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**HUNGARIAN MIDDLESCHOOLS
IN AUSTRIA
AFTER 1956**

Excerpts

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Foreword

The defeat of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 meant a new tragedy after the Second World War for the Hungarian people. Well over 200,000 Hungarians fled their country, most of them for Austria. Austria herself had just regained her freedom and was suddenly faced with the task of taking care of the housing and education needs of the many young Hungarian refugees.

By the year 1963, over 800 students graduated in the five Hungarian secondary schools. Guiding these refugee children toward graduation was certainly not the only task of these special schools. Rather, they functioned as the first starting point and integrating factor for the young refugees in a foreign country. The Hungarian secondary schools have participated significantly in the effort that after an adventurous and dangerous escape [from Hungary] this foreign country could be a new home for many children and adolescents. This was achieved without the students having forgotten their roots, as the activities of many Hungarian clubs and organizations in Austria show today.

The Hungarian secondary schools should not be seen merely as a facet of the refugee story in Austria. These were very special schools, where teachers in a difficult situation have made very special contribution to their students not only to lead them to the final examinations, but they also have prepared the students to establish an existence in a foreign country.

Elisabeth Gehrler

Austrian Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs

The Hungarian Youth Refugees (excerpt)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees called a meeting in Vienna for 22 January, 1957 with the agenda: "Possibilities for formation of Hungarian secondary schools in Austria". The focus was directed on the following, already described existing or to be constructed schools, that were supported by France, Holland and Norway:

Innsbruck,

Classrooms: Theology Department for Jesuits at the University of Innsbruck, in the Universitätsstraße

Lodging: Villa Buchroithner in the Richard Wagner street for the boys; CARITAS Home for the Catholic girls, others in the Protestant Home for Girls,

Hotel **Wiesenhof**, in Gnadewald Tyrol – purchased and set up by the Norwegian Help for Hungarians,

Grän at Reutte in Tyrol – rented for a few months thru assistance from France,

Obertraun in Upper Austria - the local school building was to be vacated in mid-February [1957] and moved to

Iselsberg - where a Dutch school project should be implemented.

Iselsberg:

Hungarian Middle School – "Königin Juliana Schule"

The predecessor of the school in Iselsberg was, as can be seen from the school stamp "*Magyar Reálgimnázium - Ungarische Realgymnasium Obertraun*". Pater János Szőke, who - as a young priest of the Silesian order - emigrated from Hungary in 1948 and was living in Italy, happened to be in Austria when the stream of refugees began to enter Austria and immediately made himself available for serving the youth. First he went to the refugee camp Traiskirchen and gathered around him children and young people who intended to complete their education. So could - under the directive of the [Austrian] Department of Education - the idea of a Hungarian school be realized in the Federal Sport School in Obertraun, Upper Austria. In those days often a lot depended on spontaneity and improvisation skills. The devotion, with which Pater Szőke took care of the young people, made it possible that the school enterprise could be taken up already in November 1956. Ministerialrat Dr. Julius Wolf, who visited the school at that time, reported to Vienna on 20. November that

... the regular school operations were set in motion astonishingly fast. The principal merit is due Pater Johann Szőke, who is the right man at the right place.

On 16 November, 1956 the teacher conference expressed confidence in him, and he was unanimously elected to principal.

Characteristic conditions for those times was naturally a large fluctuation [in student population]: Of the 19 November, 1956 - supposed first - available list shows altogether 101 pupils were registered (45 boys, 56 girls). They were enrolled in 8 classes (equivalent to grades 5 thru 12 in the USA) and were instructed by 19 teachers. By 28 December the number of students rose to 210, whereby up to this time 23 persons had again left the school. It is worth noting that of the 159 pupils and teachers, 75.71% of the school population came from the town of Sopron and environs. As a result, there were more students enrolled [for the school's capacity], so that the Board of Education of Upper Austria, on 6 February 1957 adopted a policy, according to which no more enrollments were possible, because the federal sport school - with a capacity of 160 persons - currently with 195 persons is already overcrowded. How seriously one took the learning enterprise at this school is shown already by the daily agenda: at 6.15am was wake-up time, at 9:15pm were lights out. 10 hours and 10 minutes were dedicated to classroom instruction and/or study hall, for free time - which included meals and classroom breaks - 4 hours and 50 minutes were available.

Since the federal sport school proved too small and in addition could only be used temporarily, the Dutch sided with the suggestion that a final, satisfactory solution be found. Dr. A. Kaan, Deputy Director of the *Gemeentelijke Dienst voor Sociale Zaken* in Amsterdam, who previously visited Iselsberg with P. Szőke, submitted to department

chief Dr. Vogelsang and Ministerialrat Dr. Wolf in the [Austrian] Department of Education already on 11 December, 1956 the “Dutch suggestion”. Therefore the previous health spa Hotel Bad Iselsberg at Lienz appeared to be suitable for the accommodation of 190 pupils, although building additions still were necessary. According to computations by Dr. A. Kaans the total costs of the purchase would have constituted 4.5 million Schillings¹, additionally approximately 1.5 million Schillings for the new buildings, so that the total expenditure came to 6 million Schillings. For this sum the Dutch were to be responsible. An open question about the costs of services, teacher salaries and teaching material remained. Dr. A. Kaan estimated these expenditures to be annually 3 million Schillings, to raise this money he turned to the [Austrian] Department of Education.

For the correct understanding of the joining of two conceptions and projects one must go back to the beginnings of the Dutch initiative. The first message about the Hungarian refugees in Austria was sent by the Dutch Embassy to the Hague on 20 November, 1956. In a memorandum of 7 December there was mention of buying a property to house refugees; in connection with the housing “brighter future” in Vienna that the Norwegians were named to promote. Three days later on 10 December, the Dutch Council of Ministers in its meeting already dealt concretely with the establishment of a *Hongaarse school in Oostenrijk* and its costs. On 20 December in a letter from the [Dutch] Ambassador to the [Dutch] State Department, the financial details were communicated: The Austrian Department of Education is ready to make 100,000 Schillings available for teaching materials; the maintenance cost for 1957 and a daily allowance of 20 Schillings per person would come to 1,600,000 Schillings. Furthermore internationally the Rescue Committee declared itself ready to make a 10,000 Dollar contribution, the same sum was offered by the Austrian UNESCO committee; in addition 100,000 Dollar would be made available for Hungarian refugees. The same sum was to be expected from the Rockefeller Foundation also. All in all, the sum, which should be applied for the project, came to 6,200,000 Schillings. 3 million Schillings of it should come from the Netherlands. These few indications may point out how quickly and intensely the Dutch dealt with the problem of Hungarian refugees, in particular the problem of a refugee school.

Over Christmas 1956 a *Dutch Initiative-committee for a Hungarian Middle School in Austria* was formed at Philips GmbH, Vienna I., Schwarzenbergplatz 2, whose plans were stated in a letter dated 15 January, 1957 to the [Austrian] Minister of Education Dr. Heinrich Drimmel. At the same time the establishment of a Hungarian [Middle] boarding school in close proximity to Lienz, where “the High School from Sopron, being accommodated in the federal sport school in Obertraun, could find lasting accommodation”, was discussed. Dr. Drimmel in his letter of reply of 7. February welcomed the initiative and dealt point by point with individual questions placed by the committee. First he noted that [the initiative] is not about a reestablishment [of a school], because the school in Obertraun exists already, rather it was about relocating the school. This letter was reviewed on 24 January at the Department of Education, where Gerrit Hanneman and Elsbeth Klompé participated as representatives of the committee. On this occasion again the subject of the Hotel Iselsberg, which the committee wanted to buy,

¹ In 1957 the value of the Schilling was approximately \$1 = 25 Schillings

was talked about. In this connection it should not remain unmentioned that at the beginning of the conversation it was reported that in Holland 15 million guildens (at that time approx. 100 million Schillings) were collected for purposes of the Hungarian refugee assistance. A part of this sum is intended for the support of the Hungarian intellectuals. It was therefore understandable that at the meeting of the UN High Commissioner of 22 January, 1957 W. L. Viersma and H. v. D. Wiele of the Nationaal Comité Nederland from Amsterdam were represented. The aforementioned Elsbeth Klompé was present as headmistress of the boarding school in Obertraun.

The urgency required rapid solutions. Thus a support group was established in accordance with the Austrian requirements. Under the name *Netherlands Association for the Hungarian Middle School in Iselsberg* based in Vienna established a governing body on 20 March, 1957 to which the general manager of the Philips Corporation in Austria, Gerrit Hanneman, was selected as president. Other members of the board were: Director Henri Bécude (vice-president and treasurer), Elsbeth Klompé (2. vice-president), Director Leonard M. Swennen (secretary), Professor Dr. Nikolaus Greitemann (2. secretary) and Consul General A. D. Herman G. Schouten (2. treasurer). With the establishment of the governing body, Dr. A. Kaan stepped back from the school affairs. The executive committee intended to give the established school a prominent name and turned to Queen Juliana [of Holland]. The Cabinet of the Queen in letters dated 14 May, 1957 informed the Dutch Foreign Minister,

dat de Koningin er mede instemt dat Haar naam aan deze instelling wordt verbonden. (that the Queen agrees that Her name be linked with this institution.)

According to this royal permission, also the name of the managing association was changed to *Niederländischer Verein für die ungarische Mittelschule "Königin Juliana" am Iselsberg* [Dutch Association for the Hungarian secondary school "Queen Juliana" at Iselsberg]. The Articles of Association – submitted on 23 February, 1957 and certified at the beginning of March by Federal Police headquarters - stated:

Purpose of the association is, according to the laws, that a Hungarian Middle School be established and operated at Iselsberg, in the municipality of Mölltal, Carinthia. The association pursues purely charitable goals.

Steps were undertaken immediately to realize the school project as rapidly as possible. The previous spa hotel Bad Iselsberg became the new location for the school in the Ried Penzlberg with a pertinent area of 20 hectares (that included meadows, gardens, woodlands and a construction area). Property owners were Andreas and Ingeborg Vergeiner in Lienz. According to the offer to purchase was made of a "spa with summer and winter season" consisting of primary, secondary and farm buildings that included 100 guest rooms with running water and 25 staff beds; there were 5 triples, 34 doubles and 18 single bed rooms. Furthermore:

The hotel is located in a magnificent mountain area, 1200 m above the sea level, about 12 km from the nearest train station, with bus connection every hour in summer and four times daily in winter. Own health spa sources: sulfur and iron mineral water springs, swimming pond, tennis court, ski lift (50% ownership share)..

The purchase price was set at 2.5 million Schillings exclusive of a 3% commission.

So that the whole complex could be secured for the undisturbed school operations, was not only the updating and renovation of the interior, but also the construction of a dining hall with stage - which should also serve as a chapel - connected to the main building, and a school building behind the swimming pond, kind of a barrack, was required. The 1910 established main building and the neighboring house built in 1905, which was approximately 150 m distance from the main building, were set up as boarding school buildings. According to a statement dated 31 December, 1959 the final purchase price of the property was set at 2,011,000, Schillings, the additions with additional installations 2,983,042 Schillings, amounting to a total of 4,994,042 Schillings. In addition, there were several additional investments (machines, laundry, car, office, etc.) for 1,175,990 Schillings. All in all, 6,160,033 Schillings were invested in the school project by Dutch charity (according to final report dated 8 May, 1961 the total sum was 6,171,000 Schillings.) This sum also contains the allowance of 61,000 Schillings from Care and Aid for Hungary which was spent on the purchase of a Land Rover.

The construction work and the upgrades progressed during the spring such that the moving of the school from Obertraun, in two stages, between 15 April and 15 May 1957 with 19 professors including families and 163 pupils, could take place. In main building the boys, in the auxiliary building the girls were accommodated. Since one feared, that the move and associated anxiety and stress would have adverse effects on the secondary school graduates, originally a moving date after graduation was considered. Notwithstanding, the festive opening was set for 29 October. At this time 21 teachers instructed 196 pupils: 112 boys and 84 girls. Association and school were dedicated to making the most memorable opening ceremony which, according to the report of the Dutch Embassy, actually took place on 5 November, 1957. The school choir aroused special emotions as it sang the national anthems of the Netherlands, Austria and Hungary in the native languages, as well as the dance group, that demonstrated Hungarian folk dances. Also a number of representatives of the invited guests witnessed the celebrative mood: On behalf of Queen Juliana attended E. Star Busman, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Austria, the education sector was represented by Education Minister Dr. Heinrich Drimmel personally. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, also Carinthia's and Tyrol's provincial governments, the Diocese of Gurk-Klagenfurt and the Protestant Superintendent of Innsbruck also accepted the invitation. Of course, the report would also include words of thanks from the Principal, P. Szöke to the Dutch people and to Queen Juliana. All in all, on this day the kitchen personnel served 300 persons.

Large changes in the life of the "Königin Juliana Schule" occurred with the dissolution of the Middle Schools at Wiesenhof and Kammer-at-the-Attersee. In parallel the grade 5 –

8 classes were cancelled at Iselsberg; from this time forward those students attended school in Innsbruck or Austrian schools. In September 1958, 78 students from Wiesenhof, 57 from Kammer, altogether 135 pupils were moved to Iselsberg. There were boys and young men; the latter because many young adults who were not allowed to attend high school in Hungary for political reasons, now grabbed the opportunity to do so in Austria. These changes necessitated not in the least a change in pedagogical terms, brought however to the school also additional administrative and financial burdens.

The carrier association received financial support during the existence of the “Königin Juliana Schule” from the following sources (for details see the German, original version of this report):

Austrian Department of the Interior
 Hungarian-Austrian School Association
 World Church Council – Salzburg
 Rockefeller Foundation
 International Rescue Committee
 Care and Aid for Hungary
 Caritas Belgie and others

If one counts in addition the costs of school projects, then the total sum is 16,871,000 Schillings. In view of these numbers one becomes conscious with gratitude for the generosity, with which the Dutch and other help organizations have paved the way for the establishment and preservation of this school for young Hungarians in Austria.

Despite the great mobility, but especially the many temporaries, the teaching was - at least in the first year - satisfactory. In the report of the working group for Hungarian middle schools and institutions from July 1957 it is stated that graduation [regents] examinations in Iselsberg have produced surprisingly favorable results. In addition the numbers of students indicate the same, according to the report by [Association] president Hanneman dated 8 May, 1961:

1957 (Spring)	163; (Fall)	196
1957/58		235
1958/59		211
1959/60		105

Without consideration of the number of students of the lower grade [5 – 8] classes dissolved in 1958, altogether 347 young people attended the school in Iselsberg. 209 have completed their studies successfully, 102 left because of lacking success in learning or have been expelled permanently for disciplinary reasons [translator’s note: or emigrated to other host countries]. Included in the numbers are 36 students of the last two classes who - with the dissolution of the school at Iselsberg [July 1960] - moved to Innsbruck, where they completed their studies in May 1961 and graduated. Thus the [above] number of graduates would be supplemented by them.

The ratio of those who have left the school to the graduates demonstrates extremely high agility. Example of these facts is demonstrated by the VIII C class in the 1960/61 school year: The students first attended the 5th grade of the Hungarian middle school in Kammer at Attersee; their number was steadily increasing starting at the beginning of 1958 until it reached its peak at 39. Their composition showed with respect to age and background a remarkable heterogeneity: 20 of them were born in Budapest, 19 came from other areas in Hungary. Scarcely half of them, 14-15 year old, had begun attending middle school at the proper age, the other half later; four were already 20 year or older, oldest was already 24 years old. Already during the 1957/58 school year some pupils departed emigrating overseas. A strong reduction [increase?] in student population occurred then with beginning of the 1958/59 school year at Iselsberg, when many students from Wiesenhof and other institutions were added to the VI B class. In the two years [1957-1958] in Iselsberg further changes were noted by the fact that the number of student who came over from Kammer dropped from 31 to 21. Finally only 12 the 16 pupils, who were moved to Innsbruck and who had come over from Kammer, remained. This glaring difference affected the "Altiselsberger" (from Obertraun) less - as has been demonstrated already. One can only explain their assessment - at least in part - in terms of better discipline and academic achievement.

From these references, it is clear that the Hungarian refugee schools were special kind of schools because they had to meet special requirements in extraordinary situations. On the one hand genuine communities had to be formed from the mass of the differently developed and adjusted students, on the other hand all should receive the possibility of beginning completely new lives with high school diploma in hand. Pretty often neither the teachers nor the students have been up to this challenge. First, because they were refugees and had no established existence, latter above all, because as young refugees they were confronted with a foreign world, that due to lack of knowledge did not meet their desired expectations. This caused on both sides impatience and disappointment. The tragic experiences, which had shaped above all the more mature ones among the young people, should have been processed and channeled; this problem escalated to a greater misunderstanding. Rather, the slogan was promoted that the youth had to adapt as quickly as possible. In addition the first contacts of young people with the west happened, that was connected with little or no German language skills. All proved to be barriers that initially were hard to overcome at least in the first time and to tensions, every now and then lead to even increased aggressiveness, which had negative effect on learning. As this phenomenon became enveloped in distrust, because - also as indications of the psychological overload - enemies and spies were assumed to be everywhere. The principal thought was not to let the flame of the revolution die and to ensure that its principle would not be discredited. The home life, particularly in the mountain world of Obertraun, even more however at Iselsberg, strengthened the feeling of the isolation, nevertheless the students - except for the free outdoors - came only sparsely into direct contact with the external world.

For proper assessment of the incidents, which have placed the rebellious and restless declared youth appear in an unfavorable light, all of the previously mentioned aspects

must be considered. Already in Obertraun it came to a revolt, in which also grownups were involved. This ended rapidly by the removal of the “ringleaders”. These were suspected to be communists who tried to produce [a negative] atmosphere towards the school. Fortunately, this riot also garnered positive voice in the press on 4 December, 1956 in the Upper Austrian News:

The occurrences in Obertraun are described by the authorities as possible signs of the fact that with the refugees also subversive elements with specific orders smuggled themselves into Austria. On the other hand the incident shows, how Hungarian refugee communities closed ranks to defend themselves against such elements.

The next revolting - in form of a hunger strike - took place in the autumn of 1957 at Iselsberg. *Note: Details of the event have been removed from this translation to guard against possible legal action by the individual involved.* Thereupon the executive committee of the school association decided to entrust someone directly from Holland with the oversight of the school. The choice fell on attorney Dr. Frans Visser, who took over the leadership of the school in February 1958. He made great effort – by his own admission – despite lack of educational experience, to rule over all the difficulties. In the autumn 1958 he had to deal with a new unrest, which concerned however only one class with a former pupil from Wiesenhof. This time it concerned a pupil, who allegedly spied on his comrades and carried – using his good German knowledge - internal affairs of his class to the director and his wife. Also he is to have expressed himself over the Hungarian school contemptuously and refused to participate in the singing of the Hungarian national anthem. The pupil, who suffered obviously from heavy behavior disturbances, suffered - allegedly – a nervous breakdown, was taken into a mental hospital, from which he fled and settled in Holland. The three [students] directly involved in the formers harassment of students were expelled from school despite the protests of their classmates. Out of solidarity first the whole class wanted to move to the Hungarian high school in Innsbruck; ten students actually accomplished this resolve. The last unfortunate incident occurred on the day of the “March 15” celebration in 1959, when it came to a physical altercation between the principal and a teacher.

The elimination of the troublemakers, in addition to the daily living together finally caused a noticeable reconciliation between the principal couple and the pupils. The principal’s wife dedicated herself to the young people in multiple ways; for example she introduced a clay modeling course for the girls. To the director, a passionate hiker, it was very important to take as many students as possible on weekend hikes. The couple paid attention to set good example, particularly in religious affairs, that they regularly attended mass with the students and took part in communion. They also expressed much sympathy for the Hungarian, and although they did not speak the Hungarian, they attended the student-organized celebrations on 15 March and 23 October.

In the spring of 1959 a certain helplessness became apparent, when the question was raised whether it was appropriate to continue [operations of] the Hungarian schools. Councilor Dr. H. Inama-Sternegg of Innsbruck was of the opinion that the Hungarian

high school there [in Innsbruck] was not well thought out. In order to discover various possibilities, he tried to find out whether - in the event of dissolution of the high school in Innsbruck - Iselsberg would be receptive and willing to take on the students. Recognizing the impending difficulties concerning the financing, above all the political situation, at the meeting of 20 March, 1959 H. Bécude explained that he was not convinced that continuing the school in Iselsberg [past the school year] 1959/60 provided any advantage to the students. His opinion concerning the continuation [the school at Iselsberg] is noteworthy:

The school at Iselsberg was established in expectation that the students would not remain for a long time in Austria. The school was therefore understood to be a Hungarian school. It does now appear that the children will not return to Hungary and perhaps may have to remain in Austria for many years. The more rapidly the children adapt to Austrian conditions the better for them.

Going further he stated that the executive committee did not have good experiences [with managing the school]. Based on information from a Hungarian-born director at Philips, he pointed out that the alumni would have had the greatest difficulties at colleges and universities because of their inadequate knowledge of German. With the reference to some examples not indicated in the meeting minutes he said further:

In addition at the school a Hungarian chauvinism is bred, which goes a far beyond normal Patriotism. ... He sees the best solution in accommodating the children either at Austrian families or at institutions where they could take part in the Austrian education system. They will learn German better and in addition will learn to better understand the Austrian mentality.

Nevertheless, instructions at the school continued in the chosen path. In Iselsberg there was no lack of teaching materials, however what was missing from the outset was a lack of textbooks, particularly in the major subjects. The literature and history books originated from pre-WWII era and were re-prints from the Academic Publishing House in Graz. Often one managed with books brought out from Hungary or school books sent from Hungary which were often not approved as teaching material. The German and Latin books required in the Austrian schools (Lieber latinus I-II. etc.) were also used in Iselsberg, primarily when a German-speaking teacher from Linz was employed. Particularly regarding the statements quoted above about the lacking of German [language] knowledge was a bone of contention. Senior advisor to the Austrian Education Department Dr. Julius Hölzl from Vienna, who was assigned the supervisory task of the graduation [regents] examinations as well as the presidency of the board at the same time, complained to the board at meetings and over again that professors and teachers used the Hungarian language in the daily work in the class rooms. Since obviously also the increased hours (weekly 6 hours for German language) did not produce desired success, he recommended that ever more subjects be thought in German language, and finally that the German language should be used exclusively in the school. At the meeting of 22 September, 1959 he moved to persuade the executive committee to

obligate the professors to teach - if possible - all subjects in German and also use the German language in daily interactions with the students.

Like that of H. Bécudes, his arguments also aimed at the difficulties that the graduates experienced with the German language at the colleges and universities. The direct consequence of this situation may illustrate a scene, which took place between a prefect and a pupil during daily room inspection. It concerned the waste-paper basket, which should be emptied by the designated responsible person.

The Prefect enters the room, looks at the waste-paper basket and asks: "Who?"

Student: "I".

Prefect pointing to the door: "Immediately!"

The non-formal education and recreational activities involved mainly the more mature students who were quite proactive and creative. Apart from setting up a Boy Scout group, a school newspaper was published already in Obertraun called Fáklyaláng (torch-flame), which was primarily devoted to literature. The school library provided additional knowledge. Thru fundraising the library was supplemented with German-language works, the pupils meanwhile still preferred the Hungarian literature. Cheap detective stories were read however in German language, "under the table". Of course also music (classical and modern) was cultivated, not only passively by record players and/or tape-units (jazz and the then popular hits from America, Germany and Italy were "in"), but also actively by the establishment of a school band. The largest interest was, without a doubt, for sport, for which there were plenty of opportunities at Iselsberg; the school even has set up its own soccer team. Some pupils played chess with passion. Except in the immediate area [of the school grounds] usually the only way to leave the school grounds was under the pretext of a visit to the doctor in Lienz or Winklern. Only after long hesitation it was decided at the meeting of 5 January, 1959 to permit students 18 years or older to go to the movies Saturday evening in Lienz or Winklern that was also dependent on academic performance. As compensation [for others] each week on Saturday afternoon there was to be a movie presented at the school. Occasionally also bus trips were on the program (to Heiligenblut, Salzburg, there with visit to the theatre and/or the opera). A special attraction, of course, was the [high school] graduation trip to Italy.

Special events need to be mentioned too: for Mardi Gras celebration the dining hall was decorated for the students. On 27 June, 1959 "Holland day" was extremely positively celebrated, that was attended by numerous invited guests and guests of honor. In addition to a lecture on the cultural and economic achievements of Holland and presentation of movies about Holland, the sport event as well as song and dance performances by the students contributed to the success of the celebration. A big event each year was the farewell party for the graduates, called ballagás (Valediction, i.e. Parade of the graduating class saying farewell to alma mater, Procession with symbolic implements such as walking stick, food bag, scarf, etc.) With great solemnity were the two Hungarian national holidays celebrated, the 15th of March in memory of the freedom struggle of 1848-49 and 23 October, the beginning of the uprising of 1956. These students arranged these celebrations themselves, active participation by the professors was limited to giving

speeches. At their own initiative, in 1958 the students set up a symbolic grave with a large cross near the main building to commemorate the dead of 1956 and posted an honor guard [at the memorial] during a 24 hour candle-light vigil. Principal Visser expressed his disapproval of the night watch, but could not keep the young people from it.

Monotony of school life and youthful exuberance excited again and again strife between boys that earned the participants' disapproval rather than cheers from the "more sensitive" classmates. Most teachers regarded such actions generally with amazing indifference. For this reason Principal Visser would step to the podium during lunch or dinner and reprimanded the offenders. Some pupils left [the school grounds] occasionally even in the evening – of course without permission - with the intention of going to the cinema or a coffee house. In order to be able to afford such escapades, they improved their monthly pocket money of 20 Schillings by selling some of their articles of clothing. In this connection it is not to remain unmentioned that not only their accommodation and education expenses, but also their clothing were taken care of [by the Association]. There were dramatic moments, when in the last school year after the "lights-out" the fire alarm was sounded. As it turned out, the fire was in the boys' house on the third floor, where also the laundry/ironing room was. The generosity [of the Association] was demonstrated in that the destroyed or strongly damaged pieces of underwear – as claimed by the students - were completely replaced.

Because the behavior of the students always gave reason for warnings, Karl Faith, who had to fulfill the function of the "Hungarian principal" apart from his teaching duties (Latin and history), particularly at first offenses, reminded the boys time again and again to pay attention to good behavior. He tried to make the young people understand that the impression, which they left outside of their homeland was extraordinarily important, because human beings were inclined only too easily to judge a whole nation because of [the behavior] of one [bad] person.

Just as Oberstudienrat Dr. J. Hölzl could determine, fortunately for the first time order really prevails at the boarding school (autumn 1959), with regard to this improvement actually only the boys were meant - about the girls there were hardly any complaints regarding the discipline -, strengthened the rumors that the Königin Juliana school will be discontinued after the 1959/1960 school year. When this became a reality, the remaining two classes were given a trip to Innsbruck at Easter [break], so that they could get acquainted with the situation. Correspondingly, the closing ceremony took place on 3 July, 1960. A clearly moved association president Hanneman spoke retrospectively to those present:

It has been almost four years ago that the heroic Hungarian revolution with its tragic end has profoundly shaken the entire free world.

The entire people of the Netherlands reacted at that time, in accordance with her historical tradition, in spontaneous reaction to these events and opened her borders for some thousand Hungarian refugees. It corresponds to the same tradition that from the outset Holland took part also in the relief work of the

emergency condition that developed in friendly Austria thru the overwhelming inflow of refugees from Hungary.

The unwavering commitment of the Austrian people to freedom and the generous grant of asylum, whereby it exposed to considerable risks their only recently acquired freedom, at that time it has aroused strong sympathy and admiration in my country.

From this feeling of the solidarity the thought was born that with Dutch resources in close co-operation with the Austrian localities, the Refugee Commissioner of the United Nations and other relief organizations, to establish on Austrian soil a middle school for Hungarian refugees.

In continuation of this idea, he said at the Board meeting on 8 May, 1961 concerning the objectives of the Dutch Association:

The objective was, to give the young Hungarian people in the Königin Juliana school in addition to a very good middle school education, in the consciousness of their national characters, above all also the general human values of our western democracy: Respect, friendship, understanding and tolerance for your fellow men, regardless of his nation, religion or race, so that they can, in a positively ethical Christian culture, develop into well grounded personalities.

Thanks to the support of the Dutch association, a part of the proceeds from the school sale should be used for the support of the school alumni. To this end, on 1 August, 1958 a relief fund was set up. When after the offer to the [Austrian] Department of Education through the Ministry of Trade and Reconstruction fell thru, the [Austrian] Department of Defense decided to take over the whole area in Iselsberg and set up the buildings for training purposes (letter dated 11 February 1961). Principal Dr. Visser and his wife moved to Pöllau in Lower Austria. Dr. Visser received his protégées in his office at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in Vienna in order to help them from the resources of the fund. In addition, the house in Pöllau was open to the Iselsberg alumni. Through the years they were invited to a banquet at Christmas and at Easter at the Viennese Town Hall. At the last festive meal everybody received a memento in the form of a Mariatheresientaler set in a polished frame.

The sale of the school complex yielded a net amount of 2,975.000 Schillings, so that at the end a balance of 150,000 Schillings could be booked. On the other hand H. Bécude calculated a loss of 3,045.000 to 3,195.000 Schillings. On purely business bases the Dutch school project was a money losing enterprise. However, considering the general human issues that the two hundred and fifty young Hungarians, thanks to the assistance of the Dutch people and contributions from other nations, could complete their high school studies without any financial worries and later became equal citizens of their new homelands, one can claim a convincingly positive end result in spite of human weaknesses in efficiency and success, and in some cases conflict with the laws. Even those who at leaving the school have not enjoyed higher education and did not follow an

academic career have found success in life as craftsman, technicians, clerks, or even as entrepreneurs.