

Government 362 A II

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH PROJECT ON HUNGARY  
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FACULTY: Professor Henry L. Roberts, Russian Institute  
" Alexander Dallin, "  
" Paul E. Zinner, East-Central European Studies Program

STUDENTS:

Pratt Byrd -- Economic Discontents in Hungary and their Importance

Harris Coulter -- The Hungarian Peasantry -- attitudes, change in status, regulations.

Stanley Gutterman -- The Role of Economic Organizations in the Political Controls in Hungary -- ability of organizations to support opposition to the regime.

William McCagg, Jr., -- Ideology -- respondents' images thereof, its attraction, conflicts with reality, nature of the failure of its development, pattern of disillusionment.

Eleanor A. Murray -- Education -- chronology of control thereon, as a tool of social mobility (how is choice made), students' discontent.

Florence C. Parkinson -- Individuals' Reactions to Police and Other Political Controls

Jay Schulman -- Analysis of On Communism by Imre Nagy.

Roger Shaw -- Motivations in Socialist Society -- family and other relationships, how latter relate to the official line.

John A. Smith -- Political Control from the Party through the Police and Army.

STAFF: Andre Varchaver, Assistant Director  
Rainer Koshne, Research Associate  
John Madge,\* Research Associate  
Henry Stockhold, Research Assistant  
Alexander Weinstock, Research Assistant

\*Social Mobility -- class and status changes, correlation of respondents opinion of their class position with the facts.

CURPH

Composition of the CURPH "A" Interview Sample (based on the revised face sheet) and Comparisons.  
Summary of the Report Presented by S. Alexander Weinstock on April 14, 1958.

The composition of our sample can be compared with three populations.  
1. Other post-revolution refugee groups. 2. Pre-revolution (post-1947) Hungarian escapees. 3. The Hungarian population as a whole.

1. The purpose of comparing the CURPH data with that of the Free Europe Committee (FEC)<sup>1</sup> and the Immigration and Naturalization Services report on Hungarians paroled in the U. S.<sup>2</sup> is to see how our population measures up against these groups.

A look at tables I, II and III will show that there are no significant differences and the CURPH data seems to be representative of the post revolution refugee population. (The other two groups have a larger percentage of younger people because the youngest CURPH respondent is about 17. FEC included some children in their interviews. In the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Services report the youngest group used by this study for comparison is 15-29).

2. Comparison with pre-revolution refugees shows a distinct change in the type of persons escaping. Formerly, according to the Cracauer-Berkman<sup>3</sup> study (based on the IPOR report of all Hungarian refugees in 1951-52) 80% of the population consisted of peasants and workers. While in the CURPH group peasants and workers comprise only 30% of the total. This seems to suggest that, contrary to Cracauer, the middle classes and intelligentsia are even more eager to escape than the peasants and the workers, given an opportunity. It seems to the writer that the opportunity to escape and not the change in motivation accounts for the difference in ratio between middle class respondents and worker-peasant before and after the revolution<sup>7</sup>. Other major differences between the Cracauer-IPOR data and that of the present study is that in the former over 50% of the subjects are from border regions, small towns and rural areas, whereas in the CURPH study 59% came from Budapest. There is also a much higher percentage of married people (47%) than in the previous refugee groups. (Table III)

3. Comparison of our data with the Hungarian population as a whole is difficult because of the Communist tendency to manipulate statistical data (e.g. by lumping together all wage earners regardless whether the person is a secretary of the Communist party or factory worker). Still, certain comparisons may be made. The sample is representative of the home population in regard to religion. It seems that all religious groups were equally eager to escape from Hungary (see Table II). In all the refugee studies reviewed the distribution of age and sex seems to be least representative of that in Hungary (Table I). (Though in respect to age our sample is more representative than those of all other studies).

It might be interesting to note that 19% of the CURPH, and 28% of the FEC respondents were imprisoned. An additional 42% had relatives and friends in jail under the Communist regime.

Footnotes

1. H. Gleitsman and J. J. Greenbaum, Preliminary Results of Depth Interviews and Attitude Scales, Free Europe Committee, 1957, N.Y.
2. Commissioner Swing Makes Final Report on Hungarian Escapee Program of the U. S. in Interpreter Releases, Common Council for American Unity, vol. 35, No. 9.
3. S. Kracauer and P. L. Bericman, Satellite Mentality, Praeger, N.Y. 1956 (based on material collected by IPOR).

Table IAge and Sex Distribution

	Hungarians Paroled in the U.S.	FEC	CURPH	Hungarian Population (1955)
Up to 28	57%	70%	47%	Below 15 = 25%
29 - 45	36%	15%	40%	15 - 39 = 35%
45 - over	6%	15%	13%	40 - 60 = 31%
Males			83%	65 + = 9% > 50%

Table IIReligion

	RFE	Hung. (1941)	CURPH
RC	65%	66%	66%
Protestant	25%	28%	22%
Jewish	10%	4%	9%
Gr. Orth.		0.4%	3%

Table IIIMarital Status

	Parolees	RFE	CURPH
Married	47%	42%	47%
Single	53%	58%	52%

Table IVEthnic Distribution

	Hungarian Population (1949)	CURPH
Hung.	97%	95%
Other	3%	6%

Table VImprisonment

	RFE	CURPH
	28%	19%

## Breakdown of "A" Interview Respond

		Ethnic <sup>†</sup>		Denomination						Major Residence			Participation in Revolt			
		Hungarian	Other	Roman C.	Protestant	Greek Orth.	Jewish	Other	Non-Believer	Subpost	Urban	Rural	Active	Passive	Non Partic.	
47%	Up to 28	M	35*	5	31	6	2	2	-	2	17	16	8	15	13	13
		F	5	1	3	1	-	2	-	-	4	3	-	2	-	4
40%	29 to 45	M	32	-	21	7	1	2	1	2	21	6	5	16	9	6
		F	9	-	6	2	-	-	-	-	7	-	1	-	-	8
13%	46 and over	M	12	-	4	5	-	3	-	-	8	1	3	3	2	7
		F	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total %			95	6	64	21	3	8	1	3	59	26	17	36	24	40

## Marital Status

		Marital Status	
		Married	Single
Up to 28	M	3	36
	F	1	5
29 to 45	M	24	8
	F	7	1
46 and over	M	9	2
	F	3	0
Total %		47	52

<sup>†</sup> in each category every respondent appears only once

\* All figures have been corrected to the nearest whole number and the addition of columns has been modified accordingly

VI

ents In Percentages. (Based on the revised CURPH face sheet) Based on 118

Political  
Affiliation

Occupation (as of 1956)

(145-56)  
(1945-56)

Political Affiliation	Communist	Soc. Democ.	Small Hold.	Peasant	Other	No political Affiliation	Worker	Peasant	White Collar	Administ. & Official	Self-empl.	Artist	Student	Intellectual	Clergy	Housewife	Army	Imprisoned
	2	1	2	-	2	35	15	2	3	3	-	2	13	3	-	-	2	6
	-	-	-	-	-	6	3	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
	3	5	4	2	3	15	4	-	6	5	-	3	1	11	1	-	1	8
	-	-	1	-	1	6	3	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
	1	3	1	-	-	8	3	-	2	3	1	1	-	2	-	1	-	3
	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
	6	9	6	2	6	72	28	2	15	12	3	7	16	17	1	1	3	19

Minutes of the Seminar

March 10, 1958

Progress Report by Miss Murray: Youth and Education

The report deals primarily with the youth in the universities and gymnasiums since the majority of interviews were in this age group and since they constituted the greater part of the conscious opposition among the youth, as opposed to younger groups who may have participated in activities against the regime, without actually understanding the issues at stake.

- A. The Controls are not unique but their effectiveness is. While many students appreciated the ideals of communism, they rebelled against Soviet application of communism. But even the attitudes toward communism were difficult to measure. There were devout communists who were resentful of the Soviet brand of communism; these centered around George Lukacs. There were those who opposed communism in general. The injection of Marxist jargon into the language was a decided disadvantage in the students' understanding of democracy.
- B. A reliable intelligentsia was needed to implement communist planning. Thus:
  1. Compulsory education was raised from 6 to 8 years, and the doors of the universities were opened to many new groups.
  2. Members of the old and now "unreliable" intelligentsia were also needed by the regime.
  3. The regime tried to choose for important positions those people who would be thankful for their education and who did not previously have an opportunity to acquire one.
- C. There ensued a consequent lowering of standards:
  1. The introduction of the "rapid matura" and correspondence courses (up to 1953) often resulted in the university admission of peasants who had not been past the third year of high school.
  2. Entrance examinations to universities were abolished.
- D. There existed therefore a dichotomy between the very best students who were usually members of the old intelligentsia and the poorest (slowest) students who had been rapidly pushed into the university. This in turn became translated to a certain extent into a dichotomy of social groups, a class rivalry between peasants and intelligentsia, which ended only in 1955-56.

- E. The methods of education and the system of education itself fostered a rather "deadening" effect on normal mental activity.
1. The students were often discouraged from independent thinking.
  2. There was a rigid enforcement of note-taking and supervision of notes.
  3. "Pat" ideological phrases were made to fit all garbs of learning.
  4. The great stress and enforcement of technical education did not demand as much independent thought as it did rote memorization.
- F. The lowering of standards (of teachers and pupils) was to a great measure furthered by the method of administration in admission policy.
1. There were three admissions officers, -- a party member, a professor, and a DISZ member.
  2. Many applicants were turned down because of class origin.
  3. Until 1953, scholarship help was based both on class origin and need.

Out of a sample of 32 "A" and "B" interviews, 22 were able to go to university, 16 were not able to follow a career of their choice, 8 were able to go to the university of their choice. Often married couples were separated, students were sent against their wishes to rural areas or were not able to receive alternatives to their assigned places of employment.

Some problems which could merit investigation are:

- 1) The role of counter-indoctrinary influences such as the family, idealization of past history.
- 2) The conflict between Catholic schools and the nationalization of schools. Might not Catholic training have paved the way for an easier acceptance of communist training?
- 3) Did the emphasis upon university degrees in fields of technical training leave any room for individual initiative on the part of amateurs?
- 4) The most desirable careers in the mind of the youth interview sample seem to be medicine and engineering. Is this a reflection of the system or the age?
- 5) How effective was indoctrination; perhaps we need a longer time perspective to determine this.
- 6) Why were the students at the forefront of the revolution? Were they revolting vs. the Soviet system or communism in general?
- 7) How important was the idea of freedom?



QUESTIONS

What was the chronology of attitudes towards education?

- 1) 1945-49, little interference with education.
- 2) 1950-53, highpoint of Russification.
- 3) 1953-55, the New Course; admittance of new groups to universities, choice of foreign languages, humanities courses taught.
- 4) 1955-56, much relaxation in admissions policy towards "exploiting classes," more debates, higher standards of education for workers and peasants.

What was the role of the DISZ in education?

Practically none. It is interesting, however, that the first student demand was the reorganization of the DISZ. The re-creation of a student organization (MEFESZ) was not accidental, but a conscious attempt to provide an autonomous university students' association. This desire had been voiced by party dissidents, as a form of opposition within the party. (Prof. Zinner)

Professor Roberts observed that in relation to the standards of education and the type of people trained to be the future elite in the other satellite countries, he had found just the reverse of Miss Murray's conclusions to be true, in that:

- 1) The level of education had remained high. The well-disciplined continental pattern of education continued after the initial toning down or proletarianization of education. The Soviet pattern of education moved in rapidly before "proletarianization" had really taken root.
- 2) Access to education for the former middle and upper classes remained consistently high despite the favoritism shown to the working and peasant classes. In this respect, Professor Zinner remarked that since the total number of university students increased substantially between 1948 and 1956, the absolute number of students of middle class and intelligentsia background may not have changed considerably from 1948 to 1956, although the percentage of these students would have diminished.

There ensued a discussion about the popularity of certain non-Hungarian writers in Hungary. Mr. Koehne advanced two reasons for the popularity of Thomas Mann among Hungarian readers: that his specialty consisted in showing the deterioration of the middle classes, and that there were in Hungary some prominent experts on this type of literature, George Lukacs for example. Professor Dallin suggested that Hungarian reading habits and career objectives be made a point of study.

Mr. Shulman remarked that the "Camp Kilmer sample" exhibited concern over the deterioration of standards in the arts and humanities on the part of professional groups and teachers. These respondents said that the technical education had improved greatly, however.

Professor Zinner pointed out that the period of intense Russification lasted only two or three years, 1950-52. Therefore the sample of the entering classes who were seriously affected by this would be small.

Professor Roberts closed the discussion by suggesting that the subject of indoctrination be discussed and investigated further in the following seminar.

Summary of Seminar Discussion

March 3, 1958

Professor Roberts suggested that some reasonable continuity be introduced in seminar discussions so as to fully explore problems and not let them remain unanswered, and to avoid tedious repetitions from one week to the next; to pin down unresolved problems. He described four main areas of inquiry:

- A. The effectiveness of totalitarian controls; their growth, development, and totality. The changes in the degree and effectiveness of controls.
- B. Relevance of discontent. How real is popular discontent? How is it measured? If real, does it matter? What are its sources? Are the discontents causes in their own right? We are far from reaching definite conclusions about the significance of popular discontent. This is a problem of historical analysis. It is important to determine whether some other insignificant factor, such as the firing of a gun, might not have equally been a causative factor.
- C. The effectiveness of Moscow's policies (of the 20th Party Congress for instance), of the death of Stalin, of schisms within the Hungarian ruling groups. The revolt in Hungary might have been forestalled either by a recrudescence of terror or by a policy of firm support for the Nagy group by Moscow.
- D. The broad political-social-economic aspirations of the society as a whole. The general climate of sentiments and views. Two very deep and significant problems are: do we understand what we are talking about when we speak of sympathies for the socialist regime; do we understand what Hungarians mean when they use certain terms?

Professor Dallin agreed that Professor Roberts' categories applied to the way in which this problem had been envisaged by the Project and the questionnaire: 1) Machinery and state apparatus, 2) The system and the society, 3) The system and the individual.

Professor Zinner stated that there existed a general "unrest" among seminar members in respect to substance and procedure. The working members wonder how they are going to find anything relevant to the problems discussed in seminar. A global view of the society under totalitarianism is wanted. To bring this goal about completely

might be a tour de force. On procedure, the most important thing is to get going. Go after the interview material first, set method aside for a while, get all the relevant information, then relate to the seminar the findings -- how you found the material, and your feelings of adequacy about what you found, even if the data are only approximate. Impression should not be gotten that the faculty is pressuring seminar participants against their will with regard to their choice of topic; but in view of the special nature of this study personal inclinations should be set aside for the welfare of the Project.

A discussion ensued as to whether references to Western democratic freedoms, etc., made by the respondents were merely ideas derived from radio broadcasts and books, or whether these ideas were intrinsic to Hungarian experience; were the Hungarians repeating slogans which they really did not understand or experience? The principal points made were:

- A. That the Hungarians underwent a really democratic experience from 1945-47. (Weinstock)
- B. That although a quasi-feudal society existed until 1944, there was nothing more provoking of democracy than life under a totalitarian regime. (Schulman)
- C. That any resentment against totalitarian methods and institutions will inevitably engender seemingly democratic ideas because democracy is often the opposite of totalitarianism. Thus a respondent may have resented one-party rule and hoped for the restoration of a multiple party system. Without actually being a democrat or having directly experienced democracy, the respondent may have voiced a democratic idea by virtue of his opposition to totalitarianism. (Stockhold)
- D. That since the interviews were made eight months after the respondents had come to the West, they had had some recent experiences with democracy. (Madge)
- E. That the Hungarians wanted to re-establish a basis of human relations whereby they could recover and preserve human dignity, respect, etc. The abuses that the Hungarians felt were not primarily institutional ones and so democracy is the wrong word to use in attempting to discover whether they had an intrinsic idea and understanding of their aspirations, hopes, and desires. That these basic resentments may have been later translated into political or institutional channels is another question. (Zimmer)

Hungary file

Government 362 A II -- Research Project on Hungary

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

March 17, 1958

Professor Roberts re-opened the discussion on indoctrination by posing several questions: Did the years of indoctrination have an impact on the Hungarian people? What kind of an impact? What are the contents of this indoctrination? Perhaps the greatest problem lies in applying an adequate test to indoctrination, in defining and explaining it. Professor Roberts mentioned that I. Berlin had advanced the thesis, contradicting a large body of opinion, that new attitudes among Russian intellectuals or official government circles could not necessarily be determined by their uses of Marxist language; that concepts such as imperialism, capitalism as a thing of the past, and socialism as the inevitable promise of the future are part of the world picture and are ideas which have been almost universally accepted by Marxists as well as non-Marxists.

Professor Zinner did not think that the Berlin thesis was applicable to Hungary where there existed another set of values besides those dictated by international relations, namely a set of human values. When these human values are placed in conflict with the regime's moral behavior, they tend to slow down the idealized picture of the society. Thus while George Lukács had accepted the long-range philosophical tenets of Marxism, he could not entirely condone certain compromises which the regime had made with these principles.

Professor Dallin stated that even the acceptance of the long-range "inevitable" goals of the socialist society does not prevent rebellion against authority, or against the kind of indoctrination which aims at justifying the measures imposed in order to achieve these goals. The trend of thinking in Eastern Europe shows that one can develop different variations such as "humanistic socialism" while accepting the long-range goals at the same time. This can result in a difference of change in emphasis on the political scene. For those who accept the ideology at its face value, the system itself generates opposition to it as it goes along. In the case of some Hungarians, perhaps this opposition was not directed against communism but against the regime's failure to achieve it.



Mr. Coulter: Progress Report on the Peasantry (both on the active participation of the peasantry in the revolt and on the background of agricultural development under the communists).

I. Facts and Figures: approximations.

- A. Area of Hungary: 9 million hectares, 60% of which is arable land (5½ million hect.)
1. Population: 9 million people, 5½ million rural -- 3½ million urban.
  2. One hectare is required to feed one person for one year.
  3. Therefore the land problem was not merely a political one but an economic one. Professor Zinner here remarked that at no time was Hungary a food deficient country, although the population certainly did not eat very well.
- B. Pre-war: about 3½ million people of the rural population lived with no land at all or less than was needed for subsistence. 64% of the holdings were less than the size needed for subsistence.

II. The 1945-46 land reform.

- A. The average size of holdings went up from 3/4 to 1½ hectares.
- B. There were more medium sized holdings than before. The average peasant acquired slightly more land than he had had before.
- C. All large estates were abolished.

III. The 1948 collectivization drive and the private agricultural sector.

- A. Collectivization proceeded fiercely under Rakosi until 1952, albeit slowly at first. All types of pressures were used to squeeze the independent farmer into the collective:
1. Forced deliveries to the state of a large share of the produce at prices far below the market price (sometimes as much as two-thirds of the produce at one-fifth of the market price). -- After 1953, deliveries were reduced by one-third under Imre Nagy.
  2. Taxes equalling over ½ of an unskilled laborer's yearly wage had to be paid regularly. Outside work often had to be undertaken to meet tax payments.
  3. The insurance system was made compulsory and very expensive. The Kolhoz also had to pay insurance but received over 90% compensation for damages.
  4. Compulsory peace loan subscription.
  5. When a collective was formed in a village, it apportioned the best land to itself, while those who chose to remain independent had to accept the poorer land in return for their personal holdings which had been confiscated. Taxes for the independent farmer, however, continued to be based on the assessments of their previous holdings; vineyards and orchards were generally taken over by the collective, but their former owners were required to continue paying taxes on them.

## IV. The standard of living.

- A. Collectivization demoralized the individual peasant to such an extent that he bought up all the consumer goods possible rather than save his money. Collectivization also discouraged him from buying new tools, fertilizers, or improving his land in any manner. Consequently much land became ruined and unproductive.
- B. While land productivity declined, the standard of living (for the individual peasant) rose even during the worst period of collectivization as a result of this indiscriminate buying of consumers' goods. Because of this phenomenon, respondents disagreed about the standard of living.
- C. The enforced deliveries placed the peasants on a money economy to a much greater degree than heretofore.
- D. There were greater opportunities for the village youth in education than in pre-war times.
- E. Medium individual peasants with about 5 hectares seemed better off than the collectivized peasants.

## V. Policies toward collectivization.

- A. Began in 1948, proceeded slowly 1948-49, attracted at first mostly the poorest and landless peasantry. The real wave of collectivization took place under Rakosi, 1949-52.
  - 1. In 1948 there were only 10,000 peasants in collectives, in 1952 (Sept.) there were 447,000.
  - 2. The medium peasantry, those with 4-10 hectare holdings, were allowed to enter the collectives; those owning more than 10 hectares were considered kulaks.
- B. In 1953, Nagy abolished the collectivization drive. By this time, the collectivized peasants had declined by 50%. Nagy allowed the individual peasants to lease unused state reserve lands on a five-year lease.
- C. 1954-55, Rakosi renewed the collectivization drive. According to the rural sociologist Istvan Markus, a much greater use of force was applied at this time than before.
- D. The Kadar regime abolished forced deliveries and once again renounced forced collectivization.

## VI. Methods used to collectivize the peasantry.

- A. Torture, concentration camps, and physical force in general. The regime usually went after the village leaders first in order to deprive the peasant resistance of its leadership.
- B. Blackmail, threats of punishment; a general attempt to atomize the village, to destroy it as a possible source of resistance.
- C. Collectives were granted good seed, tools, fertilizers, and low taxes.
- D. The use of the MTS which was established in 1948-49 was deprived to the individual peasant. It made contracts almost exclusively with the collectives. -- One of the criticisms levelled against the MTS was that there were too few of them (260 MTS stations and 24,000 ?? tractors for 3 million holds in 1956). Moreover the three drivers allocated to each tractor resulted in too large an administrative staff.

## VII. Administration:

- A. In order to split up the village, many kulaks were enlisted in the AVH along with former swineherds, displaced elements, etc.
- B. The Kolhoz chairman was chosen either from the ranks of the peasants or was an appointed local party man. In either case, he was often lacking in adequate experience.
- C. Personal privileges were awarded to kolhoz members as an inducement for joining; better opportunities for education, for commissions in the army.

## VIII. The Revolution.

- A. The peasants did send in food for the revolutionary fighters in Budapest, and they seem to have done it willingly.
- B. The peasants generally did not actually fight.

In an after-seminar discussion with Mr. Coulter, Mr. Koshne pointed out that it would be wrong to underrate the peasant participation in the revolt by assessing their degree of participation on the basis of actual fighting and sending of food. Their relative abstention from the fighting did not mean that their political goals could not be achieved without the kind of fighting that went on in Budapest. We should therefore re-assess the role of the peasants in the revolution along new definitions of participation such as the setting up of Peasants' Councils, etc.

NOTE. Due to a lack of time Mr. Coulter was unable to cover some other aspects of his report, such as 1) the collectivized peasantry; 2) the state farm peasants.



Current file

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

March 24, 1958

Brief Summary of the Research Undertaken by Mr. Madge:

The relation of social class to the attitudes, expectations, and experiences of individuals. An attempt to determine whether certain patterns of attitudes can be correlated with a specific social group. The data are derived from the "A" interviews. Two aspects of the attitudes are taken into consideration: 1) the respondent's self-image of his role in the society, 2) the manner in which external influences aided or frustrated the respondent's efforts. Each individual respondent is viewed in his following roles:

- as a Consumer
- Worker
- Politician and trade unionist
- Revolutionary
- Family man
- Intellectual and art lover
- Student
- Religious man
- Others
- Social Class.

This study should make it possible to work out an index of deprivations. (Mr. Shulman stated that this closely paralleled the method used by the "Rutgers" group, thus making it possible to compare results).

Mr. McCagg: Progress Report on Ideology

- I. There seems to be no general agreement among the respondents on what the prevailing ideology was. To some it was Russian patriotism, to others, Marxism-Leninism, a struggle for power, etc.
  - A. 39 interviews were used for tabulation purposes:
    - 26 "A" interviews, 13 "B" interviews.
    - 1. 15 respondents were ex-communists
    - 2. 10 were workers
    - 3. 7 were students
    - 4. 12 -- miscellaneous (prisoners, declassé, etc.)
- II. When the communist leaders entered Hungary in 1944, they came back with the Russian army into an enemy country. They had lost complete contact with Hungary; some had lived in Russia for as many as twenty years. Thus there was a great deal of hostility toward them and yet their obscurity to the general population allowed them to start from a clean slate. 3,000 returned to Hungary, most of whom were prisoners of war.

- III. Who were the communists who returned; toward what groups did they press their appeal?
- A. They were for the most part party leaders, prisoners, and philosophers with mysterious reputations and backgrounds.
  - B. Underground members were pushed into office on the ground level, as well as shiftless classes, people who had previously been persecuted by the regime, -- Jews, Transylvanians, Slovaks. (Professor Zinner remarked that Hungarians who had lived in parts of Slovakia that had once belonged to Hungary were intensely nationalistic. Nevertheless they were regarded with great suspicion by the Hungarian population, e.g. General Farkas.)
  - C. At this time the communists made no ideological demands. They wanted to broaden their base of support by attracting all strata of the population, including members of the merchant class, youthful and ambitious ~~xxxxxx~~ elements, etc.
- IV. The Hungarian Communist Party had two advantages in that it had a good organizing mechanism and had the support of the Russian Army. After the war there arose a great need for reconstruction and the Communist Party devoted its energy toward the spreading of a general feeling that it alone was the Party of reconstruction. A feeling for the community, for the joy of reconstruction, and for the necessity of authority and guidance from above was instilled in the population.

There existed at this time a great deal of looseness in the Communist Party organization; its structure was primarily regional centered around the villages, towns, and local block cells in the cities. The Party committees were made up of approximately 20-30 members, mostly elected but a few appointed from higher party organizations. Most of the decisions were made by the elected members. The structure was not firmly centralized and a great deal of regional autonomy persisted.

Professor Roberts suggested that this type of historical reconstruction might be inaccurate. He felt that the strong suspicion of the Hungarian population to an alien incoming party, supported by unpopular Russian troops, must have created considerable tension. A discussion ensued as to the extent to which the population's mentality and tempers were really at peace with the communists' goals and intentions.

- V. After 1948, a definite change occurred in the Communist Party organization.
- A. Area cells were abolished in many localities. All the emphasis was placed on plant cells. Many cells were dissolved and then re-formed with an entirely new composition of members.

- B. Centralization was stepped up. Elected members of the party committees lost much control over regional affairs and power shifted to the members appointed by the party.
- C. The agendas at meetings were no longer spontaneously arranged; they became fixed from above. All opinions contrary to the party line were barred from being expressed.
- D. The time consumed in party work for party members became greatly increased.
- E. The number of party functionaries in the factories was greatly increased.
- F. After the merger of the Social Democratic and Communist parties, a general reorganization of the party took place. All the workers were brought under the control of the party, many non-workers were dismissed from the party ranks, as well as non-conformists and bad kaders.
  - 1. The basic aim was to raise the proportion of workers in the party. There occurred cases of university students who were taken away from their studies to work in factories in order to build up good working class kaders.
  - 2. Another result was a large rise in the bureaucracy: ratio was kept at 40% white collar to 60% workers.

VI. The social origin of workers' groups in one factory (from information supplied by a respondent):

- A. Old communists and left social democrats
- B. Traditional members of the proletariat
- C. Young skilled workers
- D. "Lazy" young workers displaying "bourgeois" tastes and tendencies
- E. Workers from the countryside districts, unskilled, declasses, etc.

The majority of the traditional proletariat were either uninterested or were refused party admittance; the "lazy" young workers and the opportunists joined however. The experts and technicians who received party appointments and sinecures rapidly lost contact with the workers. The great increase of party work for party members resulted in a corresponding reduction of work in their regular jobs. This consequently gave rise to the impression among the workers that party members were lazy. The workers themselves were broken down into small cliques, in competition with and very suspicious of each other. The expert party members, who had believed in communism all along, were thus taken out of their environment and placed in hostile surroundings. A deep separation existed not only between communists and non-communists, but between the higher and lower party members. By 1951, the philosophers were in disgrace and the students were expelled. All the former groups who had joined the party now no longer existed as groups.

## VII. Sovietization

- A. The awareness of direct Soviet controls and influences on Hungarian society was not as great as it seemed retrospectively after the revolution. Many felt that Russification was merely a Hungarian application of communism.
- B. The application of terror was primarily and vengefully directed at the middle class and bad kaders, not at the workers.
- C. The resulting effect of the social isolation of the communist party members was that they were barred from seeking and finding any truths outside of party truth. The only existing reality for them was for them an inward reality, one which had to rely on party newspapers as the only source of information.

Professor Roberts closed the seminar by suggesting that some of the problems and questions arising out of the discussion be pursued at the next seminar meeting.

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

April 7, 1958

I. After a brief discussion on the meaning and importance of Communist ideology in Hungary, Professor Dallin suggested that it would be a good idea to define one's terms more precisely when speaking about ideology, theory, or indoctrination. Since differences in ideology did exist (e.g., the policies and ideology advocated by Imre Nagy, those advocated by Rakosi), it would be advisable to determine what the ideology was at a given time period, who formulated it, and who believed it. One must also be careful to distinguish ideology which took the form of rationalizations from the motives for what actually occurred. There are essentially two problems involved here: (1) What is the regime trying to make people believe and think? This can be determined from outside material; it is primarily a study in political theory. (2) What do people really believe? This can be determined from the interview material. It involves such questions as loyalty to the regime. Another interesting problem is that of intensity and flexibility of belief. How easily can changes in the ideology shake the faith of the believer. Finally there is the question of the difference between the real beliefs of the Communist leadership and their overt actions and statements.

Professor Zinner remarked that the Hungarian developments highlighted a crisis within the Hungarian Communist Party itself, be it due to disillusionment, a power struggle, or other causes. The current emphasis on the fight against Revisionist tendencies is not at all ephemeral. In the Hungarian example we do have some clues in respect to the ideology, and we should probe and try to determine as far as we can to what extent Hungarian Communists lost their beliefs and as to what they retained them.

Professor Dallin pointed out that in speaking of a Hungarian Communist ideology, this would include the beliefs not only of the leaders but of a great many lesser Communist Party officials as well. There does exist a great deal of muted conversation and exchange of opinions in the Hungarian and other Communist parties which is not publicized. Decisions do not always originate solely from the concentrated leadership at the top, and it would be a mistake to view the regime in strictly monolithic terms.

Progress Report by Mr. Shaw: Motivations in Socialist  
Society -- The Family

II. Short discussion on methodology.

- A. Two choices in the approach: One can either start from the individual or family unit and see how it is affected by society and institutions, or work from society and the encompassing institutions down to the smallest unit-- the family and the individual. This report will utilize the former approach.
- B. This study aims at determining the aspirations of Hungarian society. These aspirations, explicitly stated by the respondents, can be categorized into three groups starting with the least important:
  1. Statements of declaration -- (I want this, I believe..., etc.)
  2. Statements of inference -- (where the respondent places his declarations in terms of importance, precedence, etc., as against other things which he values)
  3. Statements of actions -- (what the respondent has actually done)
- C. There were two serious drawbacks in the interview material.
  1. The respondent, at the time of the interview, was out of contact with real life situations on which he was asked to pass judgment.
  2. Due to the weakness of the position of the interviewee, respondent vis-a-vis the interviewer, (i.e., the fact that he was no longer manager of his factory, foreman, etc., and thus could no longer speak from his former position of authority), the questions asked tended to take on a power of suggestion and the respondent was more likely to give answers which he believed would please the interviewer.

III. Findings up to date.

- A. Hardships and strenuous living conditions under the Communist regime forced the Hungarian population in their process of adaptation to re-define their concepts of status, values, and goals. Many who had been used to a relative degree of isolation of their social groups were now encouraged to a harder and more realistic view of themselves and of the regime by virtue of a greater awareness and participation in local and national affairs.
- B. Despite an increase in isolation between different family units, the individual family unit seems to have retained its integrity.

At this point a discussion ensued during which it was pointed out that in many instances the respondents tended to place the blame for their personal failures on the regime rather than admit to their own incompetence or inadequacies in certain matters. Professor Zinner observed that this tendency to attribute both positive and negative personal experiences to the regime was a direct result of the regime's effort to make the population increasingly reliant upon it. Thus the regime engendered a kind of "built-in self-destruction."

- C. As a result of outside pressures imposed by the regime, the family became a close working unit expressing a greater degree of frankness among its members, a freer exchange of ideas, a greater cooperation and consideration for one another, and often pooling economic resources. Children were given considerable attention at home in respect to education and family members devoted much of their spare time in recreational pursuits together both in and out of the house. As recreational opportunities declined, family activity became more significant.
- D. The family did not usually act as an actual "counter-revolutionary (anti-regime) force in the sphere of education. Rather it attempted to find the most favorable method of adaptation to new conditions for the family members. In this respect, the family unit became a socialization agent. On the other hand, the family tried to retain in the home the old traditional values and mores. Consequently many individuals were forced to hold two sets of values, one for the home and one for getting along with the conditions imposed upon society by the regime.

Professor Zinner added that since the basic aim of any family is the preservation and safety of its offsprings, it could not incite its members to counter-revolutionary action but would rather try to adapt itself to new conditions. An important question would be to what extent the family was able to retain its traditional values within the existing framework of society without actually inciting overt counter-revolutionary action.

Professor Roberts cautioned Mr. Shaw against failure to distinguish 20th-century phenomena from problems specifically Hungarian.

Professor Dallin suggested one line of inquiry which had not yet been pursued in this Project and which had been rather successfully dealt with in the studies on the Soviet family: the possible conflict in aspirations between security and success.

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

April 14, 1958

Mr. Varchaver announced that translated abstracts of Hungarian manuscripts were now on hand at the Project Office.

Mr. Koehne reported that work was progressing on the "I" section analysis and the categories had been established for numerous questions. These categories will serve to relate specific responses to social background. A brief preliminary report for the seminar could be given in two to three weeks.

Mr. Schulman: Report on the book by Imre Nagy, "On Communism".

I. Preliminary remarks about the book.

A. This book is fascinating not so much for what Nagy said as for the way in which he said it. It contains much ideological value and invites comparison with the Djilas book. It provides an insight into the nature of the man, Nagy; his reasons for his holding on to communist beliefs, his utopianism. One can almost pin-point the interweaving of ideological views of category and utopian aspirations.

B. The book is really a polemic against the "Unholy Four" -- Rakosi, Farkas, Gero, and Revai. Nagy is not writing about the future of communism but rather a series of essays on various existing problems. He continually finds that there is a great unrest in Hungary, places the blame on the Rakosi clique, and affirms that certain conditions must be met if communism is to survive in Hungary. These are (1) a return to the "New Course" and a retreat from the "Bonapartism" of Rakosi, (2) raising the standard of living, (3) a liberalization of policies, especially in the attitude toward the intelligentsia. More specifically these conditions are:

1. The elaboration of nationalistic ideals. Hungary must be independent and autonomous. This does not preclude co-operation with the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc, but it must not mean a policy of total dependence or mechanical emulation in building socialism. Nagy would like to see communism in Hungary tied to its national traditions and values.

2. The population must be given a satisfactory share of consumer goods. One of the terrible disasters of communism in Hungary is that it has violated the man. Workers have become more productive but worse off. There must be launched a policy of economic reconstruction where the various segments of the society (particularly the working class) can have their ideals satisfied.

3. The party must adopt certain standards of morality and must stand as an example of behavior. It must not tolerate careerists and opportunists.

II. A large portion of this book was written in the summer of 1955 before the XX Party Congress.

At this time Nagy asserted:

A. That there was a growing support among the top strata of society and among the general population for his point of view. He presents no internal evidence



for this assertion however, and there appears no validation for it in the actual material.

B. That he and his fellows were kept in total isolation, had no access to newspapers and so had to rely on private circulation of news (especially after March 1955).

C. That a cleavage in party policy had begun in 1953. Elsewhere, however, he speaks of Rakosi in 1949 as the monster imposed on Hungary by the Soviet Union. One wonders what Nagy did prior to 1953. Did he follow or oppose the Rakosi line, or did he merely follow directives from Moscow? Shulman felt that much of what Nagy said at this time was retrospective thinking.

D. That despite the near complete isolation of party functionaries, they at least were still in touch with reality and existing problems. The Rakosi clique, on the other hand, was not aware of the total disillusionment of the population.

Professor Roberts here raised a question about the relationship between Nagy and the Hungarian Communist Party to the Soviet Communist Party during the various stages of the post-war period. How does one explain the fact that Nagy's policy corresponded with developments in Russia after the death of Stalin? When Nagy spoke about his March 1955 demotion, he did not mention Malenkov's similar and co-incidental demotion.

Professor Zimmer pointed out that Nagy's total isolation made it impossible for him to know who was winning in the Soviet Communist Party power struggle and so could not commit himself. He added that personality conflicts were always present between the Nagy group and the Rakosi group (and even within the Rakosi group) but that they were subordinated and subdued until a crisis did arise. Then, these latent conflicts made themselves more apparent.

Professor Dallin stated that there were different ways in which a decompression could have been inaugurated after Stalin's death. Once a particular line of action was chosen, perhaps an appropriate leader was then sought out on the basis of his real or mythical reputation.

Professor Zimmer believed that Nagy was chosen simply because he was the only Hungarian with Soviet communist training who could be trusted. The others were either dead, too young, or too inexperienced. Neither was there much correlation between Nagy and Malenkov since they did not work or communicate with each other. Nagy perhaps went a little further in his "New Course" than Malenkov would have gone in Russia but this remains an open question.

III. Nagy provides a rather interesting evaluation of the effects of his "New Course".

A. The lesser party functionaries were able to deal with real problems rather than to have to fit them first to an ideological text. Nagy thus implies that he had considerable support among the party cadres.

B. The confidence of the public was improved, especially as a result of economic improvements. The instruments of persuasion were given priority over those of terror.

C. In response to the Nagy line, the Rakosi line became even tougher in 1955.

D. Throughout the book, Nagy accuses the Rakosi group of using the AVH and terror as a means to keep themselves in power. Nagy claims that in 1945-48, the Communist Party had a great deal of support but that this support was withdrawn as a result of the Rakosi tactics.

IV. Two important convictions held by Nagy were:

A. That the Marxist-Leninist ideology should be allowed to operate flexibly in its application to national conditions. It followed that the USSR should not be slavishly aped.

B. That though economic reforms should be geared to industrialization, popular support must be maintained; thus, the economy should try to provide a decent standard of living. Nagy further stated that revolutionaries must also know when and how to turn into administrators.

V. In his letter to the Central Executive Committee in May 1955, Nagy proposed as his program:

A. The improvement of the workers' standard of living.

B. The improvement of the standards of production.

C. Industrialization to be emphasized.

D. The abolishment of forced collectivization; free peasants to be aided by the state.

E. Criticism to be maintained in the party.

VI. One of the obsessions with which Nagy is concerned is the problem of communication within the party. The policies of 1953 were never made known in the press and so the lower party functionaries never knew what was going on. Prior to 1953 and after March 1955 promises were made that were never fulfilled. Instead of the promised rise in the standard of living, industrial development doubled to 1953 while the standard of living continued to fall; there was a decrease in livestock and an unparalleled scarcity of consumer goods.

A. Nagy claims that communist officials should not over-indulge in self-criticism. He admits that it is a tension relieving device but that a wave of criticism from the masses could sweep away the regime. The masses should be allowed to criticize only in a way that would strengthen the regime.

B. Nagy often seeks to distinguish between using Marxism as a science and as an ideology. He is always aware of the ways in which Marxist principles can be flexibly and scientifically re-evaluated in the light of new conditions. Nagy believed that communist parties had the duty of accepting the goals but could choose the means. This also applied to party functionaries. When they wished to deal with reality under the Rakosi regime, they were unable to do so without being called heretics.

Professor Roberts raised the question as to how Nagy came to believe these truths (voluntariness, popular support, legality, etc.) which placed him in an extreme heretical position, and how he was still able to consider himself a Marxist. Mr. Schulman believes that Nagy was completely insulated from reality while in the Soviet Union and that when he arrived in Hungary with the task of building socialism, he gradually began to perceive the effect of sociological reality on theory and thus slowly moved to an enunciation of these heretical views. Mr. Schulman added that Nagy is above all a nationalist. Nagy cites in his book the Bandung and Belgrade Conferences as examples of the possibility of merging national aspirations with socialist theory. Socialism, Nagy argued, must in the course of development include nationalistic aspirations and insure continuity in national cultural traditions.

Professor Zinner suggested that Nagy came to these conclusions as a result of the harm done by Stalin's insistence on extreme Soviet emulation and destruction of national traditions. During 1945-48, the Hungarian Communist Party was built largely on a peasant youth base which then became the core of the party. These peasants were intensely nationalistic and had to compromise their feelings with communist ideology. After 1948, they were either placed in secondary positions or turned out of the party. This group then became the oppositionists who continually pressed for reforms. Perhaps Nagy sympathized with them and saw in these village communists the true core of the party and the possibility of building socialism successfully while retaining national and cultural values.

VII. The goals of the New Course (those avowed by Imre Nagy)

- A. The elimination of "Bonapartism" and the restoration of collective leadership.
- B. The maintenance of criticism within the party.
- C. The restoration of excluded party members.
- D. The restoration of party prestige.
- E. The revival of such democratic institutions as the workers' councils.

VIII. After 1955 the situation got worse. There existed more illegality than ever before. The fear of reprisals by the AVH was everywhere present. Party functionaries became dependent upon the party for everything they had. Many important decisions were left to the caprice of the top executive.

Nagy ends his book with a plea for the cessation of anti-Sovietism and anti-Semitism within the party.

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

April 21, 1958

Mr. Weinstein gave a brief report on the statistical data obtained from the facsheet information of "A" interviews' respondents. This material will be made available to seminar participants and may be consulted at the Project Office.

Captain Smith -- Progress Report on Controls in the Party, Police, and Army Apparatus

- I. The work done deals primarily with the "C" section of "A" interviews. It attempts to evaluate the reaction of the masses to controls, to determine what was going on in the Party hierarchy, to determine the fluctuations and changes of control measures and their importance in engendering the revolution (during the period 1948-56). This in turn requires an investigation of policy changes emanating from Moscow, as well as the inner conflicts of the Hungarian Communist Party.

The paper will be organized into three periods:

- 1948-53 -- The Rajk trial will be used as the highpoint of this period
- 1953-55 -- The emergence of Nagy
- 1955-56 -- The 2nd Rakosi period

The respondents almost unanimously regarded Rajk as a symbol of the last vestige of opposition in the communist party. His downfall marked the end of effective opposition.

A DISCUSSION ensued ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES BEHIND THE RAJK TRIAL

Professor Dallin remarked that he did not think that this approach to an analysis of control measures and policies was the most fruitful method of using the interview material.

Professors Zinner and Roberts agreed that the disparity in materials makes it impossible to handle the problem of the actual circumstances behind the Rajk trial. What can be determined from the interviews is that Rajk became an important symbol of opposition after the 20th Party Congress and even more after Rakosi's recantations.

Professor Roberts suggested that an investigation of the pressures emanating from Moscow for Rajk's rehabilitation might make an interesting study.

- II. Captain Smith continued his report by reading the results of a broad statistical tabulation of the answers of 84 respondents to questions in the "C" section. No attempt was made in this survey to correlate answers to any specific social, age, or other categories or groups of respondents. A few of the more interesting results showed that:

- 1. Initial attitudes toward the communist party were determined by: (IN ORDER OF NUMERICAL IMPORTANCE ONE OF THE 84 ANSWERS)
  - a) family traditions
  - b) experience in 1944-45 with the communist party
  - c) ideological reasons
  - d) experiences with Bela Kun regime (2 respondents)

2. The grievances which were uppermost were:

- a) fear of arrest and terror
- b) interference with civil rights
- c) disagreement with political ideas
- d) inadequate opportunity to get ahead
- e) presence of Soviet troops
- f) violations of national dignity
- g) religious interference

Doubts and objections were raised concerning the significance and analytical validity of this kind of general tabulation. It was pointed out that many answers are here subject to ambiguous interpretation and should be analyzed individually.

CurPH

Government 362 II A -- Research Project on Hungary

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

April 28, 1958

Miss Parkinson: Progress Report on The Agencies of Control, Mass Organizations in Society (with particular emphasis on the AVH).

- I. The problem in this study is essentially to determine how the agencies of control function, to describe them and to portray their effect on society.
  - A. Such a study revolving around the theory of mass organizations has already been made by Emil Lederer, and has been elaborated upon by such sociologists as Durkheim. These studies however deal with this phenomenon only in democratic societies. The Lederer-Durkheim studies have arrived at the general conclusions that mass organizations:
    - 1. function as a disseminating source of new opinions independent of the state
    - 2. provide a new way of communicating information
    - 3. increase participation in political organizations
    - 4. provide training in the skills of leadership
    - 5. can serve as a basis of opposition to the state
  - B. These then are the functions of voluntary, independent mass organizations in society. When the state obtains complete control over these mass agencies, it can channel them into instruments for the dissemination of totalitarian rule. Consequently their functions change completely.
  
- II. In making a study of the AVH, one of the questions which arises is what, beyond the sheer physical force of the AVH, allowed it to persist in the society (assuming that physical force was not the only factor)? The question in the interviews ("A") which was most useful on this point was question 10 of the "G" section.
  - A. The political police in Hungary was organized by Rajk in 1946 and placed directly under the Minister of Interior. In 1947, it was organized by Rajk and Kadar as the AVH.
    - 1. It consisted of the Blue AVH who were the internal police (secret) and the Green AVH who were the border guards.
    - 2. Their primary task was to forestall political resistance.
    - 3. Their methods of operation encompassed all facets of physical and psychological torture such as arrests, house searches, planting of evidence etc. It is interesting to note however that the AVH went to considerable pains to legitimize their activities by such methods as "rigged" evidence, "frame-ups", etc.
    - 4. The structure of the AVH administration and the line of controls from top to bottom emanated from:
      - The Party leadership, to
      - The Minister of Interior, to
      - The top level AVH administrators, to
      - The regular AVH staff members (bureaucratic), to
      - The officers of the AVH, to
      - The AVH rank and file.

- a) Some departments were oriented toward the gathering of information while others dealt with the matter of investigations.
  - b) Yet other departments dealt with the administration of prisons and forced labor camps.
  - c) Finally there were the departments purely concerned with "field" work and carrying out terroristic and brutal measures.
5. AVH members not in uniform were planted in factories, in the army, and in the mass organizations. These members functioned in the capacity of informers.
6. Recruitment was generally carried on in three ways:
- a) regular drafting -- this was largely done for the border patrol, from lower type elements (large number of peasants, sadists). The internal police (the Blue AVH) were generally a more select group.
  - b) volunteering -- this group became for the most part officers. Immediately after the war, many Jews who sought revenge were recruited in this manner.
  - c) by force, blackmail, etc. -- these were mostly informers, not the most reliable or trustworthy elements.

Professor Roberts asked whether there was a distinction discernable between the functions of the regular staff and those elements who were forced to join. Miss Parkinson answered that the latter were for the most part informers. Professor Roberts then suggested that it might be useful to make a comparative study with the Polish and Russian experience. Professor Merle Fainsod has already made important researches on this subject in the Smolensk archives (to the year 1941).

- B. The respondents were split in their view of the AVH members. Some saw them purely as careerists and opportunists; others felt that the AVH contained in its ranks people who believed in the system, party ideologues. The AVH represented a very high status in the society and so would be attractive to the true believers. Some respondents felt that those who were forced into the AVH were not real AVH members but rather victims of circumstance. Others lumped all the AVH men together as bandits.
- C. The kinds of people used as informers varied because the AVH needed people of all backgrounds to inform on their friends and associates. Popular local figures were especially sought out to be informers for they had more ready access to information.
1. Were informers identifiable? Some respondents claimed that all AVH were identifiable, yet others or even the same respondents stated that they hesitated talking openly to anyone for fear he would be an informer. Some pointed to the uneasy manner of AVH informers in everyday behavior as a way of identifying them (their lack of experience at this type of work was perhaps a factor).

Professor Zinner drew attention to political prisoners as an unpaid source of informers. A vast amount of information was pressured out of them and this information contributed largely to the task of carrying out purges.

III. The relations of the AVH with the regular army and the regular police force.

- A. There existed considerable differences between the AVH and these organizations. The regular police merely kept law and order, were paid low salaries (600 ft./mo.), and did not enjoy special privileges. The AVH, on the other hand,

received 1,100 ft./mo. according to one respondent, 1800 ft./mo. - 2000 ft./mo. according to another. They were given clothing, food, adequate housing, paid vacations, and travelling expenses. The relatively superior status of the AVH resulted in a lowering of prestige and position for the Army and regular Police.

B. As to the background of AVH members, there was a general agreement of opinion:

1. The age of rank and file members ranged from about 20-26.
2. The age of officers ranged in the 30's and 40's.
3. A few respondents claimed that the AVH was to some extent staffed with Russians.
4. As to religious background, a few respondents claimed that Jews predominated in the AVH.
5. In regard to social class background, there was a potpourri of answers in which peasants, workers, middle classes, criminals, and low elements were all mentioned. Probably all of these elements were represented in the AVH.

Professor Roberts here raised the question as to what factors made the AVH persist as an organization during the 1956 revolt during which time all other state organizations rapidly disintegrated.

Professor Zinner remarked during the ensuing discussion that fully a month prior to the revolution, orders had ceased coming down from the top level authorities. Since the AVH was not an authority completely in its own right, it was thus paralyzed and left without direction during this time. This accounted for the "farewell parties" and the general feeling among AVH members that their organization was crumbling or being disbanded. Disintegration had started at the very top level party group and had consequently the effect of paralysis on other dependent groups. Still, the AVH was the only group which did not disintegrate during the revolution. Professor Zinner offered two possible explanations:

- 1) With the advent of the revolution, the AVH realized it would suffer severe consequences if it allowed the revolution to develop unchecked.
- 2) The AVH was the only existing agency which had its own internal system of communications along with arsenals, headquarters, etc. throughout the country. AVH members were able to rally around their organizational strongholds and thus were in a position to offer effective resistance.



CURPH

Government 362 II A -- Research Project on Hungary

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

May 5, 1958

Mr. Guterman: Progress Report on the Operation of Control Devices in Various Sectors of Hungarian Society.

I. Problems of methodology

- A. Primary reliance on "B" interviews (c. 30-35 interviews), manuscripts by the respondents, and the book by Imre Nagy.
- B. Answers to questions in the "B" interviews are difficult to quantify. A problem therefore arises as to what extent generalization is possible, or how many answers of a given nature are necessary to establish a criterion of proof.
- C. The dating of various events often presents a problem.

II. A primary purpose of this report is to discuss the devices that were used to eliminate the independent bases of opposition to the regime. This will involve the operation of control devices in industry and in professional groups.

A. INDUSTRY: The devices used to break down bases of power in this area were:

1. Nationalisation

- a) Nationalisation began in 1945-46 with the coal mines, power stations, and key industries.
- b) By March 1948 all factories employing more than 100 workers were nationalised; by 1949 this applied to all enterprises employing over 10 workers.
- c) In 1949 there remained 135,000 workers in private enterprise; by 1954 there were only 5,000.

2. Stopping of supplies to industrialists

3. Taxation, social insurance (compulsory) and other such physical measures.

4. The revoking of permits.

B. Many of these methods were also used against the Roman Catholic Church.

1. In 1948 Roman Catholic schools were nationalised. The Church then countered by ordering monks and priests to stop teaching and enter some other kind of job such as factory work. The regime then reacted by taking away the work permits of these elements in 1950. This forced them back into teaching.
2. The state retained its control over the priests by determining their wages. In this manner, the state could discriminate against the clergy who refused to co-operate.

- C. Many of these methods were also used against various social classes. Between 1951-52 there occurred a rise in the intensity with which the upper classes were expropriated and deported. In these cases, the state made use of its right of eminent domain.
- D. Perhaps the most important method of discrimination in employment was the Kader system. Both political allegiance and class origin were operative factors in kader ratings.
- E. Another method by which the state exerted its control over the population was that of discrimination in housing. All co-operative apartments and all apartment houses with more than four rooms were nationalized. People were discouraged from living in private houses because they were obliged to pay a high maintenance fee regardless of whether they received services and repairs.

### III. THE PROFESSIONS

- A. The kader system operated in all educational institutions. In order to gain admission to the bar, a political exam had to be taken. Work communities were established and people were pressured into joining them. Disloyal persons were often barred from the work community. The entrance to these legal work communities was usually controlled by a party member. In him lay the power to issue or revoke work licenses.
- B. At the place of work, discipline was kept rigid and any break in the discipline would incur corresponding penalties, -- verbal reprimands, written reprimands, fines, deprivations of certain privileges. This was in turn noted down on the kader sheet.

### IV. THE TRADE UNIONS

- A. The communist party had complete control over the trade unions.
- B. During the coalition period, the trade unions attained a great many prerogatives. Under communism these were taken away. The right to strike was abolished in 1947, employment exchanges were taken away from the trade unions in 1948, co-determination (the right of the unions to determine jointly with management what the labor conditions would be) was taken away in 1951.
- C. The trade unions carried a few benefits for its membership. These benefits attracted people to the trade unions despite the fact that they were controlled by the Communist Party.
  1. Social security
  2. Sickness and accident insurance
  3. Paid vacations
  4. Financial help in case of childbirth, death, emergencies.
- D. These special privileges tended to isolate the few who received them from the population. The regime used these privileges or the promise of such privileges in order to keep the loyalty of the workers.

- E. In general, the population did not seem to have taken the trade unions very seriously. It was extremely difficult to change jobs and severe penalties were imposed for those who left their jobs without permission.
- F. The trade unions also fulfilled some cultural functions (sponsored cultural activities).

V. **MANAGERIAL PERSONNEL: Structure of an enterprise.**

- A. At the top there is the central planning board, followed by each industrial ministry, then the directorate which corresponds to a branch of an industry, then the trust, and finally the firm which is theoretically controlled by the manager, chief engineer and the accountant.
  - 1. Bonuses were handed out for meeting the production norms. Each factory had its inspectors and informers, and the failure to realize production goals incurred various penalties.
  - 2. The state control center and the AVH saw to it that the instructions of the planning board were carried out.
  - 3. Those who were favored by the regime received good material benefits.
- B. In reality, the theoretically planned economy was characterized by waste and inefficiency, evasions, and corruption, favoritism etc.
  - 1. Economic waste and inefficiency:
    - a) Since the system of bonuses was determined by the amount of physical production alone, the quality of products suffered greatly. Thus quotas were met at the expense of quality.
    - b) In order to realize the production targets, enterprises constantly engaged in various forms of planned fraud. Thus managers might declare certain goods finished whereas they might still be in the process of completion. Often semi-finished products were stockpiled and a high value was placed on them. Later they were sold at a loss but in the meantime, the quotas had been met and the bonuses were distributed. A financial loss in an enterprise incurred no penalties.
    - c) There existed a prevalence of incompetent people in key positions.

CLP/PH

Summary of the Seminar Discussion

May 12, 1958

Professor Roberts asked the graduate student seminar members to please complete their reports as soon as possible and to turn them in.

Mr. Guterman: Progress Report continued from the previous seminar.

I. Summary of preceding remarks: This report has been concerned with the various types of control devices which were imposed upon the Hungarian society in order to attain the objectives of the Communist Party. Some of the points discussed were:

- A. The operation of control devices in various segments of society; industry, professional classes, managerial, etc.
- B. The Communist Party control over the trade unions.
- C. The manner in which the reality of controls differed from the theory.
  - 1. Waste and inefficiency in economic enterprises.
  - 2. Low degree of quality of manufactured goods.
  - 3. Kader evasions.

II. Conclusions:

- A. The kader system seemed to have been relatively unsuccessful and resulted in numerous instances of evasion. Out of 15 cases where people had been effected by their kader ratings, 13 managed to evade the consequences of their unfavorable position at one time or another. It is questionable however whether evasions were due to the skillfulness of the individuals in evading the consequences of their bad kader sheets, or whether evasions may be ascribed to the weakness of the control system or to the leniency of the regime. Professor Zinner remarked that a captive employee -- one who had been compromised with the regime -- might be even more reliable from the point of view of the regime than an employee with a clean record.
- B. Persons in positions of authority were on the whole not sympathetic to the system of extensive controls.
- C. The stringency of control measures varied from place to place.
- D. Skilled workers and administrators were relatively freer and more independent of the control system.
- E. A great deal of corruption, graft, etc. pervaded the entire society.
- F. Consequently and as a result of these tendencies, the control system doesn't seem to have worked very well. The numerous occurrences of evasions must either be explained in terms of the regime's inability to co-ordinate all agencies of control to work efficiently, or in terms of a lack of interest

in the strict application of control measures on the part of the regime. Another question which arises is the extent to which a communistic system of economic planning can become efficient. Are waste, evasion, etc. inherent or accidental features of the regime?

Mr. Pratt Byrd: Progress Report on Economic Discontent and its Importance in Hungary

I. Some hypothetical conclusions:

- A. Had there been no economic discontent, there would have been no revolution; or, had Hungary found solace for its economic discontent, there would have been no revolution. It is indeed impossible to see how Hungary could have avoided economic discontent given the drive toward full-scale industrialization. Hungary was not at all well endowed in natural resources to undertake such a policy. The transition from the remarkable recovery of the reconstruction period to the policy of industrialization placed great strains on the Hungarian economy.
- B. Had there been no "ease" from above, less talk of reform, and less freedom of criticism, there would have been no revolution. Once a modicum of freedom of expression had been granted by the regime, there occurred a rapid exchange of ideas and a rapid appearance of criticisms which finally snowballed from the students and intellectuals to the working population, and which were all aimed at the regime.
- C. Had there been no "New Course", had there been no times to look back to with regret (1945-48), there would have been no revolution. This was especially true in the light of the many unfulfilled communist promises which had been made prior to 1948 and which had given the population a hope in the eventuality and possibility of a "good society". Despite their disillusionment however, reform within the existing political and economic framework rather than revolution remained uppermost in the hopes and desires of Hungarian society up to the October Revolution.

II. The period between 1945-56 can be divided into two parts.

- A. 1945-50 was a period of reconstruction and rehabilitation, the 3 year plan, land reform, and almost total nationalization of industry.
- B. 1950-56 was a period of collectivization, heavy industrialization, high investments relative to national income, the first five year plan (the second Five Year Plan was announced in the summer of 1956), the New Course. This was a period of renovation and building of factories, of socializing the economy completely in every sector except agriculture.
- C. Some of the consequences of the latter period were:
  1. A dependence upon foreign countries for raw materials.
  2. Importation of grain.
  3. Shortages of power and energy sources.
  4. A positive decrease in the ratio of consumption to the national income.
  5. A disaffected labor force.

- D. The period of greatest economic discontent was 1950-53. The Nagy government was in part established because of the widespread popular discontent associated with the Rakosi regime. By 1955, however, political rather than economic discontent occupied the position of primary importance.

III. Generally, the respondents expressed their economic discontent in terms of three frameworks, -- the home, the job, and the world of theory.

- A. THE JOB: these discontents can be divided into two parts, 1) those dealing with wages, 2) those dealing with working conditions.

1. Wages

- a) Low wages
- b) Stakhanovism
- c) The need to overfulfill plans in order to earn a subsistence wage; this in turn meant an upward revision of the norms. Informants on the managerial level claimed, however, that they tried to achieve a marginal overfulfillment so that norms would not be revised too highly.

2. Working conditions

- a) The work book -- this was an obligatory measure imposed on every worker, indicating every job held, reasons for changing jobs, and disciplinary actions against the individual. It was almost indispensable in obtaining a job and had as its purpose the stabilization of the labor force. Changes in jobs were very difficult to obtain and there resulted an almost total lack of mobility.
- b) Propaganda programs, indoctrination seminars, obligatory subscriptions to loan programs, promptness of attendance at work and accompanying severe penalties in case of default.
- c) Favoritism of various kinds.
- d) Loss of pride in individual work as a result of evasions, poor quality of products, sparse and miserly recompense.

3. These discontents account largely for the rapidity in the rise of workers' councils during the revolution.

- B. THE HOME: It was in this category that most of the respondents experienced their greatest economic difficulties.

1. Wives were forced to work in order to meet subsistence needs.
2. Housing conditions. Despite the rent controls which kept rents low, repairs were almost non-existent and apartments were seldom upkeep or renovated.
3. Food. This constituted the greatest percentage of the household budget. It was time consuming in that hours had to be spent in queues shopping for food.

4. Poor quality of clothing at very high prices. It was even considered dangerous to be well dressed.
5. Amusements were cheap but leisure was a scarce commodity.
6. There was general satisfaction with medical insurance plans, but the doctors were seriously overworked, had poor qualifications, and the drugs were of poor quality. There was a chronic problem in availability of drugs.

#### C. THE THEORETICAL ECONOMIC DISCONTENTS

1. Overindustrialization
2. Lack of economic freedom
3. The agricultural policy of collectivization
4. Exploitation through Soviet colonialism

IV. The idealized society did not seem impossible to attain. The new course had introduced some freedoms, -- the disbanding of collectivization, the recurrence of some private enterprise, the lowering of prices on consumers' goods, increased supplies, etc. As the appetites of the Hungarian population were being to a small degree appeased, their economic demands increased. William Juhász has made a study of the economic demands voiced during the revolution. Although these demands constituted a major share of the desires of the population, Juhász seems to have overstated the case. He has divided his study into two parts:

#### A. The more frequent demands

1. Higher wages
2. Abolition of the norm system
3. Public knowledge of trade agreements
4. Voluntary collectivization of agriculture
5. Increase in consumers' goods -- decrease in industrialization

#### B. The less important demands (not so frequently voiced)

1. Increase in pensions and family allotments
2. Increase in housing facilities
3. Better working conditions for women
4. Better representation and organization for peasants
5. Workers' councils were seen as a better method of worker representation.

V. Any attempt to weigh the relative importance of economic demands is bound to be dangerous. It is not possible to say that economic discontent drove the people to the barricades rather than to seek refuge abroad. Economic demands did not call for the utter destruction of the communist system, but rather for reforms within the system. Economic discontents freely expressed called for more policing and controls. When these were relaxed, discontent became even more obvious.