



October 24, 1956

**Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Hungary,
'Summary of the Counterrevolutionary Rebellion
taking place in the Hungarian Capital'**

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Summary:

The Chinese Embassy in Hungary provides an update on developments in the Hungarian "counterrevolutionary rebellion."

Credits:

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

To the Foreign Ministry and Party Central Committee:

Yesterday's anti-Soviet demonstration turned into counterrevolutionary rebellion at eleven o'clock in the evening. We report the following on the situation prevailing in the Hungarian capital:

(1) Following Gerő's radio speech the counterrevolutionary crowd protested, demanding Gerő's resignation; the advancing crowd tipped over the bronze statue of Stalin, then proceeded toward the Radio building. Because the armed guard prevented them from breaking in, a clash ensued. Tear gas was thrown among the strikers, but the counter-revolutionaries still have the Radio surrounded.

(2) One group of thousands of protestors stayed on out the streets right up until midnight. The sound of pistol fire, hand grenades, and heavy and light machine guns was heard continuously throughout the night. It is said that one section of the army joined the counterrevolutionary rebellion, and a clash ensued with the state security forces, using arms against each other; the number of dead and injured is very high. Nowhere in the city did the police take preventive measures against the counterrevolutionary demonstrators.

(3) University student demonstrators, after returning to their dormitories, continued their organizational activities.[1] There were some students who had already obtained weapons. There were some student Party members, and those who usually follow the correct line, who have already begun to feel that they are being cheated. They said that "in the beginning, we only joined in organizing the demonstrators to demand higher scholarship grants and higher wages for the instructors, but during the course of the demonstration many trouble-makers joined in, who stirred up trouble right up until midnight. We now know that the bad elements are using us."

(4) The Hungarian Council of Ministers issued a radio appeal to the population of Budapest: "fascist elements and reactionaries have launched an attack against our common interests, the expansion of the people's economy.[2] For this reason the army is maintaining order, and we announce that from nine o'clock this morning, we are introducing martial law."[3]

(5) The editorial offices of the Party and trade union paper, Szabad Nép,[4] and some factories, have been occupied by counter-revolutionaries, who are continuously handing out special issues, and printing leaflets which claim "We are armed! The fight must be continued in the interest of attaining our freedom and independence! The police and army are with us! We call upon every Hungarian so that we go on a general strike! Until the government carries out our demands, until the murderers take responsibility, the Hungarian people respond with an immediate general strike!"

(6) Reinforced Hungarian units have already begun encircling the city; the Soviet army has begun the intervention in the city in the interest of upholding order.

Embassy in Hungary
24 October

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[1] This information clearly came from Chinese scholarship students studying in Budapest.

[2] The Chinese text uses the term “industrial construction.”

[3] The words frequently repeated on Kossuth Radio from 4.30 a.m. on 24 October went as follows: “Fascist and reactionary elements have launched an attack against our public institutions, and attacked our armed force units. In the interest of the restoration of order, all rallying, gathering and marching is forbidden until further notice. Armed force bodies have been issued with instructions to act in strict accordance with the law against those who breach order. The Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People’s Republic.” The notice of summary jurisdiction was broadcast at 8.45 a.m.

[4] The central paper of the Hungarian trade unions was Népszava.