

Columbia University  
in the City of New York

NEW YORK 27, N. Y.

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
429 WEST 117TH STREET

February 8, 1957

Mr. John Howard  
International Training & Research Division  
The Ford Foundation  
477 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, NEW YORK

Dear John:

The purpose of this letter is to request the Ford Foundation to make a grant of \$211,250 to Columbia University to enable the School of International Affairs to undertake an Interview and Analysis of a selected sample of the refugees who have recently fled across the Hungarian border. Such a study, it is estimated, would take a period of two years. The purposes, operation, and organization of the study are described below:

I. PURPOSES

The recent and continuing flight abroad of over 150,000 Hungarians provides a potential source of information about Hungary, the Soviet orbit, and the international Communist movement equalling and perhaps exceeding in importance the other major sources which have been available to Western scholars in the last twelve years: the captured German documents and the testimony of East European expellees and Soviet

refugees. These latter have already proved to be of enormous value to students of Eastern Europe, the Soviet system and Communism.

Because of the Iron Curtain and the severe limitations imposed on travel and communication in the Soviet orbit, Western scholarship has been obliged to devise a variety of indirect research methods -- some of them quite elaborate and costly -- to gain information which, in a free society, would be of the most obvious and normal sort. If reporters and scholars were able, now and in the future, to travel and study freely in Hungary and the Soviet orbit, the need for a project such as the one here proposed would be greatly reduced. For a time it appeared that such freedom might develop. The recent expulsion of journalists from Hungary, however, and the general indications of a renewed tightening of Soviet controls make this prospect quite uncertain.

At present, therefore, our judgment is that the information which may be gained from the Hungarian refugees is of such importance that we should not take the chance of failing to exploit it. If there is an element of risk in embarking upon a major undertaking like this, it is a risk we could seriously regret not having taken if the area were to remain sealed off from Western scholarship and if the recollections of the Hungarian refugees were permitted to fade and be dissipated without being collected, analyzed, and made available

to those interested in Eastern Europe, and the operation of a totalitarian system.

In the main the information gained will be from individuals who left Hungary hurriedly, who must rely upon their memory, and who are not in possession of documentary materials. The project should therefore confine itself largely to subjects in the reasonably fresh memory of the respondents and should not waste time or energy on questions (such as national income) that require the services of a statistical bureau or governmental agency for a satisfactory answer.

The question of most obvious interest and the one which should provide the central theme of the project concerns the vicissitudes of Hungarian society and its individual members under the impact of sovietization and of the recent violent convulsion against it. This general topic is susceptible of elaboration in many directions: the methods and techniques of Communization and reactions to it; the organization and operation of the Communist Party; the channels of communication and authority from Moscow; areas of social tension and of quiescence; the background, circumstances, and motives for the revolt. The project would, then, provide the opportunity for a full examination and reappraisal of the phenomenon of Communization — its strengths and weaknesses — surely, one of the most vital objects of our concern today. Moreover, to judge from the general failure of Western specialists to

anticipate the recent upheavals in Eastern Europe, there is good reason to believe that such an inquiry might be most useful in checking and reconsidering earlier, and very possibly erroneous preconceptions regarding the Soviet orbit and the nature of Soviet and totalitarian controls.

But while such a broad theme would define the area of primary interest, it would, in our opinion, be a mistake to try to spell out our subject too closely at this stage of the undertaking. There is a danger that an excessive preoccupation with certain specific topics might lead us to neglect other, and significant, types of information. Above all, this project is conceived of as a very broad effort of information-gathering, the findings of which should be of value to students and scholars of many disciplines and interests. (For example, information on the current state of Hungarian-Rumanian relations in the border regions should be sought out, even though it may be only indirectly related to the Communist question.)

Each person interviewed is of value in two rather different respects: first, as a reporter or conveyor of information about his country, about events he has witnessed, and about impressions he has received; and second, as an object of inquiry himself: his age, social and economic status, motivations, attitudes and values. Both types of information are important, and both should be sought, though by different techniques. In the first instance we are seeking factual data

that would go to create a larger body of objective information for subsequent interpretation. In the second instance the respondent himself must be compared with others so as to create, through appropriate sampling and statistical methods, a composite picture of patterns and variations in attitude and behavior. The project plans to employ both the individual and the quantitative approaches.

We should say that we approached this project with some hesitation. Indeed our primary interest was to discover whether some other agency was doing the job and whether, when the work was completed, the findings would be available to scholarly institutions. After some inquiry and discussion, we have found that, while some interviewing is being done, no agency plans to do it on the scale or with the breadth of interest which seem called for. There is therefore a danger of the opportunity going by default.

It goes without saying that a project of this nature, which involves many human encounters and is concerned with difficult and controversial topics, must be handled with fast, thorough knowledge of the issues, and in fullest feasible cooperation with other interested groups and agencies.

With respect to other agencies which are interviewing Hungarian refugees, the obvious objective is to work together as closely as possible, both to reduce unnecessary duplication of effort and to avoid friction. Where it seems mutually advantageous, we should certainly be prepared to work on an

appropriate division of labor - though the forms of this would have to wait upon closer acquaintance with the methods and aims of these agencies.

With respect to the United States Government we have made inquiries through the Department of State and have received oral assurances (we are awaiting a written statement which was assured us) that such a project as the one here proposed by us does not conflict with United States policy and would indeed be of interest to the Department. Doubtless further arrangement on a number of matters of procedure would have to be worked out with appropriate agencies of the Government as the project gets under way.

It is contemplated, for reasons given below, to carry on a good deal of interviewing in several European countries. Of these Austria is, as the chief immediate refuge of the Hungarians, the most important. It is imperative, of course, that the interviewing should in no way embarrass or imperil Austria's neutral status. Any activity in Austria, or in other countries, would first have to be approved by the United States Government and the country concerned. There is no intention on our part of carrying on any covert activities whatsoever.

With regard to the various Hungarian groups in exile, we must be prepared to face a number of delicate and troublesome issues - they are inherent in a project of this nature. We can only hope to keep these issues to a minimum by the very careful selection of the personnel on the project, by the fullest possible comprehension of the intricate political

questions involved, and by the sobriety and responsibility of our aims and activities.

## II. OPERATION

(a) Phasing. It is contemplated to conduct the project in three, somewhat overlapping, phases, which can be summarized as organization and training, interviewing, and analysis.

The following time-table is suggested as a guide to planning:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| (1) Planning, organization, pre-testing of interview schedules, and training of U. S. staff and interviewers | Feb. 15- March 14, 1957       |
| (2) Interviewing in U.S. and preparatory work in Europe  | March 15 - May 15, 1957       |
| (3) Mass interviewing in U.S. and Europe   | May 15 - Sept. 15, 1957       |
| (4) Preliminary analysis   | July 1 - Sept. 15, 1957       |
| (5) Further analysis and write-ups; additional interviews if required; conferences and publications          | Sept. 15, 1957- Jan. 31, 1959 |

After an intensive organizational effort in the early months, the bulk of interviewing is expected to be carried out during the summer of 1957. Thereafter, except for technical analysts, work would be carried on largely on a part-time basis.

(b) Interviewing. Interviews are to be conducted both in the United States and in Europe. Despite the substantial number of Hungarian refugees now in the United States, it seems essential to extend the operation to Europe for two major reasons: (1) to interview specific, knowledgeable individuals not here

available; and (2) to avoid the elements of selectivity and bias, operative in the sample admitted to the United States or, for that matter, to any other single country.

It is expected that the Project Office will be established on the Columbia University campus. In addition, a central Field Office will be maintained somewhere in Europe where a basic contingent of interviewers would be available, and scheduling and record-processing would be supervised. From there interviewing teams could be dispatched to other centers of refugee concentration, primarily in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and, if it should be possible, Yugoslavia. (No single country involved is essential for the fulfillment of the task, but some variety of locales from which respondents are drawn is desirable.)

The interviews and analysis are to be conducted in a serious, scholarly spirit. The project will avoid intelligence data and of course operate entirely as an unclassified project, though it will seek the cooperation of government officials and gladly share its information with them.

It will engage in no covert activities whatsoever. It will strive to avoid all sensationalism and journalistic exploitation of its materials or publicity. It will take due account of budgetary and time limitations so as to concentrate, within the limits set by academic standards, on the speedy and substantial acquisition of significant data, attitudes, and opinions, relating to political, ideological, social and economic problems.



A summary of the present state of planning with regard to interviews is given in the attached Appendix B.

For all types of interview, basic vital statistics will be secured. The respondents' names, however, will not be requested; instead, each respondent will be assigned a code-number. Interview notes will customarily be taken in long-hand during the interview and transcribed by dictaphone dictation in English the same day, including interviewer's estimate of reliability and veracity. Occasional verbatim recording of an interview will be made. A special effort will be made to secure interviewers combining linguistic with area competence. It is anticipated that some interviewers and/or interpreters will be hired in Europe; a knowledge of English on their part will be highly desirable, but some interview recording in German will be permissible. It is contemplated to ditto complete interview protocols, as recorded. For each interview, a subject index in the form of a punch card will be produced.

Interviews will take place in a relatively small number of centers, to which respondents will be brought at the project's expense. Respondents will be paid a modest flat-rate fee for the time and effort expended in the interview. Interviews will be held in separate closed rooms in a relatively informal atmosphere. A scheduling officer will control the assignment of individual respondents to the interviewers and follow the processing of interview reports and transcripts. A procurement coordinator will be responsible for the supply of refugees according to sample categories required.

At a full schedule, an interviewer will conduct five hours of interviewing a day, plus recording and proof-reading of interview protocols.

It is understood that, should it be possible to locate them, Soviet defectors from Hungary are also to be interviewed.

(c) Products. The project will aim to produce (a) at an early date, a book-length non-technical summary of the findings with an interpretation of their significance and implications; (b) a somewhat "digested" accumulation of the project's materials and technical analyses of its quantitative aspects, to be made available to interested scholars, universities, and agencies; and (c) a series of monographs on various topics, based at least in part on project materials, and to result in articles, scholarly papers, and dissertations.

### III. ORGANIZATION

The Hungarian Interview Project of Columbia University will operate under the aegis of, and responsible to, the Director of the School of International Affairs, for a period of twenty-four months.

The Project will be authorized to plan and execute the interview program, analysis and write-up as described in the present statement, and to engage in such subsidiary activities as are necessary for the fulfillment of its tasks.

The Director of the School of International Affairs will appoint an Executive Committee, to include at least five members. The Executive Committee will be responsible for the direct supervision of the Project's activities, including the advance planning, scheduling, determination of interview design and scope, and personnel, as well as the subsequent analysis.

The Director of the School of International Affairs will also appoint a Board of Advisers, who will be called upon singly or jointly, to consult on and review the work of the Project.

He will also appoint an Editorial Committee, which with the consent of the Executive Committee, will have initial responsibility for organizing and drafting the findings.

He will designate a Project Director, who, under the supervision of and subject to the guidance of the Executive Committee, will be responsible for the immediate direction of the Project and the implementation of its directives. The Project Director will recruit and supervise a staff as suggested by the enclosed chart.

Both in the planning of interview design and methodology, and in the subsequent analysis, the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University has agreed to assist the Project and, if desirable, to execute such parts of the analysis as may be mutually agreed upon.

The Project will feel free to secure the assistance, as consultants, of other specialists in the field as the need arises.

Given the presence on the Columbia campus of specialized institutes and research centers -- including the Bureau of Applied Social Research, the Program on East Central Europe, the Russian Institute, the School of International Affairs, the Department of Uralic and Altaic Languages, and the Program on the History of the CPSU -- availability of competent personnel and advice is assured. Likewise, previous projects carried out there supply a measure of experience in refugee interviewing and data analysis.

For some of the personnel involved, see Appendix A.

#### IV. BUDGET AND SCOPE OF OPERATION

The prospective project could vary substantially in scope and cost. After some considerations of alternatives, we are inclined toward the most economical plan, which is large enough to meet academic standards and to assemble a sufficient amount of information, yet small enough to permit reasonably speedy and unobtrusive operation and easier analysis of the assembled data.

It is the opinion of those consulted in the design of the operation that a stratified sample of 450 informants is large enough for the purposes of this project. At present

it is planned to conduct interviews on a one-day (five-hour) basis, supplemented (if needed) by a larger quota of written questionnaires. However, if after pre-testing or an early run in the field it should become apparent that a different procedure or schedule of interviews is preferable, we should like to feel free to alter the technique or approach correspondingly.

The attached budget (Appendix C) was drawn up as a guide to planning and represents the best estimates possible at this time. It is understood that in actual practice changes in the size of individual items may well be required. However, the total arrived at -- about \$200,000 -- seems adequate for the fulfillment of the tasks set in this proposal. Under no circumstances would the amount stipulated as indirect expenses incurred by Columbia University be increased above the sum indicated on the attached budget.

The Project, with the approval of the Director of the School of International Affairs, should like to reserve the right (1) to terminate the project at any time prior to its completion, having determined that the fulfillment of the tasks set above is impossible, and returning to the Foundation the total of unexpended funds from its grant; and (d) to approach the Foundation for additional support, should such a new request be deemed essential. It is strongly hoped that there will be no need to take advantage of either of these clauses.

Cordially yours,

Schuyler C. Wallace  
Director

SCW:mc

## APPENDIX A: PERSONNEL

While the core of the Project direction will be drawn from existing institutes and programs at Columbia University, it will obviously be desirable and necessary to make use of additional personnel, for advisory purposes, field work and analysis. Inasmuch as it seems inadvisable to recruit such persons until financial support for the project is assured, the following list includes both assured participants and the names of those who are yet to be invited to collaborate in the project.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Chairman: Henry L. Roberts, Professor of History, Director of the Russian Institute and of the Program on East Central Europe, Columbia University; author of Rumania, Russia, and America, and of a forthcoming volume on East Central Europe.

Members (tentative): Conrad Arensberg, Professor of Anthropology  
Alexander Eriich, Visiting Associate Professor of Economics  
William T. R. Fox, Professor of International Relations  
Charles Y. Glock, Director, Bureau of Applied Social Research  
Paul Lazarsfeld, Professor of Sociology  
John Lotz, Executive Officer, Department of Uralic and Altaic Languages  
Paul E. Zinner, Assistant Professor of Government

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Alexander Dallin, Visiting Assistant Professor of International Relations, Russian Institute; formerly Associate Director, Research Program on the USSR; Director of Research, War Documentation Project; Staff member, Harvard University Refugee Interview Project.

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:** Henry L. Roberts; Alexander Dallin; and Paul E. Zinner, Assistant Professor of Government in the Program on East Central Europe, formerly with the Department of State, editor of National Communism and Popular Revolt (1956), full command of Hungarian.

**BOARD OF ADVISERS:** The Board is to be drawn from specialists outside of Columbia University. Among the persons whose support is assured are Robert F. Byrnes, Professor of History, Indiana University; Oskar Halecki, Professor of History, Fordham University; Stephen Kertess, Professor of Government, Notre Dame University; and Philip E. Mosely, Director of Studies, Council on Foreign Relations. It is hoped, in addition, to secure the services of Cyril E. Black, Professor of History, Princeton University; Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., Russell Sage Foundation, New York; and Shepard Stone, The Ford Foundation.

**HUNGARIAN AREA SPECIALISTS:** Various leading specialists in Hungarian affairs will be invited to co-operate on a part-time or full-time basis in the planning and interviewing program. Among those who have indicated their support are Stephen Kertess, Notre Dame University; and Paul Kecskemeti, The RAND Corporation. Others to be approached include Alexander Eckstein, Harvard University; and Andrew Jaszsi, University of California. Several younger scholars with a knowledge of Hungarian affairs are being considered as interviewers.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE AND METHODOLOGY:** It is planned to use as consultants and part-time staff members specialists in interviewing methods and techniques as well as broader sociological and social science problems. In addition to Messrs. Glock and Lazarsfeld (listed above as members of the Executive Committee), it is hoped to secure the services of Raymond A. Bauer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Ivan D. London, Brooklyn College; Siegfried Krakauer, New York, and Paul Massing, New York.

## APPENDIX B: TYPES OF INTERVIEW

Three basic types of approach are contemplated -- Types A and B being oral "depth" interview, and Type C being a written questionnaire.

### TYPE A

This interview, based on an "open-ended" questionnaire, will be given to a stratified sample of respondents. The sample would take primary account of differences in age, socio-economic status, and urban/rural variations. Subsidiary attention would be paid to sex, religious, national and political differences, as well as date and type of defection and place of present residence.

Type A interview would be administered, after careful screening of respondents' basic "vital statistics," as a first step in intensive interviewing. It is to consist of

- (a) a biographical account of the individual's experience since 1944, with special emphasis on his contacts with the regime, the impact of the system and his reactions, the processes of control and his responses to them, political experience and change, the individual's occupation, education, and social status, his religious experience (and national, if appropriate), his work situation, family and friends, as well as the general problem of loyalty and attitude toward authority;
- (b) an interview on the events of 1956 -- what, when and how -- including the individual's own experience and his exodus, both factual and motivation;



(c) an examination of opinions and attitudes in a series of questions following a prepared guide with greater rigidity than (a) and (b) - (for purposes of subsequent comparability) - including such areas as the individual's ideology; political comments on Hungary, past and future; Communism, Russia, America; political programs; judgments of regimes and personalities; motivation and outlook; non-political interests, social responsibility; estimate of own's status in society; opinion of attitudes and opinions of other groups. These replies can presumably be correlated to biographical data provided above under (a). If necessary, a written questionnaire could be substituted for this part of the interview.

This interview will cover a large area of broad interests but will include a minimum core of "must" questions, to be supplemented according to the special interests or experience of the individual respondent.

It is contemplated that preliminary drafting of an interview outline and guide will begin forthwith and that within six weeks the "pre-testing" of the preliminary questionnaire will be completed in the New York area. On the basis of these tests -- and simultaneous training of interviewers -- the necessary revisions will be introduced prior to the start of more extensive interviewing.

TYPE B

In addition to the above interview -- valuable, it is hoped, both for the substantive information and attitudes

secured, and for its susceptibility to systematic ("statistical") analysis -- a number of interviews are to be conducted, regardless of the individual's "sample slot," to elicit information and attitudes from particularly "interesting," informed or important individual refugees. They are to be selected (a) on the basis of the recommendation of the TYPE A interviewer, as he runs across respondents who are suited for further interviewing; (b) on the basis of individual "procurement," regardless of whether or not they have received or are to receive TYPE A interview; and (c) for special projects or subjects of interest which individuals on the staff of the Hungarian Interview Project or associated with it hope to pursue, e. g., church-state relations; ethnic conflicts; state planning procedure; the role of Soviet personnel; the operation of a local Party unit.

In individual cases, with the consent of the project office, manuscripts may be commissioned from individual informants after interviewing under Type B.

#### TYPE C

A further source of information is the written questionnaire. This would be an effort to cast a wide net to obtain comparable information from a larger number of individuals than could be reached through oral interviews. It is suggested that this procedure be seriously weighed after pre-testing and examining the early findings: it is relatively cheaper to administer but more difficult and expensive to analyze; its relative merit may

depend on the extent to which oral interviews prove adequate; and it may be restricted to such areas of factual information, such as a personal budget questionnaire, as are susceptible to quantitative analysis but are not available from government or published sources.

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

HUNGARIAN INTERVIEW AND ANALYSIS  
PROJECT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

BOARD OF  
ADVISERS

EDITORIAL  
COMMITTEE

CONSULTANTS

PROJECT DIRECTOR

RESEARCH FELLOWS

NEW YORK OFFICE:  
Chief, Area Specialist  
Chief, Data Processing  
and Analysis  
Analysts  
Executive Secretary  
Secretarial

FIELD OPERATIONS:  
Field Supervisor  
Interviewers and  
Translators  
Chief, Processing  
and Scheduling  
Secretarial

## APPENDIX C:

Approximate Budget

	<u>Annual Rate</u>	<u>Time Required</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Project Director	\$8,000	6 months full; 18 months half	\$10,000
2. Research Supervisor (Area specialist)	8,000	half time for one year	4,000
3. Chief Analyst (Methodologist)	7,000	one-half year	3,500
4. Analysts (total)			25,000
5. Executive Secretary	5,000	two years at half-time	5,000
6. Office help (clerical)			7,000
7. Three research fellowships	2,500	one year	7,500
8. Field Supervisor	7,000	one-half year	3,500
9. Field Secretary	4,000	one-half year	2,000
10. Per Diem Fund			10,000
11. Consultants			10,000
12. Manuscript procurement and translations			5,000
13. Travel (staff and refugees)			16,000
14. Conferences and publications			15,000
15. Social Security and Contingency Fund			10,000
16. Communications, postage and shipping			1,500
17. Rent, offices, et cetera			3,500
18. Supplies, equipment, printing, dictaphones, typewriters et cetera			9,000
19. Interviews (\$60 per unit)			
600 oral interviews (450 type A; 150 type B)			36,000
2000 written questionnaires (\$7 per unit)			14,000
20. Columbia University indirect expenses (ten percent of salaries of interviewing costs)			13,750
	<b>Total</b>		<b>\$211,250</b>

Columbia University  
in the City of New York

NEW YORK 27, N. Y.

January 19, 1952  
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
429 WEST 117TH STREET

Dear John:

I am forwarding a request from Henry Roberts to the Ford Foundation which will enable the Russian Institute to finish the Research Project on Hungary. May I ask you to pass it along to them with a letter of concurrence.

Cordially yours,

Schuyler C. Wallace  
Director

Dr. John A. Krout  
Vice President of the University  
202 Low Memorial Library