand in their foreign and domestic policies, but *would be obliged to subordinate their security policies* to Moscow's interests (i.e., they would not be allowed to sign defense arrangements but with the Soviet Union). Their status would be like that of Finland.

In order to have an agreement, further guarantees could be granted to satisfy Soviet defense needs. If firm guarantees could be given against the resurrection of the German threat, and the neutrality of the Soviet Union's limitrophe countries could be assured, then the withdrawal of the Iron Curtain behind the Soviet Union's 1939 boundaries would be compatible with Moscow's security interests.

An agreement would have as its basis a defensible Western Europe, which in turn would not endanger the Soviet Union. The two together would satisfy both Moscow's and Washington's "legitimate aspirations." In spite of the "serious risks" involved an agreement with the Soviets on the size and disposition of armed forces in Europe was considered in relation with a possible Soviet withdrawal.³⁸

Thus, according to the above line of reasoning the restoration of Eastern Europe's independence was to be achieved by observing Soviet security interests in such a way that the members of the cordon sanitaire would make defense arrangements with the Soviet Union. Moscow would be guaranteed against Germany, Western Europe against the Soviet Union and there would be an accord on the size and disposition of military forces in Europe. Those countries regaining their independence would be permitted to enter European integrations, *except* defense ones.

A more realistic approach emerged in August 1953, according to which the above reasoning was rational, but unacceptable to the Soviet leadership, since it would spell the end of present Communist regimes in the Satellites, and this would presumably constitute a serious blow to the inner stability of the Soviet system. For this reason the above proposal could serve propaganda aims only, and more modest ones ought to be put forward to find out what concession, if any, the Kremlin would be willing to make. Recommendations were to be made for an amnesty to political prisoners, normalization of diplomatic relations with the West and Yugoslavia freedom to travel, the right to observe and report for Western journalists, observation of human rights conditions, and practical steps for the freedom of navigation on the Danube.³⁹

When the Austrian treaty was signed in 1955 and as a result Austria was neutralized, there was a ray of hope that a negotiated agreement on the fate of Eastern European nations could come about. This did not mean the opinion on the Soviet Union had fundamentally changed: it was still seen as seeking to undermine and weaken the Western world and expanding the territory under its con-

trol. Her concessions — like the treaty on Austria — were dismissed as “*tactical*” measures by Soviet diplomacy, which demonstrated its flexibility.⁴⁰

The United States was seeking an advantageous settlement and accordingly advocated Soviet withdrawal from Eastern Europe, independence for Soviet zone nations, German unification and membership in NATO. As far as Eastern Europe was concerned the State Department proposed the following position for the America delegation for the 1955 four power meeting: German unification, after which the Soviet Union was to move out of the GDR and Poland, and subsequently, when the Austrian agreement came into force, from Hungary, Rumania and Eastern Austria.⁴¹

The problem of Eastern Europe was raised by Secretary of State Dulles to premier Bulganin in Geneva as previously planned. Dulles told the Prime Minister that Eastern Europe was important to the United States because of ethnic ties and therefore its impact on domestic politics. Then, he continued to say that Washington had no desire to surround the Soviet Union with a ring of unfriendly countries. At this point the secretary revealed what he was getting at: that Eastern Europe be granted an opportunity for development along the Finnish model.⁴² Bulganin refused to discuss the issue and Eastern Europe was not even put on the agenda. It was tacitly recognized as being outside the scope of influence, for the Western powers. The Empire in Eastern Europe was *not* threatened from the outside at least.

July of 1956 saw a new revision of goals in Eastern Europe in NSC 5608, which contained several new elements. In contrast to the State Department's view according to which the American opportunities to put pressure on Soviet power over the Satellites “*continue to be very limited*,”⁴³ the NSC stated that the fluid situation in the Satellites increased the United States' *previously* limited chances for an influence toward a profound change in the Soviet domination of the Satellites.⁴⁴

The document which called the liberation of East-Central Europe a “long term perspective” recognized as a new motive that the independence of individual nations could develop in *different* ways. It was, therefore, asserted that some policies and political measures may be applied for the Soviet bloc as a whole, while others were suitable for one or more Satellites only. From now on the carrot and the stick policy was to be employed, elements of political pressure were to be complemented with incentives for good behavior.

Even more importantly American policy was no longer to influence the masses only, but also the governments themselves. Eastern European regimes were to be prodded to pursue policies that would not lose sight of national interests and would also take American interests into account. It was not clearly defined what those interests were. In possibly one of the worst timings of Cold War history “*evolutionary*” processes were given priority over revolutionary ones. The causes of dissatisfaction were supposed to be portrayed to the peoples of the So-

viet bloc in such a manner as to demonstrate that their alleviation was conceivable not only by revolution, but also by the governments themselves should they decide to take the necessary measures. This was a bad omen for the revolutions then in the making. The NSC document was drafted in face of unrest in Poznan (Poland) in late June. Yet, the tide in America was clearly against violent solutions: the Senate failed to pass the Dirksen Amendment which offered a \$25 million subsidy to private organizations dedicated to Eastern Europe's liberation.⁴⁵

Only a few days after NSC 5608 was accepted, the Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee passed a resolution to the effect that "... [the imperialists] are out to weaken international relations and want to undermine our unity with the slogan of 'separate roads,' then they want to smash [the socialist countries] one by one."⁴⁶ The resolution was a clear signal: if one component of the bloc fell, then the others would follow like dominoes. Therefore, if the Socialist camp was to survive, no deviation, no concession for "national Communism" was to be allowed. Unrest in Poznan and Hungary was attributed to "imperialist subversion." Khrushchev dispatched his trouble-shooter, Anastas Mikoyan to find a solution to the political crisis evolving in Hungary on the future of the Stalinist Party chief Mátyás Rákosi. Mikoyan was also to report on the Hungarian political situation, which was a source of concern for the Kremlin leadership.

Soviet-Hungarian relations of the time could be best characterized as a master-slave relationship. Hungarian foreign policy was a function of the Soviet Union's, her important domestic issues were decided in Moscow or under the guidance of the Kremlin leadership. Hungary's economy was dependent upon Soviet willingness to supply raw materials, and indeed, her five year plan was built on cooperation with the Soviet Union. This relationship remained unchanged even after Stalin died and was to continue the same way all throughout the 1950s. Hungarians were made to feel puny, insignificant — they were invited to view a military exercise where an A-bomb was dropped on the practicing troops; their leaders were shuffled around at Moscow's will.

Foreign trade was one area where the Soviet Union had its strongest grip on Hungary. In 1954 Voroshilov announced that since 1946 commercial turnover between the two sides had risen by 14 times. When in early 1955 the Soviet leadership unexpectedly reduced the list of goods it was willing to purchase from and ship to Hungary, Hungarian Minister of Foreign Trade László Hay admitted to the Political Committee of the Hungarian Workers Party that the whole foreign trade plan for 1955 was built on the assumption that the turnover with the Soviet Union would grow. "The exceedingly sharp reduction of materials coming from the Soviet Union and in the case of some raw materials, even a complete halt of the Soviet import brought our national economy into a very serious situation indeed."⁴⁷ Hungarian economy found itself in a critical situation and was obliged to "turn to the capitalist states to cover the missing raw materials and commodi-

ties." Yet, as Prime Minister Imre Nagy admitted, "some raw materials, especially those needed for foundries could not be purchased from the West even for currency."⁴⁸ Economic warfare finally bore fruit. Soviet inability or unwillingness to supply certain essential commodities made a satellite turn to the West for assistance, which due to the embargo was not forthcoming, and putting the country in question into dire straits. Just the way it was envisioned in 1948.

This episode is a clear example of a one-sided dependence on Soviet policies, and of Soviet procedure. No warning was given to Budapest about Moscow's changed trade policy, and no explanation was given why essential goods were not supplied.

Yet, it was in the political sphere that the subordinated relationship was felt most. Mátyás Rákosi, who wallowed in a Byzantine cult of personal adulation, literally presided over life and death and reckoned himself as "Stalin's best disciple," suddenly found out in June 1953 that he was worth only as much as the value the Soviets put behind him. As a perceptive British observer put it: "Rákosi's genius for a single minded, unremitting intrigue in his quest for paramourship in Hungary has been equaled only by his consistent servility to Moscow... So accurately did his policies reflect those of the Kremlin that one can almost hear Stalin plagiarizing the earlier master's words: 'My most faithful pupil.'"⁴⁹

All of a sudden in June 1953, at the peak of Beria's new initiatives, Rákosi was summoned to Moscow. There, he was told in no uncertain terms that the top echelons of the Hungarian party would need to be reshuffled and he himself had to relinquish his Prime Ministership to Imre Nagy. All sorts of charges were leveled against the shattered Rákosi and the members of his delegation. The most important was that the leadership was dominated by unpopular Jews and younger, truly Hungarian cadres, should now be given a chance. This issue was by no means new. Stalin had originally wanted non-Jews to head the Communist Party, but since the Muscovites were almost exclusively of Jewish stock — with the notable exception of Imre Nagy — he had no other choice. The Rákosi group in turn did their best to convince everyone that the "comrades" of home were not competent enough. Now it all turned back on them, and not even his anti-Semitism could save Rákosi from what he got in Moscow.

The criticism was unequivocal from Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Molotov, Voroshilov, Malenkov, but the most vocal critic was Beria. He was the one who supplied the most grotesque episode of the meeting when he attacked Defense Minister Farkas for being too harsh with the population, introducing terror, something the Moscow leadership allegedly had warned against. That the Hungarians had acted against the Kremlin's advice was a common theme. Too much emphasis was put on heavy industry as opposed to light and consumer industry and agriculture. All that was to change from now. The Hungarians could hardly speak — they had always acted in line with if not at the direct instructions of those who were now

calling them to account. In the very end Rákosi was even accused by Beria of dealing with the Americans behind the Soviets' back.⁵⁰ There was little substance to the latter accusation: the U.S. minister in Budapest had approached the Hungarian Foreign Minister at a reception earlier that year with an offer to improve bilateral relations. The Foreign Minister duly reported on the approach to the party leadership, and as far it is possible to tell, there was no follow-up.

When in 1952 the Soviet leadership was dissatisfied with Nagy's economic results, Malenkov had the Stalinist economic expert Ernő Gerő take over leadership of the economy. As it turned out, the Prime Minister himself lost favor in Moscow soon. As historian János Rainer wrote: "Imre Nagy's reform initiatives did not fit into the Soviet policy of step-by-step correction, not so much because of their rapidity...but because in the Soviets' judgement they posed the same threat which elicited Moscow's directive for correction: the reform measures would go beyond a certain limit and become destabilizing. The Hungarian thaw was not made a reform by one single spectacular move, it was a lengthy process and thus provided room for consideration. From Moscow's perspective not the actual details, but a tendency seemed dangerous, namely that multi-faceted experiments (economics, social-political, structural) were leading to a democratic reform."⁵¹

The year 1955 saw a partial restalinization. Nagy was ousted, Rákosi was reinstated as the nation's number one political figure. His tenure was not to last long. Unrest in Hungary was growing visibly, especially among intellectuals. Rákosi was forced to admit that Rajk has been executed innocently but had little success in blaming it on Defense Minister Mihály Farkas.

In June 1956, Mihail Suslov was dispatched to Budapest for a fact finding mission. Suslov reported that "non-technical urban intellectuals, moreover a part of the Central Committee apparatus ...are, to various degrees, dissatisfied with the present Central Committee leadership...the relationship between the Central Committee and the Political Committee is cold." Suslov deemed that dissatisfaction did not spread to the peasants or workers, but made the recommendation that cadres of Hungarian stock be appointed to leading positions. He also reported that disgruntled party cadres were preparing for an attack on Rákosi on the pretext of the Farkas affair.⁵² The Soviet ambassador in Budapest, Yury Andropov felt that "opposition and enemy elements" were getting "ever more impudent" and "are beginning to feel they can go on with their subversive activities almost unpunished." He felt that the Politburo was wavering about using tough measures against "opportunistic and hostile elements." Furthermore, the Hungarian secret police "was not showing sufficient deceseveness against the *counter-revolutionaries*..." He, therefore, recommended that Soviet press "exercise criticism on right wing views spreading in Hungary, in the course of which Nagy should be mentioned and the assertions, according to which we are supporting him, should be unmasked."

The situation in Hungary clearly worried Khrushchev, who confided to Tito, that he was willing to go to any lengths to keep Hungary.⁵³ This time Mikoyan was sent to Budapest to take care of the Rákosi issue. He received no instructions to depose the dictator, who was becoming a pain in Moscow's back, but to find a solution acceptable to all parties. Mikoyan, upon his arrival was appalled to find that "hostile elements were active among the masses without being punished" and were now "involving even workers in their struggle to remove the party leadership." It was a cause for alarm that "power was slipping out of the comrades' hand day-by-day," just as control over press and the radio. Mikoyan painted a gloom picture of the schism within the Central Committee, the spread of animosity and the lack of counter measures. Therefore, he demanded that hostile elements be removed from the Central Committee, just like those journalists and radio reporters who did not obey the party's leading organ. In order to find a solution to the crisis, Mikoyan recommended that Rákosi resign of his own accord. Furthermore, he advocated the cooptation of "Hungarian" cadres with a simultaneous strike at the enemy, coupled with "an assault in the front of ideology." Finally, he demanded the restoration of party discipline and unity. In his speech at the July 18 meeting of the Central Committee Mikoyan expressed that he "was worried about the Hungary" and castigated the intellectual debates in the "Petöfi Circles" as "an ideological Poznan without shooting," stating that "détente" and "coexistence...exclude ideological concessions and opportunism to hostile ideas."⁵⁴

Mikoyan's stay ended with Rákosi's removal. Ernő Gerő was appointed his successor. This choice outraged reformers, since it was evident that Gerő was Rákosi's closest associate who shared the same views.

Andropov continued to send distress signals. He thought that the crisis was a result of mistakes made in economic policy, Rákosi's personality cult and the "lack of party democracy" – meaning that no party dissent was allowed. Despite the fact that the enemy was exploiting signs of weakness, Hungarian comrades encouraged them by granting concession.. This policy could lead to a stage where "the Hungarian comrades will deviate from the road of Marxism-Leninism without noticing it," warned the ambassador. He named Western radio stations "especially RFE" as among the chief culprits in inciting nationalist sentiment.⁵⁵ Andropov's dispatch reached Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, who shared it with the Presidium. Gromyko added his own information to the Ambassador's message, namely that Hungarian nationalists were allegedly reclaiming Transylvania. Reactionary elements were trying to pry away Hungary from the Soviet Union. The Deputy Minister urged that the Soviet ambassador in Hungary be instructed to warn the Hungarian Prime Minister: "anti-party elements are undermining not only the party's respect and its role in the country, but were posing a threat to the unity of the Socialist camp as well..."⁵⁶

Events were quickly reaching their climax. The victims of the Rajk trial were given a state funeral on October 6, 1956, which turned into a mass demonstration. Andropov found Party First Secretary in a "nervous and uncertain" state. Gerő talked to serious proportions. The situation was grave and growing worse. Khrushchev was scheduled to visit Budapest on November 20, but now Gerő was urging the First Secretary of the CPSU to come earlier, since the Hungarian Communists could find no way out of the present situation.

Andropov was at a loss to supply his superiors with a useful analysis of the situation, let alone advice as to what to do about it. He repeated the earlier theme on the lack of resolve in the HWP leadership adding that they were not implementing the advice sent by the CPSU.⁵⁷ He did not understand that the crisis was not instigated by hostile elements from above, but dissent in the leadership was caused by widespread discontent from below. Zoltán Vas, an old Muscovite Communist, who had played an instrumental role in the Sovietization of Hungarian economy, warned Andropov of an "impending national catastrophe" caused by the fact that Hungary had become "essentially a republic of the Soviet Union in the 11 years following World War II." He left his role in that process unmentioned.⁵⁸ When Gerő told Andropov that anti-Soviet sentiment had spread to workers, the ambassador being convinced that the conflict was generated from above, took no note of the remarks. Nothing could have been further from the truth. By October 23 discontent assumed mass proportions and spilled out onto the streets. Thus, Khrushchev had to face a dual crisis: one in Poland, the other in Hungary. Soon one more was to follow: the Middle East.

The Polish turmoil reached a climax on October 19–20. Khrushchev made a personal appearance in Warsaw, and military threats were made. Gomulka was ready for compromise, and although the Soviet Presidium resolved on October 20 that "there is only one possible solution – to put an end to what is happening in Poland. Military exercise..."⁵⁹ On October 21 Khrushchev was able to inform on a peaceful solution. At that point, Hungary erupted.

On October 23, Khrushchev was informed by Minister of Defense Zhukov that Hungarian First Party Secretary Gerő pleaded to the military attaché of the Soviet Embassy in Budapest for armed intervention to suppress "the demonstration which had assumed ever growing, hitherto unprecedented proportions." The Russians were not quick to deliver. The CPSU Presidium gave no permission for the intervention, since no high functionary from Hungary had filed for it. Eventually it was Marshall Zhukov's report on the same day on the developments of the armed uprising that made the Presidium decide on military intervention⁶⁰ on the night of October 23. The following day Marshalls Zhukov and Sokolovsky reported that units of the Soviet army had been instructed to occupy key positions in Budapest and the important administrative centres in Hungary. Later Prime Minister Hegedüs signed a document inviting Soviet assistance and anti-dated it October 23.

Parallel to the military measure Khrushchev decided to include Imre Nagy in the political leadership and dispatched Mikoyan, Suslov and KGB Chairman Ivan Serov to Budapest on a fact finding mission. The latter on November 3 would arrest the members of the Hungarian negotiating committee discussing Soviet withdrawal. The Soviets arrived on the 26th and promptly embarked on sizing up the situation. They found that the Hungarian Communists were underestimating their own, and overestimating the enemy's strength. Mikoyan and Suslov reported somewhat contradictorily that all centres of resistance had been eliminated an "the main centre at the Radio was in the process of being eliminated." They reprimanded the Hungarians for not allowing fire on the demonstrators until midnight (nonetheless they had been fired upon earlier the Radio building by the secret police) and declared that were there to help the Hungarians – a task the Soviet military had already undertaken. An action the Soviets saw as "without friction, to public satisfaction."⁶¹ Later that day the Soviet delegation informed the Presidium by phone on the new developments. They found that the situation was "not as dreadful as the Soviet ambassador and the Hungarian comrades depicted it." It was assumed that order would be restored by morning. Imre Nagy was found to be acting "decisively and courageously"; the population was not perceived to be hostile to the Soviet Union.⁶²

Although Washington followed events in Hungary closely, the developments of October 23 came unexpectedly. Secretary of State Dulles was elated: "We kept alive the yearning for freedom. It worked in Yugoslavia; it will work in Poland and Hungary. The great monolith of Communism is crumbling."⁶³ On October 25 President Eisenhower deplored Soviet military intervention and expressed sympathy for the freedom struggle of the Hungarian people, wishing there was some way of helping them.

British reactions were more reserved. The British Minister in Hungary, L. A. C. Fry, was carried away by the sight of "...orderly crowds carrying their flags and singing patriotic songs..." He perceived that "the success of this revolt against Communism is clearly in the balance, and as I see it, we leave a magnificent opportunity to tip the scales." He recommended "placing the situation at once before the UN."⁶⁴

His optimism was not shared by all. T. Brimelow, the head of the Foreign Office Northern Department warned: "...We must be careful not to say anything which might encourage hotheads in Budapest to further useless rioting...I recommend that we should say as little as possible."⁶⁵

Eastern Europe never belonged to Britain's first priorities. London was prepared to relegate it into the Soviet sphere of interest from 1944 in return for a free hand in Greece, and never supported strong American representations to the Soviet Union for the sake of Rumania or Hungary. When in the summer of 1956 things began to move, the Foreign Office pointed out that it was in Britain's interest to "encourage national independence and internal relaxation" in the Satel-

lites "and thus to reduce their... contribution to the Soviet Union's military potential and its policy of economic and political penetration of the free world, particularly the Near East." Contacts with Satellite governments were to be kept to a minimum since London would not accept the permanent nature of Communist regimes. Anti-Communist sentiments were to be encouraged, but without "allocation of funds."⁶⁶

October 25th saw new and important developments. Passions were raised high by the bloodbath opposite the Parliament building in Budapest. Unidentified – probably secret police – men used machine guns to fire into the crowd which assembled in front of the building. Mikoyan and Suslov participated in the Political Committee consultations. The results were announced by Hungarian radio at 12:32 p.m. Gerő was relieved of his position as party First Secretary and János Kádár was installed in his place. Kádár who would become a traitor to the revolution, but would later become the nation's "good king," had participated in Hungary's underground Communist movement and was one of the few non-Muscovite Communists who came to prominence in the party after 1945. After persuading Rajk to cooperate with the authorities and confessing his own alleged crimes, he himself was jailed and released in 1955. He enjoyed good standing with Khrushchev and was acceptable to reformers in Hungary, hence he was promotion.

At the Politburo meeting József Kőböl raised the revolutionary issue of Soviet troop withdrawal much to the consternation of the Soviet "guests," who interjected that this issue "should in no circumstances be raised since it would be an invitation to *American troops*." (Emphasis is mine.) The Soviets were upset by a radio speech given by Imre Nagy announcing that talks between the Hungarian and the Soviet governments would be initiated for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, despite the fact that the Political Committee had rejected the idea.⁶⁷ The report probably reflected the hard-liner Suslov's position, since later events showed Mikoyan had supported troop withdrawal.

The Western political machines were slowly put into gear on Hungary. President Eisenhower instructed the NSC to work out a *strategy* for the new situation in Eastern Europe.

The American government's approach had been to buy time, and in order to do that Moscow had to be reassured, so as to avoid a new military intervention. The Kremlin was to be informed that Washington had no desire to exploit the situation for its own ends. At the advice of the President's disarmament advisor, Harold Stassen, the Secretary of State stated in his Dallas speech on the 27th that the United States did not regard the countries of Eastern Europe as potential allies. Then, the U.S. ambassador in Moscow, Charles Bohlen, was instructed to repeat this sentence to the Soviet leaders, which was duly done at a reception on October 29. Bohlen's message also contained a proposal for Hungary's neutralization.⁶⁸ Finally the President himself repeated the reassurance in a speech, ac-

ording to which America did not look upon East European governments as potential allies but was ready to offer them economic aid. Although both Dulles and the President wanted to avoid giving the impression to the Satellites that they were "selling them out or dealing with their hated master behind their backs."⁶⁹ The message delivered by Eisenhower was deemed so important that the Legation in Budapest was queried whether the speech had been heard in Hungary and if so, were there any official or public reactions.⁷⁰

American policymakers assumed that the Soviet Union was occupying Eastern Europe because of security reasons. Thus, if Washington "recognized the Soviet Union's legitimate interests on these territories," military interference could be avoided, what's more Hungarian independence would in the future become possible.⁷¹ As Harold Stassen later put it: with a very thorough, rapid intervention we had to give the Russians a chance to grant Hungary's independence by assuring them that Hungary would not be admitted to NATO. Stassen had had the feeling that the Russians would find it hard to swallow if the Red Army were expelled from Hungary.⁷²

The idea that Moscow, albeit reluctantly, would accept a Communist government which remained loyal to the Soviet Union in terms of defense and political agreements, but which could realize its national independence and have the right to define its own road to Communism, gained official recognition in Washington.⁷³ The President's Special Assistant in Disarmament advocated that the U.S. make a deal with the Russians: in return for a troop withdrawal from Hungary, the United States and the United Kingdom would pull back a significant number of troops from the continent. Hungary would become an independent sovereign state, but with no NATO bases or affiliation with NATO. The principle objective would be to discourage a Soviet alternative of armed intervention. It was believed that "such a move may be attractive to Zhukov, who must be reluctant to spread the Red Army throughout the Balkans in increased numbers to hold down indigenous populations; but he may be unable to prevent this deployment if his internal opposition can raise the specter of U.S. bases in Hungary, etc., and the affiliation of these Balkan countries with NATO."⁷⁴

Things seemed to be settling down on October 27. The CPSU Presidium consulted with the Chinese, but no resolution was taken on Hungary. Disquieting news arrived that "popular masses are out of [the HWP's] control, the party's standing plummeted... strong anti-Semitic and anti-Soviet feelings prevail among workers, and the population." But Soviet spirits were raised by the appointment of Ferenc Münnich as Minister of Defense.⁷⁵ Khrushchev was satisfied that "the military situation seemed to be well under control."⁷⁶

Nonetheless, the West finally decided to take the issue to the UN. France and Great Britain requested a Security Council discussion of the Soviet military intervention in Hungary based on Article 34 of the UN Charter. Yet, despite appearances there was a lack of cohesion among the three, as the British were un-

convinced of the strength of an argument based on the UN Charter because the Soviets would argue that they had been invited by the Hungarians.⁷⁷ At his government's instructions the Hungarian representative of the UN, Dr. Kós, protested against the discussion of the Hungarian issue in the Security Council.⁷⁸ The Soviet representative, Sobolev demanded to know the basis for discussing the Hungarian issue and justified Soviet action in the argument that Hungary failed to act along the lines of the 1947 Peace Treaty, Article 4 of which required a suppression of "fascist movements." U.S. representative Cabot Lodge and the British delegate, Sir Pearson Dixon, referred to a violation of the *general* principles of the UN, but did not specify which concrete articles were violated. This weakened their case, despite the fact that Dixon referred to the section of Hungarian Peace Treaty, which guaranteed the Hungarian people the free exercise of their democratic rights.

Based on the minutes taken by the French representative the discussion were dominated by Sobolev, who claimed that the proceedings violated the UN charter and accused the Americans of siding with "Hitler's former collaborators." He also refused the claim that Soviet intervention violated the Warsaw Pact. Cabot Lodge was unable to keep his composure vis-à-vis Sobolev's rantings and exclaimed: "it is inadmissible that murderers of women and children were pointing their fingers at those who were sending Christmas packages." The meeting ended inconclusively; but on a happier note, news arrived on the announcement that Soviet troops were withdrawing from Budapest.⁷⁹ In fact, no such decision had been taken.

On the following day the Soviet Presidium met yet again. The day had got off to a bad start for the Soviets. Not only did Nagy announce that the uprising in Hungary could not be called counterrevolution, but word came that Kádár was now leaning towards negotiations with the centers of resistance, and even worse, the workers were supporting the uprising. Ivan Serov made himself heard by sending an alarming report on two Americans, named Oliver and West who talked to a Soviet informer and threatened a UN military intervention and a second Korea.⁸⁰

Khrushchev presided over the proceedings as *primus inter pares*, providing the key notes of the discussion. His pessimistic appraisal of the situation was seconded by the hard liners. Voroshilov complained about Mikoyan's and Suslov's activities and defiantly declared that the troops would not be pulled out. Molotov sounded the alarm of capitulation. Kaganovich found that the counterrevolution was coming alive, but was less sanguine about putting it down than Voroshilov. Khrushchev saw two possibilities: either there would be a pro-Soviet government or one which would be "against us," and would "demand a troop withdrawal." In the first instance it could be "over quickly" with Soviet assistance, but "if Nagy turned against us and demanded a cease fire, and to pull out the military, capitulation could ensue." Either a Committee would need to be set up to assume

power or the government could be kept. The First Secretary answered his own dilemma by calling for the support of the Nagy government. "*There is no other way out,*" he concluded.

At this point the tide turned. The previously hawkish Bulganin stood behind Khrushchev by saying that "...we support the government. Otherwise we would have to revert to occupation. This would take us to adventurism." This was a new voice in the Kremlin. The idealism of the October 1917 – long lost – seemed to make a reappearance. Malenkov talked about an amnesty to the participants. Even Kaganovich sensed the new attitude. At this point, Zhukov – bearing out the analysis made by the Policy Planning Staff – recommended that Soviet units be removed from the streets of Budapest and grouped into specified areas. Khrushchev seconded that and promised a cease-fire: This was too much for the hard-liners. The sweep of the debate started to turn again. Bulganin warned the "people's democracy collapsed in Hungary, the HWP leadership ceased to exist..." There was no one to lean on, added Voroshilov. Kaganovich too, backedpedaled and warned against concessions.

Khrushchev then interjected in favor of a declaration. "The British and the French are stirring up trouble. We should not join their company. But let us have no illusions." The pendulum of the debate was now in the middle. Suslov, who had just come back from Budapest, declared that the sentiment was now against the Soviet military, the reason being that they dispersed the October 24 uprising. He advocated a widening of the government with "a few democrats." Malenkov was in favour of leaving it to Nagy to restore order instead of the Russian troops. All agreed, that Mikoyan should be instructed towards a tougher line vis-à-vis the Hungarians. It was Khrushchev who had the final say: "We do not agree with the [Hungarian] government..." Molotov, Zhukov and Malenkov should fly [to Budapest]."⁸¹

The final decision on action was still hanging in the air – it could still go either ways. Westerners managed to pick up the basic trend of Soviet policy, which was to "build on [Nagy] as a Gomulka, leave it to him to return order in Budapest if he can, rely on him to secure retention of Soviet troops in Hungary under Warsaw Pact."⁸²

From newly available sources it is evident that the Soviet Presidium was genuinely divided over the course to take. For a historical moment it seemed that the road taken would not be the one dictated by Russian imperialist tradition.

On October 30 Mikoyan and Suslov reported that Hungarian army units might side with the insurgents, but recommended that the Minister of Defense halt the sending of Soviet troops to Hungary, deeming that troops already in Hungary ought to be sufficient to put down the resistance.⁸³ In the meantime, ominous events were taking place in a different part of the world. Frustrated by American unwillingness to put strong pressure on Nasser to undo the Suez Canal's nationalization, Great Britain and France decided to solve the issue unilaterally.

ally. On October 16, Prime Minister Eden and his French counterpart, Guy Mollet, decided for a military solution. They prompted Israel to attack Egypt, which would then give an opportunity of British and French military intervention. On October 29, Israel invaded Egypt taking the American leadership by surprise. American intelligence sources had been serving notice on British-French-Israeli military preparations since the middle of October, and the CIA reported on a new concentration of heavy bombers and transport planes in Cyprus. Nevertheless Eisenhower and Dulles had dismissed the evidence because it conflicted with other sources.⁸⁴ Interestingly enough, Khrushchev was expecting something to happen, as witnessed by his remark on October 28 that "the French and the British are stirring trouble." The Soviet leader might actually have been informed than the Americans.

The CPSU Presidium did not discuss Hungary on the 29th, but turned to that issue on the following day with the participation of the representatives of the Chinese Communist Party. Here, Khrushchev came up with what could have been the most important development of the decade in Eastern Europe. In accordance with the Political Committee of the Chinese Communist Party he declared that "a Declaration must be accepted today on the withdrawal of troops from the People's Democracies... bearing in mind the opinion of the countries where our troops are stationed." Molotov stated that a Declaration to the Hungarian people had to be worded so that negotiations on troop withdrawal would begin without delay. He added that because of the Warsaw Pact, the "others should be consulted" and quoted the Chinese comrades saying that relationships between the bloc countries ought to be based on the principles of Pancha Shila. Foreign Minister Shepilov explained that "our relations with the People's Democracies are in a crisis. Anti-Soviet feeling is widespread. The underlying reasons must be discovered [although] the fundamentals would remain the same." Shepilov hinted, however, on a new type of relationship: an "elimination of the elements of giving orders." He expressed Soviet willingness to "pull out troops with Hungary's consent."

Zhukov agreed on withdrawing from Budapest "and if necessary, from Hungary too," but warned that the issue of Soviet troops in Poland and the GDR was much more serious. Khrushchev, too, was thinking of introducing new relations within the bloc, e.g. working toward economic unity. "Let us define our relations with the Hungarian government. We support their measures."⁸⁵ Thereupon a declaration was worded on "the relationship between Socialist nations." The first part expounded that "the countries belonging to the great community of Socialist nations – can build their mutual relationships only on the principles of full equality, a respect for territorial integrity, state sovereignty, and independence and non-interference in domestic affairs." The second part dealt with Hungary and made it clear that Moscow opted for a deescalation of conflict "in the recognition of the fact that continued stay of Soviet troops in Hungary may serve as a pretext

for a sharpening of the situation." For this reason the Soviet government "instructed the military command to withdraw the Soviet units from Budapest as soon as the Hungarian government deems it timely. At the same time, the Soviet government is ready to enter into negotiations with the government of the Hungarian People's Republic and the governments of other Warsaw Pact countries on the stationing of Soviet troops in Hungary."⁸⁶

Although the decision was potentially of enormous significance, it would be a mistake to think that it meant that Khrushchev would give up to Hungary. As he himself put it, the Declaration was the way for a peaceful solution. Even if withdrawn, Soviet troops could be reintroduced any time through the common boundary, which Stalin had been prudent enough to grab from Czechoslovakia in 1945. Also, the declaration was carefully worded to avoid a statement on party relations which, as Molotov was careful to point out, were distinct from interstate relations.

Yet, the Declaration was an example of *tanto buon, che non val niente*. Omniously, towards the closing of the Presidium's session, Liu Shao-chi interjected that in the view of his party, the Soviet troops should remain in Hungary. This was in stark contrast to the Chinese position taken the previous day. In fact, as later revealed by Beijing Review Mao Tse-tung became convinced that Moscow was in error to adopt a policy of capitulation and abandon Hungary to counter-revolution.⁸⁷ Later, on the occasion of Prime Minister Munnich's visit to the Chinese capital in 1959 Mao recalled that the Chinese Embassy in Budapest reported that the counterrevolution was gaining ground at an alarming rate and warned that if the Soviet Union should fail to act, capitalism would be restored. This prompted Mao to urge military action against Hungary.⁸⁸ Exactly when and why this Chinese change of heart took place is unclear, and so is its impact on Moscow's decision to go back on the October 30th resolution.

The same day, on October 30th, Zhukov told Charles Bohlen at a Kremlin reception that "Soviet troops had been ordered to withdraw from Budapest." What lent credence to his statement for the ambassador was that the Soviet leaders were "noticeably more glum than yesterday." Bohlen thought that there was "an overnight shift in position..."⁸⁹ At another reception immediately preceding the momentous Presidium session, Zhukov told Western ambassadors in a discussion on Hungary that as for the Poles, the Soviets exercised restraint, but "we could have crushed them like flies" if needed.⁹⁰ Bohlen's British opposite number in Moscow, Hayter waited until November 1 to offer his view on the Soviet declaration. He concluded that "They [the Soviets] must be prepared to see a non-Communist regime set up in Hungary...the Soviet Union now proposes to take practical and concrete steps to abandon its authority over these countries."⁹¹ By the first of November events had outpaced the report. However, for the Americans, who did not learn about the change of heart in Moscow, it seemed that their strategy might have worked after all.

A top secret memorandum prepared by the State Department quoted the Budapest Legation's view that "all signs point to complete Soviet evacuation of Budapest. That what has happened could be achieved without the strongest Western support is... evidence of the tremendous strength of the popular movement which is undoubtedly having a profound effect on Soviet policy. The Legation thinks the Soviets must be seriously considering departing from Hungary within a short time."⁹² The situation in Budapest was described as "fantastic." Not only was the State Department optimistic, the Joint Chiefs of Staff saw the future in bright colours as well. They predicted that in view of the uncertainty of Hungarian developments it is conceivable that the Soviet troops would leave without American intervention.⁹³ Since it now seemed that at least the imminent danger of Soviet intervention had passed, the November 1 meeting of the NSC, after hearing Allen Dulles on the situation in Hungary, turned to discussing Suez. The U.S. administration wanted to act quickly since it was difficult to condemn Soviet aggression in Hungary while Western powers attacked Egypt.

On October 30, the British and the French issued a joint ultimatum to Israel and Egypt to withdraw their battle lines, in case of noncompliance threatening with invasion. Dulles was outraged: "Just when the Soviet orbit was crumbling and we could point to a contrast between the Western world and the Soviets, it appeared the West was producing a similar situation."⁹⁴

On October 31 the National Security Council finally came up with Document 5616 on U.S. strategy in Poland and Hungary. It was now thought that "national communist governments" could emerge in those two countries. As far as Hungary was concerned, there were three policy options: exerting pressure through the UN and public declarations; supporting the rebels by clandestine or open military aid; attempting to secure Soviet troop withdrawal and Hungary's neutralization on the Austrian model.

In the case of Poland it was recommended that the U.S. initiate discussions for a normalization of relations with Warsaw, a reorientation of Polish trade towards the West, economic aid, and an expansion of cultural exchange programs. As an immediate aim in Hungary the NSC wanted to avoid Soviet intervention by convincing the Soviets that the American leadership did not regard Hungary a potential ally. The Joint Chiefs of Staff took exception to the latter statement.⁹⁵ The NSC recommended that an offer of mutual troop withdrawal be given to the Soviets on the lines of the October 29 proposal by the PPS. Here again, the military disagreed with the idea. It seemed that time would be available to implement the proposals. As late as November 2, Bohlen reported that the Soviets were not preparing for military action at this stage and were trying to buy time,⁹⁶ despite the fact that Soviet troops had been sent to Hungary the previous day.

Nothing could have been further from the truth. On October 31 the CPSU's leading organ met once more. Khrushchev without much ado, declared that "the evaluation should be revised, the troops should not be withdrawn from Hungary

and Budapest and we should take the initiative to restore order. If we were to pull out from Hungary, it would encourage the American, British and French imperialists. This would be perceived as weakness and they would take the offensive... Besides Egypt we would give them Hungary." Zhukov, Bulganin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov and Saburov signaled their approval.

Now all present at the meeting expressed unequivocal support for Khrushchev's motion. Only Anastas Mikoyan, who was not there and flew back from Budapest that night made a desperate effort to change the first secretary's mind. It was agreed that Khrushchev and Malenkov would consult with Tito, while Brezhnev, while Furtseva and Pospelov would "take care of the propaganda part," Marshall Koniev would issue the order for military intervention.⁹⁷

The leaders of Satellite parties were informed. Molotov and Malenkov consulted with the Poles on November 1 in Brest. Gomulka tried to dissuade the Russian from marching in, but to no avail. On the same day Soviet troops were entering Hungary. This prompted Imre Nagy to declare Hungary's neutrality and to renounce the Warsaw Pact. As we have seen, Nagy's announcement was the result, and not the cause of Soviet decision to intervene. The Soviet leadership reversed its earlier decision overnight for no apparent reason.

In the November 1st meeting of the Presidium, Mikoyan made one more effort to reserve the decision. He argued that the use of force would lead nowhere and recommended negotiations to keep Hungary in the camp. Suslov countered that "the danger of bourgeois restoration is close" and only an occupation could secure a government amenable to the Soviets. Serov seconded this, just like Bulganin who explained that the international situation had changed and Hungary could be lost. Zhukov saw no reason to go back on the October 31 resolution. There was no turning back: Kádár was brought to Moscow, possibly on November 1 and the list of the new government was compiled. Kádár became party first secretary. Despite the fact that military intervention was a foregone conclusion, the Soviets went ahead with negotiating with the Hungarians on troop withdrawal.

The Soviet leadership was gripped by great anxiety in the aftermath of the intervention. Khrushchev and the moderates recommended that they change the Hungarian party's name to Hungarian Socialist Workers Party as a sign of breaking with the past and to condemn the "Rákosi-Gerő clique." When Molotov rejected these ideas, Khrushchev shouted at him: "I don't understand Comrade Molotov. He comes up with the most harmful ideas." The old Bolshevik retorted: "[Khrushchev] should be called to order, so that he can't order about." Kaganovich too, was at a later meeting on the issue of Soviet-Hungarian relations. Khrushchev told him: "When will you mend your ways Kaganovich and when will you stop licking feet? What kind of old fashioned policies are you insisting on?"

There was confusion in the West on the significance of the Soviet reintroduction of troops. The British Legation offered that a) The Russian were seeking to

create an autonomus state, b) want to negotiate from strenght, c) they “reversed their policy and will impose will on country with force of arms,” d) fearing the Middle East crisis will lead to world war, the Russians “are strengthening their forward positions.”⁹⁸ Charles Bohlen in a telegram that was given to the Foreign Office opined on November 2nd that judging by what Zhukov and Shepilov told him, the Soviet government’s “decision was to support Nagy government to [the] end...thereby hoping to avoid total military occupation in Hungary.”⁹⁹

In order to take off the heat from themselves in the UN, Great Britain now enthusiastically embraced the recognition of Hungarian neutrality. The British mission in New York was instructed to seek its approval in the UN without pushing for a guarantee of it. Because of “difficulties” in Suez, Dixon was to “arrange for [his] American colleague to take the initiative,” and to give him “close and firm support.”¹⁰⁰ The French delegation in the UN received similar instructions, and on November 3 their chief of mission, Cornut-Gentile, was instructed “not to limit himself to press for neutrality,” but to underline also “the need to allow the Hungarian people to express their opinion on their future by free elections.”¹⁰¹ Yet, because the American delegate Cabot-Lodge dragged his feet, the last chance to put the Russians on the defensive about Hungary was lost. Discussion of her neutrality never got off the ground despite the fact that at the Acting Secretary’s staff meeting on November 2 Herbert Hoover Jr. declared that “the Hungary (sic) situation was being lost and we should have very promptly a review of what... we have done so that publicly attention should be kept on the situation.”¹⁰²

On November 4 Soviet tanks mounted the final offensive on revolutionary Budapest. Ivan Serov was busy arresting government and military officials, who had sided with the insurgents. He seized the occasion to express his contempt for human life: when Sándor Kopácsi protested his arrest by saying that his activities saved Servoc’s “colleagues” from being lynched by a mob. The KGB chairman snapped: “Idiot! Why did you protect them? They’re replaceable. Men sprout like weeds.”¹⁰³ The same day the Nagy government was deposed and Kádár’s puppet regime – his cabinet was drawn up in Moscow – was installed literally by Soviet tanks. Although armed resistance continued, the Revolution was over.

What were the constraints on Soviet and American policy? What were the considerations and ideas that shaped the superpowers’ response to the Hungarian crisis?

The leadership in the U.S. was caught off guard by the events and as a consequence had little time to adapt to the situation. Director of the CIA Allen Dulles stated at the November 12 Executive Session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Washington counted on the rebellion,¹⁰⁴ but other sources do not seem to support this statement. In fact, at the November 2nd meeting of the Acting Secretary of State’s staff, Robert Murphy, stated: “it should not go unremarked that in the three separate crises of Poland, Hungary and the Middle East,

there had been no notice whatsoever from intelligence sources and that there seemed to be a complete lack of any intelligence which could have permitted anticipation of the events." A report by the NSC on June 27, 1956 ruled out the possibility of "an open popular revolt" in Hungary.¹⁰⁵ Reporting on the Middle East was no better: Even in late September and early October the CIA and the State Department agreed that Anglo-French hostilities against Nasser were unlikely. On October 21 Dulles expressed that a peaceful settlement of the Canal controversy "was in sight."¹⁰⁶

In fact the Americans were not alone in the lack of foresight. The French Foreign Ministry's analysis on July 21, taking note of unrest in Hungary asserted: "For the moment we cannot say whether the Hungarian people would be resolved, if the circumstances warrant, to show proof of similar courage as the workers of Poznan."¹⁰⁷

The first warning of a possible explosion in Hungary reached John Foster Dulles on September 26.¹⁰⁸ It was earlier believed that events in Suez "eclipsed" the Hungarian events. Yet, according to available sources the Washington administration attributed great significance to the uprising in Budapest, which seemed to realize an important American policy objective. Both Dulles and the President were mad at their Allies — London and Paris — for jeopardizing chances to put pressure on the Russians. Therefore, the significance of Suez in terms of U.S. policy lies not so much in distracting attention but in that it made condemning the Soviet Union difficult. As Nixon later observed "We couldn't, on the one hand, complain about the Soviets intervening in Hungary and, on the other hand, approve of the British and French picking that particular time to intervene against Nasser."¹⁰⁹

Keeping close track of developments was made difficult because until October 27 there was no radio link with the Legation in Budapest. Communication was conducted through a telex machine. Moreover, there was no minister in Hungary. The new head of the diplomatic mission, Edward Wailes only proceeded to Budapest on the day before the last of October.

Most importantly from the American viewpoint the Nagy government was not seen as a desirable alternative to the previous one. This position was reflected by NSC 5616 which alluded to the fact that the government in Budapest could not be regarded as independent as the one in Warsaw. In the course of a telephone conversation on October 29 the Secretary of State pointed out that "the present government is not one we want to do much with."¹¹⁰ A day after his arrival, Wailes was instructed not to present his credentials to the Nagy government.¹¹¹ Nagy did not satisfy the Americans. It was believed that his new course, introduced in 1953 was no more than a tactical measure, which failed to improve the economy or to appease the Hungarian people.¹¹² Furthermore, there was an indication that Nagy was not considered to be sufficiently anti-Soviet.¹¹³

The most effective means to help out the Hungarian revolution would have been a military intervention. Conventional military action was out of the question because of Hungary's geographical location – Austria even denied use of her airspace to planes carrying aid to Hungary. However, a recommendation was made by the CIA to use the A-bomb,¹¹⁴ but it was rejected by President Eisenhower off hand. The American leadership was convinced that a military intervention would have led to war with the USSR. The PPS came to the conclusion one day before the Kremlin decided to use military coercion that “effective action would probably involve hostilities with the Soviets,”¹¹⁵ including the danger of a world war.¹¹⁶ As for massive retaliation, Dulles seemed to have had “more or less backed away from that concept.”¹¹⁷ Robert Murphy later remembered that Dulles, “like everybody in the State Department was terribly distressed,” but no one had “whatever imagination it took to discover another solution.” Military force was ruled out, since “any intervention on our part would have meant confrontation militarily with the Soviet Union.”¹¹⁸ British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd expressed similar sentiments at a conservative party rally in Watford.

To sum up, the United States took the following course toward the revolution in Hungary.

Military intervention was ruled out, because the idea prevailed that it would lead to a general war. Policymakers believed that Hungary (as the other Satellites) came under Soviet occupation because of security reasons, therefore, they sought to convince Moscow that the United States would not exploit the situation to the detriment of Soviet security. It was hoped that such a reassurance would stave off Soviet intervention, allowing time for the consolidation of a government acceptable to the American, which in turn would receive political and economic support. The message was clear to the British, which is an indication that Dulles' message was not unambiguous: “It is... evident that the U.S. administration is anxious to dispel any Soviet fears that the United States intends to exploit the present situation in the Satellite state area to the point of creating a strategic threat to the USSR. Foster Dulles made this quite clear in his speech at Dallas on October 27...”¹¹⁹

A half-hearted and haphazard effort was made to put pressure on the Soviets in the UN. In an attempt to save the Revolution Hungary's neutralization was offered in return for military concessions by the U.S.

Henry Kissinger, in a chapter devoted to the 1956 Hungarian crisis in his recent book *Diplomacy* criticized the American leadership for not using the advice of Kremlinologists like George F. Kennan, Fay Kohler, Thompson or Bohlen.¹²⁰

Yet, Bohlen's advice was constantly sought out and his performance and predictions were inconsistent at best. Neither was Llewlyn Thompson able to come up with an alternative idea. Indeed, one of the lessons of the crisis was that in spite of all the money and intellectual effort put into Kremlinology, the results were rather meager: the U.S. completely failed to read the Kremlin's mind. Still

American policy did have a sound inner logic, which determined what can and cannot be done. We are now left with the question: why did the Soviet Union decide overnight to crack down on the Hungarian Revolution?

According to Henry Kissinger the guarantees given by the Dulles-Eisenhower speeches were misleading and even "non-Marxist" governments saw an *arriere-pense* behind the American pledges that the U.S. would not exploit the Hungarian crisis for its own ends. Yet the British, as we have seen, understood what the message meant, so obviously there were no problems of interpretation. Furthermore, the Soviet records do not even refer to them. What's more, the decision of the Presidium *not* to intervene came *the day after* the *Kremlinologist* Bohlen repeated the key sentence from Dulles' speech to the Kremlin leaders. Kissinger also believed that the U.S. administration should have warned Moscow that an intervention could have serious consequences for East-West relations. Yet, it was Charles Bohlen, who believed that "the USSR intended to retain full control over the satellites even at the risk of general war."¹²¹ Furthermore, the course adopted by the U.S. was as good as any alternative given the level of understanding of the motives of Soviet policy. Moreover, until October 31, it seemed to work out. Finally Kissinger believes that the American government ought to have called the Budapest leadership's attention to the limits of American assistance and urged it not to take irrevocable steps.¹²² The former Secretary of State is certainly right in arguing that the U.S. should have warned the Hungarians that no military assistance was forthcoming. This could have even been done through RFE and VOA, where exactly the opposite was actually being implied. On the other hand, Nagy's irrevocable step of renouncing the Warsaw Pact came *after* the decision for military crackdown was taken. Therefore, I am convinced that the American government can be absolved of responsibility in the Soviet action.

In a recent book, Pleshakov and Zubok argue that unlike Gomulka, "Imre Nagy did not pass the test: he did not enjoy Khrushchev's respect (besides, in the 1930s he had been an NKVD agent... and reported on his comrades) and was clearly lost in the powerful vortex of popular revolution."¹²³ It is hardly likely that Khrushchev minded Nagy's alleged activities in the 30s, since most emigré Communists were involved in such activity in order to survive. Besides, he was the one who installed him to power in 1955 and had no objection to him on October 1956. More importantly even if Nagy was lost in some "vortex" it didn't make any difference, since nothing changed in Hungary between October 30 and 31. Thus, mistrust in Nagy was not a crucial issue in Moscow's rapid decision.

Let us try to sum up first what considerations pointed towards intervention. Not long before, Hungary had been an enemy, which attacked the Soviet Union. There is an allusion to this in Koniev's November 4 order: "We must not forget that in the previous war Horthy Hungary entered the conflict against our country alongside Hitler's Germany." Even 40 years later Evgeny Malashenko, the former head of the operative staff of a special Soviet division in Budapest men-

tions: "our soldiers remember that in 1941 Hungary attacked the Soviet Union with Germany and Hungarian soldiers pillaged our land."¹²⁴ Malasenko also mentions that Hungarians tortured Soviet POWs in World War II. The same motive was picked up forty years ago by the Soviet minister in Vienna who, in explaining his country's action, claimed that "Soviet women and children were being killed by the insurgents."¹²⁵ We have few records on Soviet reporting during the revolution, but it seems that Andropov kept sending false alarms, as noted by Mikoyan and Suslov in their report to the CPSU Presidium. We also know that Gromyko painted an even darker picture to the Presidium on the eve of the revolution than the Soviet ambassador's dispatch he used as his source had warranted. It is thus conceivable that Soviet sources exaggerated violence in Budapest. In fact no incident of atrocities against Soviet citizens have become known. Hungarian AVH men were, however, lynched on one occasion following the massacre near the Parliament building.

An important consideration in evaluating Soviet actions is to look at their decision makers. Being hampered by a vulgarized Marxist outlook, they faced a significant handicap: an inability to analyze the situation in Hungary. They consistently argued, even from on the spot missions in Budapest, that tension was generated by hostile foreign and domestic elements from above. They lacked the capacity to analyze the situation and thus to offer solutions that could defuse the crisis before it got out of hand.

It is known that the Rumanians and the East Germans were arguing for a military settlement, and more importantly, the Chinese switched to a hawkish position exactly when the Presidium decided to pursue a consiliatory, peaceful line. Significantly, Moscow was obviously worried about the camp's unity: Gromyko argued that "anti-party elements" threaten not only the Hungarian party's leading role, but also "the unity of the Socialist camp..."¹²⁶ In the same memorandum Gromyko stated that reactionaries were trying to "sever" Hungary from the Soviet Union "so that Soviet influence could be replaced by a *Yugoslav* one." Even the "dove" Mikoyan emphasized that beside Western, hostile propaganda "Yugoslav radio, press and agents help and encourage hostile elements."¹²⁷ Thus, rivalry with Yugoslavia was definitely on the Soviet leaders' minds.

Western intentions were more suspect than Belgrade's. Andropov reported that "Western radio broadcasts play an important role in inciting nationalist sentiment, especially RFE propaganda. The stations... foster a lack of confidence towards the Soviet Union."¹²⁸ The CPSU Presidium deemed in July that the imperialists "want to weaken our international relations, with the slogan of the independent road, are out to weaken our unity, then, are bent on smashing the [Socialist countries] peacemeal."¹²⁹ During the crisis Mikoyan and Suslov voiced the fear of American troops coming to Hungary if the Soviets withdrew – yet, this was *before* Dulles' speech on October 27.

Indeed, surprisingly little reference was made to the "imperialists" in the Presidium meeting during the crisis. On October 28 the hard-liner Voroshilov mentioned that "imperialist agents are harder at work than Mikoyan or Suslov." The only other allusion to imperialists exploiting the situation at the Presidium sessions was the one made by Khrushchev when reversing the previous day's decision to intervene. He pointed out that "if we withdrew from Hungary, the... imperialists... would attack." But why didn't Khrushchev or anyone else raise this issue only a few hours before? Did hard-liners gain the upper hand and will the day by saying that the situation was getting worse and worse? This would be plausible, but the October 30 decision was made *despite* the fact that the situation in Hungary was critical. On October 28, Bulganin actually declared that "the people's democracy has collapsed. The HWP leadership ceased to exist." Khrushchev pointed out that he "doesn't agree with the government." Still, the recognition that an armed assault could be critical for the survival of the Soviet bloc led Moscow to adopt — even if momentarily — a line which supported the Nagy government and its own effort to restore order.

Thus, although there are plenty of factors which explain why the Soviets decided to invade in the long run, we still do not see why peace wasn't given a chance even for a day. There is evidence that the use of force was by no means a foregone conclusion.

To seek an answer, let us review the minutes of that fateful Presidium meeting. What is striking about this is that the Hungarian question was only the 6th point of the agenda. One would expect that such a momentous issue should be the most important and be put on the top of the agenda. However, it seems that invading a neighbour was not a hard decision to make. Khrushchev stated that "there will be no big war." The sentence could refer to two things: that resistance would be feeble, but more likely the first secretary's confidence that the conflict would not escalate. Khrushchev, after arguing that the imperialists would be encouraged by a Soviet withdrawal, and expressing that "the Party would not understand us," uttered what I think is the crucial sentence: "Besides Egypt we would give them [the imperialists] Hungary as well." At the time, when the Soviets were making their military moves on November 1, the head of the British diplomatic mission commented that one of the reasons was a fear of the escalation of the Middle East crisis.

There was only one crucial event we can pinpoint between the Soviet decision *not to* and *to* intervene and that was the joint British-French ultimatum to Israel and Egypt in which they threatened to invade unless the two parties complied with their demands. The following day France and England proceeded to bomb Egyptian military airfields.¹³⁰ One historian noted: in the final analysis, the Suez crisis did at least facilitate the Soviet decision to crush the Hungarian rebellion.¹³¹ This argument implies that the Soviets were out to intervene *ab ovo*, they only seized the opportunity presented by the turmoil in the Middle East. Yet, the

sequence of events reconstructed on newly available Soviet sources suggests that escalation of the conflict there may have been not a tool, but *the* major cause of the Kremlin's sudden decision to use military coercion, rather than to allow events to take their course and let Nagy deal with the situation himself. In fact, strikingly, Khrushchev would have been willing on the day before to allow Nagy to stay in the new puppet government as deputy prime minister if the latter "agreed." When the Presidium convened again on November 1, Suslov and Serov argued that the internal situation in Hungary was becoming critical, it was Bulganin – in the absence of Khrushchev – who gave a briefing on the October 31 decision. He explicitly referred to an external factor: "The *international situation changed*. If we do not take measures we will lose Hungary"¹³² (emphasis mine). The notes taken at the Presidium meetings by Vladimir N. Malin are not verbatim and are often only summaries of the interjections. Possibly some relevant information was thus lost. But they are rare and invaluable sources of Soviet conduct. From the point of view of criticism of sources, they are of primary value. Together with other documents they suggest that Moscow was willing to give Hungary and a peaceful solution a chance, even though a second intervention was always hanging in the air. But as it often happened in Hungarian history, international events were at cross purposes with Hungary's interests. The fate of a small country was not decided primarily by her own actions, but by the correlation of international tensions within the framework of Cold War politics. Crisis in the Middle East which had not been in Moscow's traditional sphere of interest now seemed to threaten Moscow's vital interests in a different point of the globe.

No one knows what might have transpired had Hungary and diplomacy been given more time. Perhaps the Red Army would have invaded anyway. But there is the chance that events might have taken a different course and different ending. This was not to be owing to the aggressive actions of the two Western powers deeply enmeshed in imperialism, which elicited aggression from their expansionist adversary to match their move. The perhaps unintended result: one small country lost a chance to regain her independence and tension in Europe, rather than abating, flared up once more.

Notes

1. Döntés a Kremlben, 1956. A szovjet pártelnökség vitái Magyarországról. Decision in the Kremlin, 1956 – The Debates of the Soviet Party Presidium on Hungary = DK 1956 Budapest), 203–204.
2. Bennet Kovrig wrote that "the prompt recognition and symbolic guarantee of Hungary's independence and neutrality by the United States could have at least delayed the Soviet decision to intervene, and any delay would have increased the chances of consolidating

- the gains of the revolution." Bennet Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges: The United States and Eastern Europe* (New York and London, 1991).
3. National Security Archives, Washington, D.C. (=NSAWDC) Record No. 66141. Memorandum by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs (Beam), February 2, 1957.
 4. The Papers of Averrel Harriman. Library of Congress, Box 332.
 5. *Ibid.*
 6. NAWDC RG 263, CIA National Intelligence Estimate (=NIE) 100-3-54 Box 2. March 23, 1954.
 7. Mark Spaulding Jr., *op. cit.*, 233–239.
 8. See NAWDC RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (=FCS) 1951–1953 091 (12-9-49). Memorandum by the Joint Logistics Committee to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the revision of relaxing export control towards the Soviet bloc; NAWDC RG 218 FCS 1954–56 CCS 091.31 (9-28-45) Section 26. Memorandum to the Secretary of Defense on United States Export Controls.
 9. NAWDC RG 218 FCS Admiral Radford, 1953–57. 091. Russia. May 10, 1956.
 10. NAWDC RG 273 National Security Council (=NSC). The Report of the OCB to the NSC, February 29, 1956.
 11. NAWDC RG 273 NSC 5609/2. June 27, 1956.
 12. See Károly Urbán, A magyar–szovjet gazdasági kapcsolatok a Nagy Imre Kormány időszakában 1953–55 (Hungarian–Soviet Economic Relations under the Imre Nagy Government, 1953–55). In *Társadalmi Szemle* (1996–7): 81–82.
 13. NAWDC RG 59 Lot file 76 D 232. Kalijarvi to the Secretary of State, July 18, 1956.
 14. NSAWDC Record No. 66 367. Radio Free Europe Handbook, November 30, 1951.
 15. NSAWDC Record No. 64 444. An analysis by Columbia University Bureau of Applied Research on listening to VOA and other foreign broadcasts in satellite Hungary, November 1953.
 16. Sir James David Marchio, "Rhetoric and Reality: The Eisenhower Administration and Unrest in Eastern Europe, 1953–1959." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, 1990.
 17. *Ibid.*, 216.
 18. NAWDC RG 273 NSC. The National Security Policy of the U.S., 1951.
 19. NAWDC RG 218 FCS 1951–53. 385 (6-4-46) Box 48. Letter by Charles Kersten to Dean Acheson, October 1, 1952.
 20. NAWDC RG 330 Office of the Secretary of Defense (=OSD) CD 091.3. Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, January 1952.
 21. *Ibid.* Report to the Secretary of Defense.
 22. NAWDC RG 330 OSD CD 091.3. Memorandum by the FCS Chairman to the Secretary of Defense. March 17, 1952.
 23. *Ibid.*, September 12, 1952.
 24. NAWDC RG 218 FCS 1951–53. 385 (6-4-46) Box 149. February 13, 1953.
 25. NSAWDC Record no. 68 824. CIA NIE, July 30, 1951.
 26. NAWDC RG 218 FCS 381 (3-2-46) Box 70.
 27. NAWDC RG 59 Policy Planning Staff (=PPS) 1947–53. Members Chronological File, Louis Halle Fr. Box 47, December 9, 1952.

28. NAWDC RG 59 PPS 1956 Lot File 66 D 487 L. W. Fuller. Box 78. Fuller's Memorandum to Stelle, December 3, 1956.
29. NSAWDC Record no. 66083. John Foster Dulles to Dwight. Eisenhower, September 5, 1956.
30. NAWDC RG 59 764.0017-155 microfilm. Memorandum by Robert McKisson, July 1 1953.
31. NAWDC RG 59 764.00/9-2855 microfilm. Memorandum by William A. Crawford to Walwourth Barbour, September 28, 1955.
32. *Ibid.*
33. NAWDC RG 273 NSC 158. June 1953.
34. James D. Marchio, *op. cit.*
35. See Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge and London, 1996).
36. NAWDC RG 59 PPS 1947-53 Members Chronological File, Louis Halle Jr. Box 47. Memorandum by Louis Halle to Bowie and Beam, July 27, 1953.
37. *Ibid.* Memorandum by L. W. Fuller, July 11. 1953.
38. NAWDC RG 59 PPS Lot file 65D 100 Box 88. Memorandum for the Policy Planning Staff, March 5, 1954.
39. NAWDC RG PPS Chronological File Box 33. Memorandum for the PPS, August 19, 1953.
40. NAWDC RG PPS Lot File 66D Box 64. Memorandum by the Secretary of the NSX (J. S. Lay) to the Secretary of State on the four power talks of 1955, July 11, 1955.
41. *Ibid.* John C. Campbell of the State Department recommended for consideration the following options: German unification and choice of her allegiance, while Soviet troops would leave Czechoslovakia, Poland which in turn would maintain their military agreements with Moscow; American troops would withdraw from NATO countries the Soviets from Eastern Europe where they would not be allowed to return; Germany would be unified on a nonaligned basis, Poland and Czechoslovakia (possibly the rest of the satellites as well) would non-aligned. NAWDC RG 59 PPS 1955 Lot file 66D 70 Box 64. Memorandum by John C. Campbell to the PPS, May 31, 1955.
42. James D. Marchio, *op. cit.*, 243-244
43. NSAWDC Record no. 62620. U.S. Policy towards Eastern Europe, July 3, 1956.
44. *Ibid.* Record no. 6203. NSC 5608, July 3, 1956.
45. See Bennet Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges*, *op. cit.*, 81.
46. DK 1945, 19. Record of the July 9-12 meeting of the CPS CC Presidium, minute no. 28
47. Urbán Károly, A magyar-szovjet gazdasági kapcsolatok, *op. cit.*, 92-93.
48. *Ibid.*, 94.
49. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956. A Collection of Documents from the British Foreign Office. Edited by Eva Haraszti-Taylor, 1995. (=HR-CDFO) L.A.C. Fry to the Foreign Secretary (Selwyn Lloyd), September 10, 1956, 78-79.
50. Minutes of the talks between Soviet and Hungarian party-state leaders. Published by T. Varga György. In *Múltunk*, 1992. 2-3.
51. Rainer M. János, Decision in the Kremlin, 1956. An Attempt to Interpret the Minutes. In DK 1956, *op. cit.*, 112.

52. Hiányzó lapok 1956 Történetéből, 1956 (HL 1956) Budapest, 1993. Suslov's report to the Presidium of the CPSU. June 13, 1956. It was a matter of dispute whether Mihály Farkas should be tried for his role in the Rajk trial.
53. See Rainer M. János, Decision in the Kremlin, *op. cit.*, 115.
54. HL 1956. Mikoyan's telegramme to the CPSU Presidium, July 14, 1956.
55. A "Jelcin-Dosszié" – szovjet dokumentumok 1956-ról (The Yeltsin file – Soviet Documents on 1956 = FD 1956) Budapest, 1993. Andropov's letter to the Presidium of the CPSU, August 30, 1956, 34–41.
56. *Ibid.* Memorandum by Gromyko to the Presidium of the CPSU. September 17, 1956, 42–43.
57. *Ibid.* Andropov's report on a discussion with Gerő. October 12, 1956, 84–90.
58. HL 1956. Andropov's discussion with Zoltán Vas. October 14, 1956, 92–96. Vas was Minister of Public Supply at the time, which was not a prominent position. Informally, however, he belonged to the Communist elite.
59. DK 1956, 22–23. Meeting of the CPSU Presidium, October 20, 1956.
60. On the details see Rainer M. János, *op. cit.*, 120-21.
61. FD 1956. Report to the Central Committee Presidium by Suslov and Mikoyan, 47–49.
62. DK 1956. Report on the meeting held by the CPSU Presidium, October 24, 1956.
63. Quoted in Bennet Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges*, *op. cit.*, 89
64. HR-CDFO. Fry to the Foreign Office, October 25, 1956, 101.
65. *Ibid.* Brimelow to the Foreign Office News Department, October 25, 1956, 102.
66. *Ibid.* J. G. Ward to the Foreign Office, July 17, 1956, 65–68; "Special Considerations Applying to Contacts with Satellites," October 12, 1956, 88–90.
67. FD 1956. Mikoyan and Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, October 25, 1956, 50–51.
68. See James D. Marchio, *op. cit.*
69. Bennet Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges*, *op. cit.*, 91.
70. NAWDC RG 59 611. 64/11-156. November 1, 1956.
71. NAWDC RG PPS Lot 66D 487 1956 Box 80. Position Paper by the PPS, October 29, 1956.
72. NSAADC Record no. 65102. Interview with H. Stassen on J. F. Dulles. Stassen felt that Dulles was not disambiguous enough in signalling to the Russian leaders that Washington was taking into account Moscow's defense needs.
73. NAWDC RG 59 PPS Lot 66D 487 Box 80. PPS Position Paper; see also NSC 5616.
74. NSAADC Record no. 64493. Memorandum by the Special Assistant of the President, October 29, 1956.
75. HL 1956. Report by Mikoyan and Suslov, October 26, 109–113.
76. HR-CDFO Report to the FO by Ambassador William Hayter on discussion with Khrushchev. October 27, 109.
77. *Ibid.* The Foreign Office to the UK Delegation in New York, October 28, 1956, 115.
78. See János Radványi, *Hungary and the Superpowers, The 1956 Revolution and Realpolitik* (Stanford, 1972), 9.
79. Archives de Quai d'Orsay, Europe 1944–1960 Hongrie Vol. 62. Fol. 207–216. Minutes of the meeting of the Security Council, October 28, 1956.
80. FD 1956. Serov's report to Mikoyan, October 28, 54–55.
81. DK 1956. Meeting of the CPSU Presidium, October 28, 35–46.

82. HC-CDFO. Hayter to the FO. October 29, 129.
83. HL 1956. Report by Mikoyan and Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, October 30, 125–126.
84. See Peter L. Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain and Egypt 1945–1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War* (Chapel Hill and London, 1991), 223–229.
85. DK 1956. Meeting of the CPSU Presidium, October 30, 51–57.
86. FD 1956, 64–65.
87. Quoted in Radványi, *op. cit.*, 12.
88. *Ibid.*, 27.
89. NSAWDC Record no. 65693. Bohlen to the Secretary of State, October 30, 1956.
90. *Ibid.* Record no. 65692. October 30, 1956. See also Documents Diplomatiques, Français 1956. Tome 3. The Chargé d’Affaires (Soutou) to the Foreign Minister (Pineau), 82–83.
91. HR-CBFO. Hayter to the FO. November 1, 1956, 147–48.
92. NSAWDC Record no. 65283. Information memorandum by the Department of State. October 31.
93. NAWDC RG 218 FCS. Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee to the NSC. October 31.
94. Quoted by Peter L. Hahn, *op. cit.*, 231.
95. NSAWDC Record no. 62423. NSC 5616. October 31. For the FCS view see the Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, *op. cit.*
96. NAWDC RG 59 764.00/11-256. Bohlen to the Secretary of State, November 2.
97. DK 1956. Meeting of the CPSU Presidium, October 31, 62–65.
98. HR-CBFO. Fry to the FO. November 1, 149.
99. *Ibid.*, 155–56.
100. *Ibid.* Draft to U.K. Delegation, New York from FO. November 2, 1956, 161.
101. Documents Diplomatiques, *op. cit.*, 159.
102. NSAWDC Record no. 65307. The Acting Secretary’s Staff Meeting. November 2.
103. Sándor Kopácsi, *In the Name of Working Class: The Inside Story of the Hungarian Revolution* (New York, 1987), 206.
104. NSAWDC Record no. 65209. Report by Agerpress, November 25, 1956.
105. *Ibid.* Record no. 62596.
106. Peter L. Hahn, *op. cit.*, 224–25.
107. Archives Diplomatiques de Quai d’Orsay, Europe 1944–60 Hongrie Vol. 88.
108. NSAWDC Record no. 65235.
109. *Ibid.* Record no. 65106. Interview with Richard Nixon regarding J. F. Dulles.
110. *Ibid.* Record no. 64562. Telephone call to Mr. Shanley by J. F. Dulles. October 29. Quoted in Bennet Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges, op. cit.*, 92.
111. NAWDC 764-00/10-3156. Hoover to the Legation in Budapest, October 31.
112. NAWDC RG 59 PPS Lot File 66D 487 Box 78. Report on the Satellites, June 7, 1956.
113. NAWDC RG 218 FCS 1953–57.091 Poland, Box 15. Memorandum for the Chairman of the FCS. October 25. “Gomulka may very well be anti-Russian *unlike Nagy in Hungary, he has not spent any considerable time in the USSR*” (emphasis mine).
114. Robert Amory prepared a memorandum for Eisenhower in which he advocated a nuclear preemptive strike on Lvov, mountain passes in the Carpatho-Ukraine, roads and railroads going to Hungary. See Bennet Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges, op. cit.*, 95–96.
115. NSAWDC Record no. 66148. PPS Staff meeting. October 30.

116. *Ibid.* Record no. 62423. October 29.
117. *Ibid.* Record no. 65108. Interview with Freers regarding J. F. Dulles.
118. *Ibid.* Record no. 65105. Interview with Murphy regarding J. F. Dulles.
119. HR-CBFO. The British Embassy in Washington to the FO. November 1, 152–53.
120. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York, 1994), 562.
121. NAWDC RG 218 FCS 1957 06 (5-26-45) Box 3.
122. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, 563.
123. Zubok and Pleshakov, *op. cit.*, 186.
124. In Magyar Nemzet, September 1996.
125. The minister's discussion with Figl was reported by the French Minister in Vienna. Archives Diplomatiques, Europe 1944–60 Hongrie vol. 116. Fol. 52.
126. FD 1956. Gromiko's memorandum, September 17, 42–43.
127. HL 1956. Mikoyan's report, July 14, 1956.
128. FD 1956. Andropov's letter to the CPSU Presidium, August 30, 34–41.
129. DK 1956. Meeting of the CPSU Presidium, July 9–12, 19.
130. Peter Hahn, *op. cit.*, 231–32.
131. János Radványi, *op. cit.*, 11. A similar view is implied by Kovrig, *Of Walls and Bridges*, *op. cit.*, 88.
132. DK 1956. Meeting of the CPSU Presidium. November 1, 69–72.