

1960

New Background

X CONF — NEW HUNGARIAN AMBASSADOR TO WARSAW

Warsaw, May 10... Deace Szilagyi has been named to replace János Katona as Hungary's ambassador to Poland, reported Radio Budapest on May 9. No new assignment was announced for Katona, who had been formerly also Hungarian ambassador to Sweden and to Great Britain before being sent to Warsaw in May 1957.

Background of New Minister

This is the first diplomatic mission for Szilagyi, a former worker, who according to an official biographical note joined the "workers movement" in 1914. During Bela Kun's Communist dictatorship he was political commissar of the 13rd Regiment of the Hungarian Red Army. On the 40th anniversary of the Bela Kun dictatorship Szilagyi was awarded the "Tamasok-Intereveseg (Hungarian Soviet Republic) commemorative medal".

After Hungary's "liberation" by the Soviet Army Szilagyi entered the armed forces. In 1949 he was a captain and was decorated with the Golden Medal of the Hungarian People's Republic. In 1952 he was mentioned as a lieutenant-colonel.

Szilagyi rose to a rather prominent position in April 1957 when he became chief of the Central Committee's foreign affairs section. He held that position until April 1960.

On 27-28 March 1958 Szilagyi was member of the Hungarian Party delegation (led by János Kadar) which visited Tito and other Yugoslav leaders at Zagreb, the last direct contact between the Hungarian and Yugoslav Party leaders. In May 1958 he took part in the talks with the Polish Party and governmental delegations which, led by Gomulka, stopped in Budapest returning from a visit to Yugoslavia.

In December 1959 (at the Seventh Party Congress) Szilagyi was elected -- for the first time -- a full member of the Central Committee.

Other highlights of his career: In December 1957 he became deputy president of the Hungarian Partisan Association, very likely on the basis of his earlier military exploits; in March 1958 he received the Red Banner Order of Work, one of Hungary's highest awards.

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*WALSH*

New Chief of CC's Foreign Affairs Section

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Istvan Hellei replaces Sallegyi as the chief of the foreign affairs section of the Central Committee. He is not a new hand in that section. In fact, he was its deputy chief from 1955 until the 1956 October revolution. In March 1957 he entered the diplomatic career as a counselor at the embassy and was detailed to Hungary's permanent mission at the United Nations. In that capacity he participated in the activity of the UNO's Special Political Committee.

End *WALSH*