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OFFICIAL-INFO MAIL

American Consulate General,  
Munich.

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December 19, 1955

Dear Randy:

This is a belated reply to your letter of August 1, 1955, requesting our evaluation of the activities of the Hungarian National Council in Germany and of its representative in the FedRep, former General Gusztav Henneyoy.

I regret the delay in presenting you with our conclusions about Henneyoy and the HNC. However, I trust that you appreciate that during the three months between Ralph Jones' departure for home leave and the arrival of Horace Nickels and the return of Ernest Stanger, it was virtually impossible for Alan James to do more than the routine business of the Peripheral Unit and the Political Unit.

Prior to his departure for home leave, Ralph Jones did extensive research into the problem and actually is responsible for the collection of the largest part of the material on the basis of which Alan James has prepared this report. James has collated facts and opinions Ralph gathered and, after adding some of his own independent research, has reached certain conclusions which, whatever they may lack in detail, are, I think, generally valid.

At the outset it should be stated that our inquiries have shown that, at least as far as the Federal Republic is concerned, the Hungarian National Council is clearly the most moderate, democratic and representative body in the Hungarian Emigration and that its agent in Germany, General Henneyoy, is a reputable and relatively able representative who beyond doubt is attached to the West.

Before replying to the questions raised in the outline attached to your letter, it might be useful to note a few characteristics of the Hungarian Emigration in Germany. Although there were immediately

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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT FOR COORDINATION WITH State  
DATE 2006

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after the war approximately half a million Hungarians in Germany, best estimates now place the number at between only 12,000 and 13,000. Whether it is true, as the president of the Bavarian office for the Protection of the Constitution has said, that "none of the Emigrations is so riven as the Hungarians", the Hungarians like other Eastern European exiles are deeply split into several directions, the two principal orientations being the Hungarian National Council (HNC) and the "Collegial Society of Hungarian Veterans" (MSBK\*). The latter group appears to be composed of Hungarian fascists and former pro-German elements. The HNC and the MSBK are vigorously competing for the favor of the Hungarians living in the Federal Republic as well as for the support of the German federal and state authorities, a situation which has caused the Germans many headaches and led to urgent German demands that the Hungarians compose their differences in the interests of better relations with the host country.

The representative of the Hungarian National Council, General Henryey, until last month maintained his residence and headquarters in Munich. He has since moved to Bonn where he will remain permanently. An essential reason for the move, according to Henryey, was to separate the HNC from the Hungarian Refugee Service of which Henryey was also the principal officer until a short time ago. As will appear below, the Refugee Service is a welfare operation of the HNC. Henryey, as well as many Germans and Hungarians, thought that it was not a too happy arrangement to have the political and welfare functions so closely related. Separating the two may, to a certain extent, facilitate German recognition of the HNC as the sole or leading representative of the Hungarian Emigration in Germany. Munich remains the headquarters of the Hungarian Refugee Service which is headed by Baron Imre POMERACE and which will continue to operate under the authority of the HNC. In view of the fact that the HNC will have its permanent headquarters in the German capital it is possible that the final appraisal of the Council will have to be made by American officials in Bonn.

For convenience I have followed the outline enclosed with your letter.

Footnote:

\*The MSBK is basically a Hungarian veterans organization. It has a political complement in the "Freedom Movement" (MSZM) headed by General Farkas. These two groups have formed two roof organizations, the "Council of Generals", headed by the Hapsburg Archduke, Josef, and the "Council for National Defense". It is reported that the aim of the rightists is to supplant the HNC with the Council of National Defense which would then be the exclusive representative of the Hungarian Emigration. The MSBK, however, appears to be the most important spokesman for Hungarian rightists and in this report is cited to denote the entire rightist orientation.

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1. The Representative

(a) Political Orientation

Hennyey, a life-long professional Army officer\*, never belonged to a political party in Hungary and his political beliefs have matured rather slowly. However, most sources place him at the center or slightly to the left of center and say that he represents an enlightened conservative trend in the Hungarian emigration. In Hungary he does not appear to have acquired any express political coloration but he strongly opposed both the fascist Arrow Cross movement and the Hitlerite occupation of Hungary. Although he maintains close ties with the former Regent of Hungary, Admiral Horthy, he denies that he is a monarchist or legitimist. He professes a hatred of both fascism and communism and on this score the evidence and most neutral sources seem to bear him out. One source, described as friendly to Hennyey but relatively objective, terms Hennyey a "true friend of American democracy" and a spokesman of the pro-American sentiment within the emigration.

In August, 1944, Regent Horthy appointed Hennyey Foreign Minister, to negotiate an armistice with the Western allies, reportedly because Horthy knew Hennyey was oriented to the West. His attempts to treat with the West were rebuffed and he was told to deal with the Soviets which he did through the Swedes and Swiss. On October 15th, he asked the Soviets for an armistice and on the next day he was arrested by the Gestapo and was sent to the concentration camp at Mauthausen until he was freed in April 1945.

Hennyey's part in the Hungarian-Soviet armistice negotiations and association with exile politicians alleged to have collaborated with the Communists in Hungary after 1945, are the cause of the fairly cordial dislike of him which is felt by many German officials. They charge that whereas he was strongly pro-German in the thirties, in 1944 he fell into the opposite extreme and while becoming anti-German developed a certain softness toward the Soviets and Communism. Obviously, this attitude stems in no small measure from the fact that Hennyey tried to negotiate an armistice with the Soviets under the noses of the German army occupying Hungary. We can find no firm evidence that Hennyey is anything less than thoroughly anti-communist without any compromising fascist associations.

\*He was born of Hungarian-German parentage on September 25, 1888, in Kolozvar, Hungary. He had long service in the Hungarian Army as a troop commander, staff officer and finally as a military attache. His last military rank was Colonel General.

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## (b) Character, discretion, integrity

Henryey's friends praise his personal qualities highly. His opponents within the emigration and among the Germans are equally liberal with criticism. With a few exceptions, however, those people to whom we have spoken consider Henryey an honorable man, correct and discreet in his dealings and personally above reproach. Jones and James both found him personable and candid. Gerhart von Mende, director of the Bureau for Stateless Foreigners, is openly contemptuous of Henryey, whom he described to Ben Dexter as "an out and out opportunist who would continue to serve the Council's interests only so long as the money held out". May we say that this characterization seems extremely unfair, and biased. We suspect, however, that this view is to one extent or another shared by other German officials and derives, as I wrote above, from his "treachery" to the Germans in 1944.

The political officers at Radio Free Europe consider Henryey despite his gentlemanly qualities and loyalty to the Hungarians in exile not too astute. They state that he requires considerable guidance and supervision. A German source expert in Emigre politics believes that Henryey is easily influenced and here we tend to agree. Henryey does not impress one as having decisiveness or drive. We think that he might be less than thorough in prosecuting a particular project.

## (c) Influence in the Emigration

Knowledgeable observers of the Hungarian Emigration state that prior to 1951, that is until the emigration was reduced to 12-13,000 by repatriation to Hungary and immigration, Henryey enjoyed considerable influence among the majority of his fellow countrymen living in Western Germany. As early as the fall of 1945 Henryey had established the Hungarian Refugee Service and he undoubtedly acquired a reputation as one of the leading Hungarian exiles in Germany. After the mass of the Hungarian emigration left Germany the group remaining contained a high percentage of emigres whose political persuasion was ultra-conservative, in many instances fascist, and who were intensely pro-German. This mutation in the Hungarian emigration has undoubtedly weakened Henryey's influence so that he now is far from being the sole or even primary dominant personality among the Hungarians here. Henryey's detractors state that "his former comrades reject him, almost without exception, and that he is rather isolated". This assertion seems to be a bald distortion of the facts and it would be more accurate to say that Henryey enjoys a fair amount of Hungarian emigre support.

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(d) Influence among important opinion moulders

Among those Germans whom he cultivates Henryey probably has extremely limited influence. This is probably basically attributable to the persisting resentment of many Germans over Henryey's conduct in 1944 and his alleged softness toward the Communists. It is uncontroversial that German funds are contributing to the support of Henryey's major rivals, General Zako and Farlas and one suspects that the Germans have already committed themselves as far as choosing the groups they would favor if a restoration were now possible in Hungary. This fact understandably militates against Henryey in his attempts to persuade influential German leaders.

The most antipathetic German attitude toward Henryey is held by the Deutscher Soldaten Bund, the major German veterans organization, and by Professor von Wanda, whose personal assessment of Henryey was described above. At the other extreme, are the Social Democrats who out of their hostility to military cliques and authoritarianism clearly prefer Henryey to his Hungarian rivals. Henryey reportedly enjoys some influence with German refugee minister Oberlander whom he allegedly dissuaded recently from continuing to support the MSBK. Henryey is a periodic visitor to the German foreign office where he calls on Otto Brütigan, Chief of the ost Abteilung, and with whom he seems to be on reasonably good if not cordial terms.

In Bavaria, Henryey has been paid the indirect compliment of being considered sufficiently influential by the chief of the Verfassungsschutzamt, Martha Reichsyr, to have it proposed that Henryey agree to use his prestige to help form a coordinating center for the charitable activities of the Hungarian emigration. According to Henryey, he (Henryey) would receive Reichsyr's support as top man in the group that would emerge.

A more precise evaluation of Henryey's influence among German opinion moulders than that given above is hard to make. In an emigration like the Hungarian, containing numerous conflicting groups and impulsive personalities, Henryey is far from being the single most influential emigre leader. Despite the animus of many German authorities, he is nevertheless one of the most influential, due in no small way to the fact that he is known to enjoy American support.

(e) Contacts with the mission

Henryey has had some social and business contact with this Consulate General. He paid a courtesy call on the Consul General shortly after the latter's arrival in the summer of 1953. When he was head of the Hungarian Refugee Service, Henryey was in continuous touch with the visa section. As peripheral officer, Ralph Jones, however, met him for the first time when he began gathering data for this report. Jones met him once when he was here to intervene in a visitor's visa case for the widow of a former fellow General. It is contrary to the policy of the Voice of America to maintain official or constant association with organized emigre groups

(probably from Professor von Wanda)

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so while he is friendly with members of the Hungarian desk at VOA, Henryey's contact with that operation of this post is nominal. The United States Escape Program has no official intercourse with Henryey, the HNC or the Refugee Service.

- (f) Individual potential for furthering Western objectives or countering Communist activities within the emigration or the host country.

Making due allowance for his shortcomings and without being ~~overly~~ <sup>exaggerated</sup> to Henryey, it should be stated at once that there seems to be no one in this area who might better carry out Western objectives or counteract communist propaganda in the emigration or in the Federal Republic than Henryey. His usefulness in executing this mission is, however, limited by two factors, his age and the rather general hostility toward him by the German authorities. He will be seventy in two years. While he is active and in apparent good health, he is reaching an age at which he must expect to do less not more work. The German hostility is not, as was pointed out above, universal, but it is an inhibiting factor. One source, admittedly friendly to Henryey, has clearly indicated how this limits Henryey. He writes "the majority of the Hungarians in Western Germany welcome the activity of Mr. Henryey; however, they would not dare to support him openly in his fight against the extreme right. They simply fear that the pro-German orientation (in the emigration) could get the upper hand in directing the fate of emigres in Western Germany."

The foregoing considerations should not be construed to imply that we think that Henryey is not worthy of American support. Quite the contrary. It would, however, be a mistake to be misled into thinking that Henryey is unqualifiedly effective or that he enjoys uncritical support among his own countrymen or in official German circles.

## 2. Activities

- (a) The activities of the Hungarian National Council in this area

The activities of the HNC fall into two categories, political and social welfare. In the Federal Republic the HNC has a distinct bureau to conduct each task. The Council's political representation in Germany is headed by Henryey. A Hungarian Refugee Office, also headed by Henryey until a little over a month ago, attends to the welfare requirements of many Hungarian emigres. Henryey founded the Refugee Service in Frankfurt in 1945 and he has been the representative of the HNC in Germany since 1949.

In Munich, the main undertaking of the HNC has been social welfare since Henryey has conducted most of the Council's political business in Bonn rather than in the Bavarian capital. These two activities naturally merge and are not easily distinguished from each other and much of

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Henryey's time has been consumed in the political-social task of trying to obtain recognition from the Germans for the Refugee Service as the sole agency for handling the problems of the 13,000 Hungarians living in Western Germany. To date he has not been successful, but there are some indications that under pressure from the German and Bavarian authorities a degree of Hungarian emigration unity may be obtained and that a roof organization to channel relief and assistance to the Hungarians may be set up. It further appears that Henryey and the HNC may be successful in acquiring a dominant control in this new organization. In October of this year, he reported that a close friend, a former official in the Consular service, now living near Munich, Marik de SPANYI, had been proposed to the Germans as "coordinator" to bring together the rival right and center groups "to find a solution for peaceful coexistence".

Henryey is charged by the HNC in New York with the mission of establishing and maintaining connections with the German Federal Government and the governments of the several Luender and soliciting emigre support in Germany for the HNC. The Refugee Office, with its headquarters in Munich, has branches in Regensburg, Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Dusseldorf. All support for the office (DM 6,000 per month) comes from the Free Europe Citizens Service Committee. Part of this income is given to maintain a Hungarian School in Baden-Wuerttemberg and a varying amount for Refugee assistance. The bulk of its expenditures are for administrative expenses of the office. Henryey's successor as head of the Refugee Office is Baron Lars FONGRACS. The HRO keeps a record of all Hungarians living in Germany and distributes food, clothing, etc. Some funds are also paid out as loans and occasionally legal assistance is provided. The HRO is an observer at the Council of Voluntary Agencies. In addition to the work described above, it maintains touch with this Consulate on immigration matters and works with most of the German welfare agencies.

(b) The standing of the HNC among the emigration.

Here again one is forced to resort to a negative statement to present a balanced picture of the situation in the emigration. As one German foreign office official put it "no other group in the Hungarian emigration has more standing". Applying what we believe to be an accurate rule of thumb, the Hungarian National Council probably commands the loyalty of about 22% of the Hungarians living in Western Germany. That would be about one third of the politically minded Hungarians, after excluding children and those with no interest in political organizations. As noted above, the reduction of the numbers of Hungarians in Western Germany after 1951 left a residue which had a strong fascist taint. This group has gravitated to the rightists under Zako and Farkas

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which has naturally meant a cleavage of the emigration. A cardinal question would appear to be whether, if the Germans continue to support the rightists orientation, the democratic emigres who incline to Henryey and the HNC will think it imprudent to go on resisting the rightists if it would thus mean that they would incur the displeasure of the Germans. A severe loss of prestige for Henryey through preferential treatment by the Germans of the Zako and Farkas groups could cause Henryey a serious loss of support among the emigration.

(c) Does it include representative emigres?

The Hungarian National Council is undoubtedly a representative body in as far as it includes all political orientations except the fascists and communists. In Germany the HNC has approximately 3,000 to 4,000 members, among whom are emigres who come from most of the former democratic parties in Hungary. It should be stated, however, that the really prominent leaders of the HNC itself are not numerous, that for all practical purposes it is Henryey and Henryey is it.

(d) Does the Hungarian National Council offer potential for furthering western objectives or countering communist activities within the emigration or the host country?

Since Henryey to a large extent personifies the Hungarian National Council in Germany, our evaluation of his potential for advancing western policies holds in large measure for the HNC itself. Certainly the HNC has a real opportunity to supplement the efforts of American organizations which are charged with political action in furthering Western policy. How to measure that potential is an extremely

imprecise task. The HNC and its officers have shown a spirited activity in the Federal Republic, as will appear more fully below. Although the Hungarian emigre press in this area at least appears to be dominated by publications of the right wing, the moderate weekly newspaper, Uj Hungaria supported by the Hungarian National Council, (although not officially stamped as its organ) has a circulation considerably greater than that of Hungaria, the organ of the MHBK which appears irregularly; this, despite the fact that the extreme rightist newspapers and periodicals apparently dispose of ample funds. The HNC has, therefore, a channel through which it can and does speak to limited but nevertheless significant numbers of Hungarians living in Western Germany.

In respect to the potential of the organization for furthering western objectives within the Federal Republic, the HNC somewhat is handicapped by the general German hostility toward it described above. I doubt if this organization or in fact any refugee organization can be expected to do much to influence the Germans in Germany. It has a large enough task to try to guide the thinking of the Hungarian emigrants in Germany.



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To what extent the HNC has the potential to counteract communist propaganda and other activities within the emigration is likewise not susceptible of proof. There is no doubt that it has the will, but the effectiveness with which it can execute this task depends considerably on whether the bitter squabbling, calumniating and mutual recriminating which have to date marked Hungarian emigre life can at least be reduced. As long as the major political energies of the various groups of the Hungarians are consumed in fighting each other they individually have little time for an intelligent counter action against communist activities. Whether complete unity is possible may be doubted, but if partial unity is attained and the HNC overcomes some of the hostility of the German authorities, it would clearly appear that it would be in a strong position to operate offensively against communist tactics. One should remember that the Hungarian emigration here is not large, that relative to other emigration it does not have insuperable problems of integration and assimilation and that it is, therefore, not as fertile a field for infiltration and destructive propaganda activity as other national groups.

(e) Following or influence, if any, of the HNC among youth, labor, cultural, womens or other organisations.

The Hungarian National Council does not exert any perceptible influence on or in German organisations of the character listed above. As far as is known, it confines its activities largely to inter-exile organisations and to groups exclusively composed of Hungarians. Even in this latter category the influence of the Hungarian National Council could not be described as more than nominal. In relation to its rival Hungarian bodies like the MHBK and the USZM, however, the HNC probably commands as much if not slightly more attention.

Under Hennyey the HNC has been extremely energetic in emigre activities which receive little public notice except when they are expanded to draw in German participation.

Hennyey and other HNC personalities are members of the German Hungarian Society which was reactivated in 1954 (originally founded 1929), an organization which could, (as yet it has not been more than a name) exert substantial influence in the cultural field. The HNC is also represented in a host of clubs and study groups which have as their main object research and discussion of problems relating to Eastern Europe, Danubian federation and a united Europe. The HNC is corporately represented in the Democratic Exile Union found about a year ago in Munich and Hennyey occupies one of the deputy chairmanships in this body.

The Verein der ungarische Gewerbetreibenden und Geschäftsleute, a Hungarian working man's and businessman's association, designed to safeguard the interests of Hungarians in German industry and business, is the only Hungarian organization in this field. It is not affiliated with the

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*See next page for*

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HNC, but Hennyey has ties to its leaders. The Verein is estimated to have less than one hundred members and is therefore of little consequence.

In the field of youth affairs and education Hennyey and the HNC have been diligent. The HNC, as noted above, maintains a school in Baden-Wuerttemberg and even Hennyey's principal detractor, von Mende, admits that the HNC "does ~~some~~ valuable social welfare work", particularly in providing vacations for children. Hennyey is deputy chairman of the "Hungarian Committee for the Maintenance of Hungarian Schools in Germany".

Women's organizations are unknown in the Hungarian emigration. There are a variety of Hungarian veterans organizations in Germany. The MHBK has already been mentioned as representative of the reactionary wing of the Hungarian emigration. Its rival is the "Hungarian Military Organization", (MKEK), headed by former General Hugo SOHNYI, a personal friend of Hennyey, who while he is not a member of the HNC, is so closely allied with Hennyey that he might be considered to be a member. The MKEK, while probably not as influential as the MHBK, nevertheless is a competitor to General Zako's MHBK and it enjoys a certain resonance among the more moderate former Hungarian officers.

Sincerely yours,

E. Allan Lightner, Jr.  
Consul General

AGJames:vk  
cc: D.E. Boster  
Bonn

77-134-25