

## American Intervention in Vietnam and Hungarian-Hungarian Mediation 1965-1967

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### Abstract

*At the end of the Korean War, marking the American intervention in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. Washington made clear that it did not accept a unified Vietnam under communist rule, would rather interfere openly than see it, it views the Hanoi government as a natural extension of Soviet and Chinese powers in Southeast Asia. The American administration believed that the fall of South Vietnam would occur, it may have a major impact in Vietnam through which neighboring countries can; Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Thailand are all facing the power of the communist parties. At the same time, the South Vietnamese government was rejecting American directives regarding internal reform of the country. In March 1956, the United States of America sent its first ground forces to the Republic of Vietnam, it launched an attack against the National Liberation Front in November. The battle became fierce and widespread, as a result, many actors tried to limit the military escalation through diplomatic means, perhaps the most prominent among them were the Hungarian mediation efforts. However, this mediation was not successful, especially after the attempt of the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Pact to distance Hanoi from Beijing, rejected the establishment of a strong South Vietnam, supported by the United States of America on the Beijing border, in addition, the Soviets provided aid to North Vietnam, instead of strengthening Hanoi's direction towards peace, these contradictory policies carried the North Vietnamese into a long war.*

**Keywords:** American intervention, Vietnam, Hungarian-Hungarian mediation, 1965-1967.

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### American intervention and the Vietnam War:

The Vietnam War was a military conflict in Southeast Asia that extended from the surrender of Japanese forces in Indochina and the re-establishment of the French colonial regime in 1945 until the defeat of South Vietnam and the United States in 1975. (1) This conflict was not intentional, but rather was created by the idea of intervention in Moscow and Washington in dealing with the Vietnam Revolution, the United States did not accept the idea of a unified Vietnam under communist rule and that it preferred intervention, provided that Ho Chi Minh achieved his goals because he represented an extension of Chinese and Soviet power in Southeast Asia.

Based on the above, Vietnam has been the focus of attention of the United States since the start of the war in Vietnam against the French colonial government.

Accordingly, JFK(2) expanded the United States' fronts to assist the government of South Vietnam in its war against the communist North. Within a year of assuming office, he sent American military advisors to the South and established an official military command for the country (3).

It is noteworthy that the French were expelled by the National Forces in Vietnam in 1954 after their military defeat at Dien Bien Phu after the siege of the French forces, which announced their surrender on May 7, 1954, despite receiving significant American military and economic aid in response to the support provided by China. Popularity of Vietnamese Communist Nationalists. However, it was decided at the Geneva Peace Conference to divide Vietnam between the Democratic People's Republic of Vietnam north of latitude (17) and the Republic of Vietnam south of latitude (17) north. This division was until elections were held. Following this, the communists in the South (the Viet Cong) launched the first attack on the Vietnamese forces loyal to the United States on July 8, 1959, and killed American advisors. A state of emergency was declared in the South on October 19, 1961, after alleged North Vietnamese attacks that were not proven to be true on the two warships, the Maddox and Toner Joy(4).

As a result, specifically on August 7, 1964, Congress passed a resolution granting Democratic President Lyndon Johnson (5) (1908 - 1973) (6) broad military powers in South Vietnam. A massive, comprehensive, and continuous bombardment of North Vietnam (Operation Rolling Thunder) began on Saturday, February 7, 1965. The vanguard of American combat forces landed in Danang on March 8, 1965, and clashed with the Viet Cong (7).

This situation continued until Johnson announced on March 31 the end of the bombing of North Vietnam and that he would not run for new elections.

This war was considered the longest in the history of the United States (1955 - 1975) and its impact was devastating on Washington. The expenses of this war were estimated at more than two hundred billion dollars. There were many lies that were told to public opinion on the one hand and to the Pentagon on the other during the years of the war to obtain support. This undeclared war was not popularly accepted (8).

In March 1965, the United States sent the first ground units to the Republic of South Vietnam. The White House also announced that American military aid would continue to Vietnam, and on July 28 of the same year, Johnson announced an increase in American forces in Vietnam to reach 125,000 soldiers. American military efforts increased. On March 2, 1966, US Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara announced an increase in American forces in Vietnam to 235,000, reaching 285,000 on June 11, and then reaching their peak in March 1969 to 541,000.

But this did not prevent the situation from deteriorating in favor of the northerners. On March 30, 1972, South Vietnam was subjected to a communist attack that led to the bombing of North Vietnam by American forces, which stopped on January 15, 1973, after which the peace agreement was signed in Paris on January 27, 1973, and in the end On January 6, 1975, a North Vietnamese attack swept through the south, and Saigon was liberated on April 30, 1975.

### **Hungarian mediation between Hanoi and Washington and the Soviet position:**

Diplomatic efforts were of course not new to the conflict with the Geneva Peace Accords being concluded in 1954. There was the 1961-1962 Geneva Conference on Laos, which on paper guaranteed the country's neutrality. Although American political intervention had a long history, military efforts were relatively new, and there was hope on the diplomatic front that the two sides could be brought together. As part of a very intense international diplomatic process, many actors have tried to limit the military escalation. The Hungarian efforts were one of these efforts (9).

Regarding the Soviet position on American intervention in Vietnam, the Soviets faced a choice between their desire to build better relations with the United States and fulfilling their international duty toward the Vietnamese communists. The Kremlin knew that close contacts with the United States were important to the Soviet economy, and Vietnam gained increasing importance as China was challenging the leadership role the Soviet Union played in the international communist movement. Pragmatism led the Kremlin to turn a blind eye to the conflict in Indochina, but international solidarity with Hanoi was crucial to Soviet thought. It would affect Moscow's position toward Washington in ways that harm Soviet national interests. Moscow blamed the Americans even though they were aware - just like Hungary's leaders - that the United States was not solely responsible for the crisis in Vietnam. A quick and peaceful solution to the problem was not in China's interest. The People's Republic of China had its own reasons for supporting the Democratic Republic of Vietnam because it did not want a country allied with the United States on its southern border. Therefore, Beijing put pressure on Hanoi not to negotiate, and the leadership in Hanoi was divided on this point. Although they remained confident of their final victory, the Vietnamese communists wanted to hold talks with the Americans for the sake of military victory and not to end the conflict politically. Hanoi also wanted to improve its international image by pretending to negotiate in good faith, thus weakening the position of the pro-war faction in Washington and causing tensions between Saigon and Washington (10).

There was also a speech by Chinese leader Mao in which he emphasized his material support, as well as its geographical proximity to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which made it an important player in the Vietnam War. The leadership of the Soviet Union felt that it had to compete with the Chinese in Vietnam, so as not to lose face before the Third World and within the Soviet camp. However, the Soviet Union did not have much influence over the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and Soviet leaders feared Chinese influence over the Vietnamese so they chose not to participate in direct diplomatic mediation efforts. Therefore, the option available to them was to rely on other Eastern Bloc countries to implement their bids in this field (11).

As a result, Budapest shared the Soviet dilemma, which had no choice but to align itself behind Moscow. The riots at the American mission indicated that openness to Americans did not fit with the Interior Ministry's ideas about foreign policy. The gap between public and private data was wide. In December 1965, using the mediation of a businessman, Hungarian diplomats indicated to the Foreign Ministry that Vietnam was of no real importance in their negotiations with Washington, and expressed the hope that "the United States would control itself" (12).

There were two clear choices for this role. Poland was the first and best, as it was one of the members of the International Supervision and Control Commission, commonly known as the

International Control Commission (ICC), the body established by the Geneva Peace Accords in 1954, in order to monitor the situation in the Three Indochina States. The second was the People's Republic of Hungary, which at that time tried to create good relations with the West, and although it was not a member of the ICC, it had good relations with the West. Both countries engaged in serious secret diplomacy in order to establish direct contact between the United States and the Republic of Vietnam Democracy During Lyndon Johnson's 37-day bombing "pause" (December 23, 1965, to January 31, 1966), Polish efforts included sending a secret envoy, Foreign Ministry official Jerzy Michalowski, from Warsaw to Hanoi to urge the North Vietnamese to enter into negotiations with Washington, but Ho Chi Minh and other leaders of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam rejected the offer. Later in 1966, the Poles were major players in another peace initiative in Vietnam aimed at mediating the opening of talks between Washington and Hanoi. This width, codenamed "Marigold" by American officials, was explored, and the Hungarian route remained in the shadows, because it was somewhat shorter and halfway. The first Western publication on the issue came from a disaffected former Hungarian charge d'affaires in Washington, János Radványi, who defected to the United States in 1967. Based on his limited view of events, he declared in his book that the Hungarian efforts were little more than an attempt. To buy time for Hanoi." However, this was not true, as the Hungarian state and the party leadership engaged in an intense effort to build a real channel of communication between the two sides of the conflict (14).

In fact, the role that Bulgaria and Poland played as mediators between Washington and Hanoi during the 37-day pause in the American bombing campaign against North Vietnam in December 1965 and January 1966 contributed significantly to the diplomacy of the Vietnam War because it lasted long enough. To allow serious discussions and provide a real opportunity for American and North Vietnamese officials to make direct and indirect contacts (15).

Although Hungary had always been one of the Soviet Union's most loyal and willing allies, in the mid-1960s the regime headed by János Kádár (Hungarian Prime Minister) began - mainly out of economic necessity - to improve its political relations with the leaders of the Western powers, including in which the United States. This made Hungary a potential mediator between East and West even in conflicts such as Vietnam, a role that has not received adequate examination until now (16).

Poland was the main player in the Soviet bloc in Vietnam. Poland's membership in the International Control Committee (ICC) raised its role in conflict diplomacy in Indochina to a higher level than that of any other communist state. The ICC, or more formally, the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Vietnam, or ICSC, was a three-nation peace monitoring force established in 1954 to oversee the implementation of the Geneva Conventions that ended the First Indochina War. The other two members of the ICC are Canada and India. The Polish government has played an active role in peace initiatives aimed at resolving the conflict in Southeast Asia, and has also shared with its closest allies any useful information it obtained in both Hanoi and Saigon. However, the Hungarians appear to have had high-level contacts in Hanoi (different from those in Poland), and thus were also able to exchange privileged information with the Soviet Union and other friendly countries (17).

Proof of this is the fact that the elevation of their diplomatic missions to embassy status and the interdependence of ambassadors between the United States and Hungary took place at the height of the war in Vietnam in 1966-1968. Hungary benefited well, having a "good-looking"

status not only in Hanoi but also in Washington to gain The Hungarian mediation attempt did not come suddenly. The “sudden turn” in Soviet policy in late 1964 and early 1965 was a catalyst in the Hungarian leaders’ approach to the Vietnam conflict between the period leading up to Brezhnev’s visit to Budapest in January 1965 and the period after it. The visit marked the end of Budapest's complete indifference to Southeast Asia (18).

Consequently, from August 1959 to March 1965, the Hungarian decision-making bodies represented by the Central Committee (CC), the Politburo, and the HSWP Secretariat (usually referred to as the “central command bodies”) discussed the Vietnamese situation in 42 meetings. On occasion, particularly during the last eight months of 1965, when the matter was under consideration by HSWP leaders at a time when Vietnam was not yet considered a central issue in Moscow, Vietnam appeared nineteen times on the agenda of the HSWP Politburo and three times on Central Committee agenda in 1965. In that year when the Politburo held its meetings every two weeks and the Central Committee every two to three months, senior leaders discussed Vietnam-related matters. In almost every meeting. Given the “change in the character of the war” in 1965, these findings are not surprising, but they also provide little support for the claim that pre-1965 Budapest was completely oblivious to Southeast Asia (19).

Going back to 1950, it appears that, like China and the Soviet Union, in February 1950, Hungary established friendly diplomatic relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and these relations remained uninterrupted for the next forty years. This was immediately after the signing of the Geneva Accords, which ended the armed conflict in North Vietnam. Hungary established its embassy in Hanoi (January 1955). On the other hand, the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was opened in Budapest a year later.

As early as 1962, the Hungarian Foreign Ministry instructed its envoys in Hanoi to pay close attention to the foreign policy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam so that Hungary could respond to those steps with the necessary speed (20).

In one top-secret report, the Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires in Hanoi, László Kovács, noted that during a meeting with the Soviet ambassador there had been a disagreement within the socialist camp that had emerged following the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1961 (21). The Hungarian Foreign Ministry also ordered its diplomats to take into account the North Vietnamese approach and use the ambassador's high-level personal contacts to obtain more detailed information about the position of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the reasons for Hanoi's reservations, North Vietnam's position and mediation efforts between Moscow and Beijing. As a result of Western intervention, South Vietnam became volatile. The United States seemed determined to use all means to suppress the rising armed resistance in the South. Given the importance of the political and geographical situation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and the major role it played in Southeast Asia, the Hanoi embassy was responsible for following up on internal and foreign policy events in South Vietnam as well as Laos. and Cambodia, with great interest (22).

In fact, it has become clear that the Warsaw Pact countries that sought to formulate an early political settlement were not acting out of altruism, but rather out of personal interest. However, from late 1964, when the situation in Vietnam seemed to be beginning to deteriorate sharply, the Soviet Union and its allies did their best to prevent Hanoi from siding with Beijing and to persuade the leaders of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to begin negotiations with the

United States. However, until 1967, the Soviet Union was concerned about its credibility as the leader of the communist world (23).

The first concrete sign of Hanoi's willingness to hold talks came after the Gulf of Tonkin incident known as the "U Thant Incident" in late 1964. On August 6, 1964, UN Secretary-General Thant suggested that direct bilateral talks should begin between Hanoi and Washington. By mid-September, Thant obtained, through Soviet channels, North Vietnamese explicit agreement to participate in talks with the United States, but no reaction came from Washington.

Moreover, U Thant's proposals were "merely procedural, and did not address substantive issues or give any indication that the talks would lead to an agreement." U Thant said that the North Vietnamese agreed. US Secretary of State Dean Rusk said, "Bilateral talks are out of the question, especially since there are no indications that they will be fruitful." Rusk asked U Thant if he had "any real indications from Hanoi about their willingness to stop the aggression." U Thant replied that he "dealt only with the procedure," and Rusk said that "it is dangerous to consider only the procedure without knowing whether something can be accomplished" (24).

This period indicates that although the Soviet bloc countries publicly condemned American "provocation" as "American aggression against the peaceful people of North Vietnam," they were not sure that Hanoi was innocent in the outbreak of open hostilities. After the Gulf of Tonkin incident, Soviet bloc diplomats in Hanoi reveal that they seriously considered the question of "Cui prodest?" For whom? They listed the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a potential beneficiary. The report of these talks offered several possible explanations, including the argument that some Democratic Republic of Vietnam officials saw the events in the Gulf of Tonkin as making clear that the time had come to resolve the South Vietnam issue, and that a general uprising in The South is now within reach. The report concludes that regardless of who initiated the incident, the three main parties involved—Washington, Beijing, and Hanoi—have made good use of this opportunity (25).

Regarding some views on Budapest's failure to notice that Vietnam had become an internal US issue, the subsequent discussions and decisions of the Hungarian Politburo indicate that the detailed reports on events and opinions regarding Vietnam that were submitted and transmitted from Washington were thoughtfully and thoroughly examined by the leaders of It showed that the actions of both Washington and Hanoi took place under strong pressure from their allies and internal opposition, and therefore they must be ready to listen to voices promoting negotiated solutions. In a report on this, "friendly" diplomats assessed this as a possible sign of a change in the political line in Hanoi (26).

The Hungarian Politburo was fully aware of the results of Soviet Premier Kosygin's talks in Hanoi and other decisive political and military events that took place in Vietnam (and the United States), as well as the results of bilateral talks. Consultations with Soviet bloc countries were considered an opportune time to suggest that Soviet leaders discuss "certain issues" on informal party lines, completely omitting diplomatic protocol. The "Exchange of Views" consisted of two main points: the first: current foreign policy affairs and the problems of the international communist movement, with Vietnam as the first item on the list; The second is the main problems of implementing the Hungarian economic plan. for the period 1966-1970 and requests from Hungary in connection with these problems." The final part of the second

item on the agenda included a request for a loan in the amount of 400 million rubles, supplies of 300 million rubles worth of material goods, and a gold reserve of 70 thousand kilograms for the Hungarian National Bank. The message which contained these "proposals" was personally signed by Kadar and addressed directly to Brezhnev. Kádár concluded the letter by emphasizing the urgency of the issue, explaining that because preliminary talks on the Soviet contribution to Hungary's next five-year plan had not been completed, the Hungarian economic planning machinery was effectively paralyzed (27).

The Hungarian Politburo was fully aware that the situation in Vietnam was becoming more "complicated" and also realized how annoying this was to Moscow. Brezhnev likely told SWP leaders about Moscow's concerns during the January talks and floated a possible solution. This information gave them the idea to link their economic demand to the issue of "support for Vietnam."

The talks began issuing a series of public statements emphasizing the need for a negotiated solution. He could give a "positive" response to the president's proposals if the United States stopped its bombing of North Vietnam. Also, on May 11, 1965, ten days before the Hungarian party delegation left for Moscow, the Politburo decided to begin preliminary consultations. Kadar expected that upon his return, Brezhnev would make a direct request asking Moscow to help convince Hanoi of the necessity of a political solution - and thus the Soviet Union would be more receptive and lenient to Hungary's appeal for financial assistance, and his calculations proved correct.

As a result, an informal exchange of views took place between the Soviet and Hungarian delegations led by Soviet President Kadar in Moscow on May 24-25, 1965. In the first part of the discussions, Brezhnev informed the Hungarians about the internal situation in the Soviet Union. Then he moved to the international situation, discussing Moscow's bilateral relations with the countries of the socialist camp and with the leading Western powers. It is noteworthy that Brezhnev portrayed the Vietnam issue as an integral part of bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and China, which emerged from the statement that the discussion with Beijing is expected to be long, and that the prospects for normalizing relations with China in the short term may be long. Relations between the two countries were bleak. He then added, in a surprising turn, that China's position on the Vietnam question prevented the Soviet Union from effectively assisting the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Brezhnev concluded by saying that China's behavior had created the impression that Moscow was not making every effort to help and that China was using the war in Vietnam to force the Union. The Soviet Union was forced to enter into direct conflict with the United States (28).

On October 6, 1966, after preliminary discussions, the meeting took place between Hungarian Foreign Minister János Péter and United States Secretary of State Dean Rusk in the building of the American mission operating next to the United Nations. On the American side, the meeting was attended by Nils, Rusk's secretary, and on the Hungarian side, Chargé d'Affaires Radvány. During the meeting, Radvány indicated that following last week's meeting, he compiled the memorandum and coordinated it with Nils to obtain complete clarity, and after exchanging some general pleasantries, Rusk stated, "I would like to express our appreciation and gratitude for your interest in the Vietnam issue, and your government's actions related to it." At this stage, I would like to ask you about your view on resolving this issue. Peter replied: I would also like to ask you about your ideas about the solution, and your way out of this

difficult and increasingly dangerous situation. Rasik replied: I prefer, if we agree at the beginning of this conversation, that we talk frankly. And quite frankly, so that we can clearly understand each other's thoughts, and everything behind them; Peter expressed his agreement.

It is worth noting that during the conversation, Rask returned to this remark twice, and stressed that he, for his part, would speak frankly and completely, which may seem a bit harsh at times, but he believes that, given the seriousness of the topic, the use of the most accurate expressions is a must. In order to evaluate the situation, find out the true intentions, and avoid misunderstandings. Peter agreed to this (29).

It is surprising that even now, more than thirty years after the Radvany Report was published, it remains the most important work on Hungary's role in the Vietnam conflict. Until Hirshberg's article appeared, the bulk of the weight was attached to Radvany's book — apart from the fact that he was the top Hungarian diplomat in Washington from 1962 to 1967 and that he defected and told American officials his version of the story. "This was not an everyday occurrence" - derived from its solitary, even unique, nature. Radvany's account was always the case of a single witness. No other analyzes by Hungarian authors on Hungary's involvement in Vietnam have emerged. Hence, questions have arisen in this regard and the background has remained obscure. The seriousness of Hungarian mediation efforts has been unanswered since 1978.

For many years Hungarian scholars did not view the Vietnam War as a relevant topic in Hungarian history. The first serious challenges to Radvany's credibility did not surface until twenty years later in a 1998 foreign policy article by János Kádár (long-time First Secretary of the Socialist Workers' Party), following a report regarding the visit of a Hungarian delegation led by Kádár to Moscow on 23–29 May, 1965. The report was discussed at a meeting of the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP) on 8 June 1965. Both the report and the discussion put the role of Hungarian mediation in a fundamentally new perspective, with regard to the views and views on the nature of the Vietnam War, under which it was considered, primarily a Soviet-American superpower conflict manifesting itself in the form of a local war, had to be significantly reconsidered. But all this did not prevent him from also pointing out that Kádár's visit to Moscow was the starting point for the Hungarian peace initiative in which Hungarian officials carefully examined the East and West before contacting the Americans or the North Vietnamese and engaging in mediation. During the cessation of bombing." The entire Politburo minutes were published in the yearbook of the Budapest Institute in 1965. In the introduction to the source a precise chronology is given indicating that the first steps were taken in January 1965 and according to Radvany's book. Brezhnev "appeared" in Budapest with Soviet Politburo member Nikolai Podgorny to discuss the matter with Kadar, and the Soviet bloc's policy toward Vietnam was coordinated, among other things. Radvani's "pop-up" expression suggested that the Soviet visit was a surprise. The steps of January 1965 constitute a natural starting point for any chronology relating to secret and non-secret Hungarian diplomacy during the cessation of the bombing and the remaining years of the conflict (30).

The evidence and archival findings have combined to produce a portrayal of Hungarian diplomatic mediation that differs radically from the description in Radvany's book. The latter insisted that Hungarian leaders were completely ignorant and neglectful of Vietnam until 1965, that the entire mediation effort was a sham, that the personal machinations of the Hungarian Foreign Minister played a major role in the deception, and that American officials were wrong



to believe that Moscow was “interested.” “by helping Washington extricate itself from the war”, that the American peace efforts were entirely sincere, and that “Hanoi's obsessive determination to carry out its aggression and win the war” was what inherently made a peace settlement impossible. Evidence confirms these claims only by examining the actions of the Hungarian government directly After the bombing stopped, it sheds decisive light on the Soviet bloc’s diplomacy towards Vietnam, not only during this intervening period, but throughout the duration of the war (31).

Previous views on this matter appeared to have almost without exception dismissed Hungarian and Polish mediation efforts as completely insincere and deceptive. This unanimous rejection arose, for the most part, from statements made by Radvanyi. Among other things, Radvanyi asserted that Hungarian Foreign Minister János Péter personally orchestrated the alleged fraud, partly in order to improve his political standing and partly “to encourage a bombing cessation that would enable Vietnam North to accelerate its infiltration and resupply. For its forces in the south (32).”

Despite Radvanyi's claim that the Hungarian initiative was completely "fraudulent", the evidence suggests that Peter actually had real contacts in Hanoi and received at least some indications... However, they are completely absent from Radvanyi's account, which appears only superficially. Just the idea that Peter was not motivated by Hanoi's "willingness"—which was better defined, at least until early 1968, as Hanoi's "reluctance." Peter was motivated by Moscow's strong and sincere desire to find a political solution to the conflict and Hungary's interest Although Hungary's motives had a slightly different basis from Moscow's, both were real and Peter's personal ambitions had little to do with it. The same applied to Hanoi's interests, as the Hungarians did not care much about what was used. Vietnamese to halt bombing in terms of military strategy Later, when they learned that their diplomatic efforts had proven essentially unsuccessful, the Hungarian commanders and their Soviet counterparts were not relieved to learn that Hanoi was able to exploit the pause to accelerate the infiltration and resupply of its forces in the south.

The North Vietnamese were convinced that the United States could or should be defeated militarily, but they also believed that there was an escape route: the route back to Geneva should be left open (33).

The Hungarians took their first direct steps on the other side of the United States. On October 7, 1965, Rusk, Peter, and Radvanyi were sitting together at the headquarters of the American delegation to the United Nations in New York City, discussing the Vietnam issue, in light of Peter's speech at the UN General Assembly the previous day. Peter had publicly referred to the diplomatic framework that the Hungarians had been secretly promoting since the beginning of the year: If the United States stopped bombing North Vietnam, Hanoi would agree to begin negotiations. At this point, the first crucial question about the attempt in general can be answered: What was Foreign Minister Peter in mind when he started dropping hints in the fall of 1965? On the other hand, throughout 1965 Hungarian officials received numerous direct and indirect indications that Hanoi was willing to talk, including a conversation Beer had on August 25 with North Vietnamese officials and, most important of all, secret Soviet-North Vietnamese communications provided by Kadar at the 22nd Congress, June meeting of the HSWP Politburo. In June 1965 these indicators, especially Peter's Common Wealth Statement, were

genuine North Vietnamese initiatives, so Buda Pest had direct permission from Hanoi to deliver the message to Washington (34).

Despite this, consensus within the leadership of the Vietnamese Labor Party on the issue of peace talks had become impossible, and under these circumstances the Hungarians, who had no other choice, had to, if they wanted to complete what they had started, find a way to tip the balance in Hanoi towards the "pro" approach. "For peace." During a brief period in December 1965, the factional struggle in Hanoi, which had been exacerbated by Hungarian mediation, seemed to have won the "pro-Soviet" side. The Hungarian method of creating a *fait accompli*, at least initially, proved surprisingly effective and the original Hungarian peace initiative appeared to be intended to support this pro-peace position or "trend" in general by pitting Chinese and North Vietnamese hardliners against a *fait accompli*. It also appeared that it was very likely that factional conflict had played a decisive role in Hanoi's sudden retreat during the actual "bombardment cessation mediation" in mid-February 1966. Unfortunately, apart from occasional allusions to the "high-level contacts" the Hungarian embassy had with... "Certain members" of the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam were used as a source of classified information about the expectations and intentions of the exemption program. There were only a very limited number of Hungarian documents that indicated direct secret cooperation between North Vietnamese officials and the Hungarian embassy in Hanoi. One of these documents was the report Confidential from the Hungarian Ambassador to Hanoi, Gustav Gogoliak, dated May 1964 and concerns, in his words, "the way in which the widely declared official policy of the Republic of Hungary is discussed, interpreted and implemented at the internal and secret level. The importance of the report describes a cynical, even Slanderously, the Chinese views on the "deviation" of the Soviet Union meant that the Hungarians and Poles were also acting harshly at Moscow's instigation. The word incitement is more appropriate here because the Soviet Union was far from forcing the Allies to mediate and because a proper settlement of the conflict would have been possible. It is in the common interest of all the countries of the Soviet bloc, as the Soviet Union did not need to ask those countries to lead Hanoi in the right direction, i.e., bringing Hanoi closer to the bloc and distancing it from China (35).

But all of this did not prevent Foreign Minister Peter, at a meeting of the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP) on January 21, 1966, announcing that the Hungarian mediation attempt had proven to be a failure, which angered Hungarian Prime Minister Kádár and deepened the disappointment and anger that he himself expressed. and other members of the Hungarian Politburo, suggesting that Hungary's attempts to mediate the war were deliberate, carefully executed, and, most importantly, carried out in good faith. Although their efforts promoted the interests of Hungary and the broader Soviet bloc, they were also intended to give the United States a real chance to escape the Vietnamese trap safely (36).

The Kádár foreign policy principle was the Soviet bloc's own interpretation of *détente*: according to this view, the communist states were simultaneously engaged in a ruthless struggle against capitalist imperialism and in peaceful coexistence with those same capitalists and imperialists. Although Kádár took the principles seriously, However, economic considerations were dominant at the time when preparations for the reform of the socialist economic system in Hungary were in their final stage. The plan for the "New Economic Mechanism" was approved by the Ninth Congress of the Socialist Workers' Party in December 1966. Accordingly, the reform The Hungarian economist "proved to be the most significant structural

change to the economy since the establishment of the Stalinist-Leninist communist regime, and therefore, it was necessary to reassure the Soviet leadership that the reforms applied only to the economic sphere." Hence, Hungarian foreign policy vis-à-vis Hungarian-Soviet relations was aimed at implementing a policy of "constructive loyalty".

The proposed economic reform would require Western loans and advanced Western technology in Hungary, while cynicism about the backwardness of Soviet technology was common throughout the communist era. From the Hungarians' perspective, North Vietnam's disregard for the rules of the game was extremely disturbing, because this intransigence threatened the emerging détente that might lead to improved economic relations between East and West (37).

Based on the above, the HSWP Politburo discussion record of 21 December 1966 answers the final question about the validity of Hanoi's intention to talk and the sincerity of Hungary's efforts to bring about those talks: Were there "faint initial indications of Hanoi's willingness to talk?" Did he hold direct talks in case the bombing stopped? ... Real or just an illusion or an invention all along? The answer is that Hanoi's initial indications of readiness were actually real, or at least the Hungarians' beliefs were real and they continued to do so, on that basis. When suddenly, in mid-January 1966, it appeared Although the leaders of the Republic of Vietnam suddenly changed their minds, the Hungarians could not overcome their feeling that the North Vietnamese had let them down, but what was disheartening was Hanoi's threat that any further steps taken by Hungary would have "unfortunate consequences." Instead of taking offense and responding forcefully, a more appropriate response is to leave the door open for further attempts (38).

The meeting opened with an oral report by Peter summarizing the fruitless visit to Moscow, Beijing and Hanoi of Jerzy Michalowski, Poland's special envoy, from 30 December 1965 to 16 January 1966, and Peter's private visit to Warsaw on 7 December 1966, through which The Polish Foreign Ministry discussed the situation, which they said had reached a dead end because each side expected the other to take the first official step. It was the belief of both communities that the Poles and Hungarians could push things through the current impasse by recommending, separately or jointly, to both the United States and the Democratic Republic of the Congo that each side contact the other directly and that Budapest and Warsaw could help arrange a meeting. Although Budapest agreed, by the time Peter arrived in Warsaw, the Poles had received a bleak report of the Michalowski discussions in Hanoi, which, in their view, put an end to Poland's involvement. But the Poles were not in a hurry. In return, Peter sent a series of letters exchanged between Washington and Hanoi via Budapest in the period from December 23 to January 4, explaining that after some disagreement and misunderstanding about the nature of direct talks and possible locations, the two sides agreed to Starting negotiations on January 15, this idea was downplayed in Budapest and in Washington in this regard because the Hungarian leaders had done so.

This was highlighted by the text of the memorandum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to Peter Janos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary: "From January 7, 1966 until now, the United States has given no indication of any change at all in its aggressive actions in Vietnam. In the south they have been launching frantic attacks." At the same time, they are preparing for new military activities in the two regions.

The so-called peace offensive, which at that very moment was the target of a vociferous American propaganda campaign, aimed solely at appeasing public opinion in the United States and the wider world, taking advantage of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the world for peace, and restricting freedom of expression. Therefore, the Vietnamese people are negotiating under The American conditions serve as a pretext for a new and very dangerous escalation of the conflict. Accordingly, it will not be possible to reach a political settlement of the Vietnamese problem except after the United States government accepts the position of the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which affirmed the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination, and this acceptance is proven through concrete actions, and in The same time and forever. Unconditionally stop air attacks and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. But this matter collided with the reality of what the American administration declared and committed to what was known as the American Fourteen Points, which show confirmation of the United States' refusal to withdraw its forces from South Vietnam and its demand that the people of South Vietnam lay down their weapons and surrender (39).

This is consistent with the essence of what the Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires told Rask, that the subject of your information as of January 7 may create a false impression that the US peace initiative is acceptable and has found support from the Vietnamese side. At the same time, the United States seeks to present its position in a false light and deceive public opinion about its peaceful attack. There is a strong possibility that they will spread the content of the discussions (40).

The talks between the two parties were unlike the exchange of official documents that was already taking place in Saigon and had nothing to do with the terms. On the basis of Hanoi's previous messages, the Hungarians believed that this part of the issue had been settled, that is, that no conditions would be set for the peace talks and that only technical issues remained. The Hungarians came to this conclusion after listening to a summary of a memorandum sent on January 15, 1966. If the Americans wanted to talk, they could initiate it in any of the countries where there was a foreign representation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which used a phrase almost identical to the written message the Hungarians received from Hanoi in December 31, 1965. The January 15 memorandum did not specifically mention the National Liberation Front, while the December 31 letter did: "If the Americans want something, they should contact the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front directly." At that point he withdrew The North Vietnamese for some reason parted with the deal and blamed the Hungarians. One possible reason for the withdrawal of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was Chinese interference (41).

This possibility appears to have been strongly supported by a remark made by a member of the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party that between the second Hanoi letters of 29 January 1965 and the third of 31 December 1965, the Hungarians received "various reports" to the effect that the Vietnamese were engaged in a conflict with the Chinese with the help of intermediaries. However, the subsequent revelation of 'the truth' suggests that the second possibility should be viewed as the less likely of the two explanations (42).

The Hungarian mediation in the Vietnam War was a two-pronged, three-stage political-diplomatic effort that began in January 1965 and ended in October 1966. In the first stage, January-June 1965, the HSWP Politburo set the framework for its peace initiative by adopting

a series of important decisions. In foreign policy. The Politburo launched exploratory talks partly to obtain a clear picture of the current situation and partly to secure the support of Hungary's allies – especially to ensure that any planned maneuvers were consistent with the Soviet bloc's general approach to the Vietnam conflict. In the second phase, which overlaps slightly with the first, June to September 1965 Hungary made its first indirect contacts with both Hanoi and Washington, conveying messages tailored to each of the warring parties: to Washington, negotiations are now possible; For Hanoi. In the third phase, from October 1965 to October 1966, Hungary conducted direct contacts with both Hanoi and Washington by sending high-ranking officials to both capitals, partly in order to add more focus and credibility to learning about the views of the two governments. The highlight of this phase was the actual “bombardment cessation mediation” (from 23 December 1965 to 31 January 1966, when Hungary not only served as a messenger between the two parties, but also seriously influenced the course of events by urging the belligerents to clarify their positions And give specific answers to the questions asked, so that each side clearly understands the other's terms and conditions. In addition, Hungary agreed to change the messages and conduct direct communication (43).

In fact, Hungary failed to achieve the first of its two main objectives in undertaking a mediation attempt in 1965-1966. This has been known since almost the time of the events because no direct negotiations took place between American and North Vietnamese officials during this period. It has also long been known that by the mid-1960s Hungary enjoyed a certain degree of freedom in foreign policy. In exchange for unconditional loyalty to the Soviet Union, Hungary had appropriate, if carefully restricted, freedom of action to pursue independent diplomatic goals. In this regard, the Budapest Mediation achieved its second goal (44).

Details of Hungary's mediation efforts have only gradually emerged. This was clearly demonstrated, for example, that these efforts began as early as January 1965 and continued for a period much longer than the 37-day cessation of bombing.

The fundamental mistake the Hungarians made (a mistake they shared with their allies) was to give the North Vietnamese a large amount of dangerous tools and full political support and then try to persuade them not to use those tools. Hungary's attempt at mediation also failed because the other parties involved made fundamental mistakes. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam made the mistake of underestimating American military power and the skill with which the Johnson administration could manipulate American domestic public opinion. For his part, Secretary of State Rusk made the mistake of "overestimating the patience of the American people and underestimating the toughness of the North Vietnamese." Finally, the Hungarians made a second mistake, if we can call it a mistake, in not knowing - or at least not believing that both Hanoi and Washington, long before Hungary began to make plans for a political solution, had each made the same choice based on On their wrong calculations. Which was represented by their choice of war (45).

## Conclusion

1. One of the most prominent direct reasons for the faltering of Hungarian mediation efforts is the failure to conduct direct negotiations between both American and North Vietnamese officials during the sixties, a period that extended to the middle of this period during which Hungary enjoyed a degree of freedom in matters of foreign policy in exchange for

unconditional loyalty to the Soviet Union. This freedom was restricted to achieving independent diplomatic goals

2. The failure of the Hungarian mediation can be attributed to the mistakes of the parties involved in the mediation efforts, and they are certainly fundamental mistakes. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam made a mistake when it underestimated the importance and appreciation of the American military power. At the same time, the US State Department, represented by Secretary of State Dean Rusk, made a mistake twice, the first time in overestimating the patience of opinion. The American year and the second in underestimating the importance and toughness of the North Vietnamese, and the same applies to the Hungarians. It is possible to say that it was their mistake in not believing or not knowing that both Hanoi and Washington had, not long before Hungary began to make its plans to reach peaceful solutions, had chosen to continue Fighting.

### **Research margins**

(1) Sadiq Hassan Al-Sudani, A Brief History of the United States of America (1945-2022), 1st edition, Al-Kitab Press, Baghdad, 2023, pp. 148-151.

(2) John Fitz Gerald Kennedy, the thirty-fifth President of the United States of America, a Democrat from Massachusetts, born in 1917. He served as US President for the period from 1916 until his assassination in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963. For more -

(3) Sadiq Hassan Al-Sudani, the previous source, pp. 176-177

(4) AURELIE BASHA INOVOSEJT, "I Made Mistakes" Robert McNamara in the Vietnam War, 1960 – 1968, CAMBRIDGE, UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2019.

(5) Sadiq Hassan Al-Sudani, previous source, p. 152

(6) An American politician who served as the thirty-sixth President of the United States for the period 1963-1969. He served as Vice President for the period 1961 - 1963 as a Senator from Texas. He was the Senate Majority Leader for the period 1955 - 1956. He witnessed the era of amazing explorations in the field of the space program, as NASA ran a space program bearing the name Jimini, which developed the Saturn rocket. Johnson was a supporter of the space program. Since its inception, when three astronauts succeeded in orbiting the moon in December 1968, its era has also witnessed riots in neighborhoods inhabited by blacks, known as the Long Summer of Heat, perhaps the most notable of which occurred in the Harlem neighborhood in New York in 1964 and in Los Angeles in 1965. For more:

Robert Dallek, LYNDON B JOHNSON, OXFORD UNIVENTY PRESS, 2004, p, 36-40.

(7) It is the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, which is an armed resistance movement that was active for the period between 1954 - 1976. These forces began by declaring their rebellion against the rule of Diem, who ruled after his brother was removed and won rigged elections. Diem was, according to the opinions of some historians, American policy makers used him as a tool. The Viet Cong launched their first attack on the armed Vietnamese forces on July 8, 1959 near Bien Hau. For more: -

A. J Kingston, Vietnam war from Saigon and Hanoi the Johns Hopkins University Press Baltimore and London, 2023, pp 124 – 146.

(8) The riots in American history were only one summer away. By mid-March 1968, the will of many patriotic Americans to continue supporting the war in Vietnam had been psychologically damaged beyond repair. Even President Johnson, the hawkish leader, began to read the political writing on the wall: End the war, or forget the Democratic victory in November. So, in one of history's ironies, at the same moment that Lyndon Johnson grabbed the communist regime in North Vietnam by the throat, he allowed politics to undermine his chance of victory in Vietnam. When the enemy was on the verge of collapse, Lyndon Johnson gave them new hope by declaring a "deadline" to bomb the North and inviting them to "peace talks." On March 31, 1968, President Johnson, in a nationally televised address to the American people, announced that he had ordered an end to the bombing of North Vietnam and invited the Communists to attend peace negotiations. Lyndon Johnson then announced that he would not run for re-election in November. At that time, General Fu realized that although he lost the battles, many could soon win the psychological warfare. Give up? impossible. It is true that the North Vietnamese agreed to attend the "peace talks," but they stalled for more time to regroup, rearm, and train. For more: -

RICHARD T. STANLEY *Psychedelic sixties; A social history of the United States, 1960-69*, 2013, p. 99.

(9) Lloyd C. Gardner and Ted Gittinger, *The search for peace in Vietnam 1964 – 1968*, Texas & University Press College Station, 2014, p. 311.

(10) LASZLO BORHI, *DEALING WITH DICTATORS THE UNITED STATES, HUNGARY, AND EAST CENTRAL EUROPE, 1942 – 1989*, INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1993, P 205.

(11) KATHRYN C. STATLER, *REPLACING THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN VIETNAM*, THE UNIVERSITY PRESS OF KENTUCKY, p. 106, 2007.

(12) (1890 - 1969) The godfather of the Vietnamese revolution, a Vietnamese revolutionary fighter and leader, and head of the Vietnamese Workers' Party. He headed North Vietnam in 1954. He was the first president of North Vietnam, so he is considered the founder of the North Vietnamese state. He led the Vietnamese revolution and fought the French, the Japanese, and the Vietnamese separatists. Ho Chi Minh Ho was considered a pioneer of the nationalist renaissance in Indochina, Ho Chi Minh adopted the principle that all peoples of the world are equal and every people has the right to life, happiness and freedom. For more:

Carlyle A. Thayer, *Following Ho Chi Minh the Memoirs of a North Vietnamese Colonel*, University of Hawaii Press Honolulu, 2019, p. 32.

(13) Pierre Asselin, *Hanoi's Road to the Vietnam War, 1954*, University of California Press, 2013, p. 131.

(14) *lipid*, p. 132.

(15) Steven Totosy, *Comparative Hungarian Cultural Studies*, Purdue University Press, 2011, p.248.

(16) Andrea Pressello, Japanese diplomacy and the Cambodian conflict, 1978 – 1993, New York, 2018, p. 67.

(17) Dennis Werling, Tightrope; Finland and Hungary in Cold War, New York, 2023, p. 111.

(18) Allan E. Goodman, making peace; the united states and conflict resolution, Routledge, 2019, p. 203.

(19) Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964 – 1968, Vietnam June – December 1965, Vol, 111, 1996, p. 723.

(20) Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964 – 1968, Eastern Europe, Vol, V11, Washington, p. 309.

(21) Laszlo Borhi, Op,s Cit. p20.

(22) John D. Ciorciari, the limits of Alignment Southeast Asia and the Great Powers, Georgetown University Press, 2010, p. 187.

(23) After reviewing the US position on the negotiations and the lack of response from the North Vietnamese, U Thant was told that their talks were supposed to be secret. The Secretary-General's statements at his press conference were said to have thus caused "panic" in Washington, and created very serious doubts about whether it was possible to conduct confidential communications with the Secretariat on international affairs of vital interest to the United States." He added that President Johnson was "disturbed in particular" from the public disclosure of this information as well as from "Youthan's reference to facts which implied that the truth was being withheld from. The American people. For more: -

WILLAM CONRAD GIBBONS. The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War, Princeton legacy library, 2014, p. 101.

(24) It is known that back-channel diplomacy between the United States and the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union and West Germany played a decisive role in the settlement of the German question and the success of the CSCE process during the golden years of détente between 1969 and 1975. For more: -

Mark Kramer and Vit Smetana, Imposing, Maintaining, and Tearing Open the Iron Curtain the Cold War and East-Central Europe, 1945 – 1989, New York, 2014, p 216.

(25) Christian F. Ostermann, Inside China's Cold War, 2008, p. 370.

(26) Ibid, p. 372.

(27) United States. Congress, congressional record; Proceedings and Debates, 1970, p. 18241.

(28) We recognize that the socialist world is interested in the security and prosperity of North Vietnam, Rusk stated. There is no disagreement between us and the socialist bloc in this area. At the same time, it is necessary for the socialist world to recognize that the United States is concerned with the security of South Vietnam. We accept the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1954, and the Warsaw Pact Declaration on Vietnam issued in July, but we can only accept the settlement on the basis of reciprocity. For more: -



Csba Bekes, James G. Hreshberg, Janos Kemeeny and Zoltan Szoke, Documentary Evidence on the Hungarian Mediation efforts between the U. S. And the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (1965 - 1967), vol, 111, Budapest, 2018, p 5 -6.

(29) James Hershberg, the lost chance for peace in Vietnam, Routledge, 2019, p. 198

(30) Ibid, p. 103.

(31) Chrhstian F. Ostermann, Op.cit, p. 187.

(32) Mark Jason Gilbert, Why the North won the Vietnam War, New York, 2002, 163.

(33) Dale Walton, the Myth of inevitable U S Defeat in Vietnam, London, 2013, p. 85.

(34) United States. Congress, op, cit, p 2111.

(35) Steven Totosy, op. cit., p. 87.

(36) Laszlo Borhi, op, cite, p. 221.

(37) Herbert Y. SCHANDLER, the war that couldn't bewon, London, 2013, p. 94.

(38) Laszlo Borhi, op, cit, p. 42.

(39) HIStory, London, 2016, p57.

(40) Jan Palmowski, Christopher Riches, Adictionary of Contem Porary World.

(41) Ibid, 76.

(42) Lorenz M. Luthi, Cold Wars; Asia, the Middle East, Europe, New York, 2020, p482.

(43) Lorenz M. Luthi, op, cit, p483.

(44) Jan Palmowski, op, cite, p. 77.

(45) Jan Palmowski, op.cit, p. 87.