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NEW DOCUMENTS ABOUT BISHOP ORDASS (HUNGARY)

The Bishop in the Northern District in the Hungarian Lutheran Church, Gyula Nagy, obtained in the beginning of May (1986) a complete dossier of documents showing that Bishop Lajos Ordáss was never removed from his office, when in 1958 he was placed under house arrest. Bishop Ordass became Bishop in 1945, but at the end of the same decade he was--based on false testimony--accused of currency violation, subsequently sentenced, and later also removed from office. But because he was innocent the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), for which he served as a vice president, appealed to the Hungarian Government and he was rehabilitated in October of 1956. The government invited him to resume his duties as a bishop. But then came the revolution. After the revolution Ordáss returned to his duties by resolution of the highest church authority. The resumption occurred first. After that Bishop László Dezséry renounced his position in writing both to the church authorities and to Ordáss personally. The resignation document was dated October 30, 1956, that is, immediately following the revolution.

Barely two years later, in July 1958, the authorities received a letter from the Hungarian Government with the message that Bishop Dezséry was the Bishop in office. Retroactively, half a year prior to the resignation, that is for less than two years, Bishop Ordáss was in office with the blessing of both the government and the church.

Bishop Dezséry's return was never formally approved by the church authorities but he nevertheless functioned like a Bishop for a day when the ministers of the Southern District of the church had been summoned. At this meeting Bishop Dezséry declared that he will never again return to his function as a bishop and with that he left the episcopate that he in reality had renounced two years earlier.

But through this procedure the episcopate of the Southern District was again declared available although Bishop Ordáss had not left it and has not been dethroned by his church. But Ordáss was then confined to his own quarters [placed under house arrest] and could do nothing about it. Subsequently the government declared that it would be willing to consider as the new bishop a pastor from the town of Pecs by the name Zoltán Káldy. The Lutheran Church had no other choice than to elect Káldy formally as their bishop despite the fact that the bishop's throne was not vacant. The documents, which more fully explain these incidents, have been collected by the Rector Laszlo Csengödy of Budapest. Rector Csengödy served in the congregation of Budahegyvidék, to which Bishop Ordáss belonged. In October of 1985, Csengödy resigned at the age of sixty, namely five years

prematurely. His resignation was in protest against the church leaders who had allowed the cover of silence to fall over the Ordáss case and because the church's leaders had refused to answer his letter about this subject. Bishop Ordáss passed away in 1978 following twenty years of confinement to his own quarters in Budapest.

The documents which Pastor Csengödy now sent to Bishop Nagy and which partly deal with letters to and excerpts from diaries by Bishop Ordáss consequently show that Bishop Zoltán Káldy actually could not be elected to be bishop of the Southern District, because there already was a bishop, approved and accepted by the church and by the government. László Csengödy has shown that the person [Káldy] who two years ago [1984] was elected president of the Lutheran World Federation has functioned as a bishop for twenty years on false pretenses. These documents have been shown to and examined by the editor Rolf Bromme of the Information Office of the Swedish Church in Stockholm.

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