

*Backgrnd*

Reliable information has been received in New York that three prominent personalities who played a role in the Hungarian uprising in 1956 are being retried by a military tribunal with a view to changing their life sentences to death sentences.

Mr. Istvan Bibó, Mr. László Kardos and Mr. Arpád Gönc were transferred two weeks ago from the prison of Vác, where they were serving life sentences in connexion with the events of October-November 1956, to Budapest where their cases have been reopened in front of a military tribunal. This, it is understood, means court martial procedure, the outcome of which leaves very little doubt.

Mr. Bibó was the head of the Peasant Party and the author of a declaration of 4 November 1956, the text of which is contained in paragraph 295 of the Report of the Special Committee.

László Kardos was the head of the Revolutionary Committee of the Intellectuals and president of the Petöfi Circle.

Arpád Gönc was a member of Mr. Bibó's entourage during the uprising and took Mr. Bibó's memorandum to the Indian legation on 9 November. During his trial he was accused of having smuggled out the writing of Imry Nagy from Hungary. He is a man of about 38.

The information reached the United Nations on the morning of 27 October. The letter was posted in Europe by a Hungarian scientist on mission outside Hungary who is well-known by persons in New York and in whose reliability there can be no doubt.

The letter also appealed for some kind of action in the matter, in view of the fact that the reopening in front of a military tribunal of cases already judged previously means generally that these are cases to be settled once and for all. As the proceedings in front of a military tribunal are secret, the informant does not know whether a judgement has already been brought or whether the trial is still in its preliminary stages.

28 October 1960