

2 January 1958

NEWS ITEMS RELATING TO HUNGARY

1. Foreign Affairs:

New Year Reception of Istvan Dobi (Carl Hartman, Associated Press)

Budapest, 1 January - Western diplomats including U.S. Charge D'Affaires Garret G. Ackerson, Jr., broke their boycott of the Communist regime today and formally presented New Year's wishes in person to president Istvan Dobi.

Premier Janos Kadar, installed by the Russians when they put down the 1956 revolt, did not attend the reception. Dobi, as Chairman of the Presidential Council, was titular head of the Hungarian State before, during and after the revolt. He is not officially a member of the Communist Party.

Western diplomats were all "ill" or otherwise unable to attend the reception Dobi gave last New Year's day, when memories of the Hungarian revolt were fresh in mind. Dobi has taken a stand in support of the Soviet action in putting down the revolt.

The United States, although it has not withdrawn recognition of the Hungarian Government, has been unwilling to appoint a Minister who would have to present credentials to Dobi and make a formal speech about improving relations between the two countries.

However, the traditional ceremony of the New Year's greetings went off smoothly today and there were the usual polite handshakes and toasts all around.

Note: A dispatch of similar contents has been released by Reuters from Budapest (NYT, 2 January 1958).

2. State and Church:

Statement of Lajos Vetoe, the new Bishop of Hungarian Lutherans
(Carl Hartman, Associated Press)

Budapest, 31 December - Bishop Lajos Vetoe, a member of Communist Hungary's Parliament, said today he has been named head of the country's half million lutherans. Yesterday he was decorated by the Communist regime.

Bishop Vetoe succeeds Bishop Lajos Ordass, who has been demoted to Deputy. Bishop Ordass, once a prisoner under the regime, visited the United States last summer. The appointment of Bishop Vetoe apparently represents a victory for the Government over Lutheran leaders who objected to the reinstatement of church figures ousted during the Anti-Russian revolt in 1956.

Bishop Vetoe, 53, was one of those forced to resign during the uprising. He went to Communist East Germany and returned here earlier this month.

"Last week", he said, "The Highest Council of the church decided that I was the senior bishop."

After talking with Western newsmen, Bishop Vetoé conferred with Kwan Hsun-Ting, an Anglican Bishop from Communist China who told the official Government News Agency MTI:

"Experience gathered long ago has led us to recognize that Western Missions as well as the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation are nothing but front organizations for imperialism."

3. Economic situation:

Hungarian articles on The Record of 1957 and the Outlook for 1958

a. I. Dobi in Nepszabadsag, 22 December 1957.

b. J. Fock, Member of the Politburo, in Nepszabadsag, 26 December 1957.

c. Prof. L. Janossi in Nepszabadsag, 26 December 1957. (FBIS, No. 250, 27 Dec 1957)

d. Mrs. Jozsef Nagy, Minister of Light Industry, on Budapest Radio, 27 December 1957, 10 p.m. (GMT) (FBIS, No. 251, 30 December 1957)