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English evaluation of the British foreign secretary's visit to Hungary**

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London, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1983

Subject: English evaluation  
of the British foreign secretary's  
visit to Hungary

Ambassador: 1 copy

Rapporteur: László Fodor

Typed by: Gyuláné Braun

Attachment: 1 envelope

We conducted several discussions with politicians known from foreign secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe's visit to Hungary, with leaders and colleagues of the FCO /James team leader [?meaning unclear], Broomfield head of office, Cartledge former ambassador to Budapest, Carter head of department/, and with representatives of the press.

Unequivocally they represented the opinion that Howe's decision resulted to have been right to visit Hungary when upon the pretext of the South-Korean aircraft's catastrophe the anti-Soviet campaign made it difficult to continue the normal dialogue between East and West. They praised the calm and pleasant atmosphere of the discussions, underlining separately those serious talks of philosophical content that their foreign secretary had with Comrades Kádár, Lázár and Marjai. They evaluated positively the negotiations had with Comrade Péter Várkonyi for being up-to-the-point and direct, and the fact that the discussions lacked any stiffness. Furthermore they talked with appraisal about the fact that they experienced the Hungarian part's self-sufficiency of *thinking [in other word's autonomy, i.e. the Hungarians had their own opinion]* in every question touched upon.

Foreign Ministry

Dr. Péter Várkonyi minister

Comrade

Budapest

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Peter Rees Chief Secretary of the Exchequer, who after the visit met Sir and Lady Howe, told his opinion that the foreign secretary's visit may arouse [*original Hungarian "wake up"*] more prime minister Thatcher's interest in studying Hungarian experiences. The foreign secretary who continues to show special interest in international economic questions found separately [*meaning 'rather'*] interesting the change of thoughts held in Budapest on international business questions.

We wish to mention here that our partners of discussions mentioned everywhere: on English part they continue to support unequivocally the Hungarian ideas in connection with the Common Market.

Both Geoffrey Howe and his wife spoke everywhere in a satisfied way of the programme planned for them. The [*things*] seen during the sightseeing had good impression on them, especially the abundance of products experienced in the market hall.

During the talks American vice-president Bush's planned journey [*original Hungarian 'round journey'*] was mentioned as well. Reacting on his Viennese speech our discussion partners explained that the visit of the British foreign secretary was conceived in a different conception.

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On Geoffrey Howe's visit 10 separate articles, reports and short news were published. The BBC TV's show entitled Newsnight, the ITV's summary of news and the TV Channel 4 as well mentioned [*original Hungarian "occupied with" meaning "talked about"*] the foreign secretary's journey. The journalists accompanying the foreign secretary to our home country next to the visit

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published Hungarian-related articles in other [*mainly economic*] topics as well. Taking into consideration that in England the visits of the foreign secretary are mainly featured amongst short news /except if it is about a discussion in connection with an important, relevant [*meaning "of the present"*] international event/, it is noteworthy that Howe's visit to Hungary received a publicity wider than usual.

The English mass communication devices evaluated the visit as positive without any exceptions. The Times' leading article of 14<sup>th</sup> September entitled "Hungary's Way" deserves to be mentioned separately, its tone is unambiguously positive. It approves that the foreign secretary visited Hungary even after the South-Korean aircraft's catastrophe. It deserves mentioning that the English national papers did not publish leading articles of our country in the last years. Other socialist countries were mentioned in leading articles only in case they served as targets for criticism or attack.

We introduce in attachment the articles in connection with the visit for the purpose of documentation.

/Dr. Rezső Bányász/ [*signature of Bányász*] - Ambassador