

3.

*Le haut-commissaire au Royaume-Uni  
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*High Commissioner in United Kingdom  
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 1484

London, October 30, 1956

SECRET. IMMEDIATE.

Repeat Washington, Permis New York, Paris, NATO Paris (Information).  
By Bag Warsaw, Belgrade, Prague, Moscow.

## SITUATION IN HUNGARY

We had a discussion this morning with Brimelow, Head of the Foreign Office Northern Department, about recent developments in Hungary. Brimelow is more than ever impressed with the contrast between Nagy and Gomulka. Reports from the UK Legation in Budapest, which the Foreign Office fully accept, suggest that Nagy's own position has become increasingly, and is now perhaps almost exclusively, dependent on the support of Russian armed forces. Brimelow suggested that if these forces were really withdrawn Nagy and his government might well be lynched. He expects that the Russians will continue to try to shore Nagy up, mainly by armed force, but thinks the Russians probably under-estimate the political difficulties of this.

2. According to UK reports the overwhelming majority of Hungarians have rejected not merely Russian domination but also communism itself. The UK Legation in Budapest seems to have little, if any, confidence in Nagy's honesty, and reports that his government have repeatedly tried to trick the nationalists into surrendering by false reports of surrenders and of the conclusion of truce agreements.

3. The picture of last week's events is now somewhat clarified. Apparently it was the Hungarian security police which started shooting at the beginning and thereby turned the demonstrations into a popular uprising. By now, according to the British Legation, virtually all Hungarians excepting top communists and the security police, but including some of the latter, are bitterly anti-Russian and pro-nationalist.

4. Nagy's efforts to broaden his government have been largely unsuccessful. The UK Legation are skeptical about the extent to which Bela Kovacs is in fact voluntarily participating in the new government. Apparently Nagy did carry out negotiations with "genuine social democrats" for a real coalition government but these broke down because the social democrats stood firm on the conditions of free elections and the withdrawal of Russian troops.

5. The Nagy Government is, however, going to great lengths in its efforts to get some nationalist support. Thus the Prime Minister is reported to have stated in a broadcast that "a great national movement has taken shape of which the government approves". Moreover in an article entitled "A Reply to Pravda", the Hungarian Communist Party Organ *Szabad Nep*, specifically says that "What happened was not anti-democratic, was not an adventure and did not collapse" and states that "The tragic yet uplifting struggle has not been the outcome of some undermining activity but alas had been brought about by our own errors and crimes, primarily by our failing to protect the sacred flame inherited from