



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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U.S.S.R. AND HUNGARY

Statement by the Hon. Roch Pinard at the
General Assembly of the United Nations on
Monday, December 10, 1956.

Mr. President,

I had not intended to intervene in the present debate on the Resolution before us, but in view of the strong revulsion of feeling in my country against the events in Hungary, I do not find it possible to pass over in silence the fact that eight years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by this Assembly, the U.S.S.R. is flagrantly ignoring its provisions in its action in Hungary.

I do not see how we cannot but be impressed by the almost unanimous striving by the Hungarian youth, after a decade of communist indoctrination, for national freedom and independence-- a feeling, incidently, which does not seem to be confined to Hungary, but appears to be present in the other countries of the Soviet Bloc, and in the U.S.S.R. as well, it is an extraordinary manifestation of the indestructibility of the human spirit that a totalitarian educational system has not been able to kill this striving. It is easy enough for us here to commend the youth of these countries, and to pay lip-service to them while young Hungarians are shedding their blood for their country. I would hope rather that on Human Rights Day we might take some spiritual encouragement from their example.

In this connection, Mr. President, I should like to point out that the entire teaching staff and student body of a Hungarian school of forestry has asked for asylum in Canada, and is being adopted by the University of British Columbia in my own country. In addition, 250 students from the University of Sopron and many other students wish to move en masse to Canada. Some, indeed, have already arrived there and have described tragically how the students and professors of Sopron University tried to defend their town against the Soviet invaders. What clearer proof could there be that the free

atmosphere and proper scale of values necessary for the survival of universities have disappeared in Hungary under Soviet rule. It is a distressing fact that those students feel more at home abroad than in their own country because, unfortunately, their country no longer can be called their own since it is being politically dominated and militarily occupied by the U.S.S.R.

This is no domestic affair of Hungary. The political and military power of the Soviet Union so manifest in the puppet Kadar regime and the Soviet tanks in every Hungarian town, the flight of refugees to the West, and the deportation of prisoners to the East, can by no stretch of imagination be considered as domestic questions. Does this not affect every one of us throughout the world? Is this not a question which knows no international boundaries?

I would like to remind the Delegate of the U.S.S.R. of the statement by that staunch advocate of freedom, William Ewart Gladstone, in referring to the demands of the Bulgarians for independence in the 19th century: "You cannot stop the forward march of a nation".

Mr. President, the forward march of Hungary towards freedom can be interrupted and delayed; it cannot be stopped, nor as my Prime Minister said a short time ago in a message to the Hungarian-Canadian Federation -- "There can be no doubt in the mind of the free world that sooner or later Hungary will again be a free nation".

I need hardly say that Canada supports this resolution, as indeed we will support any move within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, to improve the chances for the Hungarian people of securing a real measure of national independence. At the same time, this Assembly must insist on compliance with its resolutions and must also require that respect and courtesy be paid by member governments to its Secretary-General. In this respect, I should like to ask what reasonable explanation the Delegate of Hungary has produced to justify the fact that he seems to have deliberately duped this Assembly. Indeed, it seems to me that the Hungarian Government is treating that Assembly with studied contempt by answering our reasonable requests by a radio announcement. I would go further and ask if it is not treating its Representative, who is acting Foreign Minister of his country, with similar contempt.

The Delegate of Roumania has said that life is being normalised in Hungary. So far as I know, martial law now rules there, and Soviet martial law at that. Is this what the Delegate of Roumania means by normalisation of life? It seems to me a pretty complete refutation of the statements by him and other members of the Soviet Bloc in this Assembly to the effect that order has been restored. Order there may be but it is the order of the grave.

To conclude, I must say that this resolution is the absolute minimum which the world has the right to expect from this body. It is the ninth resolution on this subject before this Assembly. It will no doubt receive overwhelming support from all member nations which believe, as we do, in the duties of the Assembly to protect freedom against tyranny. We can only hope that it will not have been adopted in vain.

S/C