

# Ukraine Mirrors Hungarian Invasion

Terry Sutton

The crisis in Ukraine, following the Russian invasion, is virtually a copy of events in 1956 when hundreds of Hungarian refugees were welcomed and cared for in Dover.

In 1956 thousands of Hungarians took to the streets of Budapest to demonstrate their desire to see the end of the Communist regime. But the Soviet Union backed the Hungarian communist government and on 4th November 1956 Russian tanks, backed by heavy shelling, rolled into Budapest to crush the uprising.

There was street fighting and the exodus of thousands of refugee women and children, and some men, although many remained at home to fight the Russians.

It was not long before the first Hungarians, many bearing street-fighting wounds, arrived by ferry at Dover Marine Station. The Dover Express was there to welcome them.

The British government warned the mayor

of Dover that a "score or more" refugees were expected to arrive in Dover. "Please look after them" - was Whitehall's call. Eventually around one thousand arrived.

Dover's mayor and town clerk asked Dover Express reporter Terry Sutton, a member of local organisation The Round Table, to organise the reception of the refugees. He asked fellow members of The Round Table for support and they agreed.

At the time the army barracks in Dover were empty of troops so Connaught Barracks were taken over as a refugee camp. Whitehall provided food while Sutton and his Round Table mates took over the responsibility of entertaining nearly a thousand refugees. Paper for letter writing was provided while football matches against local teams were organised.

This task continued for about two weeks before national organisations such as The Red Cross took over from the weary local Round Table members.



*Russia's drive past destroyed residential buildings in Popasna, Luhansk region, Ukraine, 26 May 2022*



*Rubble after the end of the fighting in Budapest's 8th District 1956*