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Refugee Politics And The Origins Of The Cold War: The Hungarian Experience In Montana

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REFUGEE POLITICS AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR: THE HUNGARIAN EXPERIENCE IN MONTANA

A THESIS SUMBITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
IN CANDIDACY FOR HONORS

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

BY
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This thesis for honors has been approved for the Department of International Relations.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Following the destruction caused by World War II, world leaders, specifically Franklin D. Roosevelt and Josef Stalin, were responsible for leading the mankind into a new era of post-war reconstruction. The necessary alliance of East and West was pitifully short-lived: the ideological conflict between capitalism and communism erupted into the Cold War. Caught in this conflict were countries struggling to rebuild themselves. Due to the quest for spheres of influence, parts of Eastern, as well as Western, Europe were divided between the two dominant powers. One of these nations was Hungary.

Hungary is one of the seven land-locked countries of Central Europe. It is bordered by Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Austria. While Hungary is surrounded primarily by Slavic nations, the Hungarian people are descendants of ethnic Magyars. The Hungarian landscape is largely composed of inland plains crossed by the Danube River. The capital of Hungary is also its largest city, Budapest. Today, Hungary's primary industries are mining, engineering industries, and pharmaceuticals.

Hungary was occupied by the Soviet Union following World War II, and approved a new constitution in 1949. The Soviets remained in a highly influential position even after withdrawal of their forces and dominated Hungarian politics. The communist Hungarian Working People's Party
Fig. 1 Drawing of Central Europe. By Richard Walker, March 1988.

Fig. 2 Drawing of Hungary. By Richard Walker, March 1988.
Matyas Rakosi had a great deal of work to do to improve the economic and social conditions in Hungary. Rakosi's utopian promises of his first five year plan failed, and eventually resulted in police terror tactics to eliminate all opposition. It is not surprising that in 1956 the Hungarian workers and students protested. Under the leadership of Imre Nagy, a temporary government was formed in October-November 1956. The revolt was soon stifled by the Soviet army, and Janos Kadar assumed control of the Hungarian communist government.

Before beginning an in depth study of the Hungarian revolt of 1956 and its effects on Montana, it is important to understand the Soviet view of Hungary from the beginning. Josef Stalin was determined to protect Soviet national security and saw Eastern Europe as vital to Soviet interests. Furthermore, Soviet communists saw the "imperialist nations" as a "bulwark of world counterrevolution in the modern epoch." According to The Great Soviet Encyclopedia, "The socialist countries and the world communist movement are waging a determined struggle against the imperialist export of counterrevolution." Regarding the Hungarian revolt of 1956, it describes those events as:

an armed action against the people's democratic system during October 23-November 4, prepared by the forces of domestic reaction with the support of international imperialism; its goal was to liquidate the socialist achievements of the Hungarian people and restore in Hungary the rule of the capitalists who, along with the petit-bourgeois elements that joined them, made up the class base of the counterrevolutionary revolt.

The Soviet view insists that Imre Nagy exploited the situation in Hungary with the aid of international imperialist aggressors. The encyclopedia refers to the wrestling of Hungary "from the concord of
socialist nations, and turning it into a bridgehead for the imperialist states."
The encyclopedia goes on to state how Janos Kadar reorganized the communist party, remaining loyal to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. "By the end of 1957," it writes, "the Hungarian people had overcome the main difficulties produced by the consequences of the counterrevolutionary revolt."

The Hungarian revolt of 1956 created more than 200,000 refugees in a matter of months. To accommodate this outpouring of people, many governments opened their immigration policies to provide new homes for the refugees. Volunteer groups, many which were religious organizations, greatly aided the processing and placement of Hungarians abroad.

The main catalyst for the arrival of Hungarians in Montana was the Catholic church. Under the leadership of Bishop Joseph M. Gilmore, Montana Catholics responded to the church's call for aid and greatly supported all efforts to provide refuge for the Hungarians. This study, then, examines the forces which led to the influx of Hungarian refugees into Montana in the late 1950's, and the consequences of such migration of peoples during the Cold War era.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1 The following information on Hungary comes from John Clements, Clements Encyclopedia of World Governments. (Dallas: Political Researchers, 1986), s.v. "Hungary."

2 The following information is from The Great Soviet Encyclopedia. (Moscow: Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia Publishing House, 1973) s.v. "Counterrevolutionary Revolt of Hungary" by I. A. Krasin.
CHAPTER 2

IMMIGRATION AND AMERICAN REFUGEE POLICY

Be it George Washington's land whose "bosom is open to receive the persecuted and oppressed of all nations," or Emma Lazurus's nation of "huddled masses yearning to be free," America has often been viewed as a country willing to accept refugees from other parts of the world. When we look at specific refugee cases, however, we discover that America's refugee policy has been strongly influenced by both public opinion and contemporary political issues. While American refugee policy has been influenced by humanitarian motives, it has almost always had some kind of political objective. Beginning around the turn of this century, racism sometimes played a role in immigration policy, mainly in discrimination against the so-called "inferior" immigrants of Southern Europe. Nonetheless, pushed by the idea that "each refugee from the Soviet orbit represents a failure of the communist system," the United States moved toward a positive immigration policy to refugees of Soviet influenced countries. Refugees from behind the Iron Curtain were more politically advantageous to the United States during the battle of the Cold War.

American refugee policy following World War II was still influenced by a suspicious Congress looking out for all potential "Communist sleepers." The
Displaced Persons Act, which expired in 1951, was enacted to aid in the resettlement of displaced Europeans. Following the initial waves of post-war immigration, a restrictive Congress often vetoed President Truman's policies, therefore creating tight security screening of potential immigrants and prohibiting possible communist insurgents from entering the United States. For example, the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 recoded American immigration law but maintained the national origins quota system. This system made it easier for immigrants from Northern and Western Europe to enter the United States, but at the same time often excluded those from Southern or Eastern Europe, many times Jewish, and virtually closed immigration to Asians.2

Due to the national climate during the Cold War, Hungarians were given special immigration status following the 1956 revolt. One study has shown how public opinion was greatly in favor of Hungarian immigration. It stated, "The Hungarians were viewed as heroes, easily the most popular group of refugees in U.S. history, because of their battle with Communism." 3

Substantial refugee relief funding was demanded in lieu of the military aid that many had expected. The initial Refugee Relief Act provided for 5,000 Hungarians to arrive in the United States soon after the revolt. A following increase of 1,200 was accorded due to the extremely large outpouring of people from Hungary, and soon afterward a special "parolee" status was created to allow the additional immigration of 15,000 Hungarians. The Refugee Relief Act also waived many of the security requirements for pending immigration, and most of the screening was put in the control of voluntary organizations handling the refugees.4

Although the bill was not strongly debated in Congress, both houses had understood that it was Congress's power, not the President's, to control
immigration. In fact, Representative Walter, Chairman of the House Immigration Committee and a powerful voice in Congress on all immigration issues, supported the President's parolee status program. It was not until the initial "romance" with Hungarian anti-communist "freedom fighters" wore off that their status came under serious debate as an immigration problem. Nonetheless, parolee status had already become a precedent, and indeed, later aided the Kennedy administration's decision to allow thousands of Cuban refugees to immigrate to America in the wake of Fidel Castro's revolution.

While the government acknowledged its dependence on voluntary organizations for the screening of Hungarian refugees, it also took steps to begin their resettlement procedure. A special President's Committee for Hungarian Refugee Relief was appointed, and refugees often received help from the Employment Service of the U.S. Department of Labor in finding jobs. President Eisenhower thus found new ways of admitting political refugees to the United States without direct Congressional approval, and later aided in their resettlement.

The parolee status thus radically altered American refugee politics. It could now be a president's decision to admit, or not to admit, political refugees depending upon his foreign policy concerns. It was only after specific problems arose that legislation was passed regarding the refugees, as in the 1958 decision which granted Hungarian parolees permanent resident status. Cold War politics thus had a significant impact on American immigration policy. Given this importance, let us now turn our attention to how this competition between the two super powers of the world came about.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1 The following information on U.S. immigration policy is from Gil Loescher and John A. Scanlan, Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1986).

2 Ibid., 26.

3 Ibid., 52.

4 Ibid., 55.

5 Ibid., 56.

6 Ibid., 61.

7 Ibid., 60.
CHAPTER 3

THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR

While Roosevelt's primary goal was to quickly defeat Germany, spheres of influence soon developed between the United States and the Soviet Union. By early 1943 Roosevelt came to the conclusion that he could not keep Stalin out of Eastern Europe. Not wanting to cause problems with public opinion during the war, he did not make this fact known to the American people. When Moscow's domination of Eastern Europe took place, the American people were shocked and angered. This misunderstanding—the confusion of the American self-determination principle and Soviet national security interests—later was the primary cause for the breakdown of the Grand Alliance.¹

I

Roosevelt was very practical when it came to dealing with Stalin. He was in a peculiar situation: he needed the Red Army in the war in order to defeat Germany and Japan, but in turn this would give the Soviets a much more prominent position in European affairs. A friend of Roosevelt's, William C. Bullitt, advised the President to instigate operations against Germany that would at the same time place Allied troops in a position to react to the Soviet influence in Eastern Europe, such as an Allied invasion of the Balkans.
Roosevelt made it clear that he could not follow this advice. President Roosevelt feared a possible separate peace between Stalin and Hitler, and he likewise knew that the American public would not support keeping American troops overseas once the war was ended to contain Soviet influence. Instead, Roosevelt dedicated himself to ending the war and hoped that the two countries could live together peacefully in a post-war world.

The delay of the opening of a second front also greatly strained American-Soviet relations before the end of the war. Stalin and his foreign minister, V.M. Molotov, were emphatic in their desire for the Allies to invade Western Europe and relieve some of their battle pressures. While they had been assured of a second front in Western Europe by 1942, the invasions of North Africa and Italy postponed the opening of the front until 1944. This delay greatly strained Soviet-American relations and damaged American standing in the Soviet Union regarding the U.S. commitment to aid the Soviet Union in defeating Adolf Hitler.

Already in September of 1943 Roosevelt told Catholic Archbishop Francis Spellman that Eastern Europe would simply have to get used to Russian domination. Secretary of State Cordel Hull noted that it seemed logical that the Russians gain the prime responsibility for working out armistice terms with Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, as their troops were on the scene, just as American troops were in Italy. As John Gaddis states in The United States and the Origins of the Cold War,

Since the U.S. had done most of the fighting against Japan, it could expect a decisive role in shaping occupation policies for that country. Hitler's European satellites presented no serious threat to future peace; moreover, by the end of 1944 the Big Three had tacitly agreed that Italy would fall within an Anglo-American
sphere of influence, while the Soviet Union would assure responsibility for Finland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary.  

Roosevelt and his advisors had certain goals for Eastern Europe: maximum self-determination for the region and the unity of the Grand Alliance. Unfortunately, these two interests conflicted with each other. It became clear that a choice would have to be made between the establishment of free Eastern European governments and good relations with the Soviet Union. While Roosevelt tried to achieve both goals, if he had to make a choice he knew which he would choose. As stated by Gaddis, "by the end of 1943, the President had cautiously indicated to the Russians that they could count on a free hand in Eastern Europe." Roosevelt could not admit publicly to his inability to support self-determination in Eastern Europe due to public opinion. Because of the President's strong rhetoric, the American people, and the Europeans alike, reacted violently to Soviet advances in Eastern Europe and came to regard Stalin as a ruthless aggressor comparable to Hitler. Roosevelt tried to greatly stress cooperation with the Soviet Union in settling post-war Europe. Since he felt that the proper disarmament of Germany would slacken Stalin's interests in Eastern Europe, Roosevelt did not make self-determination for the region a large issue.
II

While the Soviets had agreed to allow "democratic" governments to be formed in Eastern Europe, their definition of the term varied greatly from that of the West. At his death, Roosevelt left Harry S. Truman in a peculiar situation. Roosevelt's rhetoric had led the American people to expect free governments in Eastern Europe, but at the same time he gave the Soviets the assurance of a sphere of influence.

Some historians state that since Truman and Stalin could not agree on how to govern Europe, they began to divide it. At the end of the war each power-block had basically established its own sphere of influence, that is, Western and Eastern Europe, respectively. However, President Truman continued to support self-determination when it concerned countries in Eastern Europe struggling against Soviet domination. In 1947, the Truman Doctrine was established to aid Greece and Turkey in remaining non-communist. When the Truman Doctrine was being debated in Congress, Republican Senator Arthur M. Vandenberg stated that Truman could count on congressional support as long as he "scare hell" out of the American public. In his effort to aid Greece and Turkey with the Truman Doctrine, a type of declaration of "cold war" was made.

Other events occurred to further increase the tensions between the two world powers. The success of the Berlin Airlift (June, 1948-May, 1949) defeated Soviet advances in Germany, and was followed by the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in May 1949, as well as the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in October of the same year. The creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in July of
1949 was another proclamation of the silent battle between East and West. Dwight D. Eisenhower now commanded a multinational force that would surely respond to any Soviet attack on Western Europe.

In October of 1949 Mao Zedong's communist government in China was established, leaving the Truman administration with the burden of explaining that country's "fall." Supporters of containment cited the Truman Doctrine as a reason to intervene in the Chinese civil war. However, the Truman administration responded with the policy of non-recognition.9

Furthermore, in June of 1950 North Korean forces crossed the thirty-eighth parallel into South Korea, thus initiating the thirty-seven month long Korean conflict. In all, these international events, while occurring in countries other than the United States and the Soviet Union, dealt with ideological conflicts and greatly strained relations between the superpowers.

III

Elected president in 1952 as a World War II hero and former general, Eisenhower's background in the army appealed to Americans concerned about the increasing military battle of the Cold War. The Republican party platform on foreign policy, written by John Foster Dulles, greatly criticized the Truman administration policy of containment for "appeasing" communism. Dulles created the phrases "liberation," "brinkmanship," and "massive retaliation" in his foreign policy war. Eisenhower's Secretary of State, trying not to appear soft on communism, used the tactics of subversion, foreign aid, and with his "positive loyalty" allowed McCarthyites to "purge" the State Department of many foreign service officers.10
Eisenhower believed that foreign trade was a key strategic weapon in the confrontation with communism; total American exports went from $15 billion in 1952 to $30 billion in 1960. After Eisenhower's falling domino theory was professed in 1954, both East and West began a buildup of military alliances with the creation of the South East Asia Treaty Organization (1955), West German membership in NATO (1955), and the Warsaw Pact (1955). Congress passed the Captive People's Resolution in 1954 to encourage self-determination in Eastern Europe. The Central Intelligence Agency also began to train Eastern Europeans in West Germany for possible interventions in the event of an uprising.

Following a Geneva meeting between the U.S., the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and France in July 1955, a temporary thaw occurred in East-West relations. Moreover, Stalin's successor, Nikita Kruschev, denounced Stalin in February of 1956 for his domestic crimes, and began to support a policy of coexistence. Kruschev appeared to accept a polycentristic communist ideology in Eastern Europe. The abolition of the Comintern in April 1956 seemed to support this new freedom, and can be seen as a catalyst to the revolts in Eastern Europe.

By the latter part of the 1950's the united spirit of war-time allies had deteriorated to great antagonism and tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. Ultimately, the confrontation of the Cold War had a direct impact on the political development of Hungary and affected the fate of the Hungarian refugees.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3


2Ibid., 52.


4Ibid., 192.

5Ibid., 101.

6Ibid., 171.

7Paterson, Clifford, and Hagan, 450.

8Ibid., 445.

9Formal recognition of China did not occur until 1979 under the administration of President Jimmy Carter, following President Richard Nixon's visit with Mao and Sino-American rapprochement in 1972.


11Ibid., 482.

12Ibid., 492.
CHAPTER 4

HUNGARY AND THE ORIGINS OF THE 1956 REVOLT

During World War II Hungary's diplomatic relations with other Eastern European countries were often quite turbulent. As a non-Slavic nation, Hungary was considered an outsider and generally disliked by its neighbors. Hungarian-German relations during the war were basically that of the oppressor and the oppressed, with Hungary trying to stay out of conflicting positions. Even while Hitler saw Hungary as a non-cooperative nation, he waited until March 1944 before actually occupying the country.\(^1\) The full impact of the war then hit Hungary, and soon the Hungarian people felt the consequences: allied bombing, Gestapo arrests, and the deportation of Jews. The battle for Budapest was a particularly long fight which completely leveled the city.

The ending of World War II created new problems for Hungary. Geography proved disadvantageous to Hungary, as it was one of the last countries to be liberated.\(^2\) What the Germans had not destroyed, the Russians stole. Many Hungarian diplomats found dealing with the Soviet mind difficult, and as one stated, "The Nazis were barbarians but they had a comprehensive system. The Russians had none and their reactions were incalculable, or at least seemed so to the Hungarians during the initial phase of the armistice period."\(^3\) Hungary was officially occupied by the Soviet
army until September, 1947, but thereafter its affairs were still strictly controlled by the Soviets.

The Hungarian people had little say in reconstructing their post-war government. Any relations with foreign governments, as well as the renewal of diplomatic relations, went through the Allied Control Commission (ACC) office, which was dominated by the Soviets. The Soviets never tried to hide their intentions of a post-war European order that would be to their advantage. The overall weakness of the Western allies to enforce a strict Eastern European policy, combined with the early demobilization of the American Army, aided Soviet advances in the Danubian region. The United States, through Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, acknowledged the Soviet claim to an Eastern European sphere of influence, and was likewise aware of the Soviet security interest in the area. Even if the Western allies had intended on more joint cooperation in Eastern Europe, they were not willing to insist and risk antagonizing the Soviet Union, just as they would not be willing to take any action almost ten years later. Upon the reopening of diplomatic relations with Hungary, the Soviet and American governments began a form of competition that never ended throughout the entire Cold War. A lack of outward support in free determination for Eastern Europe confused many Hungarians. American attitudes appeared very reserved in comparison with Russian advancements. In one letter to Hungarian Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, who became an important figure in Hungarian protests, American Minister to Hungary Schoenfield stated:

In this connection you are of course aware of my government's long standing policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations. This policy has proven over a long period of time and through many trying situations the
best guarantee of spontaneous, rigorous and genuine democratic development. It will be clear to Your Eminence that it necessarily precludes action by this legation which could properly be construed as interference in Hungarian domestic affairs or which is outside the normal functions of diplomatic relations.4

On the other hand, the Russians took much stronger offensive moves in Hungary. By using the Red Army and its domination of the ACC, the Russians gradually controlled the government, as well as the everyday liberty of the Hungarian people. For example, when the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) offered assistance to Hungary, the Russians turned down this external aid, claiming "no necessity."5 Soon after the war Hungarian leaders felt abandoned by the West; at the most critical time of their reorganization they felt as if they were left to the Soviets. Any opponents to the Russian controlled government eventually disappeared.

By 1951 sides were drawn. Stalin was determined to maintain strict control in his sphere of influence. The Korean War was at a deadlock and the Berlin blockade had ended.6 By this point both East and West had learned that the status quo could not be changed except by forceful action. Both sides were claiming that the other wanted to conquer the world. The United States Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, was using very strong language to rally the American people against the Communist Bloc. For example he stated, "The Soviet Communists are carrying out a policy which they call encirclement. . . . They said they do not want to start an open war against us until they get such overwhelming power that the result will not be in doubt. . . ."7 On the other side, the Soviet leader Georgi Malenkov stated, "The ruling clique of American imperialists, . . . has taken the path of outright expansion. . . . It has chosen the path of hatching new war plans against the
Soviet Union and the new democracies..."8 Hence, each side was preparing itself for a "final conflict." The tone of language was a very important factor in Soviet-American relations throughout the Cold War; the only communications made between the two governments were generally in the forms of criticisms.

The United States, led by Senator Joseph McCarthy, had embarked on a mission to blame the Soviet Union for all the ills of the day. This "witch-hunt" portrayed Stalin as an evil Satan-like leader, and McCarthy was determined to rid all Communist "perpetrators" from the United States.9 This vigilant McCarthyism confused the issues in Hungary: Hungary's problems became based on ideology instead of the Hungarians' economic and social desires to improve their country.

II

While on vacation in Switzerland in May 1947, the prime minister of Hungary, Ferenc Nagy, called in his resignation.10 The Stalin supporter Matyas Rakosi followed as the Hungarian leader. While Nagy's Small Landholders Party had won 56% of the Hungarian votes in 1947, due to Soviet support Rakosi's Communists had dominated the coalition government with only 16%.11 As Stalin was tightening his control in the Soviet Union, his anonymous "henchmen" were getting rid of all anti-Communist leaders in Eastern Europe as well.

Under the leadership of Rakosi, the Hungarian government was molded more after the Russian example; individual liberties, such as free speech, were hindered, borders were sealed, and the secret police, called the AVH, caused many to live in fear.12 The disbanding of the 35,000 AVH
force was later one of the primary demands of the 1956 rebels, and during the fighting was also one of the rebels' primary targets. As the Hungarian nation moved closer to the Soviet communist system, religion was denounced. One very important figure in Hungarian Catholicism, Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, a very outspoken anti-communist and vehement nationalist, was arrested in December 1948. He was tortured for five weeks, "confessed" to treasonous activities, and was given life imprisonment.13

On October 23, 1956, a demonstration, mainly of young people, met to show their support for the new Gomulka government in Poland that had been defying the Soviet Union following the recent Poznan riots.14 These young people had a list of requests that they wished to make known. The most important was that they desired an increase in wages to aid their meager standard of living. Almost equally important was their wish to abolish the AVH, as well as the right to freedom of speech and worship.

A telling example of how deeply the Hungarians resented Russian domination in their country was one demand that the Hungarian military uniform be altered from the one resembling the Soviet-type of dress.15 With this list, the angry group of demonstrators then moved to a local radio station to have their demands read. When the group learned that their petition was actually not being broadcasted, violence broke out. A detachment of AVH opened fire on the crowd, resulting in a bloody massacre.16 The demonstrators regrouped in nearby streets, and headed for the district police headquarters to gain weapons.

Once armed, the originally peaceful demonstration turned into an angry riot demanding freedom and vengeance upon all oppressors. Some people had meanwhile begun work to demolish a twenty-four foot bronze statue of Joseph Stalin that had been erected on the site of a bombed-out
Catholic church; an acetylene torch and many ropes brought the statue down to be totally dismembered, spat upon, and crushed. Soviet tanks soon poured into Budapest; while these were formidable opponents for non-sophisticated street fighters, a few were destroyed by homemade Molotov cocktails.

On October 24th, the Soviets agreed to reinstate to power Imre Nagy, former Prime Minister from June 1953 to April 1955. Although Nagy was a communist who had even lived in Moscow for fifteen years as a Soviet citizen, he was viewed by the people as liberal and had much support. He attempted to instate martial law and stop the fighting, but did not succeed.

Communications with the West had been cut off, and the fighting spread to outlying regions of Hungary. Fighting continued on the 27th, with much action directed towards the AVH; by this time members of the AVH were in hiding or fleeing for their lives. The official policy of Nagy and the rebels was supposed to put members of the AVH in jail, but many were beaten to death by angry crowds before they could be imprisoned. In a broadcasted speech on the 28th, Imre Nagy addressed the people. He assured them that the new government would try to correct improprieties in areas such as collective farms and housing construction, and to move toward a more democratic self-governmen...
Hungarian friendship and the principle of the mutual equality and national independence of socialist countries.22

On the 29th, the Soviet forces started to leave Budapest. The streets were littered with dead bodies, and looked as if they had been hit by a full-scale war. While the tanks were leaving the city, Soviet officials Mikhail Suslov and Anastas Mikoyan were quietly deciding what was to be done with their unruly satellite.23 There was much diplomatic activity between Moscow and Budapest, and the ambassador to Hungary, Yuri Andropov, was constantly present in the negotiations with the Nagy officials. Still hesitant, Nagy was in careful contact with these Soviet leaders before daring to make any moves.

During the three free days in Hungary, many new political parties were formed, newspapers and radio stations started, and political prisoners, such as Cardinal Mindszenty, freed.24 Many Hungarians listened to the Hungarian language version of Radio Free Europe, funded by the CIA, where one broadcast stated, "A political victory must follow an armed victory. Don't hang your rifles on the wall."25 These rebels were convinced that the West would support their attempt at self-determination.

On November 1, after Russian troops had initially left Hungary, the United Nations received an unusual direct telex from Budapest. This message was sent directly to the UN Secretary General instead of being communicated by Hungary's delegation. Nagy's telex read:

THEREFORE I REQUEST YOUR EXCELLENCY TO PUT ON THE AGENDA OF THE FORTHCOMING GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS THE QUESTION OF HUNGARY'S NEUTRALITY AND THE DEFENCE OF THIS NEUTRALITY BY THE FOUR GREAT POWERS. . . .
While the United Nations General Assembly held four sessions during the actual Hungarian crisis, the importance of the Suez crisis overshadowed the revolt in Eastern Europe, and Hungary was never discussed. However, an informed group of delegates who called themselves the Cassandra Club took the Hungarian issue quite seriously. They were primarily smaller states, often Catholic, whose U.N. delegates were unofficially led by Dr. Emilio Nuñez-Portuondo of Cuba. Portuondo began a campaign to put the Hungarian rebellion on the U. N. agenda, but was overruled by the vast majority of delegates involved with the Suez Crisis; they contended that since bullets were being fired in the Middle East, that region should have first priority.

Russian troops re-entered Budapest early on November 4th in great force, threatening to bomb the city if the rebels did not surrender. By 9:30 A.M., Hungarian regular troops had surrendered, and Nagy had taken refuge in the Yugoslavian embassy, leaving Janos Kadar as prime minister. Street fighting still continued until the 10th, but as one rebel said, "We knew then that the Russians were not there to save Hungary for Communism but for Moscow, and we couldn't lick the might of the Soviet Union." The first lot of what was finally 200,000 refugees then began their flight from Hungary.

III

At the time of the Hungarian revolt, Austria had been free from foreign occupation following World War II for just one year. Austria had been recovering well from the war; in fact, in 1955 the Austrians experienced a 14% rise in national income. Because of efforts at de-
Stalinization, security on the Austro-Hungarian border had been relaxed, barbed wire fences had been removed, and border guards did little to stop people from fleeing. In October 1956, Austria was already caring for 30,000 escapees. In material terms Austria was well prepared to accept the tide of refugees. The former occupiers had left large barracks and other military installations that could easily serve as dormitories, and certain welfare agencies, such as the International Quakers, disposed of over 50,000 pounds of clothing and 75,000 tons of surplus foods. More important, Austria deserves the credit for accepting the refugees despite the near threat of retaliation by Soviet tanks.31

Various international charity organizations established operations in Austria to help refugees. For example, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) had already helped to resettle over 500,000 people. Additionally, the United States' Escapee Program had aided refugee services to relocate 160,000 escapees of communist regions, and both groups had their headquarters in Geneva. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also was involved in refugee work in 1956, and served as the major legal protector of the escapees. These governmental agencies were greatly supported by many private relief agencies, notably the Catholic Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC), which eventually received the most substantial portion of Hungarians for resettlement. It is important to note the speed in which these organizations were forced to take action, both financially and materially, and the large numbers that crossed the border in a short period of time. By November 8, 1956, little more than two weeks after the beginning of hostilities, approximately 20,000 people had already sought refuge in Austria.
Studies have shown that the exodus of Hungarians in 1956 occurred in three distinct waves. The first wave took place during the actual revolt and was made up primarily of AVH and other communist officials who feared for their lives. The second wave lasted until December 1 and was typically composed of opportunists who took advantage of the open borders to flee Hungary for the West. The so-called "freedom fighters" of 1956 comprised the third wave and lasted until approximately January 1957. Because the Soviets had heavily increased their security at the beginning of December 1956, they traversed the border under the most dangerous conditions.

The world quickly responded to the Hungarians' needs, and many countries amended their immigration policies to provide asylum for them. For example, Sweden and Switzerland formed convoys of trucks to transport Hungarians to their new host countries. President Eisenhower released a statement allowing the United States to immediately process 5,000 refugees.

The speed with which repatriation occurred was not necessarily without criticism. Professional social workers were appalled at the lack of documentation and supervision under which the resettlement took place; they knew that "misplacing the displaced" only compounded their problem. To alleviate the predicament, the heads of many agencies, like Monsignor Edward E. Swanstrom of NCWC, succeeded in getting the major processing duties turned over to their groups. These volunteers proved vital in the accumulation of possible host countries and in the proper resettlement of Hungarian refugees. Once processed, the available countries of asylum were numerous. For example, refugees were sent to Spain (40), Italy (370), Switzerland (12,000), West Germany (14,500) and Great Britain.
Of the total 200,000 refugees, only 11,175, or 5%, returned to Hungary.

While some refugees were also sent to South American countries, their reception was not well organized and caused many problems. Countries like Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Peru all initially offered to accept large quantities of refugees, but government mismanagement and complicated bureaucracy impeded many from even arriving. The Dominican Republic under Rafael Trujillo was the only Latin American country that admitted and cared for a significant number of Hungarian refugees. In a report by Senator William Langer in October 1957, further efforts towards Hungarian resettlement in this region were discouraged.

The United States accepted the largest number of the Hungarian refugees; about one fifth of the refugees were brought to, cared for, and resettled in the United States. Immediately following the uprising, arrangements were made for 5,000 to come to the U.S., and this number was subsequently increased to 15,000 and later to nearly 32,000. In an agreement with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the procedural tasks of admitting refugees were largely handled by American volunteer organizations.

A general processing center was established in New Jersey at a former military installation called Camp Kilmer. While there was hesitation in creating a replacement center in a former army camp, large efforts were made to make the reception center less military-like. For example, the name was changed to the Joyce Kilmer Reception Center and a large banner with "Isten Hozta Amerikaba," meaning welcome to America, was raised.

As well as a definite humanitarian gesture, the arrival of such a massive amount of refugees from an anti-communist revolt proved the
perfect publicity opportunity for many Americans. For the first time an advertising firm, Communications Counselors, a Division of McCann-Erickson Advertising Agency, was hired to sell the Hungarians to the American public.42 Companies and businesses showered Camp Kilmer with requests for Hungarians to help in opening ceremonies and commercials. Unfortunately, many donators and contributors were more inspired by possible business gains than by their desire to aid the refugees. Vice President Richard Nixon visited refugees in Austria and at Camp Kilmer, and Life magazine printed cover stories on the plight of the Hungarian Freedom Fighter.43 In this publicity campaign the refugees were sometimes used as pawns in the Cold War confrontation with the Soviet Union. From the base at Camp Kilmer, the refugees were resettled throughout the United States. Due to the rapid international response, aid was immediately provided to the Hungarian refugees. Under the image of heroic "freedom fighters," Hungarians resettled throughout the United States, including Montana.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1Stephen D. Kertesz, Diplomacy in a Whirlpool: Hungary between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1953.), 64.

2Ibid., 86.

3Ibid., 101.

4Ibid., 116.

5Ibid., 117.


7Ibid.

8Ibid., 152

9Ibid., 238-9.


11Rezsoe and Margaret Gracza, The Hungarians in America (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1969), 47.

12Ibid.


15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.


18 Ibid., 56.

19 Ibid.

20 Bursten, 20.

21 Ibid., 17.

22 Ibid.

23 Foote, 57.

24 Ibid., 58.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 166.

27 Ibid.

28 Bursten, 21.

29 Ibid., 22.

30 Ibid., 32.
31Ibid., 36.
32Ibid., 27.
33Ibid., 42.

34Congress, House, Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, Recording the Admission of Certain Hungarian Refugees, report prepared by Mr. Walter, 85th Cong., 2d sess., 1958, p. 19.
35Bursten, 46.
36Ibid., 47.

38Ibid., 5.

40Ibid., 2-3.
41Ibid., 2-4.
42Bursten, 163.
43Ibid., 162.
CHAPTER 5

THE HUNGARIAN EXODUS TO MONTANA

In order to deal with the large number of refugees at Camp Kilmer, the National Catholic Welfare Conference sent an urgent message to all of its offices nationwide. The organization needed dioceses to sponsor Hungarian refugees, providing a new life for these displaced people. In response to the church's call, dioceses across the country accepted the Hungarians. Cardinal Stritch of Chicago greeted 71 refugees, and 103 arrived in San Francisco, while others disembarked in New Orleans and De Pere, Wisconsin.¹

The Bishop of the Western Diocese of Montana, Joseph M. Gilmore, petitioned his Catholics to aid in the resettlement:

Our chief concern at the present time is to assist in every way we can the persecuted and needy people of Hungary. Every Catholic worthy of the name will consider this a matter of personal concern.²

Bishop Gilmore later described how the members of his diocese could directly aid the refugees. First, he asked for their financial support. Second, he asked the people to open their homes "for the resettlement of these unfortunate and afflicted brethren of ours." Finally, he designated a diocesan
day of prayer to ask for God's help in the Hungarian crisis and for other victims of "religious persecution throughout the world."

As a native of Butte, Bishop Gilmore had substantial support in the city and found homes for twelve young boys. In Butte they were under the care of Rt. Rev. Msgr. D.M. Harrington, director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Helena, and Mr. Jim Flanagan, child welfare worker for the diocese. They were assisted by a native Hungarian, Laszlo Tetmayer, in helping the boys to adjust. The residents of Butte and Helena had been bombarded by a massive media campaign to accept these refugees of communism. The rhetoric of the Cold War used very strong and emphatic words, and fiery images of street fighters defending their liberties and religion spurred people into opening their doors. Protests made by Cardinal Mindszenty portrayed a land where religion was being forcefully stifled. Despite his imprisonment from February 9, 1949 to October 31, 1956, Mindszenty's voice was heard on behalf of Hungarian Catholics. When liberated he once again denounced communism, and eventually had to take refuge in the U.S. Embassy.

Initially Bishop Gilmore did not have many problems in finding host families for the first group of young boys who arrived in Butte. Many articles in the diocesan newspaper, the Register, encouraged Catholic families to open their homes to the young Hungarians:

Their flight against Communism set them up as bulwarks of defense against the Communistic ideology. They, and hundreds of others like them, made the first crack in the Soviets' satellite empire. In gratitude for that, and in Thanksgiving to God for our own freedom, we should give these young heros welcome and sanctuary.
The Register also vividly portrayed these boys as street fighters in the revolt, and explained how "Communism is a fighting word to all of them... there is reason to understand the hatred so vividly express[ed] for the 'Ruskies.'" The paper stated that "Stephen was hanged from his heels for two days, but refused to admit taking part in the rebellion or to give the names of those that did." Later, it went on to say, "Zoltan demonstrated how he ran down a Budapest street to escape machine gunning by a Russian tank crew. He grasped his abdomen and fell to the floor to show how a girlfriend was mowed down by bullets." The following excerpt explains the situation of another young Hungarian: "Bela is an orphan. His father was killed fighting against the Communists during world war II[sic], and soon after the conflict he saw his mother attacked and murdered by Communist troops."

Many illustrations found in the Register following the revolt also portrayed the fierce anti-communist feelings of the times, as well as the influence religion played in the minds of the readers. (See Fig. 3-6)

Another article in the Register, of January 27, 1957, carried the following report:

"Give us back our Church," chanted the Hungarian patriots as, on Oct. 23, they advanced upon Stalin Square in Budapest to topple the huge statue of the Red dictator that stood there. Their chant has echoed since that day throughout the world, shattering Soviet dreams of conquest. The religious implication of the Hungarian uprising was evident from the beginning.

Stories such as these emphasized the religious aspect of the revolt; very little was even mentioned of other factors, and no list of the actual demands of the students was even printed.
Fig. 3 Attacking a Soviet Tank. From the Register, November 11, 1956 p. 3.
Fig. 4 Wasted Postage. From the Register, November 18, 1956, p.3
Fig. 5 Temporary Relief. From the Register, November 25, 1956, p.3
Fig. 6 Breaking Through the Iron Barrier. From the Register, December 23, 1956 p.3
The "fiercely nationalist and devotedly Catholic" boys attended both public and parochial schools in Butte. While the families provided room and board, the boys were encouraged to get part-time jobs. Although many of the families had no major difficulties with their Hungarian boys, some people had more problems with them than they had expected. The majority of the boys did not stay in the area very long. As soon as they had learned English, most returned to the Northeast where the head offices of NCWC helped them to find jobs. Other boys encountered more serious problems. One was forcibly returned to New York because of an incident where he ran over a girl and was found guilty in a $30,000 civil suit, and later shot himself in the arm. Another was sent to the Montana Industrial School in Miles City until he turned 21 because he was declared a delinquent, and later served a prison term in Mississippi for bad check passing. Other boys were looked down upon for staying out too late, being rowdy, or missing mass. While some boys committed admittedly serious offenses, most were acting like normal adolescents experiencing a new kind of freedom far from the supervision of their parents. However, the boys received a lot of criticism from the townspeople, and later it became difficult to find a home for a Hungarian in Butte.

Carroll College in Helena was also active in refugee relief. Two priests, who were themselves refugees from Hungary, greatly influenced Carroll in the Hungarian situation. These priests, Rev. Francis Purker, O. Praem, and Rev. Gerlac Horvath, O. Praem, were vital in the decision to sponsor twenty-six Hungarian students in Helena.
The regular students of Carroll College were quite politically active during the Cold War years, and even placed a jar in the library to collect change for the revolutionaries: "What better way to assist the friends of those who still fight on. What better way to assist the freedom fighters than to assure them that their loved ones will find security in a new world?" A "Big Brother" system was also started to help the Hungarians overcome the initial problems found in a new environment and the language barrier. In March of 1957, twenty-five Hungarian students arrived on the Carroll College campus as participants in an English language program sponsored by the Institute of International Education of New York. Under the direction of Rev. Francis Purker and Rev. Gerlac Horvath, these students studied English grammar, phonetics, and reading. The students ranged in age from eighteen to twenty-four, all had graduated from a Hungarian high school, and most had already attended a Hungarian university.

Under the auspices of NCWC, these students were sent initially to Montana only to learn English, and most continued their studies in the Northeast. Carroll was participating in a nation-wide program to provide an education to approximately 1,300 students. As well as partial funding from each university, aid was granted by World University Service (WUS), the Institute of International Education, and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. The cost of this program after one year was nearly two million dollars.

When the students arrived at the Helena airport, they were greeted by a group of Carroll students trying to sing the Hungarian national anthem. One such Hungarian student, Joseph Kintli, said the first
thing he wanted to do was taste American beer, but had to settle for a milk shake from a local restaurant instead. According to Burke Kintli, his American wife, the Hungarians were a very dynamic and fun group of students who enjoyed life and treasured all things Hungarian. The Hungarians lived together on the fourth floor of St. Charles Hall and soon formed friendships that still exist today. Dr. Charles Canty stated that the Hungarians, while open to American customs, socially stayed in a separate group. Of the original group of twenty-six, four stayed and graduated from Carroll College.

While the students were generally well accepted, some antagonisms developed. The cultural adaption created some conflicts: the Hungarians did not automatically appreciate American food, and some students complained that the Hungarians were washing their feet in the sinks. To this Mr. Kintli good naturedly replied that he felt washing your feet in the sink was no worse than spitting in it! Burke Kintli, as well as Fr. William J. Greytak, stated that some problems existed because the Hungarians quickly got all available jobs. Greytak went on to say that the fact that the Hungarians had saved all their money to buy cars—"the American dream" for many of the refugees—bothered some American students who were struggling to pay their tuition. Neither were the recently liberated Hungarians ready to accept the rules, such as curfew and study hours, of a strict Catholic College. The Hungarians were very bright students, however, and many had been denied admittance to a Hungarian university of their choice because of a communist program that gave most of the available positions to children of the peasants and workers. Once given the opportunity to study subjects they desired, they proved to be very good, highly motivated students who often challenged their American counterparts for the highest grades. The Hungarians may have appeared
boisterous, but Mr. Kintli stated that they were just enjoying their new freedom and experiencing a new culture.

In correspondence Mr. George Krajcsik described the Hungarian government of 1956 as inhuman, and compared the 1956 revolt to the 1979-80 situation in Afghanistan. He was a freshman in engineering at Hungary's Polytechnic University and participated in the October demonstrations. He stated that the Hungarians expected help from the West, especially the United Nations, to hold free elections. He was particularly bitter that even while he was the valedictorian of his high school class, he was only admitted to the university with difficulty and delay because of his so-called "bourgeois" origins. He was part of the third wave, and arrived in Helena on March 1, 1957. He stated that he experienced a feeling of exhilarating freedom and described coming to the United States as a "true rebirth." He further added,

When you are 18 years old, as I was when I arrived at Carroll, you are as adaptable as you'll ever be. I soaked up everything. I joined clubs, became part of all the goings-on. After the first month or so, it seemed as if I had been there all my life.

While he has returned to Hungary over twenty times, he commented that coming to the United States was the best thing that had ever happened to him.

Mr. Joe Kintli originally from near Budapest, came in the same group as Mr. Krajcsik. He also was deprived of studying because of his social class standing, and in 1956 was in the army. Because he had deserted the military and fought in the revolt, he had to leave Hungary or face prison or execution. With the help of a guide he left on December 1, 1956, and spent two and a
half months at Camp Kilmer. He cited economic and political conditions for
the uprising, and believes that in 1956 the Hungarian people were in a sort of
Russian prison. He said that he did not have any problem adjusting to Carroll,
as he had attended a strict parochial school in Budapest. He did not speak any
English when he arrived, and to help learn the language he bought a tape
recorder, had Americans read speeches, and then repeated them.
Consequently, getting an A in speech class was a great accomplishment. He
felt that if he had stayed in Hungary, he most likely would have been killed.
If he had lived, he felt he would have some kind of menial job, perhaps
playing violin or trumpet in a dance band. Today he is married, lives in
Helena, and works as a supervisor for the the Highway Department of
Montana, as well as helping manage a travel agency with his wife.

Mr. Kintli stated that while in Hungary people talked openly of the
Cold War between East and West, as well as the work of Cardinal
 Mindszenty. Nevertheless, Mrs. Kintli stressed that her acquaintance with
Hungarians leads her to believe that the predominant figure in conversations
involving the Cold War would have been Hungary. In her opinion, any
discussions on foreign relations were probably focused on how the
international situation would effect Hungary.

Mr. Kintli spoke in great detail of his arrival in the United States. He
took a boat for West Germany to the U.S. and spent approximately two weeks
at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. Since he wished to continue his studies he was
placed with groups being sent to American universities. He remembers being
interviewed by American immigration officials in Austria and the United
States, perhaps because of his past membership in the Hungarian army. He
was immediately given resident status, a social security number, and the
"green card." He became an American citizen, when eligible, in 1962.
Through the NCWC, many Hungarian refugees arrived in Montana. Catholics led by Bishop Gilmore opened their homes in Butte to the young boys, and Carroll College became one of the nation's few English language training centers for Hungarian refugee students. While most of the refugees have left Montana, numerous ties to the state still remain.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1 Register (Helena), January-February 1957.


3 Ibid., February 1957.

4 Ibid.

5 Prospector, (Carroll College, Helena) 29 November, 1956, p. 4.

6 Register, 10 March, 1957, p. 1.

7 Prospector, 18 April, p. 2.

8 Bursten, 178.

9 Ibid.

10 Joseph Kintli, correspondence with author, October 1987, Helena, Montana.


12 Joseph and Burke Kintli, interview by author, 6 November 1987, Helena, Montana.

14 William J. Greytak, interview by author, 19 October 1987, Helena, Montana.

15 For example, Mr. Kintli made Chinese noodles nightly in a local restaurant.

16 George Krajcsik, correspondence with author, October 1987.

17 Kintli, correspondence with author, October 1987.

18 Kintli, interview by author, 18 February, 1988, Helena, Montana.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The over 32,000 Hungarians who gained admittance to the United States as a result of the revolt of 1956 are only a part of the larger story of American immigration history. Of course, ever since the French revolution America has been seen as a haven for political refugees from abroad. The influx of political refugees has increased since the 1940's, primarily due to the Cold War. Indeed, the refugees from Hungary are not the only to come to the United States for this reason, as seen in the large arrival of Cubans, Vietnamese, and Haitians in recent years. Despite all their difficulties, the Hungarian immigrants and other refugees of the Cold War era, by bringing the customs and traditions of their homeland, have added to America's mixed cultural heritage.

The Hungarian refugees also had a lasting influence on American refugee politics during the Cold War era. President Eisenhower established the policy of using parolee status to bring specific political refugees to America, thereby tying together the foreign policy issues of national security and immigration. The procedure was later used by President Kennedy to bring Cuban refugees to America in the early 1960's. (Incidently, Cuban refugees also attended Carroll College.) Eisenhower believed that the admittance of refugees from a country behind the Iron Curtain would be a hard blow to communism, while at the same time providing a boost to his
own public image in the United States. Ultimately, when it has been advantageous for an administration to admit refugees, this special status has proven a means to override existing immigration quotas.

The sudden arrival of a group of young Hungarian people during the Cold War certainly had a long-term effect on Montana. These Hungarians were living representatives of the Cold War struggle between East and West occurring in the 1950's. Moreover, these refugees often found jobs in Montana and made the state their new home, becoming a part of many local communities. For the Carroll College campus, a lasting effect may be harder to define. For the student of 1956, a more heightened knowledge of international politics would certainly be plausible. The activities taking place at Carroll provided the students with the opportunity to have an active role in the placement of Cold War refugees. Despite the fact that while on campus the Hungarians stayed in a close group, their presence could not have been ignored by the students or the faculty. Mr. Krajcsik still has close ties with people in Montana, and Mr. Kintli and his family continue to live in Helena.

The Catholic church in Montana remained responsible for the young Hungarian boys in Butte until they reached legal age. While ties were eventually broken over time between the offices of Catholic Social Services and the Hungarian boys, the young refugees, as well as the Carroll students, are still remembered by many people in the church community. These young boys, and other Hungarian refugees who would come to Montana either temporarily or permanently, would help to remind the residents of this state that the Cold War was not confined to distant lands.
## APPENDIX

### TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES BY CONTINENT

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Northern or Western Europe</th>
<th>Eastern and Central Europe</th>
<th>Southern Europe</th>
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<td>19.1</td>
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<td>21.7</td>
<td>44.5</td>
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