

"B" INTERVIEW

PRELIMINARY VERSION: OUTLINES

General Information

The following statements describe, in a preliminary way, how the topics envisaged for the various "B" interviews are divided and described. They include for each "B" interview series, a brief statement of purpose, a description of problems and an outline of areas of inquiry, and an indication of personal goals.

These statements are neither advisory nor mandatory. They are to be considered guides to planning and thinking, the underlying assumption being that "B" interviews will be unstructured or open-ended conversations, largely with expert interviewees. Given the variety of the interviewees, organized, in-depth systems of questions can be avoided in favor of an open-ended approach of the individual interviewee. The purpose of the interview is to explore the experience and insights of the interviewee on the experience and insights of the interviewee and informant.

B 1 INTERVIEWS: POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The series of interviews to be conducted under this heading aims at a broad coverage of political developments in postwar Hungary. They include different institutions and will strive to fill factual gaps in our knowledge as well as to provide some understanding of group relations involving political life, mass organizations, government, law and terror.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series should be largely persons with first-hand experience in political life, Party, government, police, or law. Preferably, they should include a few men from different institutions and from different layers of the official hierarchy. They should include officials as well as victims of the police and courts. Examples of suitable B 1 informants are:

- Secretaries of primary Party organizations
- Officials of any government ministry
- Higher officials of local and municipal government
- Propagandists or activists of the Youth League
- Personnel of the uniformed police and of the AVH
- Persons who were subjected to arrest, trial (public or secret), and jail and/or camp sentences since 1946
- Any members of the central apparatus of the Party or any mass organization
- Judges, attorneys, state prosecutors
- Members of parliaments and councils
- Others politically active, such as newspaper reporters and radio men.

Suggested Problem Areas:

THE COMMUNIST PARTY: Actual, as distinguished from formal, position and operation; its place in postwar Hungary; its historical background; pre-war, war years, different trends; postwar coalition; Moscovites and indigenous Communism; national Communism;

Composition of the Party; recruitment, admission; euster; procedures; reality of membership; what did it mean to be a Party member; in goods, in prestige, in immunity, in commitment, in terms of career and advancement; distinctions between rank-and-file and cadres or activists; motives of membership and activism.

The operation of a Party organization: what does it do, and how; Central organization and relation with regional and local units.

Differences within the Party; relative competence and interests of Party personnel; tactical and ideological differences; the Party leadership; personalities, status, reputations.

Party and Government.

Party and Police.

Party and Economy.

Party and Army.

The Hungarian Party and Moscow, Cominform and satellites [see also B9].

Relation of Party to factory workers, to farm hands, to white-collar.
 Activists: who, why, what positions?
 Who were the "good Communists"?
 Who has to be a member, and who wanted to be?
 The Party in 1948 and in 1956: what has changed?
 The Party during and since the crisis of 1955 [see also B 7].

MASS ORGANIZATIONS, DISZ, etc.: Analogous questions, including
 Organization
 Operation
 Motivation of membership
 Differentiation, stratification, and opposition within
 Relation to other institutions
 Vitality, spirit, power position

X POLICE AND TERROR: Police organization; Ministry of Justice; uniformed and secret police; organization and operational trends and changes; personnel; who are the members, the leading officials? motives for joining? Examples. Differences of outlook and aims among members. Conflicts within police apparatus. Conflicts with other institutions, Party, government. Changes in Party and government attitude toward police. Role of Russian advisers, tactics, training.

The courts; reorganizations; significance and role of; Ministry of Justice; procuracy; changes in functions of lawyers and courts; administrative punishment; influence of Soviet law, theory and practice; relation to police and AVH; dictation of decisions; personnel in judicial and legal professions; changing status and place of institutions and personnel.

The purges and political terror; reconstruction of major arrest waves; first-hand testimony on treatment, "preparation," pre-trial investigations, closed trials, confessions; actual guilt vs. prophylactic arrests; signals. Prisons and camps: first-hand testimony on conditions, treatment, statistics, variations in locale and time. Stratification and rationales of arrest waves and stratification of prison populations.

The changing place of the police; relations at top level of government; indices, if any, of demoralization in police apparatus; apoliticals vs. far-atics; the police, the courts, the AVH and the Revolt of 1956.

GOVERNMENT: High-level decision making; relative role of cabinet, Party leadership, Moscow, others. Autonomy of operation of government and economic officials; formal and informal elbow-room and inhibitions; official and factual "bosses." Secondary and primary decision-making; centralization.

Parliament, People's Democracy, elections; significance, effect.

Institutions: (a) adoption of Soviet forms, procedures, and (b) failure to adhere to Soviet model, and why.

POLITICAL "FEVER CURVE": How did the population (and "insiders") see the ups and downs in political tensions and relaxations since 1944. Problems of LOYALTY and adjustment: Overt behavior vs. "genuine" attitudes. Hierarchy of expectations; hierarchy of satisfactions; hierarchy of grievances and tensions. PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS: who, why, when, how. Extent to which life was "politicized." Opinion-soliciting mechanisms within system.

DEVELOPMENT OF OPPOSITION: when, how, by whom; (a) within legitimate groups; (b) outside of them, especially in top leadership and bureaucracy (upward mobile group).

B 2 INTERVIEWS: THE ARMY

The series of brief interviews to be conducted under this heading aims at the collection of information on a few selected problems relating to the military establishment in postwar Hungary. These interviews will definitely not cover matters of specifically military intelligence nature, such as location of troops, military installations, nature of weapons, etc. These interviews are concerned about (1) morals and loyalty problems in the Hungarian army; (2) the influence and status, if any, of Soviet and Soviet-trained personnel; (3) the extent, forms, and effectiveness of political and police controls in the armed forces; and (4) the attitude and behavior of the armed forces on the eve of and during the Revolt of 1956.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series are largely persons with first-hand experience in the Hungarian military establishment since 1945. If possible, the sample should include a number of higher officers as well as some junior officers and enlisted men; some professionals and some draftees; a few older men and some younger; members of different branches of service; and personnel assigned to or trained in the USSR.

Suggested Problem Areas: A list of suggested questions will be supplied before actual interviewing begins. B 2 interviews will be relatively short and may be added as one additional session to an A or another B interview.

B 3 INTERVIEWS:
SOCIAL PROBLEMS

This series of interviews is intended to provide sociological data on trends in postwar Hungary, both as autonomous social developments, and as clues to--and results of--political processes.

Requirements: In this series, unlike all other B interviews, most of the informants will not be experts but will, in accordance with the desires of the interviewers, be chosen from the pool of respondents available for A interviews. Exceptions to this will be made for the following groups, some of which should be included in the sample of informants: Members of ethnic minorities; professional social welfare and "case workers"; sociologists, criminologists, and persons professionally concerned with juvenile delinquency; The sample should definitely include persons of different social and age groups, if possible some members of the "new elite," of different professions, and some individuals who were significantly upward and downward socially mobile since the war. Further specifications are to be determined at a later date in accordance with interviewer plans.

Suggested problem areas: The following are merely suggestive of some of the questions to be discussed here and need further elaboration.

Social change, social mobility, and social stratification: causes, process, impact, differentiation; government policy and social change; adjustment to new social group and declassé elements. The new upward mobile: the new elite, the young professionals and intelligentsia, the new managerial stratum, university students, et.c. The new downward mobile: the former aristocracy, gentry, middle class, kulaks, artisans, etc. Extent and ease of mobility; variations in time.

How "classes" view each other; traditional class concepts vs. new perception of status and prestige differences. Indices of class differences.

The new elite: who, how, how manifested, how maintained; open class or caste; qualifications, values, goals, and motivations.

Status, rank, and titles: changes since 1944.

Family: change in role of family, parental authority; change in attitude toward women, children. Changes, if any, in mores, values, inter-personal relations. Trends in crime, juvenile delinquency. Friends and small group relationships.

Ethnic and other minorities. Policy toward and treatment of; reaction on the part of minority members. Jews; Swabians and Volksdeutsche; Slavs; others.

A community under Communist rule; what the new regime has meant (a Hungarian "Widdletown in transition").

B 4 INTERVIEWS: RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

The series of interviews to be conducted under this heading aims at an investigation of two facets of religious affairs:

- (a) government and Party policy toward the churches; and
- (b) the nature of religious life under the Communist regime.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series include persons with first-hand experience in religious matters. This might encompass the following: ministers, priests, and other ecclesiastic personnel of different faiths and denominations; government and ex-Party officials familiar with policies toward the church (e.g., from the State Office of Church Affairs); personnel connected with the so-called National Peace Committee; informants acquainted with conditions in individual parishes, congregations, seminaries, religious schools, etc.

Suggested Problem Areas: The two interviewers primarily responsible for the study—one, of the Catholic, the other of the Reformed and Lutheran churches, will spell out in considerable detail the areas of inquiry on the basis of their previous work in this field. They will include an attempt to understand variations in the regime's tactics, differences in treatment of various faiths, and disagreements within official circles on this score. They will also seek to find the patterns of accommodation and hostility to the regime on the part of the church-going population, and the general attitude toward religion(s) on the part of different groups of the population.

NOTE: While the treatment and fate of the Jews, as a cultural and ethnic minority, falls within the scope of the series B 3, religious aspects of the Hebrew faith can and should be investigated in this series.

CURPH "B" INTERVIEWS: B 5 PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

✓ B 5 INTERVIEWS: THE INTELLIGENTSIA ✓

The series of interviews to be conducted on this subject aims at an investigation of several types of problems, which may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Who are the intellectuals and how do they live L
- (b) Intellectual currents and ideas L
- (c) Political attitudes and aspirations of the intelligentsia. ✓

Requirements: Informants needed for this series (who will often be suitable for other B interviews, too) should be largely intellectuals of various backgrounds and experiences. There should be as many members as possible of key groups, such as the Petöfi Circle, KEFESZ, etc. There should be some variety in generations, i.e., older intellectuals as well as some who received their higher education since World War II. The sample should include men and women who held responsible positions, such as scientists and philosophers; administrators, including newspaper editors, university deans; government officials, such as a section head in the Ministry of Culture; and free professionals and "bohemians"--writers, poets, literary critics, musicians, actors. There should be at least a few "declassé" intellectuals, e.g., former aristocrats who became teachers, etc.

Suggested Problem Areas: The following are a few of the types of problems to be investigated.

Who is the intelligentsia; social and personal background of old and new intellectuals; conflict of generations, if any; social status of the professionals and intellectuals; career opportunities and limitations; common characteristics and variations, differentiations within the group.

Intellectual currents: pre-1944 ideas; reaction, conservatism, reformism; varieties of socialist and communist thought and experience; Titoism, Trotskyism and other radical mutations; existentialism, pragmatism; contact with Western thought since World War II. What appealed to whom, and why? Relevance of systems of ideas and intellectual currents to the Hungarian scene. The Soviet and satellite influence and contacts. Nationalism as an intellectual trend. The content of indigenous intellectual thought. Sources of ideas and beliefs.

Political attitudes and changes in the course of time; patterns and variations; idealism, cynicism; adjustment and opposition; material conditions and "not by bread alone." The atmosphere and flavor of intellectual life: drabness or vitality. Intellectual life within the licit circle; camouflaged opposition; philosophy and literature as grasps politics? The political function and fate of the intelligentsia: sell-out or hold-out; the captive mind--myth or reality? Nuclei of autonomous thinking; the Petöfi Circle: who, when, why, what, and how; Irodalmi Újság and public expression of heterodoxy. Inhibitions and breakdown of barriers; the effect of events on the intellectuals, e.g., Zhdanov Tito, Stalin's death, Imre Nagy (1953-55), etc. Dilemmas and choices. The role and fate of individuals (e.g., Lukacs, Acsel...).

The intellectuals and the antecedents of the Revolt [see also B 7].

B 6 INTERVIEWS, EDUCATION AND YOUTH

The series of interviews to be conducted under this heading aims at two distinct, though related, areas of inquiry:

- (a) higher education in postwar Hungary, and
- (b) student life and youth, as a social and political factor.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series should be largely persons with first-hand experience in education or student life. Suitable informants are, e.g.:

College administrators, officers, employees;
 Personnel of Ministry of Higher Education;
 Teachers in universities and other institutions of higher learning;
 Students, in particular active members of university student organizations.

Suggested Problem Areas: In order to forestall a shallow investigation into the entire wide field of education, attention is to be focused on higher education alone. The following are among the problems of interest:

Organization and administration of higher education; government agencies and their relation to universities; organization of each institution of higher learning; relations among universities and with other educational institutions; actual, as distinguished from formal, relations.

Financing, equipment, plant, laboratories, libraries; establishment of new institutions.

Students: Admissions policy and practice, recruitment, screening, stipends and tuition problems, fees; political desiderata and selectivity;

Teachers: Recruitment and training; living conditions and salaries; political desiderata and selectivity;

Faculty, Faculty-student, and Student relations; social status, rank, titles of the "educated".

Methods of instruction, curriculum, changes in courses, procedures, and emphasis.

Quality of education; caliber of teachers and students; variations and prestige patterns within one school and within Hungary; comparison with earlier and with foreign higher education.

Political elements in higher education; official and unofficial controls; dialectical materialism and other ideological courses; Russian language;

political role of sports and para-military training; political considerations in polytechnical vs. liberal arts or humanities programs; choice of courses and careers; political incidents in school experience; political discrimination in educational opportunities.

Political profile of faculty, administration, and student body.

Contacts with Western literature, science, personnel; studies of foreign languages.

Student life; well-being of students; attitudes and interests of students; their evolution in recent years; youth organizations; formal and informal groups; Communist Youth organizations and educational institutions; their role; political content and interests, aspirations, and attitudes of students.

The role of youth and students in the events of 1956. [See also B 7.]

Indoctrination through formal education, courses, text books, etc.: how, what, how successful.

NOTE: Knowledgeable informants from other phases of education may be included in this series, e.g., a high school principal, a secondary student leader, the head of the education section of a municipal government.

B 7 INTERVIEWS: THE REVOLT

This series of interviews seeks to fill gaps in our knowledge and understanding of the events of 1956. It takes for granted the available body of factual information on the course of the Revolt and its suppression. It does not strive for material to write a history of the Revolt. Nor does it seek to document, with names, dates, and places, instances of heroism—or of deportations or of atrocities. Its emphasis is on a number of social and intellectual as well as institutional trends which the Revolt brought into focus.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series cannot be reduced to any common denominator. On the one hand, they are men and women who had something to do with the general climate that led up to the events of October—or who witnessed, savored, or recorded it. On the other hand, they are those who participated in the events in key spots or who had particular insight at various levels—from the Parliament Building to the radio station to the university, and for that matter, throughout Hungary. Suitable informants include, e.g., members and leaders of workers' councils; members of the Petöfi Club; student leaders active in the Revolt; Party and Government officials.

Suggested Problem Areas: A familiarity on the part of interviewer and respondent with the general course of events is assumed. The following merely suggests a few additional dimensions.

Long-range factors behind the Revolt.

Specific events leading up to Revolt; spontaneity vs. preparedness of events; alternative channels of change; fate and collapse or reorganization of Hungarian control institutions: Party, police, AVH, government apparatus, army.

Emergence of leadership: who, how, when; pattern of authority and prestige.

Latent political structure; variations in aims, implicit and explicit; expectations and discussions during the Revolt. Personalities. Typology.

Institutional development: Role of workers' councils; relation to Party, trade unions, etc.; contact and cohesion among revolutionary groups; students and workers; strike movement; workers and peasants; intellectuals; the churches; emergence of new institutions and bodies.

Soviet control mechanisms; behavior, timing, extent of Soviet leadership; rank-and-file Soviet troops; incidents.

Role of Party, Army, Police in the revolt
Role of different social, age, and other strata in the revolt
Why Hungary, not other satellites?

The aftermath; the exodus; the new regime.

B 8 INTERVIEWS: ECONOMY

This series of interviews is intended to shed fresh light on various economic problems on the basis of expert testimony by individual informants conversant with a given branch or facet of the Hungarian economy. It does not strive for an integrated or exhaustive description or working model of the economy but rather hopes to fill gaps and correct errors and misconceptions.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series should be largely specialists of various descriptions. (One exception to this are peasants who will be asked to describe operations of a collective farm.) The following categories are suitable B 3 material:

Industrial managers, foremen, directors, statisticians, purchasing agents; collective farm chairmen, brigadiers, book-keepers, MTS personnel; employees of economic ministries, planning board, central statistical office, and specialists connected with them; personnel engaged in domestic and foreign trade; banking, finance, and money specialists or employees; retail tradesmen and individual economic entrepreneurs; teachers of economics.

Suggested areas of inquiry: To a greater extent than in other fields, the nature of the interview will be determined by the informant's experience and the interviewer's skill and knowledge. The following may be some of the problems investigated.

Planning; centralization and decentralization; rigidity, realism, and dogma in economic planning; over-all and local planning; bases of calculations and errors; alternatives of investment, production, consumption; practical difficulties in implementation of plans; extent of Soviet influence and coordination; relation of management to Central Planning Board.

Collectivization of agriculture; signage of policy, variations of attitude; who are the beneficiaries, who the victims? Economic, social, political effects. Operation of a farm; personnel and inter-personal relations; "farm biographies" since the war; problems of depletion and soil deterioration; collective and state farms; small holdings and large estates.

Economic relations with the Soviet orbit; real value of ruble; prices in intra-bloc trade, conversion and credit arrangements; mixed and joint-stock companies; "Ruffification," if any, of the economy.

Industrial management; decisions at the plant level.

The socialized and the private sectors.

Economic grievances of the population: variations, content, intensity. Standards of living, household budgets, income and spending patterns. Industry etc. before and after 1946; comparison of working conditions, intensity of labor, incentives, innovations.

Falsifications of reports and statistics; corrective factors.

Trends in the government's economic policy and variations.

B 9 INTERVIEWS: HUNGARY AND THE SOVIET UNION

The series of interviews to be conducted in this series seeks to explore the actual nature of Soviet-Hungarian relations since 1944. Since it is unlikely that refugee informants can add substantially to our knowledge of the formal aspects, interviews will concentrate primarily on the informal, unpublicized, and interpersonal aspects of the problem.

Requirements: Informants needed for this series should be individuals who had personal contact with Soviet personnel. The following would be among the most suitable informants for B 9 interviews:

Officers, cadets, students, and specialists assigned to, stationed in, or trained in the USSR;

Diplomatic personnel and others in the Hungarian government who met or negotiated with Soviet representatives;

Party and police officials who had first-hand experience in contacts with Soviet counter-numbers or advisers or superiors;

Economic officials, particularly those involved in foreign trade, loans, and mixed Soviet-Hungarian enterprises, who had direct relations with Soviet officials;

All those who had dealings with other satellite governments;

Representatives at international gatherings and organizations;

Deportees to the USSR, persons arrested by Soviet agencies in Hungary, and prisoners of war returned from the USSR.

A separate category, to be interviewed along different lines, consists of former Soviet soldiers and others who defected in or through Hungary.

Suggested Problem Areas: Some of the questions to be investigated in this series are suggested below.

Soviet personnel in Hungary or dealing with Hungarian affairs: diplomatic, military, economic, secret police and uniformed police, TASS and other news personnel, Cominform personnel; officials in Moscow; secret informants and informers working for Soviet agencies; others. Who, why, and what. Actual functions and formal assignments. Hierarchy and coordination among Soviet officials dealing with Hungarian matters. Personalities and differences in attitude and "line."

With whom in Hungary did Soviet personnel deal; whom did they influence, pressure, control, make suggestions to. Techniques and procedures in dealings. Changes in the course of time. Examples.

Cultural, educational, propaganda, ideological pressure and coordination; "exchange" programs; Hungarian-Soviet Cultural Society and related

activities; visits by VIP's; intellectual and scientific contacts.

Military coordination with Soviet armed forces and Warsaw Pact.

Soviet economic policy, exploitation, coordination, dictation, and concessions, if any.

Attitudes of Soviet personnel toward Hungary and Hungarians; personal contacts; differences among individuals, civilians and military, high and low officials, at different times, etc.

Hungarian attitudes toward Soviet personnel; differentiations and changes in time.

Relations with other satellites.

Role of Soviet organizations, personnel, advisers in Hungarian police, purges, trials; deportations to USSR; forced labor in and for the USSR.

Uranium mines and the USSR.

Coordination with Soviet action in international organizations, such as UN, WFTU, international "peace" movement.

✓ Behavior of Soviet personnel in the 1956 revolt.

B 10 : OTHER INTERVIEWS

Interviews in this rubric are to be conducted whenever particularly interesting informants turn up whose knowledge or experience should not be passed up but whose field cannot or should not be fitted into any of the other series of interviews.

By the very nature of this category, no outline or list of problems can be suggested. One group of informants who may be included in this series of "targets of opportunity" are those concerned with cultural life and media of communications, such as a movie producer, an editorial writer. Another group may include informants who personally knew an individual of interest, e.g., a neighbor of George Lukacs.

Assignment to the B 10 category will be made by the Scheduling Office on an ad hoc basis.