

The Cardinal Mindszenty Forgeries

U. S. Minister Chapin's Signature Forged For Trial

This the eighth of ten articles in which László Sulner, Hungarian handwriting expert, who escaped from his homeland last year, reveals how he was forced to forge documents which the Communists used to smear Cardinal Mindszenty as a "criminal."

Chapter VIII
By LÁSZLÓ SULNER

The day after publication in the newspapers dated Jan. 7 of the Mindszenty-Winkelmann handwriting cases—my forgery and Hanna's character analysis, as distorted in the official press release—I was working in the police laboratory when a buzz summoned me to Major Leslie Kerekes's room across the corridor. Kerekes was deputy chief of the police criminal laboratory. Colonel Asztalos, new Ministry of Interior personnel chief and party commissar (succeeding Julius Ozsko, who had just been suspended and a few days later was shot on the Austro-Hungarian frontier), was there, with three others. They were grouped around Kerekes's desk. On the desk was a scattered heap of photostats. At a glance I recognized some of those brought to our laboratory by the two AVH men three days earlier.

I thought you had agreed to cooperate." Asztalos's attitude was not threatening. These men seemed genuinely inquiring and interested in technicalities. And why not? In their way they were as much "on the spot" with their masters as we were with the AVH. They were professional policemen, this was the biggest affair they had ever handled, it would be world news. Word must have been passed down from Communist party headquarters and from Ivan Boldizar's office at the Foreign Ministry that everything must be handled properly—and they were now answerable to Russian backstage masters, very exacting and ruthless people.

THEY HAD a mass of material found, or said to have been found, in that famous metal tube which the Cardinal's secretary, Andreas Zakar, had led them to—oddly, a month after his arrest, Nov. 18—in the cellar of the Cardinal's palace at Esztergom. Some of the documents on which they relied had reached them in ways which anyone not acquainted with the ramifications of "underground" and espionage and counter-espionage networks in and around the Iron Curtain countries would find hard to believe.

When I had finished my exposition Colonel Asztalos, a small, slight man, very keen and quick, he had come to Ozsko's post from the Police Academy said: "I see. Well, that should be an easy one for you to fix up. How do we get a good copy?"

I explained. You make a black on white negative from the white on black photostat. On the negative, using black Chinese ink, you correct the spoiled signature. From this new black on white negative you make another white on black print.

The best check on the truth or falsity of a typed document is in the typewriting. But sometimes a forger can get hold of a specimen of the original machine type or even have a plant agent re-do the letter on the original machine. If he is willing to take a slight risk he can retype a bad copy on a police department typewriter (the AVH had at least sixty different kinds of machines) with the typewriter fixed to imitate any marked deviation of the original machine, and using a letterhead duplicated in the police print shop.

"That's all right then," said Colonel Asztalos, and he pushed the photostat over to me.

"I TOOK IT back to the laboratory and made a good copy from the blurred one, and re-did the spoiled signature. I made a photostat of the blurred original, and kept a print of the new one. Both I microfilmed in

Exhibits K and J are from my restoration.)

We went to the other things. There were a number of items which I indicated as bad or useless if documents were to come under hostile scrutiny, or were to be passed for publication. These were mostly typed letters with doubtful signatures, and letters or reports lacking the page carrying the signature.

Anyone working at police headquarters would know how they came into police hands. They were passed on by spies, by agents of the Political or Economic or Criminal Police, by members of the Communist party, through its ramifications which extended throughout the world and all led back to Moscow. Private letters were intercepted and photographed in the postal censorship. Some documents were sold to the police or party by secretaries or typists for money or favors. People had been killed for documents there is a saying in the Hungarian police which probably is common in all the Iron Curtain countries that Communists kill only for documents.

The uninitiated would be puzzled by the frequent absence of a page carrying a signature. There are five good reasons. One is that an agent can often get only a quick photograph of a first page as it lies on a man's desk or is extracted from a file. Another is that the agent reads the letter but photographs only the page or passage which he thinks incriminating. A third is that the agent copies the first page on a piece of stolen stationery but does not go beyond, as he cannot reproduce the signature. A fourth is that the agent conceals a letter or memorandum but tells his police or counter-espionage paymasters that there was only one page available—he does not want to risk exposing his deception by risking an amateur handwriting forgery. A fifth and common reason is that the document goes on to give explanations or qualifications which deprive of all importance and significance the passage which the police and prosecution want to use.

of the Cardinal's writing, signed letter, and another letter which interested me because it was in typewritten and there was a handwritten copy in what looked like the Cardinal's writing clipped to it.

Taking these in my hand I went out of Major Kerekes's office, down the corridor and through the chemical laboratory to my own room, and got down to work. Examining the two documents clipped together I saw that the handwriting was forged, but quite well. It showed signs of the handwriting selection apparatus technique. Somebody in Bogdanovitch's AVH laboratory was learning.

I made photostats of both. You see this in Exhibit L. This evidently was a letter written in English to American Minister (Chapin, to which Chapin's letter (Exhibits J and K) replied. It had been intercepted and photographed. But as AVH orders were to get everything in hand writing the letter had been written again so that the prosecution could say "This was the letter you wrote to Chapin. See here's your own writing." This writing was reproduced in the Yellow Book as by the Cardinal.

The work required of me took very little time. Exhibit C shows one of the typewritten carrying my forgery of the Cardinal's signature. This one was used at the trial and published in the Hungarian Yellow Book, although the reproduction here is from a photocopy I made in my laboratory, and later put under the microscope.

The forgeries I made could be copied in any number of authentic photostats. All that was needed was some expert photography and a good eye for selecting the size of the authentic writing and signature, so that it would look about the way the Cardinal would write having regard to the size and shape and margin space of the document in each case.

Bishop's House In Taegu, Convent Shelter Refugees

By REV. GEORGE M. CARROLL, M.M.
Taegu, Korea.—(NC)—This city which used to have a population of 300,000 has swelled at this writing to well over 700,000. Bishop John Choe, the Vicar Apostolic, is the only Bishop still free and with a (diocese in the whole of Korea. The northern portion of his diocese is in the hands of the Reds and fighting is going on not far from here.

PRIESTS AND Sisters, natives

and refugees from places overrun by the Reds, now have crowded into the Bishop's house and the convent. A Catholic school has been taken over by the Korean Military Police and is being used as a receiving center for North Korean prisoners of war.

This correspondent visited the receiving center and found that the majority of prisoners are youngsters in their teens, some as young as 14 or 15. Without exception they answered "no" when asked if they volunteered. Most of them were inducted in August and had no training. They were given no guns, merely uniforms, and were marched down south where they were employed to carry supplies and to act as laborers.

War Veteran Refuses Award, Joins Jesuits

Los Angeles, Calif. (NC)—Gerald James Phelan, 25, recent honor guest of Loyola University here, has rejected the award of a coveted Fulbright scholarship and has joined the Society of Jesus. He now is at the Jesuit Novitiate in Los Gatos, Calif.

The Fulbright scholarship, administered by the State Department, provided transportation to and from Italy and a liberal maintenance allowance for a year. Mr. Phelan was the first Loyola student to be awarded the honor according to Dr. John Bricca, chairman of the University's modern language department.

For the last 25 years, Mr. Phelan's father has served the State Department and currently is stationed at the U. S. Embassy in Havana (Canal Zone). He has lived with his parents in a number of foreign countries and speaks French, Spanish, Italian and German fluently. He served with the Army in Europe during World War II and was awarded the Purple Heart.

I CAME ACROSS only one Catholic boy. He asked for Communism. One of the Korean Fathers, the Rev. John Kim, who visits the prisoners every day, was going to hear his confession and give him Holy Communion. We also visited the American Army Clearing Station where the wounded are brought in from the front line.

(At the outbreak of the Korean war Father Carroll was the representative of War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference in Korea and is now serving as a civilian chaplain with the South Korean army.)

Peace Appeal Utrecht, Netherlands (NC)

The International Union of Catholic Women's League, representing 36,000,000 members in all parts of the world, has issued a proclamation condemning the communist inspired Stockholm "peace" appeal.

BOYS' YOUNG MEN!

There is still time to enter signs at the 1950-51 National Fraternity of Young Men's Union. New York, Oct. 20. The Fraternity of Young Men's Union is now accepting applications from boys and young men who are interested in becoming members. The Fraternity offers a wide range of activities, including sports, social events, and educational programs. For more information, contact the National Fraternity of Young Men's Union, 100 South Centre Street, Orange, N. J.

Cardinal To Attend 'Cure d'Arns' Film

London.—(NC)—His Eminence Bernard Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, is to preside at the London West End premiere of a French film on the life of the Cure d'Arns "Le Sacerdote du Ciel" in October. The film, which will have English subtitles to the French sound track, has the English title "Heaven and Earth." Proceeds of the premiere will go to the Young Christian Workers.

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