

IX.

What strikes you as being completely different in the U.S. from Hungary?

"The life is much more peaceful here, and quiet, and everything can be purchased here, and nothing was available at home.

What are the things you like most about the U.S.?

"I like the big houses, the chewing gum, the nice parks, and the soft drinks."

What are the things you disapprove of in the U.S.?

"I don't like that very hot weather."

THE END

VIII. SPECIAL SECTION

A. Who do you think are the three greatest people in the world?

"Eisenhower, Lincoln. You know at home, none of those Communists was a great man. There was nobody at home. I cannot tell a third one."

Can you name maybe some great people who are living today?

"No. There was nobody I can recall."

Who do you think is the greatest living Hungarian?

"Horthy. (He adds quickly) Oh, I am sorry. He is not living anymore. I don't know."

B. Now we would like to give you a few names of famous Hungarians. Tell us a little about each of them.

St. Stephen: "He was a king. I heard his name from my mother."

King Mathias: "I heard his name."

Francis Rakoczi the 2nd: "He was a soldier, a good commander."

Sandor Petofi: "He was the author of that Communist song. I didn't like that song."

(Respondent cannot tell what song he means.)

Louis Kossuth: "I don't know who he was."

Istvan Szechenyi and Ferenc Deak: X Respondent has no knowledge of them.

Teresia Maria: "She was a queen."

Respondent doesn't know who Gabor Bethlen was.

Michael Tancsics: "We didn't learn his name. I have never heard it."

George Dozza: "He fought. I remember, but I don't know why. He was a peasant. This was the name of our school too."

MM Nicholas Horthy: "He was a soldier. I have a stamp with his picture, and I heard his name only from my mother."

Joseph Mindszenty: "He was a priest. He is at home. The Communists wanted to catch him and execute him, but they won't succeed with it."

Imre Nagy: "He was a half Communist, half Hungarian."

VII.

What would you like to be when you grow up?

"I would like to be a doctor. He always can help somebody. I asked my parents, and they okayed it. I want to be a surgeon. Through surgery, many people can be saved. During the revolution, so many people lost their arms or legs, and I would have liked to help them so much. Once my father brought in a wounded person from the street in his arms."

A. Tell me, what do you think a good father is like?

"A good father should punish his son physically if he is bad. My father is a very good father. But I am also modest. I never say, if I see something, a big horse or anything like that, that I would like to have it. A good father shouldn't drink, and he doesn't play cards. He eats fruit instead."

What is an ideal teacher like?

"He doesn't exercise favoritism. He keeps the class in order, and disciplines the boys, and he teaches well. He is not occupied with something else all the time instead of taking care of the children."

What does a good mother do?

"A good mother never leaves her children. She takes care of them and doesn't let them grow up on the street."

What are the three worst things a child can do?

"To lie, to steal, and to fight with other boys."

What are the three most important things a child should be taught?

"To be intelligent and smart, to be good, and not to be rude."

What are the three worst things one can say about someone?

"That he is not intelligent, to tell about somebody that he is bad while he is good, and that he always fights with others."

VI.

- A. Now let me ask you a little about the revolution. Can you tell us why the Hungarians started the revolution?

"I saw only that the rebels came in cars and asked everybody to join them. The people first demonstrated, then went to the Radio and wanted to broadcast something. However, they couldn't get into the building. Therefore they wanted to break in. Then the AVH started shooting at the people, and as a result the demonstrators got weapons too and started to fight. It was good for one day only, and then Kadar or somebody else asked the Russian troops to come in. The Russians came and everything was finished."

Who told you these things?

"I heard these things from everybody. My father took part in the demonstrations, but I didn't know exactly why the fighting started. However, now the misery is greater in Hungary than it was before."

- B. What impressed you most during the revolution?

"There were a few things I remember well. We went to the Stalin Statue because a friend of my father's was buried there, and I wanted to put flowers on his grave, and then the Russian soldiers chased me away. I remember also well when the Russians arrived. They just stood in front of our house and cleaned their weapons, and asked me whether I was a Fascist. But I didn't feel any fear. I only disliked them. I saw them eating, the Russian soldiers. They ate a brown bread that we never gave even to our pigs. I heard that in the country a Russian soldier gave his tank for a loaf of white bread. For me, maybe the most exciting was, when at the beginning of the revolution, we pasted the Kossuth emblems all over the street, when we put the different scripts against the Russians on the walls. It was so interesting to see that if the Communists threw leaflets on the streets, nobody picked up a single one of them. But if the revolutionists put up a poster, within a few minutes there was such a crowd around it that nobody could ever get there and read it."

"I also heard during the revolution that the members of the AVH were hanged on the streets and tortured. It was okay; they deserved it."

V. REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

A. Have you been rewarded at school for good work?

"The only reward we ever got at school was the Pioneer certificate. Only those boys got it who behaved well. Sometimes we also got a small Communist emblem, if we were very good and if we answered all the questions correctly for a month. I never got such an emblem. That miserable little boy got it all the time."

B. Were you ever punished at school?

"If ~~he~~ we came late in the morning, or if we didn't behave, then we had to stand for an hour or when we broke the window with a football once, I had to stand for an hour with my hands lifted above my head. It was very unpleasant. If somebody did something very wrong, then he was sent to the Director, who beat the boy. But he gave a sound drubbing to somebody who got into his territory."

C. Were you ever punished by your parents?

"Yes, if I talked back. They were very nervous. I will never forget that my father drubbed me so strongly twice that I could hardly sit, in spite of the fact that he did it only with his hands. But regularly, he only gave me a few slaps on my face if I did something wrong."

IV.

Now tell us something about your family. What did your father do, and your mother?

"My mother worked in a string factory. She worked on three different machines in three shifts -- once in the morning for a week. Then for a week in the afternoon, and then for a week at night. My father was always on the road. He had a motor cycle with a sidecar, and he transported people and other things on his motor cycle. Usually he worked from 8:00 o'clock in the morning until 7:00 o'clock in the evening. My grandfather was a shoemaker. We lived in the XIIIth district. It was a small house with a small garden. The whole neighborhood included this type of house. In our house there was one room, a kitchen and a bathroom, but there was no bathtub, only a cold water faucet."

Where did you sleep?

"We had a large double bed for my parents, and one bed for me."

"My mother's salary was 1000 forints, and my father made about the same. But even so, we couldn't buy anything else but food. It was impossible to buy clothing. Whenever I got something I was overjoyed. At home, a person had to work for an hour in order to be able to buy one egg. In 1950, my father had his own shop -- a canvas and sack store. Then he had money, but the store was confiscated and nothing was left. Finally, my father had to sell even his suits. I got some clothing for Christmas sometimes, and I was the only one in the family who ate fruit. Once in a while my mother bought me a half pound of some kind of fruit. Our food was mostly potatoes and bread with lard."

Who did the housework?

"My grandmother lived with us. She had no pension. I don't know why; perhaps because she wasn't a Communist. She worked around the house, cooked, and I helped her sometimes. I cut wood for the stove because we cooked on a wood burning fireplace. Grandmother took care of me too after I got home from school."

But what did you tell your parents about school? You said you didn't talk about everything, but what did you talk about?

"My father told me that what I learned about Rakosi was not true. I believed what my father told me."

Did you ever talk about what happened at home when you were at school?

"I never talked at school about what happened at home, because I didn't want the Communists to learn about it. My father didn't talk very favorably about them. My parents told me that I shouldn't talk at school, and my grandmother told me this once in a while too. Whenever they talked about something in front of me, afterward they always told me not to tell it to anybody."

D. What did you do after school hours?

"First I finished ^{my homework,} and then I went out to play."

What kind of books did you read?

"I read my schoolbooks and fairy tales. I have beautiful books at home. I got them from my parents for Christmas. I read all kinds of literature for youth. For instance, novels like "The Boys of Pal Street" (this is a famous novel by Ferenc Molnar)."

What other amusements did you take part in?

"We went to the movies once a week, but those films dealt always with the Russians too. They defeated everybody. They were terribly bad films."

Did you do any sports?

"Yes. We played soccer. I also took part in racing and high jumping."

What did you play with other children?

"We climbed trees, we built gardens, played soccer, and we always played 'war'."

Did you take part in the Pioneer Movement?

"Unfortunately, yes, with a red necktie. It was compulsory. We learned how to salute. We had to confess that we were proud of our red neckties, and if we did not behave, then our teachers took this necktie away from us. I was always very glad, by the way, when she did. They told us that that red necktie was a piece of the big Russian flag, and this way we ~~became~~ all became small parts of this big unity, and that we should be proud of it." (He says this very disdainfully.)

Let's say there are two children of your age. One of them is the son of a man who once was a lawyer, but is now a common laborer. The other is the son of a man who was a common laborer ten years ago, but now is the manager of a factory. Which of them would you rather have as a friend?

"I would have the lawyer's son, because the other had to be surely a great Communist, otherwise he couldn't have gotten a good job. My father had an accident. A police car crashed into his car and it was the policeman's fault, but he wasn't punished, and he didn't have any probe in connection with this accident. But my father was in the hospital. He had to be operated on, and afterward he had to pay all the expenses. And once, in the factory, when a machine cut off two of his fingers, he got 90 forints only for that for every month, as long as he couldn't work."

And what would you do if neither of the two boys was a Communist, or the two fathers?

"In this case, I would choose both of them as friends."

Did you have religious instruction at school or elsewhere?

"There was no official religious instruction at school. For a special fee, someone could register in a religious class, but everybody who registered there had different disadvantages at school. Therefore my mother didn't register me in that religious class, but during the summer vacation my mother registered me in a special religious course. Besides that, I went to the church every Sunday, and took part in the confession and the Holy Communion. In the summer religious class I was prepared for Confirmation. I liked to go there very much, and I knew everything, because my mother always explained all the religious stories to me. But even so, I registered in the summer course my Director learned about, and they lowered all my grades with two marks because of that. When I received this very bad certificate at the end of the year, I was extremely angry at the Communists, and especially at our Director, but still the religious class was worth more to me than to drop it for those people. Oh, those Communists! If at school I had to learn a poem, ~~ixxwas~~ or a ~~skung skun~~ song, it was always about Stalin and the Communists. For instance, we learned "Arise, you Slaves of the Earth". Damn it, they are the slaves, those Communists."

B. Did you tell your parents what happened in school?

"My parents didn't ask about everything that happened at school. They had their own troubles. My father was always very nervous. He always wanted to leave Hungary. I myself didn't talk at home about what happened during the revolution when we collected those hand grenades, and what we planned to do against the Russians."

What did you do together with your friends?

"We played soccer, climbed trees, sneaked into the army barracks once in a while, but when we wanted to go in during the revolution, the Russian soldiers pointed their guns at us. In the revolution and afterward, we collected the shells and took the gunpowder out of them with one of my friends, but I never talked about this to anybody. We ~~had~~ also built gardens with flowers. We had all kinds ~~of~~ games."

What did you talk about with your friends?

"During the revolution, we talked about the Communists all the time, about how we could make some trouble for them. We pasted the Kossuth emblems on the ~~walk~~ street, and also ~~walked~~ painted on the walls with big letters "Russians go home!" We couldn't do anything more. I know about boys who wanted to fight, but their mother didn't allow them. It was a pity, because during the revolution in the court of the army barracks, there were big boxes full of weapons, and anybody who wanted to could take one. As long as we couldn't fight, we at least collected the hand grenades which were not exploded, in order to avoid trouble later on."

Whom did you like among your friends and whom didn't you?

"I liked all my friends, but there was a boy, a big strong boy, who came among us all the time, and always wanted to fight with us. I didn't like this boy, but he was not my friend. My friends and I always held together and made a little group. Making exact plans, we went against the Communist children. We threw shells at them."

How did you know that they were Communists?

"I heard from my friends, and the people also talked about it, that those children were Communists. I didn't like anybody who was a Communist. We generally thought that a child whose father was a Communist must be a Communist. Even if somebody was an honest man, he had to belong to the Party; otherwise, he would have lost his job. This didn't mean that everybody was bad who was a Communist. But still, we never told anything to those Communist boys."

Were there any children at school who were looked up to by all the others?

"We had only a tiny, trembling boy who was very smart. He was looked upon by others. I liked him very much but the others didn't, because they also wanted to be smart. We had no other outstanding boys besides this one, and our little group beat the boys who wanted to become big anyway. I wish my friends were here with me. I wouldn't be so lonely here."

III. THE SCHOOL SITUATION

A. Can you tell us something about your school in Hungary?
What were your subjects?

"Our subjects were arithmetic, reading, writing and grammar, geography, singing, drawing and gymnastic. In our Hungarian reading lesson, we always read about Stalin and Rakosi. We read about the life of Stalin. I wasn't too much interested in it. We had to learn what a big personality Rakosi was, and what a great Communist; how he was liberated by the Communists, and how the Communists helped Hungary to be so great and wonderful. I hated the Communists, by the way, together with my father. Therefore we took part in the revolution. But nobody else in the class liked it either. My friends had the same opinion as I had."

Which subjects did you like the most?

"I liked arithmetic and gymnastic. I can count very well; ~~xx~~ this is why I liked it, ~~xxxx~~ and it was so good to jump around during the gymnastic hour."

Which subjects did you like the least?

"The reading class, because we always read about the Russians."

Tell me something about your teachers now.

"Every subject was taught by one teacher in our class. He was a young man around 30. If we didn't behave, he pulled our hair a little and that was all. Only singing and gymnastic were taught by two women teachers."

Did your teachers treat all the children equally?

"I liked our teacher very much. He was just. He treated all the children equally."

"Only our Director was very strict. He came into the class very often and beat the children if they did something wrong. You see, a Director under Communism had to be a Party member. My father or my mother could never have gotten such a job. But our teacher was not a Communist."

Tell me something about your classmates. Who were your friends?

"I had four friends. One was only my classmate, and the other three lived close to our home. One of them was a Freedom Fighter. He was 14 years old. When I was 4 years old, they were already my friends. But I made friends with the Freedom Fighter just before the revolution."