

state for external affairs, Jules Léger, "was in trying to go too far and too fast." [Document 12] But Léger was just as severe in judging the inadequate Western reaction, which he described as "completely impassive." [Document 11] Indeed, it was worse. Though Léger stopped short of blaming the Soviet reconquest of Hungary on the Anglo-French assault on the Suez Canal of October 29, he thought the Mideast misadventures of two of NATO's leading members had alienated the Afro-Asian bloc at the United Nations and cost the West a chance to exploit Moscow's early hesitations in Budapest to seek a negotiated solution favourable to Hungary.

Readers might be intrigued by the number of documents that focus on India's reaction to the events in Hungary. This was no accident. Since the late 1940s, Canadian policy-makers had made a sustained effort to court India and its prime minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the acknowledged leader of the non-aligned Afro-Asian bloc.<sup>4</sup> The Hungarian Revolution tested this policy and found it wanting. India and its followers were slow to rally to the Hungarian cause in New York, leaving many Canadian officials feeling bitter and betrayed. "I think we must agree," concluded Ford, "that the action of the UN on Hungary was largely a failure. ... The one lesson that might profitably have been learned by the Arab-Asian group concerning the natures of the Soviet system has been obstinately refused." [Document 55]

Though imperfect, Canada's response to the flood of Hungarian refugees that spilled across Europe in the wake of the crisis was more inspiring than its detached posture at the United Nations. Here was a problem that Canada, with its booming postwar resource economy, could address effectively, and Pearson made sure the government contributed its share. Moved by a combination of ideological and humanitarian motives, the foreign minister insisted that Ottawa match the outpouring of domestic and international support for the refugees. But the going was tough. The Cabinet discussions reprinted in this collection show how the resettling of refugees raised tricky questions of federal-provincial responsibilities, making ministers cautious and wary. Canada's politicians also worried about the Red Cross's capacity to oversee Canadian aid and hesitated to increase it too quickly. Even so, the government eventually removed most of the usual immigration requirements and heavily subsidized the movement of Hungarian refugees to Canada. Within a year, almost 30,000 Hungarians had moved to Canada, where they made their presence felt in the country's emerging multicultural mosaic.

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The documents in this small book on Canada and the Hungarian Revolution are extracted from Volume 23 of the series, *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, published annually by Foreign Affairs Canada. First issued in 1967, *Documents on Canadian External Relations* represents the basic published record of the foreign policy and foreign relations of the Government of Canada, and provides a comprehensive, self-contained record of the country's major foreign policy decisions

<sup>4</sup> Greg Donaghy, "'The Most Important Country in the World:' Escott Reid in India, 1952-57," in Greg Donaghy and Stéphane Roussel, *Escott Reid: Diplomat and Scholar* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), pp. 67-84.