

SI
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HUNGARY

POW'S /2400/
PRISONS AND CAMPS /2500/
Prisons /2506/a

SLOW RELEASE FOR ~~NON~~ AMNESTIED RETURNEES FROM
USSR TO HUNGARY.

SOURCE HAMBURG: Letters from Hungary and released prisoners' information.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until June 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: It is known from other sources that former POWs and deportees from the Soviet Union are held at the JÁSZBERÉNY prison.

The hard conditions in Hungarian prisons are known and the reported details are in line with information available here on this subject.

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/A/ News received from the Hungarian prison JÁSZBERÉNY shows that many non-amnestied prisoners who had returned from the Soviet Union to Hungary in November 1955 are still detained, although hopes were expressed within the prison walls that the amnesty would later be applied to cover such prisoners. A small number have, however, been released, these consisting to 80 per cent of Germans formerly resident in Hungary. These Germans instead of being sent to the Federal Republic have been released with orders to go back to their original dwelling-places in Hungary.

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The conditions under which these non-amnestied prisoners have been detained in JÁSZBERÉNY approach complete isolation. Most of the prisoners have been allowed to write only one letter to their relatives informing them of their arrival and only in a few cases were single visits from relatives allowed at all. From conversations inside the prison with warders and other members of the prison staff, it is clear that the further retention of the non-amnestied prisoners is unpopular on all sides and is attributable to the weakness of the BUDAPEST government's attitude toward the Soviets.

/B/ Reports received in Western Germany from recent returnees from Hungarian prisons show that up to June 1956 there were very few signs of any mitigation of conditions for political prisoners. There was, up to this time, a complete ban on letter or parcel post with any country outside Hungary, this applying both to the sending and receiving of mail. The conditions for prisoners wishing to write to relatives and friends inside Hungary are also extremely severe. Permission to write from the prison is granted at the most four times per year and this at intervals of not less than three months from all prisoners who are not engaged in prison labor. For those who are working on regular jobs inside the prisons, slightly more latitude is granted up to eight letters per year but this only applies to those who exceed their norms by 25 per cent each month.

As regards the receiving of parcels, this is only allowed on two occasions per year, in June and December, unless the norm is exceeded to the above mentioned extent, when packages may be received at three-month intervals, i.e. March, June, September and December. All packages containing any medicaments must be prescribed and later inspected by the prison doctor. Dispatches of money to the prisoners are not handed out in cash but credited to the prisoner's account.

The above measures are further subject to arbitrary and unpredictable interpretation by the various prison staffs. In many cases the prisoners are not informed of the postal regulations and have no idea of what their restricted rights might be. In some cases the prisoners are questioned by warders as to when they are allowed to write and if they do not know immediately, lose their three-month chance straight away. Many other cases have been reported where the prisoners have not been asked whereby their writing privileges automatically became

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invalid. There is great discontentment in many prisons over these, very restrictive und unfair postal regulations.

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