A Swoon of Misery and Rage: The CIA's Actions in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution

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> *We knew little of what was happening in Budapest or of the encircling movements of Soviet troops, and we had no composite picture of the status of the Revolution in the period between its first victory and its suppression by the Russians.*
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> -Central Intelligence Agency, Clandestine Services History[1]

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was a critical event during the Cold War. Hungary, a relatively small nation in Central Europe, did something unheard of at that point in the Cold War and revolted against their Soviet-controlled government. The revolution caught the world off-guard, beginning with small protests and demonstrations and quickly escalating to armed conflict between the people of Hungary and Soviet forces. The Soviet Union quickly moved to take action against the revolution while forces within the Hungarian government attempted to control and guide the revolution to some peaceful resolution. The West was surprised as well and unable to capitalize on the opportunity to free a nation from Soviet control, in no small part due to their wholly inadequate intelligence about the situation on the ground.

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[1] Central Intelligence Agency, *The Hungarian Revolution and Planning for the Future, 23 October – 4 November 1956, Volume I of II*, January, 1958, 106. http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB206/CSH_Hungarian_Revolution_Vol1.pdf.

The Central Intelligence Agency was tasked with gathering and analyzing intelligence and thus should have known about and been ready to respond to the 1956 revolution. However, in nations such as Hungary, the Agency was woefully understaffed and unprepared. Leaders like the Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles misjudged the nature of the revolution and the wishes of the Hungarian people, and the absence of solid operations within Hungary made clandestine actions impossible. One of the few ways that the CIA was able to offer assistance was through Radio Free Europe, though this did little but offer false hope to the revolutionaries. The CIA had little recourse but to watch as the Soviet Union ended the revolution and re-established its authority in Hungary.

The 1956 revolution was an attempt to wrest control of the Hungarian government away from the Soviets. The Hungarians were not necessarily seeking a complete rejection of socialism but rather the removal of the Russian influence provided by the Soviet Union.[2] The revolution itself began as student demonstrations against Soviet rule. MEFESZ – *Magyar Egyetemisták és Főiskolai Egyesületek Szövetsége*, the Association of Hungarian University Students, was created outside the realm of the Hungarian Workers' Party (*Magyar Dolgozók Pártja*), a first in communist Hungary.[3] This coincided with growing discontent with the government and with living conditions within Hungary, which were reaching all-time lows.[4] MEFESZ issued a list of demands to the Soviet Union called the Sixteen Points, which included Soviet

[2] Charles Gati, *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt* (Stanford, CA: Standford University Press, 2006), 3.
[3] Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer, eds., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents* (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 13.
[4] Békés, Byrne, and Rainer, eds., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution*, 12.

withdrawal, new elections within the HWP, the installation of Imre Nagy, new labor regulations, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press.[5] The Revolution quickly turned violent, and for a time it appeared that Hungary would free itself from Soviet control.

Nagy, a former prime minister of Hungary who had been expelled from the Communist Party, was named prime minister again on October 23. While in office he made reforms designed to satisfy the protesters and to move Hungary away from total Soviet rule. Historian Charles Gati states:

> He concluded, at long last, that a popular uprising rather than a counterrevolution was taking place. He was ready to make common cause with the workers, students, and soldiers who sought independence from the Soviet Union, a coalition government rooted in political pluralism, and a socialist economic order.[6]

Nagy became the leader for the revolutionaries in this sense. He took on their position of a Hungary free from the Soviet Union, with multi-party participation, while retaining socialism in the economy. The Soviet Union for its part was willing to remove itself from Hungary. A declaration by the Soviet Union from October 30 states that "the Soviet Government is prepared to enter into the appropriate negotiations...on the question of the presence of Soviet troops on the territory of Hungary."[7] Things appeared to be working in Hungary's favor – the

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[5] "The 'Sixteen Points' Prepared by Hungarian Students, October 22-23, 1956," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 188-189.
[6] Gati, *Failed Illusions,* 173.
[7] "Declaration by the Government of the USSR," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 302.

government was undergoing reform under the leadership of Nagy and it appeared that the Soviet Union was preparing to leave Hungary.

This situation would not last, though, as the Soviet Union brutally ended the Revolution beginning November 4th of that same year.[8] Nikita Khrushchev decided on October 31, the day after declaring the removal of Soviet troops, that the Soviet Union "should not withdraw our troops from Hungary and Budapest. We should take the initiative in restoring order in Hungary. If we depart from Hungary, it will give a great boost to the Americans, English, and French…We would then be exposing the weakness of our positions...We have no other choice."[9] Khrushchev felt that Hungary needed to keep Hungary as a Soviet satellite for fear of the West seeing the USSR as weak. The Soviet Army would be put to use in crushing the revolution in Hungary. Nagy appealed indirectly to the West for help on November 4, broadcasting a message that "the Soviet troops launched an attack against our capital city with the obvious attention of overthrowing the lawful, democratic, Hungarian government…I inform the people of the country and world public opinion of this."[10] He pleaded on behalf of democracy in its fight against the Soviet regime trying to reclaim its authority. The help that Nagy sought never came, and the Soviets reasserted control in Hungary that would endure until 1989. Hungary was a Cold War battleground, a country fighting against Soviet authoritarianism and seeking to democratize.

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[8] Gati, *Failed Illusions*, 14-17.
[9] "CPSU CC Presidium Meeting Oct 31," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 307.
[10] "Imre Nagy Radio Broadcast," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 383.

The United States had committed itself to opposing communism, especially Soviet communism, throughout the world. This commitment was first espoused in George Kennan's policy of containment. Kennan at the time was an American diplomat in the Soviet Union and had a better grasp on the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and also the reasoning behind the Soviet Union's actions.[11] His policy advocated for "the United States entering with reasonable confidence upon a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interest of a peaceful and stable world."[12] The containment that Kennan promoted took shape in the Truman Doctrine. In the doctrine, President Truman stated that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures...we must assist free peoples to work out their own destines in their own way."[13] These two important statements of policy placed the United States in a position to help every country attempting to resist the Soviet Union. Other documents and polices of the United States further connect the principles of the policy of containment and the Truman Doctrine specifically to Soviet satellites such as Hungary.

In addition to the policies already accepted by the U.S. government, the latest policy on how to manage the Soviet satellites detailed in NSC (National Security Council) 5608/1 implied heavily that use of covert action, as opposed to direct military action, would be a

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[11] Paul S. Boyer, *Promises to Keep: The United States Since World War II* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 46.
[12] George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," in *The United States Since 1945*, eds. Robert P.Ingalls and David K. Johnson (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 20.
[13] "Truman Doctrine," in *The United States Since 1945*, eds. Robert P. Ingalls and David K. Johnson (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 22.

favorable tool in fighting the Soviets. The report states that the United States should employ "appropriate means short of military force to oppose, and to contribute to the eventual elimination of, Soviet domination over the satellites," but also to carry on with "propaganda and special operations by official and unofficial means."[14] In these sections the National Security Council prevents the United States from engaging in armed conflict with the Soviet Union, while allowing subversive means of warfare to continue. A supplement to NSC 5608/1 further outlines United States policy in regards to Eastern Europe:

> 1. In general, however, do not discourage...spontaneous manifestations of discontent and opposition to the Communist regime...when their net results will exert pressures for release from Soviet domination. ...
>
> 2. [B]e prepared on a case-by-case basis generally, covertly, and under appropriate policy guidance to assist nationalists in any form where conducive to independence from Soviet domination and where U.S. and free world cohesion would not be jeopardize thereby.[15]

Thus the policy was to provide assistance through covert means to people seeking freedom from Soviet rule. Under this policy the United States, through the CIA, should have provided aid to Hungary in fighting the Soviets. Radio Free Europe allowed the Agency an opportunity to communicate with and assist revolutionaries without needing to supply troops or weapons.

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[14] "NSC 5608/1," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 155.
[15] "NSC 5608/1," *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution*, 156.

The main avenue of CIA intervention in Hungary was through Radio Free Europe. The CIA was responsible for much of RFE's funding – $16 million of $21 million in 1956.[16] RFE, in addition to its anti-communist radio broadcasts, also undertook Operation Focus, delivering anti-communist propaganda through air balloon drops.[17] In their radio broadcasts, RFE encouraged the Hungarian revolutionaries to continue fighting, and implied that help was coming. In one broadcast from October 28, 1956, RFE related a story of how 500 Serbian partisans had resisted Nazi Germany in 1943. The Serbs had deceived the Germans into thinking they had a larger force, and ultimately the Serbs escaped while inflicting substantial losses on the Germans. Of greater importance is the weaponry that RFE described the Serbs as possessing: "automatic weapons, mine throwers, a few 75 millimeter guns, bazookas and different explosives which were all thrown by English-American planes."[18] While this does not say directly that America would be supporting Hungarians with weapons, by drawing parallels between the Serbs in 1943 and Hungarians in 1956, the implications were difficult to ignore.

A later RFE broadcast from the beginning of the Soviet counter-attack on November 4, 1956, goes even further with its suggestions, detailing opinions from media outlets about the Soviets' handling of the revolution. According to the editors of *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, "throughout the revolution the producers at RFE failed to make listeners aware of the difference between an opinion

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[16] Johanna C. Granville, *The First Domino: International Decision Making During the Hungarian Crisis of 1956* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M UP, 2004), 165.
[17] Gati, *Failed Illusions*, 6.
[18] "RFE Transcripts," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 287.

published in the press and the official U.S. government position."[19] This failure became worse when compounded with what opinions they were broadcasting. In the case of the November 4 broadcast, they discussed the British newspaper *Observer*, whose Washington D.C. correspondent had reported that if "the Hungarians will hold out for 3 or 4 days, then the pressure upon the government of the U.S. to send military help to the freedom fighters, will become irresistible."[20] These types of broadcasts encouraged the Hungarians to continue fighting and to hold out until the United States could come to their aid. A letter to the editor of the *New York Times* from one of the Hungarian revolutionaries supports this claim. Bela Liptak wrote "I can confirm the accuracy of your Sept. 28 report that Radio Free Europe gave false hope to the Hungarian freedom fighters in 1956. What we understood R.F.E. to say was that we needed to hold out for only a couple of days, while the West mobilized."[21] With RFE supporting the continued fighting, and the revolutionaries believing that the West would be providing help, it became imperative for the CIA to intervene beyond RFE, a very difficult task for the Agency.

The CIA's main actions within in Hungary came through RFE despite covert chief Frank Wisner's desire to send in forces.[22] Some agents saw the Revolution in Hungary as a golden opportunity for the CIA: the ability to assist in a legitimate revolt against the communist regime. In reality, despite the eagerness on the part of Wisner, the CIA was completely unprepared to carry out a coup or even provide military

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[19] Békés, Byrne, and Rainer, eds., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution,* 389.
[20] "RFE Press Review," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 389.
[21] Eva M. Thury, "U.S. Misled Hungarians in 1956 Revolt," *New York Times*, Oct. 3, 1996.
[22] Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008), 148.

support for Hungarians. Hungary was not viewed as important by policy-makers, and the CIA was tremendously outmanned within Hungary.[23] According to CIA historian Tim Weiner, "Wisner had one man in Budapest when the uprising began: Geza Katona…who spent 95 percent of his time doing his official work as a low-level State Department clerk…he was the only reliable set of eyes and ears the CIA had in Budapest."[24] The CIA could not afford to engage in any sort of covert operations in Hungary. Their inability to gather accurate intelligence was the primary way in which the Agency failed in their response to the revolution. The CIA never had a true grasp of the situation, a scenario compounded by having only one agent within the country.

In the months leading up to October 1956, the CIA regularly reported that the possibility of revolution in Hungary was minimal at best. In National Intelligence Estimate 10-55 from April 12 1955 regarding the feasibility of an uprising in Hungary, the CIA stated:

> Effective internal security control and lack of know-how will continue to limit the development of organized resistance, active or passive. Cold war activities, at best, will probably remain restricted to information collection, clandestine antiregime propaganda, isolated acts of sabotage, and unorganized passive resistance. Poor terrain impedes the formation of nuclei for future guerrilla operations; the development of contacts for escape and evasion would be difficult, even on a local level. Further factors militating against an active resistance build-up are: the vigilance of the police, the presence of Soviet troops, lack of experienced resistance leaders, lack of contact with Western agencies that could guide and help them, and the absence of a well

[23] Gati, *Failed Illusions*, 72.
[24] Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 149.

> developed security consciousness. However, Hungarian capabilities for unorganized passive resistance, especially in industry and agriculture, will remain substantial.[25]

Here the CIA estimates that the population of Hungary does not know how to form a resistance group effectively. The Agency was convinced that minor, individual actions would be the extent of Hungarian opposition to the Soviets because there were too many conditions that would prevent a resistance movement from starting. The revolution that took place would prove these assessments wrong. The CIA did get one thing right in this report when they note that Hungarian resistance would not be able to be assisted by the West.

Other reports from Hungary further reveal the CIA's lack of a complete picture of Hungarian resistance and the strength of the Soviet Union's control over Hungary. In National Intelligence Estimate, 12.5-55, the Agency reported that among the Soviet-controlled nations, "Hungary has in recent years shown the most consistent symptoms of political disharmony, economic dislocation, and popular unrest…We do not believe that the regime is, in fact, seriously threatened."[26] Once again, the 1956 revolution would prove this assertion wrong – the Soviet regime would be seriously threatened, not by passive resistance, but by active resistance. The estimate goes on further to say that "there is little likelihood that Communist control over Hungary will be jeopardized during the period of this estimate, but the difficulties confronting the

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[25] Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 10-55: Anti-Communist Resistance Potential in the Sino-Soviet Bloc*, April 12, 1955, 19. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0001166754/DOC_0001166754.pdf.

[26] Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 12.5-55: Current Situation and Probable Developments in Hungary*, March 29, 1955, 2. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000269431/DOC_0000269431.pdf.

regime will continue to be accentuated by the hostility of the people."[27] This claim is basically correct, as the estimate only covered the time period up to the summer of 1956, while the revolution would happen several months later.[28] However, other estimates by the CIA show that their assessment of Hungary changed little when the time period extended beyond 1956.

In National Intelligence Estimate number 11-3-55, titled *Soviet Capabilities and Probable Soviet Courses of Action Through 1960* from May 17, 1955, the CIA came to the conclusion that "popular resistance of an organized and active kind is unlikely to appear in any of the Satellites during the period of this estimate. Disaffection showing itself in noncooperation in economic fields and even passive resistance might increase."[29] The CIA again asserts that the satellites will not participate in active resistance against the Soviet Union, and they cling to the idea of passive resistance being a probable course of action, and again, they were wrong. A later Estimate of 11-4-56 dated August 2, 1956 again places little stock in the possibility of a national uprising: "Dissatisfaction among the Satellite populations will continue and, in the short run, may even increase and dramatize itself in sporadic protest movements."[30] This begins to hint at an uprising, but "sporadic protest movements" are very different from a full-scale revolution. The CIA fell short in their predictions regarding a possible revolution among the

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[27] Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 12.5-55*, 6.
[28] Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 12.5-55*, 1.
[29] Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 11-3-55: Soviet Capabilities and Probable Soviet Courses of Action Through 1960*, May 17, 1955, 10. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000269425/DOC_0000269425.pdf.
[30] Central Intelligence Agency, *National Intelligence Estimate Number 11-4-56: Soviet Capabilities and Probable Courses of Action Through 1961*, August 2, 1956, 12. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000267690/DOC_0000267690.pdf.

Soviet satellites. This failure would continue as the revolution was taking place.

On October 24, 1956, the CIA viewed Imre Nagy as "the most powerful man in Hungary" and stated that Nagy "has long argued for Hungarian independence and a cutback in draining Hungarian commitments to the USSR."[31] This should have made the CIA's position on Nagy clear; if he was an advocate for independence and a strong national figure, then he should have received the support of the CIA during the revolution. Two days later, a memo to the Deputy Director of Intelligence asserted that "The government of Premier Imre Nagy at this point apparently does not exercise real authority. There may be, therefore, no effective central control of the Hungarian forces combatting the rebellion."[32] In two days time, Nagy had somehow gone from the most powerful man in Hungary to having no authority in the country. A Current Intelligence Bulletin from October 28, 1956 stated that "The Nagy regime has also assured the insurgents that it is already negotiating with the USSR for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from the country. By so doing, Nagy has, in effect, shifted the basis for whatever authority he now possesses from reliance on Soviet support to hoped-for insurgent support."[33] Within four days, Nagy now had gone from a supporter of Hungarian independence to relying on the USSR to hoping for the support of the revolutionaries.

The CIA suddenly expressed great fear of Nagy. Another memo to the Deputy Director from October 30, 1956 claimed to have "Reports

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[31] Central Intelligence Agency, *Current Intelligence Digest*, October 24, 1956, 4. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000119732/DOC_0000119732.pdf.
[32] Central Intelligence Agency, *The Present Political Situation in Hungary*, October 26, 1956, 1. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000119735/DOC_0000119735.pdf.
[33] Central Intelligence Agency, *Current Intelligence Bulletin*, October 28, 1956, 3. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000119740/DOC_0000119740.pdf.

from reliable eyewitnesses in Budapest," which, given the aforementioned existence of only one man in Hungary at the time of the revolution, is not a convincing statement.[34] The memo goes on to state:

> In an attempt to gain full support throughout the country, the Nagy regime is currently engaged in an all-out campaign to convince the insurgent forces that their "national revolution" has triumphed. Some observers view this tactic as a ruse designed by Nagy or by the Soviet Union to lure the rebels into at least de facto surrender...The new "inner cabinet" seems to be a further effort by the regime to give the appearance of surrendering to rebel demands without actually giving up control or committing itself to meeting the basic demand of all revolutionaries, Soviet troop withdrawal from Hungary.[35]

The CIA had committed itself to the idea that Nagy was a loyal Communist leader when in fact he was not. This memo reveals the doubt within the CIA towards Nagy's commitment to Hungarian independence. Every action he took was a possible Soviet plot. This failure was not limited to just the intelligence analysts within the CIA. CIA leaders also failed in understanding both the situation in Hungary and the attitudes of the revolutionaries.

Allen Dulles, then the Director of Central Intelligence, made several critical errors in judgment in the important period of time between the initial uprising and the Soviet attack. During a meeting of the National Security Council on November 1, 1956, Dulles stated that

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[34] Central Intelligence Agency, *Situation in Hungary, as of 1600 Washington Time, 30 October 1956*, October 30, 1956, 1. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000119743/DOC_0000119743.pdf.
[35] Central Intelligence Agency, *Situation in Hungary*, 1-2.

the Soviets could not utilize their military to retake Hungary.[36] The events of November 4, just three days later, would prove him wrong on this account. In the same meeting he also asserted that Nagy had little support and was unable to lead the people in their revolution and that the best person for that task was Cardinal Mindszenty.[37] On October 26, 1956 in a NSC dictation by Dulles, he stated that "in the Hungarian revolt the rebels were clearly both anti-Communist and anti-Russian and were unwilling to settle for a Gomulka type government represented by Prime Minister Nagy."[38] As noted earlier, though, the revolutionaries did support Nagy, and the revolution was primarily aimed at removing Soviet influence from Hungary. It was only anti-Communist insomuch as the people wanted free elections. Dulles was unable to see any of this.

Weiner writes that even "as Nagy took power and sought to dismantle Soviet control over Hungary, Allen Dulles deemed him a failure...The CIA's radios falsely accused Nagy of inviting Soviet troops into Budapest. They attacked him as a traitor, a liar, a murderer. He once had been a communist and so he was forever damned."[39] Dulles was wrong in his assessment, though; Mindszenty had no hope of leading the people while Nagy was supported by them. Even Wisner, though he had limited access in Hungary, knew this fact but was unable to persuade anyone of its validity.[40] The CIA's leadership failed to assess the

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[36] "302nd NSC Meeting Memorandum of Discussion," in *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, eds. Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer (New York: C.E.U. Press, 2002), 324.
[37] "302nd NSC Meeting Memorandum of Discussion," *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution*, 324.
[38] Allen Dulles, *NSC of 26 Oct – DCI's Dictation*, October 26, 1956, 1. http://www.foia.cia.gov/docs/DOC_0000119717/DOC_0000119717.pdf.
[39] Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 150-151.
[40] Békés, Byrne, and Rainer, eds., *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution*, 216.

situation in Hungary properly, and as a result the Soviets had little trouble ending the rebellion.

Between 2,500 and 3,000 Hungarians were killed in the Soviet intervention, which lasted until November 10.[41]Following the end of the Revolution, the Soviets placed János Kádár, a member of Nagy's cabinet, in power while Nagy was executed in 1958 on orders from Kádár's government.[42] Soviet officials entered Hungary to help the new government restore order after the Revolution. Over 10,000 Hungarians were arrested and sent to various prisons.[43] While it seemed that the government of Hungary would be transformed into a more oppressive one now that the Revolution had ended, Kádár did create a more liberal form of Soviet communism in Hungary. The reason for this may be more practical than ideological. Historian Johanna C. Granville claims that "Kádár had to make a virtue out of a necessity: to make minimal demands on the people and to separate politics from ideology as much as possible in order to stay in power and prevent another revolution."[44] In this respect, Kádár did manage to keep power and order in Hungary for the next thirty-three years.

For Wisner, the failure to assist the Hungarians contributed greatly to his future breakdown. He had earnestly and whole-heartedly wanted to work covertly in Hungary, and the inaction ate away at him. According to Weiner, Wisner "soothed his nerves with cigarettes and alcohol. He drank whisky by the bottle, in a swoon of misery and rage."[45]

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[41] United Nations, *Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary: General Assembly Official Records: Eleventh Session Supplement No. 18 (A/3592)*, New York, 1957, 68.
[42] Granville, *The First Domino*, 126, 143.
[43] Granville, *The First Domino*, 149.
[44] Granville, *The First Domino*, 157.
[45] Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 153.

Wisner was distraught as Hungary remained under Soviet control and an opportunity to fight Communism slipped through his fingers. Instead, the people of Eastern Europe would live under Soviet rule for another three decades.

The CIA was not prepared to handle the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, despite the desire of leaders like Wisner's to help. Hungary was not viewed as strategically important, and the Agency had only one operative within the nation, which prevented a true understanding of the situation. The revolution was misjudged, its goals misunderstood, and its outcome tragic for the revolutionaries who hoped to remove Hungary from the Soviet Union's gasp.

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