

# Fugitive From Hungary Still Fears Red Hand

If Peter Kaffka glances nervously over his shoulder as he walks down the street or peers suspiciously at his friends, he has good reasons.

In the past few years, Mr. Kaffka, a long, lean, distinguished-looking man of 51 who was once Hungary's leading government architect, has discovered, to his discomfort, that safety and trust can be hard to find.

Mr. Kaffka who has been living at 63 Huntley St. leaves with his wife today to join a Vancouver firm of architects. He has been employed with an architects' firm during his several months here.

Three years ago he set out from Budapest to study the latest methods of city planning and building in the United States and Canada. As under-secretary of state for reconstruction of war-battered Hungary, he worked hard, inspecting and lecturing at leading universities in both countries.

"I wanted very much to see my country rebuilt once again," he explains.

But things were happening back in Hungary. The Communist Party was taking over the country and non-Communists were mysteriously disappearing or being found dead.

Armed with the data his government had wanted, Mr. Kaffka went home. "I wasn't very anxious to, but I felt I had a moral obligation," he says.

He found out differently. The minister of reconstruction was in jail. Mr. Kaffka's large staff had vanished. His office wasn't to be found.

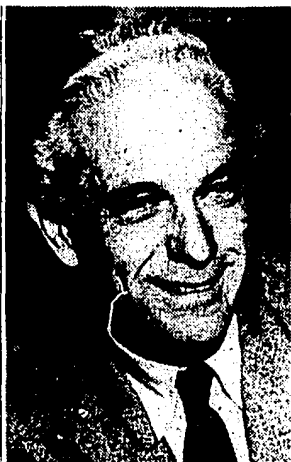
The only reconstruction work the Red government was interested in, he discovered, was the re-building of roads and bridges for swift movement of troops and the erection of barracks.

"I had just come back from the West. Right away they figured I was a capitalist spy. Even my best friends were afraid to speak to me."

Mr. Kaffka went through the formality of resigning and went to work at the U.S. legation in Budapest. Matters grew worse. His English wife, Elizabeth, and their children, fled the country. He stayed on and soon got into more trouble with the Reds.

"This time they charged me with getting arms from the United States for a revolution," he said.

What he had actually done was to get a tiny pistol for the U.S. legation's gamesman whose hunting dog was afraid of the sound of gunfire. The gamesman was



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Peter Kaffka

sentenced to death, was given a reprieve and served three months in jail.

Facing persecution and serious court charges, Mr. Kaffka arranged to be smuggled out of the country by night. The man who took him across the Austro-Hungarian border, it turned out, was in the pay of the Communists and turned him over to the Austrian police.

They were prepared to hand him back to the Hungarian authorities, but he talked them out of it and made his way to Vienna, eventually coming to Canada and Toronto, where he was reunited with his wife.

Even here, Mr. Kaffka has found, one cannot be certain about so-called friends and acquaintances. His every move—even closed conferences with planning men and university heads—were reported to the Communists in Hungary when he was making his tour of this country and the United States.

"The Communists seem to have a big network of friends everywhere," he says. "They are hard to escape."