

AHF, Tibor Eckhardt, and the "Movement for Independent Hungary"



On the 31st of December 1940, the Amerikai Magyar Népszava, the most influential Hungarian language daily at the time, published a front-page editorial headlined "The Hour has Struck." The editorial proclaimed that it was "the historic mission of Americans of Hungarian origin to give their whole

hearted effort to the liberation of their mother country which is clubbed into submission by the Nazi terror." The editorial called upon the American Hungarian Federation to unfurl the banner of a Free Hungary Movement without hesitation or delay. In January 1941, AHF's Executive Committee sent a letter to President Roosevelt expressing the loyalty of the Hungarian-American populace, proclaiming, "The Executive Committee of the [AHF] as representative of the American citizens of Hungarian origin...consider it our sacred duty to lead a movement for the preservation of an independent Hungary for the freedom of its people."

WWII and the First American Hungarian Relief Program.



According to estimates, 50,000 Hungarian-Americans served in the U.S. military during the Second World War. The newspaper Szabadság (Liberty) commemorated the Hungarian-American dead by printing their name, rank and state of origin in a separate column on the front page of each issue. An average of 150 Hungarians died each month in 1945 alone. The American Hungarian Relief Program, under the auspices of the American Hungarian Federation, collected \$1,216,167.00 (over \$10.7 million in 2017 dollars) in clothing, medicine, foodstuffs, and money and sent 200,000 care packages to war-torn Budapest.

AHF Activates its 3rd American Hungarian Relief Program.



The American Hungarian Federation, working with its sister organization in Hungary, the Amerikai Magyar Klub, activated its 3rd American Hungarian Relief Program and raising \$225,000 to help families and farms affected by

devastating flooding and Toxic Sludge disasters of 2010 and 2013. Working with other volunteers and local non-profit organizations, we delivered 10,000 pounds of Relief Supplies, including seed to help small farms re-plant and survive the disaster. The effort also included a free summer camp at Lake Balaton for 100 children impacted by the flood.

AHF: An Outspoken Advocate for Human and Minority Rights



Throughout its more than 100 year old existence, AHF has decried and vigorously opposed manifestations of xenophobia, discrimination, racism and hate directed at national, ethnic, racial and religious minorities,

Sadly, the rights of Hungarian minorities have been largely ignored.

AHF has been and is deeply concerned by the discrimination and intolerance confronting Hungarian minorities in their age-old homelands in the states bordering Hungary. They are denied a range of rights, including cultural or territorial autonomy, and are forced to live in a stifling *status quo* that threatens their cultural existence. They are denied even internal self-determination that would enable them to exercise a degree of local self-rule to preserve their unique culture and identity. AHF regularly engages with public officials and the media and is an outspoken advocate for the rights of Hungarian minorities throughout the Carpathian Basin.



Selected Moments in AHF History

The American Hungarian Federation® (AHF / Amerikai Magyar Szövetség) is a national, non-partisan, all-volunteer, independent, non-profit, charitable and educational 501(C)(3) organization representing the interests of its members and the Hungarian-American community.

Founded in 1906, AHF is the largest Hungarian-American umbrella organization in the United States and among the oldest ethnic organizations in the country.

Join us!

On the Web at:

www.americanhungarianfederation.org



@amerikaimagyar / @regikepek

"In the Beginning" - Unity Between the Nations



In 1902 a movement started to build a Kossuth statue in Cleveland spear-headed by the "Szabadság" Hungarian language newspaper and its editor and first AHF President, Kohányi Tihamér. Funds were raised in few short weeks. Some 60,000 people attended the unveiling, but there was no official Hungarian representation.

As a sign of unity between the nations, the newly established AHF and its "Statue Committee" was organized and construction began on a site in Budapest's beautiful City Park (Város Liget). In 1906, several hundred Hungarian-Americans traveled to Hungary for the unveiling led by Kohányi Tihamér.



The Kossuth Bust in the U.S. Capitol



"A Gift to the People of the United States from the American Hungarian Federation" AHF commissioned a bronze bust of Lajos Kossuth and presented it to U.S. Congress. The dedication ceremony took place on March 15, 1990, Hungarian National Day, under the magnificent dome of the Capitol Rotunda. The bust is one of only two honoring non-Americans in the Capitol. The base reads, "Louis Kossuth, Father of Hungarian Democracy."

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"Justice for Hungary" - an Historic Transatlantic Flight



On July, 1931, newspapers all over the world reported on the front page that two Hungarian pilots, Alexander Magyar and George Endresz had crossed the Atlantic Ocean from the United States to Hungary in a Lockheed-Sirius

airplane named "Justice for Hungary."

The flight was intended to call attention to the dismemberment of Hungary after World War I. It was a spectacular success. On July 15, 1931, the trans-Oceanic flight left Harbor-Grace for Budapest on a non-stop flight of twenty-six hours. The historic flight took 26 hours and 20 minutes (Charles Lindbergh's flight in 1927 took six hours longer) and marked the first time that an airplane crossing the ocean had radio contact both with the starting and landing aerodromes. It was also the first time such a flight was used for political purposes. The pilots were received as heroes in Budapest.



Smithsonian Folklife Festival 2013 - "Hungarian Heritage - Roots to Revival"



The Smithsonian Institution has been presenting a Folklife Festival since 1967 on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. This the largest and most important event of this kind in the world, reaching approximately 40 million people in the U.S. The American Hungarian Federation supported the effort, committing \$10,000.00 in seed money toward the \$100,000.00 needed for the building of the Hungarian Pavilion and grounds. AHF members volunteered for this highly successful event showcasing Hungarian culture from across the Carpathian Basin.

AHF and the Divided Village of Szelmenc: "A kettévágott falu"



A Most Painful Division... Although brother and sister have lived in the same village all their lives, Maria Ivan and her brother, Arpad, had been able to hug each

other only twice in the past 53 years. As a result of a post-World War II treaty, a barbed wire fence marking borders divided them. Szelmenc (Solontsi in Ukrainian and Velke Slemence in Slovak) is found near where the Ukrainian, Slovakian and Hungarian borders meet. After WWII, the Soviets took this part along with half of the village for themselves. The other half was given to Czechoslovakia. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Soviet part became part of Ukraine. Communist officials built a wall down main street to keep families apart. The wall came down, but no border crossing was established. AHF's efforts included a Congressional hearing which helped lead to the opening of a Schengen border, reuniting families.

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution



Hungary's 1956 Revolution marked the first tear in the Iron Curtain. Hungarians from all walks of life rose up against the mighty Soviet Union in a desperate fight for freedom. Thousands died, many others tortured and jailed, 200,000 would flee, bringing untold talents to the shores of many nations,

some 38,000 coming to the U.S. AHF activated its second Hungarian Relief Program, raising over \$525,000 (over \$4.5 million in 2017 dollars) and, working closely with the International Relief Committee, found beds and supplies to aid in the resettlement effort.