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Hungarian Secret Police Memorandum, 'Ensuring the Security of Preparations for the Burial of Imre Nagy and his Associates [on 16 June 1989]'

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Summary:

Hungarian Secret Police memorandum, "Ensuring the security of preparations for the burial of Imre Nagy and his associates [on 16 June 1989]", regarding plans to maintain security using the dissemination of information concerning possible retaliation for extremist action, and the use of operatives

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Translation - English

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

Directorate III/III

Approved:

Dr Istvan Horvath

Police Maj. Gen.

Minister of the Interior

TOP SECRET

Until destroyed!

Agreed:

Ferenc Pallagi

Deputy Minister

Subject: Ensuring the security of preparations for the burial of Imre Nagy and his associates

Operative Plan of Action

On the basis of the permission [given by] the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic and the decision [Nagy's] of relatives, the burial of Imre Nagy and his four associates will take place on 16 June, 1989, in the New Central Cemetery in Budapest.

The family members as well as The Committee for Historical Justice wish to ensure the character of the event as an act of respect, [but] recognize at the same time that a political aspect will inevitably arise, they will make efforts to keep it—as much as possible—within limits.

As opposed to them, certain extremist social groups—mainly SzDSz [Alliance of Free Democrats], FIDESz [League of Young Democrats] and the Republican Circle are attempting to turn the ceremony into a political demonstration. (...)

The main direction of the activity of the state security service must be to support with all force and means at its disposal the character of the event as one of respect, commemoration and rehabilitation, while preventing, halting, limiting, detouring and influencing toward a positive direction all extremist attempts which may be expected from both sides.

Accordingly, it should make special efforts:

□ To obtain, analyze and evaluate the ideas of Hungarian émigré groups and the various internal alternative groups regarding the funeral. To provide up-to-date information to the political leadership, and to work out proposals for political and

government action.

□To work out and carry out combinations and active measures abroad and at home, orienting [action] toward the tribute-paying line of thought, placing rehabilitation and the paying of final respects [at] the fore. Pushing back and deflecting every initiative to the contrary.

□To initiate operations of misinformation emphasizing that the events may be taken advantage of by extremist groups to stage provocations, which could lead to a halting of the process of democratization and to restoration.

□To initiate measures in the foreign affairs arena, through our network of contacts, mainly toward the US State Department and the US Embassy in Budapest, calling attention to the fact that any action of extremist adventurism may disrupt increasingly broadening and strengthening Hungarian-American relations, and would negatively affect our initiatives toward a pluralistic social order.

□In matters involving games,[1] to convey information to the hostile special services suggesting that a course of events contrary to the intentions of the authorities may lead to a strengthening of the forces urging restoration [i.e., an abandonment of the current relative liberalism].

□To control the activity of politicians, businessmen, press correspondents and camera crews arriving from abroad.

□To investigate and reveal analyses and assessments by officials of foreign representations operating in Hungary concerning the funeral as well as to find out about any eventual effort to influence the events.

□The deliberate use of the Hungarian mass media—Hungarian Television, Hungarian Radio, the government and independent press—to spread the suggestion that it will be a proof of the maturity of the nation if the events of 16 June proceed in an orderly manner.

□To spread, through our system of contacts, information influencing the political mood in the desired direction, emphasizing that the current leadership is making positive moves and initiatives, which [is the] reason [why] it would be highly undesirable if extremist forces provoked restoration [of the former order] by their actions on 16 June or 23 October. [...]

In order to co-ordinate state security efforts, an operative committee has been set up consisting of appointed leaders [from] Directorate III/I, III/II and III/III [from] the Interior Ministry which will have regular weekly meetings—at 4:00 PM every Monday—until the funeral. Memoranda will be made of these meetings, which will be submitted to the leadership of the Ministry.

For the operative control of the funeral of Imre Nagy on 16 June 1989, the following related measures are being planned:

IM (Interior Ministry) Directorate III/I:

In the field of intelligence gathering: it will mobilize the operative forces at its disposal abroad, and will make efforts to provide continuous information on:

□the plans and activities of Hungarians living in the West regarding the events, and their general attitude and mood;

□it will pay special attention to the discovery and acquisition of information regarding the preparations, plans and activities at home of the Hungarian groups and émigré political personalities travelling to Hungary for the event; (...)

It will analyze and provide up-to-date reports on views and opinions observed in Church, especially Vatican circles. It will take steps to win the support of church circles with the purpose of moderating domestic tendencies.

In the area of the employment of contacts (agents, social, official) it will aid, by consistent positive influence:

□the loyalty of external émigré public opinion and that of the incoming groups, emphasizing the tribute-paying and mourning character of the events and playing down their demonstrative elements.

□Through cover organizations and diplomatic channels, it will influence the political and official circles of the receiving countries in a positive manner, in line with our interests.

IM Directorate III/II

□To inform, through official and informal channels, the government organs of the NATO countries—especially the USA and Federal Republic of Germany—that certain extremist forces want to exploit the funeral to disrupt and prevent the paying of respect, and for adventurism political action, endangering thereby the increasingly vigorous process of democratization.

□To influence diplomats, journalists, trade and business specialists of the capitalist countries accredited to Hungary through “friendly conversations” in [such] a direction that, using their own means, they should make efforts to prevent the exploitation of the funeral for the purposes of political demonstration.

□Persuading the émigré politicians—especially Bela Kiraly and Sandor Kopacsi—to declare themselves in support of the memorial character of the funeral through the press and TV.(...)

Use of the channel of operative games:

□Contact covername [henceforth cn.] “Hedgehogcactus”[2], employed in Game cn. “Tarot”, will send—in a coded letter—the following information to the CIA center: “Certain extremist groups are planning to exploit the funeral of Imre Nagy for anti-government disruption. In such a case, the authorities are expected to act harshly. The IM has been put on special alert.”

□Contact agent (henceforth C.A.) cn. “Muddygrass”, employed in Game cn. “Tarot”, [who]will verbally inform the officer of the BND [the West German Federal Intelligence Service] about the information regarding preparations for the funeral of Imre Nagy. Will talk about the plans of the extremist groups intending to disrupt the funeral and the expected reaction of the authorities. Emphasizes that he believes a conflict would have a negative impact on the process of democratic evolution.

Via the network

□C.A. cn. "Red Thorn" will remind US diplomat cn. "Stone Rose" in a personal conversation that he saw [US] Ambassador [Mark] Palmer on TV among the marchers at the 15 March celebration. Personally he is very pleased with the wholehearted sympathy of the Americans for the Hungarian cause and that they support the democratization process by their participation, but at the same time he is worried about the funeral of Imre Nagy. He has information from university circles that some extremist groups, in violation of the memorial character of the funeral, intend to provoke a political demonstration. He believes that such a step might seriously endanger the process of democratization. It might provoke a violent action from the authorities.

The notions defined in the basic concept will be passed on:

□Via Agent cn. "Agave", a person in close contact with the Austrian Embassy in Budapest, to the Austrian government.

□Via Occasional Operative Contact cn. "Candleflower" to the "friendly" contact between the US and British diplomats.

□Via S.A. cn. "Stonecrop" to British Press Attaché Stoneman. [...]

□Via S.A. cn. "Coralberry" to the press attaché of the French Embassy in Budapest and to French Intelligence.

□S.A. cn. "Cactus" will arrange that a camera crew of Hungarian Television interview Bela Kiraly (USA) and Sandor Kopacsi (Canada) on the preparations for Imre Nagy's funeral. The report should emphasize the memorial character of the funeral and both persons should be made to condemn any attempt to take advantage of the funeral for political purposes.

IM Directorate III/III

(...)

Department I:

□(...) follows continuously the attempts of the organizers of the funeral and the organizers of the planned demonstrations to build contacts with the Church, takes the steps necessary to halt, prevent, and to influence these.

Department 2:

□(...) follows by technical and network means the development of the position of FIDESz.

□Through S.As, cn. "Balsam" and "Flamingo Flower", it will strengthen the anti-demonstration position.

□Via S.A. cn. "May", it will leak the divisions within FIDESz regarding the issue to the press.

□It will keep the presidents of DEMISz [Hungarian Democratic Youth Organization] and MISzOT [National Alliance of Hungarian Youth Organizations] continuously informed on the developments (...).

Department 3:

□(...) obtains information (...) on the ideas of the TIB [Committee for Historical Justice] and the relatives.

□Wishes to influence, using its operative positions, the activities of the TIB and some alternative groups so that no political demonstration take place after the funeral.

□Among those operating in various alternative groups S.As cn. "Knotweed," "Passion Flower", "Rhododendron", "Agave", and "Sword-Flag" will be instructed to exert an influence on their environment, as a result of which they will abandon the idea of initiating, or participating in, a political demonstration.

□A special action plan is to be made for the employment of the services of S.A. cn. "Crown Imperial" inside the TIB (...)

□S.A. cn. "Inca Lilly" will be employed on the basis of a special action plan in order to discover and influence the plans of Imre Mecs in connection with the above. (...)

Department 4:

□S.A. cn. "Calla" will follow the co-ordination meetings of SzDSz in connection with the demonstration. In selecting the scene for the mass rally, he will argue in favor of holding it in the cemetery. If other sites are suggested, he will vote in favor of the less important ones. (...)

□S.A. cn. "Friesia" will obtain information from Sandor Szilagyi at the meetings of the Shelter Committee about the conferences, the planned sites and the manner of organization. At the sessions of the board of the Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Society he will find out about the plans concerning participation of the organization.

□S.A. cn. "Lady's Mantle" as a leader of the (...) district group of SzDSz, will represent the position of "the relatives" in the group, influence the members and Ferenc Koszeg [3] in that direction. If he is invited, he will accept to become an organizer (...)

□S.A. cn. "Bellflower" will explore the plans and ideas of the MDF [Hungarian Democratic Forum] and its participation in the mass rally.

□(...)

Departments III/III-4 and 6 will, in close co-operation, discover the travel and participation plans of Gyorgy Krasso and Zoltan Zsille.[4]

Department 5:

□In the period preceding the funeral: It will collect information through network persons, official and social contacts for the Hungarian National News Agency (MTI) and print media on the preparation and planned moves of the various alternative organizations with special regard to information received by the National Press Service from the (OS.)[5]

□With the help of S.A. cn. "Sage" and S.A. "Torch", it will collect information on the intentions of the leadership and members of the Openness Club. They will be instructed to initiate an appeal for calm on behalf of the Club regarding the funeral.

□With the help of S.A. cn. "Autumn Crocus" and S.A. "Bride's Eye"(...), it will plant articles appealing for peace and calm in the newspapers Reform and Unio.

□Through S.A. cn. "Bride's Eye", it will initiate the publication of articles suggesting national reconciliation and keeping calm in the daily Magyar Nemzet.

□Through the Foreign Relations Department of Hungarian Radio, it will obtain information on the foreign radio correspondents registering [to cover the event], and, in close cooperation with Department II/II-12, will check them [out].

□Will Instruct Secret Officer (henceforward S.O.) I-87 to provide as much information as is available to him on the progress of activities within Hungarian Television (program planning, live broadcasts, etc.) involving the funeral.

□Will instruct S.A. cn. "Artichoke" to provide information, as far as possible, on broadcasts planned by MR PAF [Hungarian Radio, Editors of Political Broadcasts] involving the events [...]

I request approval for the execution of the measures contained in the Plan of Action.
Budapest, May "... " 1989

[1] [The term had a two fold meaning: 1) indirect influencing through 2 or 3 persons; 2) intelligence or counterintelligence operation, the imparting of misinformation to an institution, e.g. through a letter or report.]

[2] [The names of agents and games are fictitious, in accordance with the data protection law in force in Hungary—note of The Hungarian Quarterly editors.]

[3] [Ferenc Koszeg: One of the editors of the dissident magazine Beszelo, a leading SzDSz politician—THQ.]

[4] [Gyorgy Krasso, Zoltan Zsille: prominent dissidents who returned from exile in 1989—THQ.]

[5] [OS: National Press Service a private initiative news agency founded in 1989 to break the monopoly of MTI, the National News Agency