

1957. március 14-én
Veu Sancte Powell
Riverben. — Gratias agimus

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is not an everyday occurrence that the students and staff of a University leave their own country to find a new home in order to be able to preserve their idea of freedom and to live as free men. I believe I am not conceited when I say that our Exodus shall be written on the pages of history to provide example and inspiration for generations to come. What can we learn from the example of Sopron University?

First of all this: ideas can not be made accepted through force, new social systems cannot be created by oppression. Only the will of the people, I repeat the free will of the people, can create new social order. Since it was not the will of the Hungarian people that a communistic social system be adopted in the country, but that system was forced upon us, the end result was that we had to start out on the journey of the homeless. Nobody can evaluate today what a tremendous failure this is from the point of view of the Soviet system.

The conscience of nations shall long remember those pages of Soviet-Hungarian history which Mr. Khrushchev or Bulganin shall never be able satisfactorily to explain for any intelligent man.

Canada's receiving these refugees, on the other hand, shall everlastingly remain a bright page in Canada's history. Because it is an immensely positive contribution to the whole of humanity, when a nation, Canada, gives new home and new hope for so many Hungarian refugees, amongst them four our own university. I am quite sure that the entire world regards this action of the Canadian people as an outstanding expression of humanitarianism and understanding.

But by being received into this country our task is not over yet. As the snow covers the graves of those who fell fighting for liberty, and as the memory of the uprising diminishes we ask of all Canadians, and we pledge ourselves that they shall not let the flame of freedom disappear. This is our common duty, because it is false to believe that any one country can remain free for a length of time after other countries are cruelly oppressed.

We all have to understand that peace is not the absence of war., and that after the butchery of a nation it is hypocritical to talk piously about peace, it is more than hypocritical, it shows a serious lack of historical and political responsibility.

We have to explain to everybody, workingmen, intellectuals, socialists and even communists that the imperialistic intention of bolshevism is only camouflaged as socialism, in fact this bolshevism has lost all its credit as far as seriously thinking people are concerned.

In a small, destroyed country, like our Hungary, nothing specially Hungarian happened, the revolution was not the outcome of fiery Hungarian temperament, it was a fight for the freedom of humanity and especially for the freedom of the working classes. This is the crucial question: if the idea of freedom, bestowed upon us by God and nature, for which idea throughout the ages people fought and died, can be erased from peoples minds, crushed in its manifestation in the east, then some day the idea of freedom shall become but an empty illusion in the west too.

I talked about this subject deliberately, although I realize that this is perhaps unusual in an opening ceremony like ours, but I wanted to talk about this, because I realize that in this township of Powell River people were willing to

that in this township of Powell River people were willing to risk their lives for the freedom of their country in a percentage unequalled in the whole of Canada, and I dared to say these few words here in this community which so graciously opened its doors to us.

I am quoting you from a letter which a student of mine received from his father still in Hungary: "We Hungarians expecting freedom here, are extremely grateful to the freedom-loving people of Canada and Powell River especially, for receiving our sons with so much love." We, too, are extremely grateful for your hospitality. But we want to do more than feel grateful. One question occurs frequently in our minds: what can we do to express our gratitude? At this very moment we cannot do too much. But later we hope we shall be able to contribute to the development of this country, this province and Powell River itself.

Of course first we must learn English. Then we shall have to complete our university work to be able to do our best for our gracious hosts.

This is our programme and we asked God's blessing in our services. And now to be able to fulfill this plan of ours I wish good health and strength to my students and colleagues, and ask from our Canadian hosts to help us, so that we all together, might cooperate in working for a better future for Canada, Hungary, nay for the whole of humanity.