

November 2, 1956

**Cable from the Chinese Embassy in Hungary, 'On
the Meeting between Imre Nagy and Ambassador
Hao Deqing'**

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Summary:

The Chinese Embassy in Hungary provides a lengthy report on the talks between Imre Nagy and Hao Deqing.

Credits:

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

To the Foreign Ministry and Party Center:

Yesterday evening at ten o'clock, we were summoned by the President of the new Hungarian Council of Ministers, [Imre] Nagy. Present were Minister of State [Zoltán] Tildy, Minister of Agriculture [Béla] Kovács, First Party Secretary [János] Kádár, and the Party Secretary, [Géza] Losonczy. Before and after meeting me, he saw separately the Polish Ambassador and the Yugoslav Minister. Nagy said the following:

I have summoned the Ambassador, because the situation is very serious. I should like to inform you of the present situation with the following:

The present event is a tragedy, caused by the serious errors committed by the Party in the past. Economic errors committed by the Party led to political tensions. In the beginning the events moved on because of the Polish events, the movement starting off with peaceful protests expressed people's dissatisfaction. The fact that the revolution originating from this dissatisfaction was termed counterrevolutionary rebellion, only aggravated the situation. We are communists, we want social democracy. (Tildy and Kovács said of themselves that they were not communists, but that they too wanted to build socialism.) The aim of the movement is nothing other than to truly realize the spirit of people's democracy. Because the errors committed in the past were very serious – we might also say that they were crimes – for this reason, the protesters took up arms. The arrival and intervention of the Soviet Union aggravated the armed struggle to the extreme. The Soviet army intervened with tanks and other weapons. This led to the situation where the entire people turned against the Soviet Union. As a consequence of the fact that Soviet army entered Budapest and intervened, the peaceful demonstration spread out and became an armed uprising. A large section of the workers, and the largest section of the students were among the insurgents. In their slogans, they demanded independence. It must be emphasized here that as a consequence of the Soviet intervention, many communists also joined the insurgents' movement. Naturally, in such a serious situation counterrevolutionary and fascist elements also mobilized, but their numbers are very small. It is clear from the composition and the declared aims that the vast majority of the insurgents are not counterrevolutionaries, nor are they fascists. This uprising has permeated the entire Hungarian people. The people demand as one that the Soviet army withdraw from Hungary. This has become the central demand of the whole country. The working class, being the power of social democracy, has already reached the general strike stage. Their slogan is: "Until Soviet troops withdraw, the workers will not resume work." The Hungarian government has called the attention of the relevant Soviet authorities to this serious situation countless times. Mikoyan and Suslov spent a few days in Hungary. We spent whole days in discussions with them. They know of all our steps and measures taken. Their opinion and conclusions on the events coincide with ours. (Tildy interrupted to note: I had discussions with Mikoyan, and his opinion and mine are exactly the same.) The only solution to the serious problem now is the withdrawal of Soviet troops. We have not set out a final deadline, only negotiated. The Soviet government mentions in its declaration that it is willing to negotiate. The declaration also indicates that the continued presence of the Soviet army may further worsen the situation. The situation is not however developing in such a direction. From yesterday afternoon right up until now, the situation demonstrates that the Soviet army has not begun its retreat, but precisely the opposite, strengthening [its forces] with two new tank divisions. We are observing the troop movements from aircraft, and our information is verifiable. This is why I summoned the Soviet ambassador today, and informed him of the situation, I showed him the detailed materials and protested to the Soviet government. This sort of not informing the government, and starting to arbitrarily position their troops within the borders of the country, is unacceptable. Moreover, this contravenes the agreement made at the meetings between the Hungarian government and Mikoyan, and contradicts the Soviet government's declaration. The whole country is very tense as a result. If Soviet troops come, the present government will leave, a bloody war of counter-revolution will break out, there is no other way. We want to seize every

opportunity to prevent the occurrence of such a tragedy, this nobody wants. We are communists, half the cabinet are communists, the President of the Council of Ministers is a communist, [we] all want to build socialism. But by now, the situation has become so serious. To our question on what reasons drove us to take these steps, the Soviet ambassador has not replied ... [Here there is a missing section – radio operator's notes.]

We have no other choice than to submit this question for discussion at the UN, we shall leave the Warsaw Pact immediately, declare neutrality, and request the four great powers (including the Soviet Union) to assure such. The Soviet ambassador agreed to communicate urgently the protest to his government, and would reply as soon as possible. Five hours passed, and at three o'clock in the afternoon, the Soviet ambassador's reply was as follows: (1) The Soviet Union emphasized that it holds in respect the principles formulated in the government's declaration; (2) the aim of the Soviet army's concentration of forces and troop movements is to carry out the task formulated in the declaration (Nagy added: one does not understand this point); (3) it agrees that we continue negotiations on the question of the stationing of Soviet troops; (4) they request that the Hungarian side submit a proposal on the place of the discussions, and the people involved. This is not a response, but marking time, and nothing more. Have the Soviet troops entered the country or not? And why have we not received a response? The Soviet army's tanks are now only 60 kilometers from Budapest. They come in one direction from Miskolc, and other tanks are moving toward Yugoslavia. There are three tank divisions in Hungary which are heading straight for Budapest. By now, all of the country's airports have been occupied by Soviet tank units. This is a planned Soviet military attack. It is difficult to believe that all this is happening in the interests of securing the evacuation of Soviet citizens.

According to the most recent intelligence reports, Soviet heavy bombers and air-carriers are arriving continually at Hungarian airports. We have reported on the serious situation to the Soviet ambassador. The Soviet ambassador suggested that we form a Hungarian-Soviet joint committee and continue with enquiries. This is merely marking time. We have already made very great sacrifices for Hungarian-Soviet friendship. The current events cannot bring an end to Hungary's friendship with the Soviet Union. Our task is to execute the will of the people. This serious situation is of no advantage to Hungary, nor to the Soviet Union, nor to world peace. If the Soviet army does not withdraw, then Soviet foreign policy will be committing a great error. This error will not be rectifiable later. In the present difficult circumstances, we have reorganized our Party, we stand by socialism ... [Here there is a missing section – Foreign Ministry radio operator's notes] and we shall submit [it] to the UN. If the Soviet army withdraws, we shall immediately withdraw our complaint to the UN. The situation is exceptionally serious, and I have informed you separately, Comrade Ambassador, to request that you inform the government of the People's Republic of China, Comrades Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, at the earliest opportunity. China, in light of this situation, might be of [some] assistance.

Finally, Tildy said that: The intervention of the Soviet troops was requested by the previous government; we demand that the Soviet army leave. We demand negotiated Soviet troop withdrawal make possible the establishment of peace in Hungary. Until yesterday afternoon, this is what we hoped for. The situation has changed again since yesterday afternoon. We are not guided by personal interest in presenting our demands, but because we are deeply conscious of that grave responsibility to save the nation. The world demands the same. If we did not demand it, the people would revile us as traitors. There country has never been so unified as now. With the exception of the bakers, all the workers are resolutely on strike. This is the iron truth, which proves that this serious situation cannot continue. I have already said that if there is peace in Hungary, and the Soviet troops left, I would go immediately to Moscow to negotiate. I am not a communist, but a democrat, and I want to build socialism. We want to alleviate the present state of affairs. Whether the Hungarian nation is befallen by misfortune depends on whether the Soviet troops withdraw or not. In the past, I served as Chairman, I was imprisoned by the Rákosi government,

and only now after eight years have I been set free. It does not matter whether we go and others come, the situation is destroyed by the entry of Soviet troops, and the entire people view them as enemies. Finally the ambassador agreed that he would report to his government immediately.

The Embassy has been reporting several things on the nature of the incident, but on whether further Soviet troops were sent to Hungary, we know nothing.

Embassy in Hungary

14:00, 2 November

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