

X H - *Hungarians in New York City*  
A-26872 NEW YORK, APRIL 1952 PAUL PHELAN WRITES

IN FRIDAY NY WORLD-TELEGRAPH LOCAL:

A PERSON CAN WALK ALONG FIRST AVE. BETWEEN 72ND AND 86TH STS. OF AN EVENING AND PASS BY NUMBERS OF NEW-YOUNG AND NOT SO YOUNG-WHO SEEM LIKE ANY OTHERS IN THIS LARGE CITY. BUT ACTUALLY THEY ARE VERY DIFFERENT, IN ONE IMPORTANT RESPECT. THEY ARE, OR WERE, HUNGARIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS. *(us)*

THESE ARE THE MEN WHO TWO YEARS AGO WERE BATTLING RUSSIAN TANKS IN THE STREETS OF BUDAPEST AS THEY SOUGHT TO FREE THEIR HOMETOWN FROM THE TYRANNY OF A COMMUNIST REGIME. JUST HOW MANY OF THEM THERE ARE IN THE CITY IS UNCERTAIN BUT THE FIGURE IS SOMEWHERE AROUND 10,000.

THESE MEN ARE THE LATEST INFUSION OF NEW BLOOD INTO THE CITY'S HUNGARIAN COLONY, WHICH IS CENTERED FOR THE MOST PART IN THIS 72ND-86TH STREET SECTION AROUND

FIRST AND SECOND AVES.

THE NEWCOMERS HAVE BROUGHT WITH THEM THE PROBLEMS THAT BESET ALL NEW COMERS, THE LANGUAGE BARRIER, ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, AND HOMESICKNESS.

A SPECIAL ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN SET UP TO HELP THEM, THE HUNGARIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS FEDERATION. IT IS HEADED BY FERENC VALL, NOW A PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY, AND GEN. BELA KIRALY. GEN. KIRALY, WHO HEADED 30,000 REGULAR HUNGARIAN ARMY TROOPS AND AN EQUAL NUMBER OF FREEDOM FIGHTERS IN THE 1956 REVOLUTION, WAS THE HIGHEST MILITARY LEADER TO ESCAPE. HE IS CURRENTLY A PH.D. CANDIDATE IN HISTORY AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. \_\_\_\_\_

X H - (1) - HUNGARIANS IN New York

"THE MAJORITY OF THE NEWCOMERS ARE SERIOUS, HONEST PEOPLE, PREPARED TO WORK THEIR WAY INTO AMERICAN LIFE, AND THEY ARE PROGRESSING," GEN. KIRALY SAID. "THERE ARE VERY FEW WHO HAVE TAKEN THE ATTITUDE 'I AM A HERO AND I SHOULD LIVE ON THAT FOREVER.'"

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A LARGE NUMBER OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS ARE STUDENTS WHO ARE CONTINUING THEIR STUDIES. OF THE OTHERS, ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS HAVE BEEN THE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING JOBS. POSSIBLY LAWYERS HAVE FOUND THINGS MOST DIFFICULT. MANY ARE WORKING AS WAITERS WHILE LEARNING AMERICAN LAW AND COURT PROCEDURES. LABORERS, SKILLED AND UNSKILLED, AT FIRST MADE OUT ALL RIGHT. BUT THE RECESSION HURT THEM, BECAUSE, HAVING NO SENIORITY, THEY WERE THE FIRST TO BE LET OUT.

THE NEWCOMERS ARE HELPED BY THE FACT THAT NEW YORK'S HUNGARIANS ARE A HIGHLY ORGANIZED GROUP. THANKS FOR THIS CIRCUMSTANCE ARE DUE MAINLY TO THE IMMIGRANTS WHO CAME HERE FROM 1902 TO 1941 AND FOUNDED THE CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES, THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AND ATHLETIC CLUBS WHICH ARE NOW FLOURISHING. THE EARLIEST WAVE OF IMMIGRANTS WAS MADE UP OF THE WORKING CLASS; THEN CAME THE "INTELLECTUALS" - IN THE 30S AND 40S-WHO ACCOUNT FOR THE GREAT NUMBER OF TEACHERS, LAWYERS AND DOCTORS IN THE LOCAL COLONY.

OF PARTICULAR INTEREST IS THE HUNGARIAN COMMITTEE, A GROUP OF POLITICAL EXILES WORKING FOR THE LIBERATION OF HUNGARY AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARLIAMENTARY REGIME. IT IS HEADED BY MSGR. BELA VARGA, SPEAKER OF

X H - (2) - HOWE MEMOIRS IN NEW YORK

THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT, 1945-47, AND INCLUDES FERENC TACY,  
HUNGARIAN PREMIER IN THE SAME ERA, AND GEN. KIRALY.

BUT HUNGARIAN LIFE HERE INVOLVES MORE THAN POLITICS.

THERE ARE NUMEROUS CHARITABLE, LITERARY, FRATERNAL,  
SOCIAL, AND YOUTH GROUPS. AND ALONG FIRST AVE.,  
ESPECIALLY, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF HUNGARIAN SHOPS AND  
RESTAURANTS.

A DAILY NEWSPAPER, NEPSZAVA (VOICE OF THE PEOPLE), AND A  
MONTHLY MAGAZINE, NEPES MAGYAR MAGAZIN, SERVE THE  
POPULATION.

THE HUNGARIANS ARE MOSTLY WINE DRINKERS.

TOKAJ, OR TOKAI, A WINE FROM NORTH HUNGARY, IS  
FAMOUS. BALATON AND SZURE BARAT, FROM WEST HUNGARY.

THE SPIRIT OF PATRIOTISM RUNS HIGH AMID  
NEW YORK'S HUNGARIANS, FOR THEIR NEW COUNTRY AND THEIR  
OLD. ASK ANY ONE OF THEM ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HUNGARY AND HE  
WILL SAY: "WE ARE SURE THE TIME WILL COME WHEN IT WILL BE  
FREE. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW, WHY, WHEN, BUT WE KNOW IT WILL BE  
FREE."

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