

PRIORITY

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HUNGARY

PERSONALITIES

/2101/

JUSTICE

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Amnesty

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EX-PRESIDENT TILDY DEMANDS DROPPING OF BISHOP PETER

AS CONDITION OF RETURN TO POLITICS

SOURCE GENEVA: Hungarian intellectual on short Western travel.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Current period.

ENGLISH SUMMARY: Zoltan TILDY former President of the Hungarian Republic, who had lived under police control in a villa in NAGYTETENY /south of BUDAPEST/ since his forced resignation was recently /end of July or beginning of August/ allowed to move back to his luxurious home at Rózsadomb.

It seems as if the Government intends to use TILDY and Bela KOVACS as puppet heads of a new Smallholders Party. TILDY reportedly accepted this role on one condition only: the immediate removal of Janos PETER, Calvinist Bishop of DEBRECEN. Bishop PETER used to be TILDY's private secretary. He collaborated clandestinely with the Communists, thus contributing to the President's fall and the execution of his son-in-law. PETER was made Bishop as a reward for these services.

Bishop PETER's fall would mean not only TILDY's personal revanche, but also the revival of Hungarian Protestant life.

EVALUATION COMMENT: This is an interesting report. TILDY's reappearance in public life has become in the meantime an accomplished fact. Radio Kossuth broadcast on September 15 1956 an interview with TILDY in which the latter praised the agricultural achievements of the Regime.

For the time being there is no sign for a revival of the Smallholders Party. Bela KOVACS has not yet accepted any position under the present Regime and refused the job as editor in chief of "Magyar Nemzet" /MUNICH /B Item No. 8171/56./

At the present stage it does not seem that Bela KOVACS

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would cooperate with Zoltan TILDY in more active political work.

The fact that Janos PETER was spying on the TILDY family when TILDY was President of the Republic, is a widely known rumor. After TILDY's resignation PETER became Bishop of the Reform Church, and in recent years he was one of the loudest and most active fellow-travelers of the Regime. During his many visits to foreign countries PETER proved to be an obedient tool of the Regime, as it appears from LONDON Item Nos. 5770/53 and 4779/55, STOCKHOLM Item No. 10741/54 and VIENNA Item No. 7171/54.

No indication is available here that the situation of Bishop PETER has changed, but it is possible that his antagonism with TILDY may do him harm. It will be interesting to watch whether the reported demand of TILDY to remove Bishop PETER will be satisfied or not.

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TILDY Zoltán és családja éveken át NAGYTÉTÉNY közelében élt "csendes őrizetben." TILDYéket most "feloldották" és ismét Rózsadombi villájukba költöztek.

Forrás szerint TILDY hamarosan ismét "a közélet porondjára lép" és valószínűleg KOVÁCS Bélával együtt vezető szerepet kap egy névleg feltámasztandó Független Kisgazda Párt szervezésében.

TILDY a közéletbe való visszatérés feltételéül PÉTER János DEBRECENI református püspök "fejét követeli." PÉTER annakidején TILDY személyi titkára volt és a kommunistákkal való összejátszása tette lehetővé TILDY félretételét és vejének CSORNOKY Viktornak bitófára jutatását. PÉTER János e szolgálatok jutalmaként kapta meg a behódolt református egyház legfonosabb püspöki tisztét. Az árulást TILDY sohasem tudta megbocsájtani és ünnepélyes közéleti rehabilitációjának előestjét alkalmas pillanatnak tartotta a PÉTER Jánossal való számadásra.

Forrás szerint a népi-német származású PÉTER püspöknek amugyis sok az ellensége a szintiszta DEBRECENI reformátusság köreiből. Nehézségei nemcsak egyházi, de párt-vonalon is voltak: megbizhatatlan, oportunisták behódoltnak tartják. Így igen valószínű, hogy TILDY Zoltán feltételét a rezsim teljesíteni fogja, ami egyben TILDY lekötését is jelenti.

End.