

- (1) You should know of everything that transpired in Hungary during the ten years of Communist rule. You should know about the decisive changes that took place and shape there.

The free elections of 1945 revealed that only 17 percent of the voters endorsed the Communist Party. A sympathy gradually grew up for the Communists, especially in the ranks of the landless peasants and factory workers, who were never overly enthusiastic for Horthy, -- the middle classes have found their proper milieu under Horthy, they were prosperous.

This development of initial sympathy underwent a radical and drastic change in the course of time and became most evident among the peasants and workers. These two segments of the population, who initially welcomed Russians and Communists and sympathized with them for the actual changes they effected, particularly in the land reform, gradually saw the real aims of the new rulers. Total disillusionment characterizes the feelings of these masses.

In ~~1955~~ 1956, I witnessed the second burial of Rajk. In a small company of friends, we went out to the Kerepesi Cemetery of Budapest, where we saw young cadets from the Ludevika Military Academy lined up in stiff attention on either side of the long procession. They stood there, motionless, and we, who only recently came out of prisons, looked at them with pity and said to ourselves: "There, this is a lost generation." They grew up in the Communist system, they have no ways of making comparisons. They are lost for Hungary. We are probably the last ones who still know reality."

This hypothesis of ours proved altogether wrong. The Revolution proved this very conclusively. There was a sudden, total change of attitude. You, gentlemen, here in the United States, have no idea, cannot even imagine, what Communism really is. I was at the University of Miami for three months. I have discussed communism with many students there. I have seen how American university students ^{flirt} ~~sympathize~~ (kacérkodnak) to a certain extent with socialism. They apparently are totally ignorant of the real situation both in the Soviet Union and in the satellite countries.

Communism not only did not ~~not~~ improve the lot of the poor classes in Hungary, but it played on their naiveté and exploited and betrayed them. It was precisely these classes, whose liberation the Communists so eagerly proclaimed in the beginning, that turned against them. The remnants of the Horthy-regime did not participate in the Revolution. The decisive force of the uprising was represented by the peasant youth of the universities, to the support of which the Hungarian youth from the factories also rallied.

You should know that the whole Hungarian nation wants to be freed from the oppressive grip of the Communists. You should know that we were and still are completely disappointed in the United States, in the United Nations, and that we feel that Hungary ~~is~~ was sacrificed, was thrown to the wolves for the sake of saving the Suez Canal. 60,000 Hungarians have died in their attempt to regain their freedom, and because of the attitude of the United States and of the United Nations they have died in vain. We cannot forget this so easily. X

The trust of the Hungarian people in, and its attachment to, the United States and to the United Nations was deeply shattered.

We feel that a great deal could still be done for Hungary through the five-member U.N. investigating committee. We, who have only recently left Hungary, see and understand the Hungarian situation precisely. We are still in close contact with those who remained behind the Iron Curtain. We know that there still persists in Hungary a boundless expectancy, but, unfortunately, we know also how hopeless this expectation appears to be, if we look at it from the United States.

We are all too familiar with the barrage of Soviet and domestic Hungarian propaganda which charges that what happened in Hungary was not an uprising at all of all the people, but was the result of machinations of counter-revolutionary^{ies} and Fascists who have acted in unison with American imperialist spies.

In this connection I should like to simply state for the record that we, the emigrants, are in possession of a list of those who have either been deported or executed. About 60 percent of the people involved are young Hungarian workers.

You should, I think, know at least the outline of some of the more burning problems and questions that fired the revolutionaries, that gave them the impetus to do what they did and which kept them going even at a time when all seemed lost.

The foremost social, political, and economic question of the

Revolution was welded together in the unanimous resolve of the people that Hungary's state of subjugation by the Soviet Union must be severed. Hungary wanted, above all else, national independence and individual freedom.

Another burning question was the agricultural question. I am sorry to say that the West, and the people of the United States in particular, do not understand this question at all, and I am afraid that the importance of this question to us Hungarians is not appreciated here.

In the United States, where there is so much land, where there is a better than ideal proportion between available agricultural land and the number of farming population desirous of cultivating such land, there is, of course, no agricultural problem.

In Hungary, all this is different. Hungary was a predominantly agricultural state before the second World War, with the majority of the population earning their livelihood from working the soil. While there were several million farmers, the Hungarian arable land was traditionally consolidated into a few huge landed estates, controlled by the Church and a handful of private individuals. The situation was so oppressive that ~~SEVERAL~~ 1,200,000 landless agricultural day-laborers saw themselves forced to leave their country and emigrate to the United States, Canada, and other places. All this emigration took place in less than a century.

The emigration did not ~~SEVERAL~~ solve the agrarian problem.

Landless farm laborers continued to live under the steadily increasing pressures of population increase on the one hand, and economic oppression of the landed estates on the other. The domestic political struggles in Hungary between the two world wars revolved around this basic and central Hungarian problem.

Needless to say, they remained unsolved. It was only natural, therefore, that the seemingly benevolent and helping attitude of the Communists after 1945 evoked sympathetic responses from the agrarian masses.

The agrarian problem and other pressing sociological questions of Hungary were first raised by the so-called populist writers, (Népi írók.) These writers analyzed every angle of these questions and described actual conditions on landed estates, small farms, and villages.

This sociography of such populist writers as Veress ^{Péter}, Kodolányi ^{János} ~~Zoltán~~, Sinka ^{István} and others became the starting point of a nationwide discussion of social and economic questions, ^{and} ~~these~~ mistakes, ~~and~~ injustices, and unbearable conditions became widely known. It was in this atmosphere of social unrest and a thorough discussion of social injustices that the Hungarian youth grew up before and immediately after the second World War. This youth possessed, at least the bare outlines, of a possible solution. They wanted a farm reform, of course, but they did not want kolkhozes, they wanted certain revisions and adjustments of the industry, but they never even dreamed of proposing an industrial policy that the

Communists contemplated and later carried out.

In ~~1948~~ 1948 these young Hungarian intellectual forces were mercilessly cut down by the Communists. Many intellectuals were imprisoned, others were interned, still others were forced to give up their intellectual ~~and~~ endeavors and to seek their livelihood as industrial laborers.

The ruthless Communist oppression, ^u began in 1948, continued until 1953. In 1953, Nagy Imre came to power and inaugurated a process of liberalization of every aspect of Hungarian life. Among the many things that Nagy proposed to do was the judicial review of the cases of incarcerated persons. As a result of this process, a substantial number of political prisoners were set free. These freed prisoners, for the most part young intellectuals, eagerly joined the Nagy forces and soon became interwoven into the fabric of the young intellectual leadership of Hungary. They were instrumental, for example, in establishing the Petöfi Circle. It was these people who later became the elite, the avant-garde of the Revolution. These people were agreed on what constituted the fundamental Hungarian questions and they spoke and wrote in a similar tone when ~~in~~ proposing solutions to these foremost questions. Their reaction to whatever took place in Hungarian day-to-day politics was identical. It was this identity of views ^{of} the intellectual elite that explains why, in the turmoil of the Revolution, revolutionary pockets in various parts of Budapest and ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ the suburbs, while not organized, and not under a central command,

gave all the appearances of an organized uprising; they were united in their aims and goals and methods.

These leaders were united in ~~XXXXX~~ proclaiming that there would not be a restoration of Church lands or landed estates. (If there was a minority that opposed these views, it certainly did not dare come forward with its propositions.)

They were also united on the question of the future of Hungarian industrial ~~XX~~ plants: they did not propose restoration here either. (I encountered such views only abroad, after I left Hungary.) We were all agreed that certain phases of the industry ought to be de-nationalized and ownership and control returned to private hands. But we did not propose to de-nationalize key industries.

You should also know that the workers' councils were the product of the Revolution. They came into being as a result of practical revolutionary necessity. The unpopular and hated factory managers and other high officials of the pre-revolutionary factory management fled for their lives soon after the outbreak of the uprising. As a result, the factories stood there without direction. But the Revolution could not permit stoppages in certain industries (electricity, gas, bakeries) because their continued operation was essential to the success of the uprising. In these industries, therefore, the revolutionary workers themselves had to see to it that the production continues.

Thus, up until the time when Imre Nagy formed his government, the workers' councils performed a double function; a/ they were

protecting the industrial plants; b/ they had a political role. In Budapest, this political role of the councils was considerable already during the first phase of the uprising. During the second phase of the Revolution, the Budapest councils represented the largest single political block and they had the greatest political power. It was during the second phase that the councils turned against the labor unions.

I already mentioned the name of ~~NAME~~ Sándor [REDACTED]. He was the president of the Budapest Central Workers' Council. We don't know what has become of him. He was a simple man. If it had not been for the Revolution, he would have continued as a first-class skilled worker that he was. He clearly saw what was happening and took the initiative. And we soon learned what a great leader he was.

The workers' councils were organized on the basis of democratic elections. The central leader of these councils, Sándor [REDACTED], clearly demonstrated his statesmanlike wisdom in critical situations. These people ([REDACTED] and others) would have found solutions in difficult questions.

The members of the workers' councils clearly recognized that their immediate problem had to do with production, not with solving political questions. It was only because of inescapable necessities that they took upon their shoulders political questions as well. Discussion went on already regarding the reorganization of the labor unions. It was agreed that, once the labor unions are

reorganized, the workers' councils would give up altogether their political role and retain the direction ~~of~~ of production only.

To come back to a previous question for a moment, the question of ~~the~~ reorganization of Hungarian agriculture and industry is extremely important, because these questions are some of the more important positive achievements of the revolution. Hungary, as reorganized and reconstituted by the victori^{ous}~~ous~~ revolution, would not have had the appearance, ^{NOR THE} substance as the free world had imagined it would turn out.

The Hungarian people turned sharply and completely against the Russians. This, however, did not mean that the victorious Revolution would have reestablished capitalism. To the contrary. A free society would have been created with an economic policy and system where the workers' councils would have had an influential and decisive role.

During the Revolution about 65 percent of all the ~~EXISTING~~ TszCs's disintegrated. Dob^o himself admitted that only an insignificant number of TszCs's could be salvaged. People vehemently opposed the establishment of the TszCs's. Between 1950 and 1953, Rákosi, using the slogan "Communists go to the villages," sent thousands of Communists to the villages and farmdistricts, where they became presidents of the TszCs's, and established themselves as absolute masters of the villages. These people were empowered to do whatever they pleased and made use of every conceivable method to force the independent farmers into the collectives. I myself was under constant police surveillance from 1953 to 1956.

(2) The Revolution was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life.

The Revolution has its antecedents. The Petőfi Circle was a closed, young intellectual group, which came into being shortly after ~~1953~~ Imre Nagy became premier in 1953. The Circle made it its policy to organize and conduct high-level discussions. The first meetings consisted of only a few participants. Later, when the Circle began giving clear expression to Hungarian problems, its meetings were very much attended and Hungarian writers also joined. These Hungarian writers also recognized the problems that faced the country.

The act of joining the Petőfi Circle represented a fateful decision on the part of the Hungarian writers, -- it represented a dividing line for them, requiring of them a decision to dedicate themselves either to the service of Rákosi or to the service of the Hungarian people.

I must say they made the right decision. They were with the Revolution. Only those less talented writers, for whom cooperation with Rákosi meant earning their bread, remained aloof.

The Irodalmi ~~Ujság~~ ^{Circle} ~~Ujság~~ and the Petőfi Circle prepared, conditioned, and transformed the Hungarian public opinion ~~in~~ ever since 1953. The Irodalmi Ujság was in such a great demand and short supply, that a single copy of it ran to 20 forints.

The immediate cause of the rise of the events that directly led to the 1956 developments was the Rajk burial.

The Rákosi-government had fallen and Rákosi himself lived a semi-secluded life, exerting his still tremendous power only indirectly. He used to summon to his office the leaders of the Petöfi Circle, of the Irodalmi ~~Iskola~~ ^{Circle of} and other organizations and tried to influence and persuade them to accepting his, Rákosi's, views. This was especially true after the Poznan developments.

At the time of the Poznan events, there were already two clearly recognizable factions within the Hungarian Communist Party. The existence of two factions within the Party is the explanation of the Rajk burial also. The Rajk affair has long been the object of endless discussions, the Government always refusing to even as much as consider rehabilitation.

Immediately preceding the Rajk burial, an editorial, composed by István Kovács, was already set to type, and ready for the printing presses, in the Szabad Nép ^{CIRCLE} building. The article began with these words: "We greet and welcome Rákosi's return." To counteract this subtle manoeuvre of the Rákosi forces within the Party, the anti-Rákosi faction hurriedly arranged for the official burial of Rajk. The burial, and the attendant ceremonies and the high tension of feelings that went with it, undermined Rákosi's position and made his return impossible. The burial, at the same time, offered a splendid opportunity for all consciously anti-Rákosi elements to assemble and to demonstrate their power.

Rákosi was progressively losing his initially great popularity

with the Hungarian people. He was very popular in 1945. Thereafter he began to be hated and detested, for personal, concrete reasons by some, because of the excesses in the Rakosi cult of personality by others.

The masses assembled in the cemetery. Munnich took the rostrum. His speech was vehement in tone and content; he demanded that the guilty ones be made responsible for their actions. He demanded to know why Rajk had to die. Kádár was actively supporting ~~XXXX~~ the same view.

During the preliminary investigation that preceded Rajk's public trial, Kádár played a peculiar role; Rákosi appointed him ~~XXX~~ an emissary of the Party, directing him to visit Rajk in prison and there to persuade him to wholly admit his treachery for the sake of the Party, when on the witness stand in his public trial. In return, Rákosi promised, through Kádár, that Rajk's life would be spared. Everyone knows that the promise was not kept.

The personal, and political, conversation between these two political friends, both of whom opposed Rákosi for political and personal reasons, was secretly recorded on orders from Rákosi. When Kádár returned to Rákosi to report on his mission, his report also was secretly recorded. The two recordings were characterized by wide discrepancies and contradictions and conclusively showed what the true political views of Kádár were as well as his true relationship to the Rákosi-faction within the Party. Both Rajk and Kádár were known for their anti-Russian, national Communist

tendencies.

- (2 b) This is an all-embracing question. ¶ Let us consider them under separate heads. (No. 1.) Let us look at the economic sphere first. Without exception, every branch of the Hungarian economy operated on the basis of the norm system. The norm system was universally applied. The norms themselves were arbitrarily determined from above, and were based on the economic prognostication of Party leaders, ¶ on what the Party desired to achieve economically, not on realistic capabilities of workers and equipment.

The living standard of the population was so low that every capable member of a family was perforce obliged to work, if it desired to maintain ~~the~~ itself above surface. Family life, the end objective of normal people, was made impossible. The low living standard, and the resultant necessity that forced married women and mothers too to work in factories formed part of a long-range Communist plan, the end ~~of~~ objective of which was the gradual disintegration and destruction of the family. The maintaining of an intolerably low living standard, ^{then} was continued, ~~when~~, primarily out of ideological considerations. The destruction of normal family life was also fostered by placards proclaiming that ~~the~~ whereas it was a duty of married women to give birth to children, bearing children constituted a glory for unwed girls. (Gyereket szülni anyáknak kötelesség, lányoknak dicsőség.)

The total earnings of a family were barely sufficient to cover the minimum food requirements and only very rarely was there some money left for the purchase of some clothing items.

Our economic misery was further aggravated by the regime's ill-advised and irresponsible policy of systematic large-scale industrial expansion, especially in the field of heavy industry. The classic example of the regime's ~~X~~ irresponsibility in the economic sphere was its attempt to build a grandiose ^{subway} system in the city of Budapest. Plans were made, and construction work initiated on this pet-project of the Party, without prior engineering advice as to its physical feasibility. A tremendous amount of work and money was pumped into the subways until it became quite evident that soil conditions in Budapest would make its continuation impossible. It had to be abandoned. The cost of the experiment was staggering.

The Hungarian worker suffered a constant reduction of his purchasing power, while the speed under which ~~X~~ he had to work kept on increasing. The Government used this convenient method -- drastic reduction of the workers' real wages -- to finance a disproportionate industrial expansion and to offset steadily rising costs of production that resulted from excessive centralization and from the colossal mismanagement.

~~XII~~ (No. 2.) An individual did not have an aim, a goal, to live, and to work for, in Hungary; he did not ~~even~~ have the possibility of saving. He had no influence over the education, over the future of his children. The fate, and the entire future of a child depended solely on the cadre of his father. There was an unacknowledged and undefined, and yet a very real and cruel

and oppressive caste-system in Hungary, whose high-priests were such personages as the party secretaries, members of the AVH organization, and others.

These people lived in their own make-believe world, completely isolated from the suffering masses. Members of the party hierarchy occupied an exclusive, compact area of the Capital, the Rózsadomb section of Budapest, around which barbed wire ~~XXXX~~ barricades were erected. Heavily armed AVH personnel stood constant guard at strategic points of this enclosure, making sure that no unauthorized person would ever enter this Communist heaven.

Those living inside of this protected territory communicated only with one another and with the Russians. They did not know what went on on the other side of the fence. They have lost contact with the people, they did not understand their day-to-day problems and had no understanding for their desires and aspirations. They followed blindly the principles of their ideology, the dictates of the party, on a dark road, without knowing where the road ultimately would lead, or where the end of it lie.

I have once had an occasion -- during my stay at the AVH prison -- to enter into a discussion with an AVH major. The AVH has just finished beating me up in an underground interrogation chamber, when they suddenly changed their method of questioning. I was brought up to a plush reception room where I met the major. He proposed that we discuss economic problems, ~~XXX~~ entirely off the record, as private citizens. Our talk led to the discussion of

the state of Hungarian agriculture, to the analysis of the relative merits of small private landholdings versus the socialized large estates. I asked him what the end of all this collectivization was supposed to be. My question visibly caught him off the guard, for he had no ready answer to my enquiry. He was thinking for a long while. At last he said: "At the end we shall ask for admission, as a member state, into the Soviet Union, and this decision of ours shall automatically solve all our outstanding problems and difficulties." This was his considered conclusion. And this shows how wide and deep the gap was between the aspirations of the people and the plans and policy of the governing circles.

(No. 3.) To come back for a moment to the Government's policy of forcible and accelerated industrialization; The Government decided to completely transform the Hungarian society and to establish those Marxian-Leninist prerequisites which, in their judgment, would bring about those material and social conditions where the roots of Communist ideology could be provided with a fertile soil. The proper element of Communist ideology, -- according to this theory -- is the industrial proletariat. In order to have proletariat of this sort, large-scale industrialization is absolutely essential. If this is not already available, it must be created. Thus the large-scale expansion, especially of the heavy industry.

The entire Hungarian economic life operated under a system of rigid, centralized, direction. In production the emphasis lay

on quantity with no one paying attention at all ^{to} ~~as~~ quality. This necessarily followed from the system of norms and premium-incentives. Wages were so low that no one could allow himself the luxury of disregarding the additional sums that the premiums represented. As a result, there evolved, in time, a gigantic conspiracy, where the workers produced a great amount of low-rate or worthless, goods, the inspectors put their stamps of approval on them, and the commercial establishments accepted and passed them on to the consumer.

No one took conservation of material resources and of manpower seriously. There resulted a tremendous waste. The Government, in its fervent ~~is~~ zeal to expand the Hungarian industry, embarked upon the construction of a huge industrial complex at Mohács. The operation of this complex was planned to proceed with ~~the~~ ^{raw} materials to be imported from Yugoslavia. The building of this enterprise was well under way, when difficulties of a political and ideological nature ~~is~~ developed between Rákosi and Tito. The road to importation of raw materials from the South was closed. The regime now decided to dismantle the entire Mohács complex and to rebuild it again at Dunapentele (Stalinváros).

^TThis is an example how the Government embarked upon building one heavy industry after another, -- even though there was no need for it in Hungary, and even though ~~they~~ ^{we} completely lacked both the necessary raw materials and fuels to run them, -- only in order to prove the correctness of what ~~we knew were~~ ^{we knew were} fallacious ideological and

economic theories.

One of the results of this misguided planning and waste and economic ~~mismanagement~~ mismanagement was the almost total lack of consumer goods and of necessary little luxuries like chocolate, candy, etc., on the one hand, and the total inability of people to buy any of these consumer items -- insofar as they occasionally became available in limited quantities -- on the other.

You may find it difficult to understand this, but the truth is that the lack of consumer goods, and the people's inability to avail themselves of them, assumed incalculable proportions. It turned out to be an existential problem for all Hungarians.

Individual Hungarians were acutely aware of all these problems, they recognized its true causes and magnitude, even though they had no way of expressing them. It remained for the Petöfi Circle to formulate and express these many-sided and deep-rooted grievances.

But while the Petöfi Circle undoubtedly performed a useful and magnificent job in this respect, we must constantly bear in mind that the Petöfi Circle only echoed and publicly proclaimed what actually were silenced protest-voices of many millions. The Petöfi Circle only gave a final résumé of what every Hungarian knew from the beginning.

(2 b (1)) I was interned at the time of Stalin's death at the internment camp of Reesk. (Reesk is ~~in~~ situated about 5 kilometers from Paráđ, in Heves County, next to the Kékestető.)

We were at Reesk. The news reached us two days after its occurrence, by way of civilians, who were employed at the camp,

by way of newspaper-fragments that we found in the toilets and wastebaskets. It is characteristic for a camp, how well informed we were. We have developed a sixth sense that was capable of registering minute details and analyzing them and interpreting them.

The camp leadership made an attempt to conceal the news from us.

The effect of Stalin's death on us was twofold: (a.) concessions were gradually introduced within the camp and (b.) cases of prisoners began to be taken under review; in June of 1953, some of the prisoners were freed outright, others were brought before court for trial, others were permitted to return to their homes to live under police supervision, etc.

(2 b(11)) The contributing effect of Nagy's premiership was tremendous.

Imre Nagy introduced a process of liberalization. The general atmosphere became more free, and people were voicing more freely their true opinions. Nagy introduced a new policy in the sphere of socialist legality, cases of many, heretofore held incommunicado, came under judicial review, and people began to speak about things and persons and problems that were untouchable in former times. Prior to coming of Nagy, utterances having to do with the Government's industrial policy, with the inferior quality of consumer and other goods, and with similar subjects were never tolerated. Such actions were anti-democratic manifestations and offenders were correspondingly punished.

Under the heading of socialist legality, the cases of all

political prisoners were reviewed.

People felt the changing trend and under the impact of these concrete changes they came out from within their protective shells; engineers, for instance, who knew all along how some of the economic plans were faulty or wrong or unprofitable, came out and openly criticized them. This change was so remarkable that people openly discussed a variety of issues in public, on the trolley cars, and on streets.

In the period of 1948-1953, only Russian movies were available to the Hungarian public. Not only was one required to refrain from criticizing these inferior Russian films, even in the private company of friends, but one was expected to pay high tribute in public to the supposedly excellent qualities of these products of Russian culture.

The question of religious education of children, especially after 1947, 1948, became extremely explosive. There was a formal agreement between the state and the Roman Catholic Church which formally stipulated the parents' right to have their children receive religious instruction on a voluntary basis. In the period 1948-1953, parents were required to sign a statement of consent, if they wished their children to receive religious instruction. Fathers signing such statements of consent, if they were Party members, were blackmailed into withdrawing them, or, failing this, they were intimidated in some other ways. If the signing father was not a Party member, he was simply thrown out of his job.

In this question, too, there was a notable change for the better after Nagy came to power.

Remarkable as all these changes were, the most striking, and the most widely felt changes occurred in the political sphere proper. Regarding political questions, everyone was permitted to freely express his views. The keeping of compulsory silence was no longer an obligation. Criticism became free. In 1953 Tamás Aczél was able to formulate in writing, and to publish, what turned out to be the first criticism of the AVH and of the methods it employed.

There soon appeared a critical, sociological study, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ depicting the true life, and methods, and organization, and work of a collective farm. The work, written by István ~~ME~~ Márius, (its title escapes me now) was a true-life sociological study of a village in the Dunántul Province of Hungary.

Approximately coinciding in time with the appearance of this study, there came the declaration of Imre Nagy that compulsory collectivization of farms would henceforth be abolished. These were tremendous changes. Up until that time collectivization was pursued by all sorts of forcible methods (tűzzel-vassal) and criticism of any kind of the collectives was most severely punished.

It was during this time (1953 and after) that it generally became known how ineffective, inefficient, and at times irrational were the agricultural production methods employed on the collective farms. It was these studies, made and published in this period,

that permitted us to make real comparisons between private and collective agricultural enterprises. The collectives were more often than not mismanaged and they compared unfavorably to private holdings in every respect.

Some of this agricultural impotency I have seen myself; there was for example an orchard (60 holds of peaches). (Interviewer's note: hold is a Hungarian ~~MA~~ farm measuring unit slightly larger in size than the acre.) The leadership of the collective decided to cut the trees because they simply did not know how to cultivate them.

The collectives were managed according to centralized directives. Every single detail was prescribed to them. And the directives had to be carried out. The trouble was that this centralized planning did not take into consideration local peculiarities of soil, climate, etc. The various farm activities were improperly and poorly executed, because on farms, too, workers performed their duties according to prescribed norms. The farm ~~work~~^{day} consisted of 8-10 hours, in imitation of usages in effect in factories. Because the worker's pay was invariably tied to norm, farm laborers did not do a good job and farm production constantly decreased.

During the premiership of Nagy, much was written about the combine harvester machines. The harvesting by these machines left much to be desired. The machines left a high stubble (tarló) and the seed losses were tremendous. Immediately after the harvesting,

the stubble-fields were ploughed, thereby eliminating the possibility of using them as grazing fields for animals or as flower-fields for apiculture (beekeeping).

All these questions came up for discussion; there were many ~~of~~ critical voices uttered during meetings and lectures in the various industrial enterprises. While the main emphasis, at least in the beginning, centered around political and economic matters, the discussions also covered other important aspects of Hungarian life.

People soon embarked upon criticizing the organization, methods, and excesses of the AVH.

The AVH had a complex network that covered, and held under constant supervision, every individual and every manifestation of individual and organizational life in Hungary. There was the AVH proper, the secret police force, with all of its informers and agents provocateurs. And there was the all-embracing network of personnel bureaus. At the head of each and every personnel bureau there was an AVH member. These bureaus were responsible for collecting and recording of all sorts of information regarding every individual ~~in~~ under their jurisdiction. All personal data, actions, and utterances, views and opinions, political and religious beliefs and practices, -- in a word, whatever information could be obtained respecting a given individual -- was collected and entered on his cadre-sheet.

These confidential dossiers were distributed in many places during the Revolution. I have seen many a cadre-sheet in those days; an average sheet contained three-four hundred items of information, collected from various sources and covering every conceivable aspect of the individual's life.

In Communist Hungary a person's safety, job, opportunity, future, -- his very life, depended entirely on what sort of information his cadre-sheet contained and on what the particular mood of a personnel bureau's chief may have been at a given moment. If the personnel chief was in a benevolent mood, some poor fellow may have fared better. If he was a malicious, sadistic individual, he was entirely free to ruin a person's life.

These questions were also thoroughly aired during Nagy's premiership and the views presented cannot be said to have been sympathetic.

These, then, were the first fermenting mushrooms (erjesztő gombák). It is this period, and this milieu, that made the publication of the Irodalmi Ujsag possible. The Petöfi Circle, too, began functioning in the very midst of these remarkable changes. The Imre Nagy Government must be fully credited with the ~~MF~~ opportunity it afforded to the Hungarian nation to unmask and to bring into full public view the grave errors and mistakes of the past.

(2 b (III) The rapprochement between Tito and Moscow brought with it a noticeable result for Hungary. It made possible the temporary

dismissal of Rákosi.

When the relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union came to an impasse, the all-out crusade ^{waged} ~~was~~ against Tito ~~was~~ carried out mainly under Hungary's leadership.

Tito was assigned all sorts of names -- he was a chained dog among other things --, and was accused of all crimes under heaven. Those Hungarians who sympathized with Tito were summarily arrested. I have known many of them, they were brought to the same prison where I was incarcerated. The main offense of many of these people was the fact that they corresponded with relatives of theirs who happened to live in the ~~the~~ Vojvodina Province -- a Hungarian-inhabited ~~region~~ region of Yugoslavia --, because they wrote ~~to~~ and received ~~letters~~ letters from Yugoslavia, they were conveniently branded Yugoslav-Titoist spies and provocateurs.

The entire membership of the Hungarian-Yugoslav Cultural Society was thus jailed. Also, inhabitants of villages bordering on the Yugoslav frontier were summarily evacuated and trusted members of the Party were sent there in their stead. Nowhere else in the Communist orbit was the anti-Tito sentiment so high-pitched, nor the persecution of Tito sympathizers so severe and all-embracing as in Hungary. This entire campaign of agitation, personal attack on Tito, and political innuendo of the worst kind was personally led by Rákosi.

When Tito and Bulganin met in the Crimea, Gerő was also conveniently present. Tito and Bulganin came to an understanding

that Rákosi must go. Tito made Rákosi's dismissal an absolute prerequisite to the normalization of the Soviet-Yugoslav relations.

While Rákosi had powerful backing in the Soviet Union, and even though he was well-liked and trusted by the Soviet leadership, the Soviet Union apparently was convinced that a Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement was absolutely necessary and that, as a consequence, Rákosi and his accomplices, -- so thoroughly compromised during the anti-Tito campaign -- must be eliminated from ~~the~~ positions of leadership.

The net result of all this for Hungary was the gradual melting and softening of the rigidly frozen air that characterized up until then both our public and private lives. This process in turn contributed in great measure to the formation, channelling, and crystallization of later events. X

It was to Gerö's personal advantage that during the period of the anti-Tito campaign he held an economic assignment within the Hungarian Government, and therefore was not personally compromised. The Russians held Rákosi in high esteem and, while apparently Tito did not oppose the appointment of Gerö, long conferences and bickerings preceded his now famous journey to Belgrade, on the eve of the Hungarian uprising.

(2 b (IV)) Our history began with the Twentieth Congress. It was this Congress that effected the first all-embracing critique. The entire Russian-Communist history was up until then inextricably

interwoven with the personality of Stalin. The Twentieth Congress^r represents the first occasion when this condition was brought to an end. The Congress acted joyfully on the anti-Stalin resolutions, and these resolutions of the Congress were enthusiastically received in turn. My knowledge of these events is only indirect -- those who have been in the Soviet Union at the time related to me how enthusiastically people received this good news. I also heard witnesses describe the jubilant mood of Russian officials in Budapest, both on the occasion of Stalin's death and when the news of the Twentieth Congress arrived.

Whatever transpired in Hungary after 1953, it did come about under the aegis of the Twentieth Congress. The leader of whatever movement after this time looked upon the Twentieth Congress as his bible. When encountering resistance or opposition or rebuke, they boldly cited the Twentieth Congress as their supreme authority, prudently pointing out that such things as they were engaged in were clearly permitted and desired. People felt free to express opinions and judgments that deviated from the official view of the Party and of the Government and at times embarked upon directly criticizing these very bodies.

Even in the Hungarian Parliament, -- a body of traditionally servile and subservient spirit, -- speeches of a mildly provocative nature could be heard; Parragi, an otherwise subservient and conciliatory individual, delivered a remarkable speech in 1954 on the question of Church and State. The ~~XXX~~ entire program of

the Nagy Government was based on the now fundamental premise that there are separate and distinct roads to socialism. The Nagy Government's policy was cemented on the thesis that, in the building of socialism in Hungary, policy may and ought to be based on the peculiar Hungarian characteristics, conditions, and circumstances. It was this kind of interpretation that prompted Imre Nagy to effect a substantial revision of Hungarian agricultural policy.

In a word, every movement and political undertaking in Hungary between the years 1953-1956 based its existence on, and was kept in existence by, the Twentieth Congress. ~~States~~ Extremely important, it was the Twentieth Congress that permitted Hungarian writers to attack the many deficiencies and shortcomings of the regime from the left, a fact that secured them a ^{quasi} ~~quasi~~-cloak of legality and immunity.

(2 b (v)) These events were extremely interesting; shortly after the news of the Poznan events reached Budapest, the Petöfi Circle met and many participating writers gave a positive evaluation.

Rákosi, seeing in these events an opportunity for his political revival, decided to try to stage a come-back. He marshalled the remnants of his power and influence and delivered an attack against the Petöfi Circle. But he was on the wrong side of the fence and his views were unfavorably received. From this time on, Rakosi's star gradually began to wane.

The Petöfi Circle speeches did not remain unopposed, however, and the Central Committee of the Party deprecated the opinions of

Gábor Tanczos, Déry, and Tardos.

At about this time, a severe attack was leveled against the silenced Imre Nagy, who continued to reside in Budapest, and who became, without his conscious solicitation, the center of an opposition movement.

Nagy lived as an ordinary private citizen, frequenting various public places and speaking openly with people on the streets. His popularity has risen to enormous proportions. He became a ^{pleasant} ~~pleasant~~ figure of Budapest and everyone liked him. His professor-like figure was frequently seen in Pest, as he strolled by and kept lifting his hat in response to the innumerable greetings. Nagy supplied a pleasant contrast of a leader who was jovially mingling among the masses, and discussing and appreciating their problems, while those in power, the Communists, preferred to barricade themselves, and lived behind barbed-wire fortresses in the Rózsadomb section, secluded, separated from the people, without contact with the masses, problems, or reality.

Here, then, began the actual struggle. Both Imre Nagy and the Petöfi Circle and the writers were attacked by the Party. The sessions of the Central Committee became stormier and stormier. Rákosi delivered his last onslaught against the steadily increasing number of his critics. He went as far as to organize a coup d'état, just before the second funeral of Rajk; the article of Istvan Kovács was already set to ~~be~~ type and ready for the presses of the Szabad Greet Nép which, under the title: "We ~~greet~~ and Welcome Comrade Rákosi's

Return" was meant to prepare and condition the public for the occasion. But the anti-Rákosi faction of the Central Committee got wind of these subtle manoeuvres and set in motion its own counter-measure: it made hasty arrangements and preparations for the Rajk-funeral. The funeral, and the anti-Rákosi szé sentiment it provoked, took the very foundations from under Rákosi's feet and his coup d'état never had a chance.

I should like to digress here a little bit and say a few words about the Györfi Kollégium, an institution founded in 1943 and named after Istvan Györfi. The acknowledged aim of this college was the education and training of intelligent, but poor peasant boys. The Györfi Kollegium had about 30- 40 collegians on its roster. Many of these young people became members of the Communist Party after 1945. These people, following the ideology of Rajk, desired to organize and to bring into being a national communist party. A number of them became exposed during the Rajk controversy and some, Tökés Ottó among others, who functioned as Rajk's secretary, suffered arrest and imprisonment. These were people with outstanding ability and training. One of them, Antal Jenes -- who became the Minister of Forced Deliveries (Beszolgáltatásügyi) in the Nagy Cabinet during the uprising -- had the courage of distributing the cadre-sheets to all the employees of the Ministry. He took over the Ministry, issued a decree stopping all forced deliveries, and then dissolved the Ministry itself.

László Kardos was the first director of the Győr^{fi} Kollegium. Later he became the director of the National Center of Museums. Kardos and Gyenes were the spiritual leaders of the Győr^{fi} Kollegium. Both of them were ardent supporters of Imre Nagy, ever since 1953. András Hegedüs, Béla Szalai, and Gergely Szabó were also Győr^{fi} Kollegium alumni.

It was these people who later organized the Hungarian Populist colleges (népi kollégiumok). They were instrumental in bringing into being the NÉKOSZ, as well as the Hungarian Collegiate Association (Magyar Kollégiumi Egyesület). The latter became integrated into the NÉKOSZ in 1948, and the NÉKOSZ itself was ordered dissolved in 1950 by Rákosi, because of its deviationist tendencies. The NÉKOSZ was accused of fostering and keeping alive Titoist and national communist ideologies.

The ~~fact~~ fact is that members of both the Győr^{fi} Kollégium and of the NÉKOSZ colleges were characterized by their national communist tendencies. Rajk was financing these institutions and the graduates of these colleges were appointed to very influential and well-paying jobs. Because of the strategic positions they held, they were ideally suited to pave the way for Imre Nagy, *and* to establish a prestige for Nagy in their respective circles.

Shortly after the Poznan events the Győr^{fi} Kollégium organized and held a social event (a party) to which all the alumni of the Győr^{fi} Kollégium as well as the alumni of various NÉKOSZ ~~EMEK~~ colleges were invited. Hegedüs and Béla Szalai were there and

many others. László Kardos and Antal Gyenes, -- two leading figures of the Győrfi Kollegium, who earned their livelihood as unskilled factory workers during the past few ~~EE~~ years, have meanwhile been appointed as assistant professors at the University.

Kardos and Gyenes approached Hegedűs and criticized his policies. They have pointed out to Hegedűs that Hungary's problem must be considered as a moral and humane problem, that Hungary must be freed from the I clutches of the Soviet Union. Both Hegedűs and Szalai gave evasive answers and left the gathering shortly thereafter.

The Győrfi-circle consisted of cultured and informed men. It was a pleasure to work with them. We represented similar, if not identical, views during the Revolution, and we were in general understanding regarding questions and methods to be worked on after the Revolution.

It was the Győrfi-circle that formulated the thesis that the TSzCs's cannot be maintained. Their negative attitude in this respect is not to be construed as an attempt to return to the old system; what they ~~had~~ envisioned was a reorganization of Hungarian agriculture, free from compulsion and government regulation.

(2 b(vi))

Rákosi's political power and influence was only broken at the time of the Rajk funeral. Up until then a continuous struggle went on between Rákosi on the one hand, and the whole Hungarian public opinion on the other, ^{with} ~~but~~ no one really knowing who the

ultimate victor would be.

Rákosi's power was almost unlimited; at the beginning of Nagy's first premiership, Nagy, for instance, made his speech of introduction in Parliament, giving the main outlines of his program. The following day Rákosi delivered a speech in the radio, criticizing and correcting Nagy point by point. In this Nagy-Rákosi struggle Rákosi easily won. To be sure, Nagy was the Prime Minister of Hungary, but all the important positions were filled by Rákosi-men, on whose goodwill and cooperation the execution and implementation of the Nagy-program depended. Nagy had a policy, and he was anxious to carry it out, and the population would have liked to see the Nagy-program executed, but all this desire was to no avail. Rákosi and his henchmen were in a position to sabotage it all. This Rákosi-struggle characterized the 1953-1955 period in Hungarian politics.

To give another example of Rákosi's methods; at the time the sociological study of István Márkus appeared, Rákosi summoned to his office Ernő Urbán, who was the first secretary of the League of Hungarian Writers at the time, gave him a stern lecture on correct party behavior and demanded to know how such a work as Márkus's was permitted to be published.

Rákosi, as First Secretary of the Party, also took protocol precedence over the Prime Minister.

This Rákosi-Nagy struggle is the main reason and explanation for the almost complete ineffectiveness of Nagy's first government.

People saw the struggle and they were fully aware that the real power centered in Rákosi's hands. They did not think that Nagy could hold his own for a longer period of time, and the changes, that Nagy did bring about did not possess in the eyes of most people those marks of stability upon which a stable future could be built. People simply did not believe that the changes would last.

There was, for instance, Nagy's policy that farmers were free to leave the collectives. Nagy's policy declaration was discounted by an administrative order, issued by the Rákosi-clique, saying in effect that, while farmers are indeed free to leave the collectives, they may not take any farm implements with them, and must, before leaving the collective, assume full responsibility for, and pay in cash, their share of the collective's financial indebtedness. This sum may have amounted to anywhere from 25 to 50,000 forints. Besides assuming these financial burdens, farmers would have been required to purchase all sorts of farm machinery, horses, and other implements that are necessary for independent farming.

This explains why the extremely individualistic Hungarian farmers, faced with these insurmountable difficulties, continued to remain TSzCs-members, even after Nagy, at least theoretically, set them free.

This same situation applies to the small artisans' class. They, too, had a theoretical freedom to set up their own shops on the one hand, but were faced with insurmountable financial difficulties if they wanted to establish their own independent

existences, on the other.

The fate of the small retail merchant was equally hopeless. Theoretically they were permitted again to operate. In practice, however, they could obtain a license only in places with limited marketing possibilities, they received an insufficient and irregular supply of goods and only infrequently were they supplied by the state with small quantities of consumer goods. As a result, the consumers were obliged to go to the state retail stores for most of their daily needs.

(2 b(v11)) I already spoke of the significance of the Rajk funeral. The funeral was staged and used by the anti-Rákosi faction of the Party to undermine Rákosi's position, and to make his political comeback impossible. Rákosi was supported by Moscow. But there was a powerful opposition to Rákosi in the Hungarian Communist Party. Kádár and Münnich were personal enemies of Rákosi. Kádár, after his release from prison, was a very popular individual. Kádár made many speeches in the Angyalföld section of Budapest. These speeches, the airing of the Farkas-affair and the resultant demand that the responsible ones be called to account, tended to strengthen the already widespread anti-Rákosi sentiment of the masses. Antal Apró, for instance, while vacillating in the beginning, became a supporter of Kádár in the anti-Rákosi struggle, as soon as the relative strength of the opposing factions became known.

It was at the time of the funeral, that Rákosi was accused for the first time in public as the one responsible for the murder of Rajk. Münnich went even further and spoke of the need ~~XXX~~ of

calling the responsible ones to account. The funeral presented an opportunity to the entire nation to express its sympathetic sentiment for Rajk, and to demonstrate by this stand its support for such staunch Rajk defenders as Kádár, Münnich, and the others. Hundreds⁺ of thousands came to the cemetery, with their very presence demonstrating against Rákosi.

The Rajk funeral represented, then, -- and it was so understood in all corners -- a gigantic and determined demand that Rákosi must go.

(2 b (viii)) I don't know if Gomulka's return to power contributed anything to the outbreak of the Hungarian uprising. I don't think so. The anti-Rákosi sentiment was so well on its way by October, that no change in its direction or ferocity could have been effected. X We must note here, however, that the Petöfi Circle, as well as the MEFESZ, started out with solidarity declarations for the Poles. The Polish events, however, must be viewed only as a circumstance that gave an opportunity to sending telegrams which expressed our solidarity on the one hand, and to discussing the formulation of the points of our own demands, on the other.

Thus the demonstration of October 22, originating from the College of Economics, formally was a solidarity demonstration, and it officially took place under the aegis of such a demonstration. But the 14 points were already formulated at that time and ~~the~~ the already printed handbills were distributed in large quantities.

(2 c) There were a number of important turning points; with 1945 an era came to a close. We had the beginnings of a brand-new world then, with the land reform and the many other changes. 1948 was another turning point. Rákosi calls it the year of the turning point in one of his books, where the beginnings of socialism have taken place. Actually, 1948 was the turning point of human wickedness and iniquity, the turning point of human arbitrariness, but without this turning point of 1948 there would have been no Hungarian Revolution in 1956. It is after 1948 that we learned what freedom really is. After 1948 every possibility of criticism ceased and every human life stopped. Prisons were filled to capacity. 1953 is another important turning point; Imre Nagy became Premier, the Petöfi Circle came into being, István Márkus published his book in that year. The Rajk funeral of 1956 was another such great turning point.

(2 d) Yes, I did have such a feeling. It was something entirely subjective. I lived in a small village near Budapest. On October 22, I went to Budapest. I felt a compulsion to go to the College of Economics. The events that followed are known. Everyone lived in an air of expectancy. I met many people who have come from outlying districts of the country to the Capital. Many workers left their jobs, against standing orders, because they felt that something big was in the making. The demonstration was preceded by a tremendous national expectation and it proceeded to the accompaniment of a tremendous enthusiasm. At the statue of Bem, almost at the end of the demonstration there, running and breathless

arrived Péter Veres, and announced that the League of Writers joins and affiliates itself with the youth.

- (2 e) The writers played a great and significant role. The activities of the Hungarian intellectual élite manifested themselves in the Petöfi Circle ^{and} in the Writers' Association (Írószövetség).

The Writers' Association was an exclusive Communist domain, where only reliable and faithful adherents to the party line could gain admittance.

There were significant writers of national and international stature who were not members of the Writers' Association. I should like to mention in this connection such names as Áron Tamási, László Németh, István Sinka, and Zoltán Kodolányi. These writers were not Fascists, -- they were the leading representatives of the left-wing faction among Hungarian writers before the second World War. They had great ability and wrote courageously about many sociological questions. They described the life of the non-privileged classes, of the poor, pointing out social injustices, unhealthy economic conditions, material and spiritual stagnation, and other characteristic features of pre-war Hungarian society.

These people either lived a life of forced literary inactivity after 1945, or were engaged in minor, or second-rate literary endeavors. László Németh restricted himself to translations, Kodolányi led a meager sort of existence by editing a small provincial paper, the Balaton Akarat.

These people may have been inactive, but they were by no means forgotten. Everyone in Hungary knew of them and people continued to keep them in high esteem. Révai did everything to win them over for the Communist cause; he journeyed innumerable times to Hódmezővásárhely to see László Németh -- the latter was engaged as a professor at the gymnasium of that city -- but all his efforts of persuasion remained unsuccessful. It was common knowledge that László Németh was not willing.

Another of the pre-war greats, Gyula Illyés, continued to write poetry. Again, everyone knew that ~~XXXXX~~ Illyés was not accorded a treatment that he justly would have deserved.

Zoltán Kodály, the celebrated composer and collector of folk-melodies remained one of the most determined and most outspoken opponents of the regime. He was assigned a ~~XXXX~~ beautiful home on the Kékestető, but he refused to use it. The regime heaped every imaginable material favor on him, without any result.

These people, then, because of their past literary performance, renown, and wide prestige, continued to be significant members of the literary life of Hungary. Some of them, László Németh and Gyula Illyés among others, were admitted to membership of the Writers' Association after Imre Nagy became premier.

Official recognition, fame, and material reward continued to be party-directed and ideologically-motivated; Ernő Urbán, for example, was a mediocre writer with very little talent. But he was a trusted and reliable follower of the party-line. As a result,

he became the chairman of the Writers' Association. It was he and people like him who received the prizes, the publicity, the rewards. Others, the truly recognized cream of the crop, were on the edge of material despair. Sinka, for instance, was forced to rely on subsidies which Keda'ly so generously and continuously gave him.

As soon as Imre Nagy^a became Premier, ~~THE~~ struggle began among the Hungarian writers. In this struggle the great majority of the young generation of Communist writers sided with the people.

There are critical times in the history of all nations, when literary personages must take a stand. We had such a critical time after 1953. And the Hungarian writers stood their ground and assumed responsible and correct attitudes in the crisis. They kept alive and fostered the spirit of criticism and they consistently worked to bring about the victory of the people's desires.

To come to the young generation of Communist writers: Istva'n Ma'rkus, Ta'mas Acze'l, Tibor Me'rai, Tibor De'ry, Istva'n Sa'ndor, and the Poet La'szlo' Be'jamin were the outstanding representatives of this group.

They all began their literary careers in 1945. Most of them were members of the Communist Party as early as the late twenties, and they grew up in the illegal Communist ~~MOVEMENT~~ movement. We collaborated with these people in 1943 and ~~1944~~ 1944, -- in the anti-Fascist movement -- up until the time of the execution of Bajcsy-Zsilinszky. In 1945, they all became full-fledged members of the then reorganized and reconstituted Communist Party, and

devoted all their time and effort and talent to writing for Communist dailies and periodicals. They were talented from the literary point of view, and they were honest as human beings, who believed, and had an ardent faith, in communism.

These people were the front-fighters of the many-sided party-polemics and party-literature after 1947. But Rákosi decided to silence them.

This attempt at coercion on the part of Rákosi represented the beginning of a process of doubt that arose in the minds of many a young Communist writer -- a process that culminated in their total disillusionment.

They could not help noticing the striking differences that existed between their own lives and material and social circumstances on the one hand -- and the unbearable conditions of the masses on the other.

They, the writers, were given all the material advantages that the regime was capable of bestowing upon them. They had everything they desired. They were provided with cars, with money, with luxuries and leisure, and they were encouraged to travel to every corner of the country, to visit factories and kolchozes, to talk to people and to discuss issues with them for the purpose of gathering concrete material for socialist novels, plays, and poetry.

These young Communist writers visited factories and villages and collectives, they lectured, and held discussions, and argued with the people. At first they could not understand the people, they could not account for what were obviously violent outbursts

of denunciation and rejection of the regime. To them it was inconceivable that even party members of the proletariat would assume a position, a view, that so strikingly resembled attitudes associated with reactionaries and party-aliens.

This was the initial phase of the writers' disillusionment. They suspected that something was wrong somewhere.

In 1953, they openly admitted how firmly they believed until then in the infallibility of ~~THE~~ the Party. They have held the view that the basic doctrine~~s~~, and the various official interpretations of that doctrine by Party congresses and Party leaders are to be considered sacred, that they are unimpeachable, that they do not admit of error ~~or~~ mistake. If ~~they~~ ^{there} are errors and mistakes, if there is evil and injustice -- and they saw plenty of them with their own eyes -- all these shortcomings are the results of human fallibility and intellectual limitation, deficiencies that originate not from doctrine and official policy, but from impotency and short-sightedness of human administrators and executives.

By 1953, these Communist writers came to a conclusion; they declared that the causes of errors and mistakes are not in the human element, the roots of the evil must be sought in the Party, the Party is in error, because it does not understand the people.

This was the first and decisive step. The struggle continued, within the Writers' Association, between the untalented group that faithfully represented Rakosi's views on the one hand and the open-minded and free-wheeling rebels on the other.

I met many of these rebels at the end of November, 1956,. They were then engaged in the direction and advising of the revolutionary workers' councils. I spoke with Márkus, Déry, and others. It was these people who brought into being the ~~SK~~ central organization of the Budapest workers' councils. I had an interesting and characteristic conversation with István Márkus. He had taken his family across the border to safety, and himself returned to Budapest. I asked him why he did not leave the country. His answer: "You may do so, after all, you have spent five years in jail. But my situation is different. I always was a Communist, I always believed in communism, even though I frequently criticized actual conditions and personages. I must remain here." We Communists must never leave, we must take up the fight with Kádár so that everyone may see what a gross treachery was committed. Márkus's family is now in Switzerland.

(2 f) This is an involved and complicated question. Let me try to take up the most important publications one after another. Szabad Nép: In the beginning, during the time of Nagy's premiership, Szabad Nép reported Nagy's activities, with no commentaries attached. The paper remained unchanged in every other respect.

When Sándor Novováczky became Nagy's chief press officer, a corresponding change also occurred in the Szabad Nép's ~~SK~~ redaction. Márton Horváth was dismissed from the chairmanship of the board of editors, and his place was taken by Miklós Gyimes. Gyimes was Nagy's man, and he changed the tone of the paper.

Szabad Nép underwent another significant change in 1954. Rákosi's political importance increased, and the Rákosi political line was again co-represented in the direction of the paper. Szabad Nép after this worked under the strains of a Rákosi-Nagy compromise, it was neither hot nor cold.

The decisive change took place in connection with the Rajk funeral. Rákosi was bent on engineering a coup d'etat, and an article designed to support the manoeuvre was already set to type. The Rajk funeral prevented Rákosi from carrying out his scheme. After the funeral the entire editorial board of the paper was reshuffled. Unfortunately for Imre Nagy, he did not have an adequate group of newspapermen to replace the old guard.

The first order of business of the Revolution was the abolition of the Szabad Nép. The Szabad Nép headquarters was attacked by the insurgents in the first phase of the Revolution. Dudás used the building as the headquarters of his own forces. As a result, Szabad Nép ceased to be published during the Revolution and did not reappear ever since.

Szabad Föld: this was a weekly publication, written for the peasants, with an aim of paving the way for Socialist (collectivized) agriculture. Szabad Föld was started in 1945, under the editorship of Antal ~~III~~ Gyenes. After the Rajk trial, Gyenes was replaced by Lajos Fehér. Still somewhat later, this publication became one of Rákosi's organs, through which Rákosi continually tried to frighten and intimidate the rural, village population. After the

coming of Nagy, in 1955, Szabad Föld underwent another cycle, this time supporting the Nagy Government.

Irodalmi Ujság ~~was~~ this paper began to be interesting after 1953. Up until then it had an entirely different format and content.

After 1953, the Irodalmi Ujság became the official organ of the Petofi Circle and of the Writers' Association. It firmly supported Imre Nagy and Rákosi-men had little possibility in participating in its direction or of contributing to its contents. When, for instance, the Central Committee of the Party deprecated the tone of the Irodalmi Ujság and condemned the stand this publication took during and after the Poznan events, this paper, while publishing the text of the party resolution, was strong and independent enough not to add any commentaries to it.

This paper was in such a great demand, and in such a short supply, that regular subscription to it was out of the question.

The Irodalmi Ujság was a weekly, with a circulation of approximately 50,000 copies, 12,000 copies of which went to old subscribers. The rest was sold on streets. One had to order it, and have it reserved, days before the date of publication, and even then the price of it was at least 10 forints. Both the ~~Reaction~~ of the Irodalmi Ujság and Imre Nagy ^{determined} made/efforts to increase the circulation of the paper, but the bureaucracy, where the Rákosi-elements continued to dominate, made this impossible; the Central Association of Newspaper Publishers, the agency which controlled the distribution of newsprint, calling attention to

the provisions of the Economic Plan, politely but firmly rejected the Irodalmi Ujság's pleas.

In contrast to this ~~XXXX~~ deplorable curtailment of the Irodalmi Ujság, Szabad Nép, the official organ of the party, had a circulation of approximately 3,400,000 copies a day.

You must bear in mind that this figure by no means represents Szabad Nép's popularity. Szabad Nép had a complete and thorough network of distribution, and it was sent everywhere, irrespective of whether people wanted to read this paper or not.

The Circle of Szabad Nép, an organization formed by ruthless and forceful methods, saw to it that everyone did buy this Communist newspaper. The fact that a person was, or was not, a subscriber, was carefully entered on his cadre-sheet.

There was also the institution of Szabad Nép Half-Hour, operating everywhere. ~~XXXX~~ This Szabad Nép Half-Hour took place every other day; someone read a few articles aloud to an assembled group, after which the participants were expected to make comments. And these comments had better be straight, according to the ever~~ŷ~~ shifting and changing party line, or else one was in real trouble. In order to be able to take a logical and consistent stand, when called upon, one had to regularly read this paper, even if he hated it more than his sins.

Needless to say, all factories, offices, farms, stores, and institutions of all kinds became automatic subscribers to the Szabad Nép. Factories were also regularly subscribing to the

Népszava, while farms and collectives patronized the Szabad Föld (Free Soil).

How great this superimposed and forceful sale of unwanted propaganda was, I knew from the beginning, but I only realized in 1953 to what extent it failed to accomplish the purpose intended. When I was freed in 1953 and placed under police surveillance, I was permitted to work as an unskilled laborer. I went to work to a factory. People there felt themselves relatively free then and expressed their true opinions; the change of attitudes appeared to me of such magnitude and it certainly was so dramatic that I was quite confused. People freely and deliberately cursed the system, the regime, Rákosi, and the norms. I kept looking around, constantly preoccupied and depressed by the thought that the AVH would be there any moment. It took me about a month and a half until I again became my own self, became acclimatized and completely understood the situation.

The Communist reeducation program, forced so mercilessly and systematically down people's throats, had exactly the opposite effect of what was desired and expected. People saw the wide gap and contradictions between spoken or written words and reality, and they ceased believing there and then. And when opportunity presented itself, they gave expression to what they saw.

The system of distribution of Communist books and of Soviet books was equally well organized; books of lasting value with

long-established reputation, such as works of Jókai, Mikszáth, Gárdonyi, Herczeg, and of others, were nowhere to be found. Bookstores carried Soviet books only, students used Soviet notes on the universities.

After 1953, a small quantity of old Hungarian classical works reappeared again.

I was a great lover of books and I saw many a characteristic incident in the bookstores. A lady would come in with a boy and say: "I should like to purchase a story book." She would be presented with 20 or 30 Soviet publications. She would look at them and say: "I would like so much to have a Hungarian book." The storekeeper did not have any.

It was this craving for Hungarian books, and the intense hate associated with everything Russian that accounts for the burning of Russian and Hungarian Communist books during the Revolution. The hateful reaction to the twelve-year-old torture of Soviet culture sought and found an outlet.

Every industrial undertaking had a library and in the economic plan of each concern a library-plan was incorporated, -- a sum of money that had to be spent for books and other publications. But the company was not free to determine what books it will purchase, or how it will spend the library-fund. The usual procedure was that a representative of the factory visited a state bookstore, presented his library budget and the bookstore filled out an order to the tune of whatever amount of money the factory had available

for the purpose.

Then there were the "culture half-hours." One was expected to attend these cultural meetings, to report on books one read, to make commentaries on others, and to show enthusiasm and admiration for Stalin. This was the Hungarian cultural policy in Hungary during Rákosi.

The other newspapers of Hungary were insignificant, because they were ~~EEEE~~ through-and-through Rákosi publications. The publishers of these were only able to sell them, because of the tremendous apparatus they had and because, being government or party supported, these publications could exert a tremendous pressure. No one really cared to read the Csillag, for instance, a paper edited by Urbán and company.

Antique bookstores were doing a ~~HEXHEXHEX~~ thriving business, simply because it was these stores where books written and published before the Communist era could be found. ^{All} ~~EE~~ public libraries were thoroughly checked and all books that went counter to Communist ideology were taken out. The Hungarian youth, as a result, was completely shut off from the West and, for the most part, remains to this day ignorant of the great literary masterpieces and other works of the Western world. The Iron Curtain was felt everywhere, and people were fed the mediocre and unicolored Hungarian and Russian literary products.

To say a few words now about the revolutionary press: let us

take the Népszabadság first. The Népszabadság of the Revolution has nothing in common, save its name, with the Népszabadság of today. The Népszabadság actively supported the Revolution. It was the official organ of the reconstituted Communist Party. Its fate, and direction, was intimately connected to Kádár, and it continued to change as Kádár changed.

Magyar Függetlenség; this paper was edited by Dudás.

Dudás is of Transylvanian origin, an engineer by profession, -- a man who spent 9 years in jail in Rumania for his Communist convictions.

He crossed illegally the Hungarian-Rumanian border in 1941, joined the illegal Communist movement in Hungary, became a Rajk-supporter and spent some time in jail in Hungary, too, for his Communist activities.

Dudás underwent a drastic change in 1945; he vehemently opposed the Moscow-domination of the Hungarian Communist Party. His nationalistic stand brought him in direct conflict with the Hungarian Muscovites. Helpless, and unable to exert any influence on the Party trend, he became completely disillusioned and he quit the party in 1945. Here was a man who has suffered a great deal, spent a sizable portion of his life in Rumanian and Hungarian jails, and, when in 1945 a great career lay ahead of him, he quit the party. He was a member of the Hungarian Peace Delegation and, together with Domonkos Szentiványi and Gábor Faragó (the gendarme-field-marshal: csendőraltábornagy) visited Moscow towards the end of the war.

TERMINABLE

These people represented Admiral Horthy, and it was they who signed the provisional armistice treaty between Hungary and Russia.

Dudás later joined the Smallholders' Party and was an active member of the Parliament's judiciary committee. He continued to maintain contact with the Communists, especially through the instrumentality of Aladár WE Weissshaus -- the only Jew I have ever known to maintain anti-Semitic views.

Weissshaus conducted a series of well-received seminars among the factory workers of Csepel. He became extremely influential and highly respected among the workers.

Weissshaus was arrested in 1947, and Dudás followed his fate shortly thereafter. In 1948, he was brought to Kistarcsa, and still later he was transferred to Recsk. It was in Recsk that I met him. He did not stay there long, however. He was placed in a jail in Budapest, where he remained until 1953. With the coming of Nagy, he was freed (1953) and worked as an engineer until 1956. He WE enjoyed a tremendous popularity among the workers, who frequently invited him to hold seminars for them.

It is this great popularity, renown, and prestige of Dudás, -- WE qualities that were well established long before the Revolution -- that accounts for his phenomenal personal success during the uprising. He was the leader of the largest, and most powerful, organized group during the Revolution, commanding a force of 130,000 men in the Capital.

Western leftists often branded him a Fascist. In reality,

he is neither a Communist nor a counter-revolutionary, his entire following consisted of factory workers.

Dudás was wounded after November 4. He remained in the Szabad Nép building for a while, transferring his headquarters to the School of Law building later. Still later his faithful workers sheltered him in a factory at Kőbánya. Toward the end of November, during the period of the passive resistance, Dudás still had a small armed force in the Kőbánya factory, which watched over his safety day and night.

He was eventually captured and was put to prison. A delegation of writers visited Kádár and asked him to guarantee the safety of Dudás. Kádár replied that he had no objection to Dudás whatsoever and expressed his desire to talk to him. Dudás subsequently visited Kádár in the Parliament building and, as soon as he entered, he was arrested. He was later executed.

Dudás was obsessed by a theory of his, and this obsession caused him to make a hasty, and ill-considered step during the uprising; he wanted to seize the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to bring about a situation where the United Nations would recognize the revolutionists as a belligerent party, i.e., he desired that the United Nations recognize that a state of belligerency existed in Hungary.

Because Imre Nagy did not see eye to eye in this with Dudás, the two men were not always on very friendly terms. Imre Nagy did not think that the recognition of the existence of a state of belligerency between Hungary and the Soviet Union by the United

Nations would do any good.

Finally the two men effected a compromise, there was talk about Dudas's becoming a member of the Nagy Cabinet, about Dudas and Maléter joining forces and organizing a unified revolutionary command.

These controversies had the nature of high-level political disputes and they are in no way to be construed as signifying differences between the rank and file of the revolutionists. The rank and file of the freedom-fighters were in complete agreement.

To come back to the original question; the Magyar Függetlenség was one of the most influential newspapers of the Revolution. It was edited by Dudas, a widely-respected man who at the same time commanded the strongest revolutionary force. Dudas's paper was not restricted to Budapest, organized attempts were made by his group to distribute it to the provinces as well.

Igazság -- the best paper of the Revolution -- was jointly edited by József Gáli and Gyula Obersovszki. Obersovszki was a newspaperman of long standing, Gáli was a playwright. Gáli was one of the most talented writers of the young generation.

The Igazság was a consequential, beautiful paper, a paper that was very hard to get during the entire crisis. Both Obersovszki and Gáli have been arrested and both are awaiting execution under a death sentence.

Népszava. This paper used to be the official organ of the labor union. During the Revolution it became the organ of the

Social Democratic Party. It was edited by György Faludi and others. Faludi was imprisoned at Recsk and I came to know him personally there. He is now editing the Irodalmi Ujság in London, England. Faludi is a very good poet, -- he wrote some beautiful poetry while in prison.

Kis Ujság. This was the organ of the ~~SM~~ Smallholders' Party. The paper ceased functioning in 1948. During the Revolution ~~it~~ ^{it} revived again. Béla Kovács and Dezső Futó were its editors.

Szabad Szó. This was the official organ of the National Peasant Party. Its editor was Pál Szabó. The paper appeared probably only twice during the Revolution.

(2 g) Yes, there were a great many such items that impressed me. ~~NE~~ Márkus's book, for instance, Aczél's article in which he criticized the AVH, the evening debates of the Petöfi Circle, especially those pertaining to economics and politics.

(3) There were a great many factors, ~~some~~ ^{some} of which I already discussed in ~~some~~ ^{some} detail. ~~One~~ ^{One} ~~could~~ ^{could} summarize these and say that the six-year Communist rule of terror, between 1948 and 1953, with its all-embracing exploitation and betrayal of our national interests in the economic, cultural, and political spheres as well as in international relations, inevitably led to the Revolt.

The people saw constantly the many clear-cut contradictions ^{conditions} between official pronouncements, promises, and actual ~~contradictions~~ in reality. People ~~did~~ saw the endless Russian economic exploitation. ~~Many~~ ^{Many} people, some convinced Communists, some only opportunistic

fellow-travelers, -- an attitude that one cannot condemn very well -- have seen through the years the many atrocities so contrary to human nature, the arrests, and the mysterious disappearances. We, too, disappeared without any trace. Our families were never notified. They learned of our whereabouts from a report by the Free Europe Radio. One of our group managed to escape to the West after a year and Radio Free Europe broadcast our names.

Personal freedom, and the security of one's person, were ~~KKK~~ flagrantly violated. Then again, in the cultural life, we had to suffer spiritually because we were forced to express ourselves favorably and admiringly and enthusiastically when it came to lectures on Soviet achievements ~~KK~~ or personalities, even though only hate and ~~KKK~~ scorn and rejection characterized our souls. Our living standard sank to a remarkable low, with practically no possibility left to us to satisfy our material wants and cultural needs. One was obliged to choose between a pair of shoes and a movie ticket.

In the sphere of health insurance, while the SzTK was well organized, one had to put up with a spiritless, bureaucratic machine where no individual attention was possible.

These are only a few examples of the innumerable grievances we had. All these little items tended to bring about a feeling of insecurity, impotency, and an attitude of determined rejection of the whole regime. This feeling and attitude grew, as time went on, until it reached enormous proportions. This repressed force found an outlet after 1953, when everyone was permitted to offer his views.

Everyone used this opportunity, everyone criticized, and people constantly searched for mistakes. But this whole activity remained negative. The possibility of correcting the mistakes was not given us and the new gigantic stream of opposition transformed into a loud dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction led us to the Revolution.

All this internal development in Hungary grew, and took shape, within the framework of the changing international factors affecting Hungary -- the death of Stalin and the Twentieth Congress in particular -- factors, which inadvertently helped and assisted and accelerated the development and channeling ~~and~~ of already existing phenomena.

In this connection the summit meeting in Geneva must also be considered as a contributing factor; the more conciliatory tone that resulted from the Geneva talks prompted the Soviet Union to grant certain concessions to the satellites and to give up or modify certain basic aspects of policy on which she previously insisted.

(3 a) This is an odd question. I should like to ask you a few similar questions: why did the French Revolution break out when it did? Why did the first World War break out on the day when it did? and not before or after?

The outbreak of the Revolt, and the precise moment of its occurrence must be explained in the light of the combination and composition of the various constellations which helped bring it about. Conditions and circumstances are different in Hungary and, say, in Poland. Poznan, for instance, is not the capital city of

Poland. In Rumania, there was a heavy concentration of Soviet troops, also Rumania properly belongs geographically, culturally, and traditionally to the Balkan bloc, where the feeling and desire of belonging to the Western world is practically non-existent. All these factors must be considered. If, -- and we are here on a hypothetical ground -- Piro, the Minister of the Interior, did not vacillate, if he had immediately granted, or if he had refused to grant to the end, the permit to hold the demonstration; if Gerő did not make that rude and provocative speech; if the Government and the Party had given in, and had granted the initial demands, promptly and fully, if the AVH had not killed that young and innocent girl, the initial crisis and the revolution may have been averted. This hypothesis appears quite plausible, and the initial demands of the Revolution seem to underline this sort of reasoning; the Revolution, in its first hours, desired no more than a reorganization of the Communist Party. No one even dreamed at that time of a possibility of re-establishing the submerged or disbanded coalition parties, let alone demand their reconstitution. We were operating within the framework of the status quo then existing, and within this framework ~~we~~ we desired the dismissal of all Rákosi-elements and their replacement by Imre Nagy and by people like him. This was our basic demand, supported and reinforced by other, lesser demands, as embodied in the 14 points. If these points had been granted, I, who never was a Communist -- would have been satisfied also.

- (3 b) The assumption that the regime collapsed so easily is fallacious. It did not; the Government of Imre Nagy remained under complete and direct control of the AVH up until October 26. The Nagy Government was held in captivity in the Akademia Street. It was this place where all the Communist functionaries assembled, Communist bodyguards and Russian tanks protected this Communist headquarters and sealed the entire Akademia Street. There were at least two Russians present when Nagy received visitors and attempted to talk with them. The Petófi Circle, and the Council of Hungarian Intellectuals (Magyar Értelmiség Tanácsa), under the leadership of Géza Losonczi, constantly organized deputations of all sorts, trying to maintain the contact with the Prime Minister, but this attempt was only partially successful.

It was only the victory of the Revolution, whose main outlines became apparent on the 27th, that permitted Nagy to free himself from the grip, to reshuffle his Cabinet, and to transfer his headquarters from the Akademia Street to the Parliament building.

In the Parliament building the possibility of conducting negotiations became greater and hundreds of deputations availed themselves of the opportunity to present their views and demands. The stand taken, and the demands presented, were, in the main, identical, -- underlining, of course, the identity and universality of problems and grievances and the necessity of their urgent solution.

The Nagy Government was held in captivity by the AVH. This

explains the fact that the proclamation of martial law and the calling in of Russian troops were effected without Imre Nagy knowing anything of it at the time. When he later learned of these decisions, he did not oppose them in order not to thereby sever what little contact he was permitted to maintain with the revolutionists. This, by the way, is characteristic of Gerő's methods.

A careful analysis of the events clearly refutes the contention that the regime easily collapsed; the masses assembled at the radio building in order to be present when the 14 points of the NEPESZ are read in. This was supposed to be a peaceful demonstration and yet the 19-year-old girl was killed. The people there assembled were neither armed nor organized. In these first moments one can hardly speak of the AVH as having lost a decisive battle -- at that time most people were still very much afraid of the confidential house-informers. The disintegration began when parts of the Hungarian Army deserted the Government and went over to the revolutionists, when Maleter refused to shoot at the Kilian barracks and instead assumed command of the revolutionary group there. When the Ludovika regiment attacked the Russians. It was only after these events that the tide had turned and the AVH became isolated.

(3 c) Formally, there was the desire to express solidarity for the Poles; actually, under the cover of this desire to express the Hungarian people's solidarity for the Poles, there burned the determination to simultaneously bring to expression the deep-rooted grievances of the Hungarian people. More specifically, the intellectual

leadership used this occasion to voice its own demands against the Hungarian Government.

It demanded a cessation of the absolute rule of the Party; Gerö should resign, and the leadership of the Party on all levels should be re-determined by elections from bottom to top. Imre Nagy should be brought into the Party's Central Committee, he should be appointed Prime Minister and he should be permitted to resume his program along the lines of his 1953 policy declaration.

Hungary's economic independence was another of these demands; secret trade agreements between Hungary and the Soviet Union should be made public. These were known to have contain^{ed} secret price-lists whereby the Soviet Union was permitted to arbitrarily determine what products it would give to Hungary, what others she would receive, and at what price. These agreements were further known to have ~~stipulated~~ stipulated unfavorable transportation conditions and extravagant quality requirements.

There was the question of the uranium-ore, uranium mines in Hungary were under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Soviet Union. Hungary wanted to see her sovereignty -- political and economic-- reestablished in this sphere.

There was the symbolic question of the restoration of Hungary's traditional emblem, the Kossuth emblem.

There was the question of the Hungarian Army uniform. The outfitting of Hungarian soldiers with Soviet-type uniforms should

cease and a uniform corresponding to Hungarian army traditions should be re-created.

There was the question of the freedom of expression. Freedom of expression of every kind, particularly the freedom of the press, was demanded.

Another demand wished to secure the recognition of the independence of the MEFESZ organizations, with the possibility given to them to publish a newspaper of their own.

These were some of the principal demands of the leaders of the Revolution. How did ~~XXXX~~ they hope to accomplish them? Their aim^r was to bring their stand to the attention of the general public, to publicize them in newspapers, in the radio, and by means of mass meetings. The principal aim of the demonstration was to exert a pressure on the Government and thereby to facilitate the acceptance of these demands by the Government. If the Government had decided to accept these demands, there would have been no revolution. There would have been a Polish-type solution. In Hungary everyone would have been satisfied with a solution based on the 14 points and the conditions thereby created would have been considered as a condition of almost perfect ~~KE~~ freedom.

Of course, Rákosi and the Russians knew that, once these concessions are granted, there would have been no limit to further demands later. The developments in Poland exemplified this very well. An evolutionary development would have been inevitable.

Neither those who organized the demonstration, nor the countless thousands who participated in it did prepare themselves for a revolution. Not even an action against the AVH members was contemplated. That it did come to a revolution, that so much innocent blood was shed, is the sole responsibility of the AVH.

- (3 d) The change in attitudes occurred at the radio building. A delegation with several members carried the demands of the demonstrators inside the building for the purpose of broadcasting them over the waves. One of the members of the delegation was a girl. The AVH at first used such devices as rubber-~~sticks~~^{truncheons} and water hoses against the members of this delegation. When that failed, shots rang out and the girl was killed. The girl's body immediately became a symbol in everyone's eyes and the demonstrators, peaceful until then in tone and action, violently turned their wrath on the AVH.

At the Parliament building, also, the change in the attitude of the demonstrators occurred only after the news that fighting broke out in front of the radio building had reached there.

- (3 e) I don't think so. The reason for this becomes evident if you understand that at that moment the 14 points constituted the non plus ultra in everyone's mind. There were isolated instances of people, it is true, who have seen more in the demonstrations and who have read more into the demands than they actually ~~see~~ represented, -- people who expected more from the Revolution than the spirit of the Revolution would ~~see~~^{bear} dare -- people who saw near at hand the fulfillment of their personal desires and aspirations.

3

These additions came later, however, and did not even exist on the first day. These personal aspirations and plans came only after the reestablishment of the political parties. To a starving man a small ~~piece~~ piece of bread represents the realization of a noble dream, worthier than most everything else in the world. Those who later did not stop here, who were not satisfied nor satiated with the outlines of the revolutionary program were people who, because of the very nature of their political status, could not and did not dare even dream about anything in the beginning.

(3 f)

Opposing the revolt were members of the AVH, compromised party secretaries and all those people who, either in the party or in the government, held and enjoyed the fruits of responsible ~~positions~~ positions. To this we should add people of all categories who have committed some acts in the past and for which acts they expected to be punished after a successful revolution.

While the opposition came from many quarters in the beginning, only members of the AVH stood resolutely against the Revolution with arms in their hands. These people knew what fate expected them, they had nothing to lose and they had no other way out.

I must mention here that there were many people in the AVH ranks who were inducted and placed there against their own will for the duration of their military service. Many of these regular soldiers sided with the Revolution. This is precisely the reason why it was thought necessary to call in the Russians; after it

became evident that the Hungarian Army would act as it did, and after the ~~the~~ Communist leadership of the factories was eliminated from positions of control, the remaining force of the AVH diehards simply was not sufficient in number ^{OR} of strength for the task.

The AVH consisted of two categories; the regular AVH force, forming an integral part, and under the command of, the Ministry of the Interior, and equipped with red identification books on the one hand, and the inductees, regular army personnel, under the overall jurisdiction of the Defense Ministry, but temporarily transferred to, and under the command of, AVH officers, with blue identification papers, on the other.

- (3 g) It is difficult to establish categories here. Individual people who remained neutral could be found among workers and among peasants, for instance, but the great majority of the workers participated, and a few days after the outbreak of the revolt the revolutionary spirit reached even the outlying rural districts and villages, where the TszCs-secretaries and others were dismissed.

The former middle class, as a class, was probably more neutral than the other classes, -- but one cannot state even this much in a categorical fashion -- after all many of these people were jailed and participated actively in the Revolution. One cannot set up social categories here.

There were people who were personally afraid or were cowards and therefore refrained from active participation.

The Revolution spread later to the entire country. There was

practically no village or locality in Hungary where revolutionary councils had not been established, or where no changes in personnel in industrial or agricultural establishments had taken place. Party and council secretaries and plant and TszCs directors were everywhere dismissed and were replaced by people who were revolutionaries in spirit and outlook, if not in action.

It is undeniable that there were neutrals, but their number and strength was totally insignificant in relation to those who did participate. Also, neutrality was very difficult to maintain; one was under constant social pressure and had to take a stand one way or the other. A Budapest apartment building is a neighborhood group where everyone knows everybody else.

- (3 h) Slogans there were in great numbers. The most popular and the most persistent slogan was the demand that the Russians leave the country. There were others that were particular in nature or temporary in duration. Some demanded the ouster of the Rákosi forces, others demanded the return of Nagy. Still others demanded free elections and the re-establishment of political parties. There were slogans demanding that the AVH be disbanded. Others advocated strike (especially after the Gerő speech). Somewhat later in time came slogans demanding neutral status for Hungary and a withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact.

There were some slogans of local significance; one of these originated in Szombathely and soon became nationally accepted; it demanded religious instruction within the curriculum of schools,

and a return of the Church-schools to the Churches. Mindszenty made this demand his own when he delivered his radio address.

Other slogans had to do with the norm-system. Slogans in one form or another demanded the abolition of the norm-system. Another slogan, originating in the provinces, incorporated the demand that the ~~ME~~ compulsory deliveries be stopped. (To this day there is no compulsory delivery system in Hungary). Other slogans demanded a return to the traditional flag and emblem. Still others demanded that the Army wear traditional uniforms. There was another, important slogan, declaring that we are not returning land or factory (this was already part of the 16-point MEFESZ memorandum). This last slogan was more defensive in nature; it proposed to prove that what went on was a Socialist revolution, not a counter-revolution.

A war of placards and of handbills began after November 4. This was the time when the Kádár-regime tried to take a few cautious steps. The revolutionists were no longer in possession of printing presses and their placards and handbills were mimeographed. Many a person was arrested and taken away by the Russians in those days, while reading these placards. The regime, at first, printed all its propaganda material, but people simply refused even as much as to ~~X~~ read printed messages. After some time the Kádár-placards were also mimeographed.

(3 1)

If Rákosi and the Russians are Communists, then the Revolution was anti-Communist. If what transpired in Hungary between 1948 and 1956 was communistic, then the Revolt was anti-Communist.

Many Communists participated in it, the writers and the great majority of the Petofi Circle were all Communists. These people were not anti-Communists, they condemned and fought against the slave-master relationship between Hungary and the Soviet Union.

The Revolution was all for good-neighbor-relations with the Soviet Union. But the Revolution negated and denied both the Moscow system and the Rakosi-type leadership. The Revolution's ideal was complete economic independence from Russia, and complete political independence from both East and West, symbolized in Hungary's neutrality.

The Revolution opposed and fought against Russian Communist imperialism and against that group of men who represented this imperialism in Hungary.

(3 8 j) I am not going to ^{define} ~~define~~ the term, because it is not possible to do so. Opposition to the ideology did come from all quarters with causes varied and innumerable. I am only going to try to describe anti-Communist feeling and some of its causes as they pertained to Hungary. Take, for instance, the United States. People here are experts in selling all sorts of products. The television advertising may be quite misleading, and yet it is very effective. I, for example, was influenced by it so that I now smoke Viceroy cigarettes.

The Soviet Union, and Communists in general, have a similar method. They advertise not products but ideology. In the schools a constant and never-ceasing advertisement went on, within the

school curriculum, where the Soviet Union, Stalin, and Rákosi continued to be mentioned, and described, and praised almost uninterruptedly.

This advertisement centered around the personality of Stalin. An attempt was made to instill heroic love and endless devotion to Stalin ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ in the hearts of the very young. Stalin was endowed with telepathic powers, capable of rushing to the help of children and rescue them from danger, or want, or give them what they were wishing for.

Similarly, Rákosi, the Hungarian Stalin, was a superman-character. He had an infallible intellect, and he was an expert in every sphere of life, beginning from the butterfly to the airplane. Not only were children taught to admire and to love him, Rákosi was equally able to gently superimpose his will on everybody he desired. All he had to do was to deliver a speech, let us say, at the Writers' Club, at a rally, or some other place, and the contents of his speech were immediately transformed into a program.

This was the basis of Hungarian school and adult education. And this education, instead of succeeding in saturating the Hungarian mind with communism, provoked an entirely opposite sort of reaction.

If the Hungarian Revolution was anti-Communist, then this attitude was but the consequence of Communist educational methods. This sort of advertising was forced upon everybody, but not even kindergarten pupils took it seriously. They knew it was not true. More than that, they knew that they must never reveal to anyone

their disbelief, lest they caused trouble to their teachers or parents. Thus, while they did not believe a word of this propaganda, they gave the impression, at least outwardly, of being thoroughly indoctrinated. This latter fact tended to deceive the Communists themselves.

Révai declared in Parliament in 1947 that communism stands or falls in Hungary depending on whether or not it will be able to produce a succession of Communist generations.

If ~~THESE~~ the Communists had succeeded in re-educating the young generation according to Communist principles, then there would ~~NEVER~~ have been a revolution in Hungary. The reaction of the youth, so fully exposed for so long to Communist indoctrination, was truly amazing.

Now the Kádár-regime tries to convince the Hungarian public and the world that what happened in October-November was the work of reactionaries. They are trying to say that those many students, recipients of Russian scholarships and of material favors, young people who were especially selected and sent to Russia for a number of years to study, were reactionaries. We know this is a lie, but the fact remains that the most favored and the most supported group, students who had all they desired materially, turned completely against them.

The intellectuals, ^{surfeit, nausea} upset (csömör) from this constant and, in the eyes of most people silly propaganda, coupled with the readily apparent contradictions between it and reality, ^{led} ~~THE~~ people

to first reject it and then to hate it, and to abhor it from the very depth of their hearts.

People, then, became anti-Communists not because they were American and imperialist spies, or reactionaries, but because they recognized Communist statements and pronouncements to be false. Because there was such a clear-cut contradiction between Communist ideology and actual life.

Communists did believe, at first, in the infallibility of their ideology. They rationalized the inconsistencies and concluded that the people, those in charge of putting ideology in practice, were the originators of mistakes. But they, too, came to see the light, and openly declared that the very foundations, the ideology as well as the system of its implementation, are the real roots of the evil. *enunciated* (I am only paraphrasing here Tibor Déry's thesis, as ~~announced~~ during one of the meetings of the Petöfi Circle.) Tibor Déry was a Communist of long standing. He entered the Party in 1919. He returned to Hungary in 1945. He believed then -- he related -- that communism could be brought about by means of a dictatorship of the proletariat. In 1953 he finally realized that he was mistaken. And he openly admitted his mistake. "Only one thing causes me intense pain -- said Déry -- that it is at such a colossal price of young life that I feel myself obligated to disassociate myself from communism."

those
For ~~ENNE~~ who were not Communists, communism nevertheless did become an existential problem. One part of this group was interned and incarcerated. Others, the majority, accommodated themselves to the inevitable. They did not see a way out, even though they would have preferred to live under different circumstances. For this very reason many entered the ranks of the Party, in order to secure their daily bread, to be able to send their sons to the university, and to be able to more adequately provide for their families. They knew quite well how all depended on their cadre status. These people tried to establish cordial relations with those in charge of the cadres. This is why the various seminars were so well attended. This is why the Szabad Nép so easily managed to maintain such a wide circulation. A life, however, where a person constantly wears a mask, is a boring, stiff, and unnatural form of life. Not even on excursions and outings was one of these people permitted to take off his mask, and to offer his real views on Rákosi, for instance, because the party secretary was also there, and listened to everything he had to say. Nor was a man safe, or free, to express his views at home; there, the confidential house informer (házbizalmi) registered all his movements. It was an inescapable, terrifying and agonizing thought supervision. Liberation from these controls was greeted with extraordinary joy.

It was the determined rejection of, and the helpless opposition to, all these factors and circumstances of life that drove people to the anti-Communist camp. They joined the Revolution to stamp out once and for all this limitless terror. The confidential

house informers were no longer active during the Revolution. They remained home behind locked doors. The all-powerful party secretaries no longer dominated the factories. The cadre sheets were distributed to all concerned. Only then did people see in full actuality the scope and extent of the regime's police methods.

(3 k)

See Question 3 j.

(3 l)

Yes. It is undeniable that there were reactionaries among the rebels. Their number, however, was insignificant.

In the Eighth Precinct (nyolcadik kerület), for example, people recognized a former Horthy-general. Similar phenomena appeared also in the provinces. There were instances when former gendarmes and chief notaries (főjegyzők), former head administrative officials of rural civil administrations, succeeded in occupying and seizing the power in some villages. I am personally convinced that the victorious II revolution would have dealt quickly and easily with these anachronisms.

There was, for instance, the case of Count Almásy, a former great landowner and aristocrat, who visited Imre Nagy and demanded that his lands be returned.

Occurrences of this sort were extremely rare. No one took them seriously and most people were impelled to smile when hearing of these Don Quixote sort of fellows as they chased the windmills.

(3 m)

This is a hypothetical question. I can give you only what my personal impressions were regarding these matters, though the

Revolution undeniably supplied the contours, the main outlines of things to come.

It is a generally known fact that Hungarian democratic parties were reconstituted almost immediately after the outbreak of the uprising. Acts of party organization and planning were in full swing, in spite of the first Russian intervention. It is also universally conceded that by the 28th of October ~~the~~ ^{we} defeated the Russians. Had there been no further Russian intervention, normal life would have been resumed by November 4 at the latest. People were already engaged in clearing up the ruins, employees of the ~~MINKOR~~ Beszkárt (municipally operated transit system of Budapest) were already repairing the high-tension overhead electrical wires. Factories were all set to resume their regular operations. In a word, Hungary's internal life would have reverted to normal and production would have been resumed.

In the field of international relations, the foundation was already there; Hungary repudiated the Warsaw Pact and declared her complete disassociation from power block politics both with respect to the East and with respect to the West. Hungary henceforth was to be neutral. Within this framework, and in conformity with this new outlook, our political and economic relations with the Soviet Union would have been worked out.

In the internal political sphere the ~~RESUMPTION~~ ^{parliamentary} resumption of normal ~~life~~ life would have been the first order of business; universal, free, and secret elections would have been held.

Everyone spoke of this election as imminent, even as the fighting went on. The organization and operation of the Presidential Council was chaotic and unsatisfactory. Equally important, the Hungarian Constitution, as well as the parliamentary rules and procedures were in dire need of revision. Needless to say, a new electoral law would have soon been enacted. These would have been some of the more pressing and immediate questions to be debated and acted upon by the new Parliament. The basic principle in this respect was the preservation of constitutionality and of constitutional continuity, a very important consideration to legal-minded Hungarians and a principle in which even Dobi concurred.

Other important questions of internal political and economic nature were equally pressing and in need of solution. One of the most far-reaching of these was the constitutional and legal determination of the status of the workers' councils. These councils were forced to perform a dual function during the Revolution; they combined the activities of the labor unions with a political function whereby they acted as elected ~~representatives~~ spokesmen of a substantial part of the population.

It was generally agreed that the workers' councils would relinquish their political part and that they would restrict themselves to the economic sphere. The workers' councils were to assume the overall direction and planning work, the administration of production units on the local level, while a newly elected and

reconstituted labor union leadership was to assume the regular functions of a labor union.

The national government was to be entrusted to a coalition cabinet, the composition of which was to correspond to the relative strength of the various parties in Parliament. From this it follows that the Cabinet of Imre Nagy would have been reshuffled until it corresponded to the relative strength of the parties. The various expert, non-political portfolios would have been filled by experts of the respective parties.

It would have been the task of this coalition government to create new political and economic foundations for the country within the framework of a neutral and democratic ~~people's~~ republic and in the spirit of complete political freedom.

While the political part of this new program would have been relatively easy to accomplish, on the economic sphere the situation was more complex. We were faced with an acute depression and a very low living standard, brought about by the extensive and abnormal policy of economic expansion. We would have been obliged, no doubt, to seek economic assistance and long-term loans from the United States and from other Western countries.

Retail trade and small industry would have been denationalized and these small undertakings would have received the whole-hearted support and encouragement of the government.

§ In agriculture, 65 percent of all the collectives have already collapsed in the wake of the Revolution. While voluntary ~~farmers' associations would have been permitted to continue, the~~ government would have encouraged all those farmers who preferred to

farmers' associations would have been permitted to continue, the government would have encouraged all those farmers who preferred to till their own land by assisting them in the purchase of livestock, equipment, seed, and fertilizers. All this with a view to resuming agricultural operation as soon and as smoothly as possible.

The tractor and machine stations would have been so reorganized as to make them available to independent farmers as well.

The question of cultural policy would have assumed immense importance. Needless to say, we could not have erased traces of Communist influence in a matter of days. It would have been our aim to counterbalance these influences by consciously popularizing Western ideas and ways. You must realize that the national quest of Hungarians for culture was arbitrarily and forcefully directed into Russian/^{cultural} channels to a point of complete one-sidedness and isolation, ~~where~~ ^{where} Hungarians knew only of things Russian, and were completely ignorant of new discoveries, new literary and other artistic creations in the Western world.

Another of our great tasks would have been the working out of the principles of the essence of democracy; it would have been our obligation to form a new people -- individuals who would have regarded liberty as their highest goal and greatest treasure. Hungary's development in this respect came to a complete standstill in 1848. Nothing of the sort was done since that time.

Speaking
~~Judging~~ on the economic sphere I should like to mention that Hungary could have become a very prosperous ^u country if she based

her economic existence on those resources and potentials that are freely available within her geographic boundaries. Light industry should have been developed with the emphasis on those branches whose support and operation was assured by the availability of domestic raw materials. I have in mind here the production of electrical appliances, railroad equipment, tools, textiles, ~~and~~ and canning industry.

In agriculture our aim would have been to introduce ~~the~~ intensive as opposed to extensive, cultivation methods and practices. Instead of cultivating the traditional varieties of grain, we would have concentrated on ~~the~~ fodder culture (takarmány), on production of various seeds for which the uniqueness of Hungarian climate offered ^{an} an excellent basis and which, incidentally, could be exported in tremendous quantities; these seeds cannot be produced anywhere else in the same quality. We would also have emphasized the establishment of orchards and the development of a large-scale fruit culture. ~~the~~ Nut-bearing trees are especially adaptable to arid (szikes) sections of Hungarian land, and in this connection we have achieved significant results even before the second World War; Hungary exported more than 300,000 kilograms of various kinds of nuts between the two world wars. Part of our agricultural program would have consisted in irrigation of arid lands, and transforming barren meadows into thriving orchards. All this would have been ideally suited to smaller farm units and, if intensive cultivation methods were employed, a raising of living standard,

prosperity, and satisfaction would have been assured the Hungarian peasants.

(4)

I participated in the Revolution between the period you asked me (October 23 - November 4). My participation was not confined to any one place, I was in contact with all revolutionary centers in Budapest and everywhere I went I did those things which were important or necessary under the then and there existing circumstances.

On ~~NEVER~~ October 23 I was part of the demonstration that marched to the statue of Bem. After that we went down Rákóczy Street to the Parliament Square. Not everyone took part in the demonstration at the Bem statue. I remained in front of the Parliament for a long time and went thereafter to the statue of Stalin. I was at the statue during the evening and night of October 23.

On the 24th and after, I was mainly in Buda. My residence was in Törökbalint and I selected a place which was in some proximity to my home. I was stationed at the Móricz Zsigmond körtér and the Széna-ter. János Szabó, the leader of the Széna-ter resistance group, was a very good acquaintance of mine.

I was also a member of the Presidential Council of the Petöfi Circle as well as a member of the Revolutionary Committee of Hungarian Intellectuals. This latter group operated under the leadership of György Ádám and it was engaged, among other things, in the procurement of arms and in the distribution of these arms among the university students. Sándor Herpai, a high-ranking

officer of the Budapest regular police force, fully cooperated with our group and provided the students with those arms and national guard (nemzetőri) identification papers.

- (4 a) During the first phase of the Revolution I was on the Széna-tér, which is one of the most interesting parts of Buda, -- a sector where the most serious and the most decisive things took place. We were engaged in the sealing off of street entrances to the square with barricades and in building our actual defense line.

An especially savage battle took place on the Széna-tér during the afternoon of the 24th of ^{October}~~November~~, with approximately 40-45 Russian tanks participating. Alongside of the tanks, members of the AVH forces from the Vörös Hadsereg Street AVH barracks also participated.

The freedom fighters were about 300 to 400 men strong. Their equipment was very meager and deficient. They used an overturned railway waggon and the surrounding houses as their cover. The Russians concentrated their fire on these buildings for the entire duration of the fight, which lasted uninterruptedly for three hours.

The Russians and the AVH-men advanced from the Széll Kálmán Square, but they were not able to break through the barricades we erected just a few hours before their arrival.

Our casualties were heavy, amounting to some 15-20 dead and many more wounded.

The insurgents fought with simple infantry rifles and a few machine pistols of the type used by the Hungarian Army. We later

had a few machine guns, which we managed to capture from our enemies. We also had a few trucks and a car -- equipment we used mainly for the transportation of our wounded. We also had a Russian armored car. This was about one-and-a-half tons large and was equipped with a machine gun. This armored car came to our possession as a result of the exploits of a young man, Endre Cserbakófi, one of the sub-leaders of the Széna-tér group, who captured it from the Russians. In the first phase of the Revolution this armored car constituted our most important weapon.

On October 25 the AVH succeeded in capturing a small segment of our force, about 30 to 40 men. These people were taken to the Petőfi Akadémia (a military installation) and there were locked up. At that time (October 25) the amnesty proclamation was already in operation and Imre Nagy himself enjoyed a relatively greater freedom. It was under these circumstances that the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals succeeded in intervening on their behalf. Imre Nagy freed them. The Széna-tér group was freed, then, on the 25th, the day of their capture, and they all returned to their former units.

The following day, on the 26th, the same group succeeded in capturing the Petőfi Akadémia. They were greatly assisted in this by the enlisted men stationed in that installation, who, as a group, sided with the insurgents and came ~~BEHIND~~ over to their side. As a result of this exploit, a revolutionary council was immediately

organized in the Petőfi Akadémia, with Endre Cserbakóí becoming the leader of the council.

Part of the activity of the Széna-tér group was the seizure and confiscation, in the name of the Revolution, of the villas of Rákosi, Gerő, Hegedűs, Szalai, and others in the Rózsadomb section of the city. They found an immense amount of food, clothing, and luxurious installations in these houses. Rákosi's villa was also equipped with an atom-proof ~~SECRET~~ subterranean shelter.

We penetrated to the Rózsadomb by way of the Keleti Károly Street, and, while the Rákosi-clique no longer resided there, this exclusive sector was still heavily fortified and guarded by a strongly-armed AVH sentinel force, reinforced upon our arrival by other units from a nearby AVH barrack.

We went to the Rózsadomb on the 26th of October, led by János Szabó and Endre Cserbakóí. The AVH-men opened fire on us and a battle quickly developed, in the course of which we captured four machine guns and a large mass of lesser hand weapons. Some of the AVH were killed or captured, others were ~~treated~~ *retreated* and fled.

This whole thing occurred in the before noon hours of the 26th. We left a small garrison on the Rózsadomb, the bulk of us returning and heading ~~to~~ for the Petőfi Akadémia, the capture of which I already described.

On the Rózsadomb a minute inventory was kept of all the items found in these exclusive residences. Food of every variety and expensive clothing were found there. The residences were magnificent

equipped with all the conceivable modern conveniences. While I have no personal knowledge of any papers ~~or~~ or documents having been captured there, I should like to call your attention to the fact that certain papers were made public in France and also in Germany in this connection (see ~~see~~ ^{Refugee in Paris.} -- Interviewer's note: I already gave the address to the Project).

My situation in the Revolution was a special one; those of us who were members of the Petöfi Circle and of the Committee of Hungarian Intellectuals were also engaged in other aspects of the Revolution than actual fighting. Because we dealt with many questions of city-wide and national character, we were not confined to one place, nor did we remain in any one locality for long. As the fighting ceased in one locality, for instance, I would move to another. It was more the circumstances and events ^{which determined} where I was at any given moment.

October 26 and October 27 were days, for example, when we made it our task to convince the wavering Imre Nagy of the true nature of the Revolution. We have tried to persuade him to make the program of the Revolution his own.

On the 26th the Government finally left its Akademia Street confinement and took up quarters in the Parliament building. The transfer represented a degree of change insofar as the tight control of the AVH over individual members of the Cabinet lessened somewhat.

It is true that the Parliament building continued to be watched by the AVH, and that the Parliament building ^{itself} was not without

Communist guards. These guards, however, were under the jurisdiction of the Defense Department, not of the AVH.

Also on the 26th, the Cabinet itself was enlarged and reshuffled.

A ^agreat many delegations came to the Parliament building. All of them desired to see the Premier. The principal purpose of all these delegations was to try to make Imre Nagy understand that what went on in the country was not a counter-revolution, and to convince him that the program of the Revolution was not a counter-revolutionary program, but one that even Imre Nagy could easily accept.

Zoltán Tildy played a very forceful part in those days. He, for one, sympathized with the revolutionary ideals from the very beginning. He maintained that the Cabinet must never lose contact with the Revolution. He brought about the inclusion of Maléter into the Cabinet, securing his appointment as Assistant Defense Minister at first, and later as Minister of Defense. It was also Tildy who clearly recognized that the Government must not drift aimlessly (kullogni) behind the Revolution. The Government must, he said, accept, and make its own, the demands and aims of the Revolution and must lead it through success and triumph.

Indeed, the Revolution was clearly heading toward chaos and anarchy and disorganization. Everyone joined it, worthy and worthless people alike. The AVH organization, ^{thoroughly} ~~was~~ beaten and disorganized by ^{them} them, was on the verge of collapse. On the 27, 28,

and 29, one could no longer truthfully speak of an AVH organization, for there simply wasn't any. Many of them put on uniforms of the regular police force, escaped or submerged in some other way.

It was then (October 27 -29) that the Calvin Square episode took place; a few AVH-men became isolated in the Reformed Church on the Calvin Square, they retreated to the church's steeple and the shooting began. It was on this occasion that AVH people were slain and posthumously hanged, a fact which, -- while I deprecate and condemn it as an extreme and cruel act, unworthy of the high ideals of the Revolution -- I also understand as a normal reaction of hate and wrath after 12 years of AVH terror.

This episode was not a pleasant or happy moment for the Revolution, and both the Petőfi Circle and the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals protested against it and condemned the action.

On the 28th, Pál [redacted], Gábor [redacted], and a Catholic priest whose name I escapes my memory, visited Cardinal Mindszenty as a delegation and asked him to take a public stand against the repetition of similar atrocities. Mindszenty immediately responded and publicly condemned the atrocities.

These, then, were the events which took place between October 27-29. Our activities and tasks were political, not military, in that period. On the 29th, the reconstitution of the political parties was made public. On the before noon of the same day a nine-member executive committee of the Smallholders' Party was

called into being. More specifically, 120 leading exponents of the Smallholders' Party assembled in the party's Zárda Street headquarters, and these 120 elected the nine-member executive committee. The nine-member executive committee, in turn, immediately conducted discussions with János Szabó, the ~~KEMER~~ leader of the Széna-tér resistance group who, as it later turned out, himself was a Smallholders' Party adherent.

The other parties, too, were in the ~~process~~ process of formation; Sándor Kiss organized the Peasants' League (the league used to be a peasants' labor union between 1945 and 1947).

The National Peasant Party also came into being under the new name of Petőfi Party. Ferenc Farkas and some other former members of this party constituted the provisional leadership. The Petőfi Party elected a consultative body, with László Németh, János Kodolányi, Péter Veres, Gyula Illyés, and other noted populist writers as members.

The Social Democratic Party was the last in time of all the parties to reconstitute itself. Anna Kéthly, Gyula Kelemen, József Fischer, József Komuves, András Révész, and others were its recognized leaders.

Once the parties re-emerged, some of their respective members took up their parts assigned to them in the Cabinet; Zoltán Tildy, Kovács, and Istvan D. Szabó represented the Smallholders' Party, Ferenc Farkas and Istvan Bibó represented the Petőfi (Peasant) Party, Anna Kéthly, Gyula Kelemen, and József Komuves were the Social

Democratic Party representatives.

István Bibó of the Petöfi Party should here be mentioned. Bibó, on November 4, worked out a common platform to be adopted by all non-Communist parties, in an effort to consolidate all the ~~anti-~~ Communist parties in these critical days. We may have an opportunity to discuss this later.

October 29th was a decisive date for the Revolution. The Government, on that day, accepted, and made his own, all the demands of the Revolution, made determined efforts to consolidate the situation and decided, in principle, to immediately start negotiations with the Russians.

Under this new setup Maléter became the Defense Minister and organized the National Guard (Nemzetőrség). Béla Király became the commander of this new force.

Maléter is a graduate of the pre-war Ludovika Akademia (the Hungarian West Point /Interviewer's note/). He served in the Hungarian Army under Horthy. In 1944 he sided with those officers of the Hungarian Army who decided to get Hungary out of the axis bloc. He later entered the Communist Party. So did Király, as a matter of fact. This was a compulsory act for all higher ranking army officers. Király was relatively unknown -- I certainly never heard of him -- during the Revolution. Maléter, on the other hand, played a very interesting part in it; he received an order from Károly Janzza, then Minister of Defense, to proceed with his armored unit to the Kilian Barracks and to liquidate a "mob violence"

there. The unit which Maléter commanded was an all-officer detachment. Maléter proceeded as ordered and, recognizing on his arrival the true nature of this "mob violence," instead of shooting at the "mob," he himself went over to their side with his entire group. The Kilian Barracks Revolutionary Council promptly elected Maléter as the barrack's military commander.

Maléter visited several times Imre Nagy in those hectic days as the leader of the Kilian delegation. It was on one of these occasions that he met Tildy, who immediately recognized his human and leadership qualities. There was, according to Tildy, no better qualified man than Maléter for the defense job. Dudás was unsuitable because he was not a military man and because his politics was entirely unacceptable to the Government. János Szabó, another man under consideration, did an excellent job on the Széna-tér, but would not have made a good Defense Minister. As a result, Maléter was nominated for the post.

As soon as the Coalition Cabinet began functioning, Tildy advanced his proposal that the Government should immediately enter into direct negotiations with responsible Soviet leaders with a view to bringing about the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary. Tildy's proposal was accepted by the Cabinet, and since the Russians, too, appeared quite willing, the negotiations soon began.

The negotiations did go on and, outwardly at least, the Russians appeared sincere and cooperative. I suspected their sincerity then, and I am fully convinced now that the Russians never really took

these negotiations seriously. Moscow entered into these negotiations because she saw a tactical advantage in them;; the apparent willingness of the Russians to withdraw their troops from the city permitted them to withdraw a compromised, unreliable, and beaten force, the continued garrisoning of which in Budapest would have undoubtedly ^{been} more of a disadvantage than of an advantage to Russia. Unfortunately, the real Russian aim -- so clear today -- was not to withdraw, but to replace the beaten Budapest garrison. It is because of this imperative need to bring in fresh forces that the Russians entered into the troop withdrawal discussions in the first place. It is tragic that the Hungarian Government was not well informed about the Russian troop movements and that when it did receive the necessary information, it was much too late to effectively handle the changed situation. It must be quite obvious to everyone today that the fresh Russian troops in all probability received their order to enter Hungary even before the withdrawal negotiations got under way. This contention is further underlined by the actual reports the Hungarian Government did receive from various sources in the County of Szabolcs, shortly after the Russian forces crossed the Hungarian border, reports which, for some unknown reason, the Government did not take seriously at the time.

On October 29, Mikoyan visited Budapest and, among other of his conferences, met Tildy as well in a private apartment. The meeting took place in private quarters to lend an air of unofficial, private atmosphere to the discussions, so that both men could freely

exchange views on all aspects of the situation.

During the conversation, Mikoyan promised Tildy that the Russian troops would definitely be withdrawn from Budapest by October 31 at the latest and that the evacuation of Russian troops from the rest of the country would also take place soon after that date.

Meanwhile, discussions of general aspects of the evacuation continued between Maléter and Ferenc ~~Erdei~~ Erdei, leaders of the Hungarian delegation on the one hand, and the Soviet delegation on the other. These delegations continued until the 2nd of November

All these discussions were based on the promises which Mikoyan gave ~~to~~ Tildy and on other verbal agreements these two men concluded.

On the afternoon of November 3, the mixed Hungarian-Russian delegations concluded their discussions, having reached an understanding regarding the main aspects of the troop evacuation. Further discussions and the working out of technical details of this operation were entrusted to a delegation of technical experts. These experts conducted their meetings at Tököl. It was at Tököl, where Maléter came as the leader of the Hungarian delegation, that the Russians arrested him.

On November 3, there were already significant new Soviet forces between the Danube and the Tisza rivers -- a fact which Imre Nagy took cognizance of in his foreign policy declaration of that same day.

In the early dawn of November 4, the second Russian invasion

of Hungary began. This time the Russians came not only with tanks, they also had an infantry of a considerable size.

Now to say a few words about desertions of Russian soldiers; one of the first of the numerous instances of such desertions took place just before the battle on the Parliament Square. In the vicinity of the Parliament building, in the Kossuth Lajos Street, a dispute occurred between some Russian tank soldiers and Hungarian freedom fighters. Russian-speaking Hungarians managed to establish friendly contacts with a group of Russian tank-soldiers who, after learning of the true nature of the uprising, deserted their forces and joined the Revolution. Five Russian tanks were involved in this incident. The Russians drove their tanks, with Hungarians riding on them, to the Parliament Square. A large mass of people were already assembled there. On the roof of the Defense Ministry building located in the immediate vicinity of the Parliament Square, AVH forces were stationed. Suddenly the AVH group opened its fire on the crowd assembled below. The Russians, not knowing what it was all about, took up the fight and returned the fire. The crowd stood helplessly between the two fires, taking heavy punishment from the AVH machine guns. I did not witness the actual fight, I only arrived about one hour after its termination. Many people were killed and many more wounded. Blood was literally flowing in streams down the gutter. This whole thing took place during the first phase of the Revolution. The assembled crowd was a peaceful group, intending only to demonstrate in the Parliament Square. The five

Russian tanks, of course, came to the assistance of the crowd. What I saw there was a horrible picture.

Russians deserted ~~in~~ their units in other sectors of Budapest also. There was, for example, a small Russian unit fighting in the Kilian Barracks. Such desertions usually occurred in small units, i.e., platoons or, which was even more often the case, individual Russian soldiers deserted their units and sided with the rebels. In Győr, for instance, the Revolution succeeded completely without shedding of blood simply because the Russian commander there refused to combat the insurgents. He even delivered ^a ~~an~~ speech to that effect in the Győr radio.

The Russians stationed at Győr had many contacts with the Hungarian population and they had a clearer understanding of the Hungarian situation than did those Russian soldiers who participated in the first invasion of the city of Budapest.

This uncertainty about the attitude and the allegiance of some of the Russian troops and the outright refusal of others to fight the insurrection contributed in great measure to the apparently conciliatory stand the Russian Government took during the Mikoyan-Tildy talks and during subsequent negotiations. The Russians clearly saw the need to replace their old troops and they searched for a graceful and yet effective way to do it.

The fresh Russian troops of the second phase (October 4 and after) were provided with varying orientation instructions; some

of them were constantly searching for the Americans. They were told that the American imperialists had attacked the peace-loving and defenseless Hungarian workers. Others were vainly trying to find the sea ~~at~~ ^{and} the Suez Canal in Budapest. These fresh forces were clearly misinformed. They knew nothing of the Hungarian situation. They were a much stronger force than the previous wave, made up of both tanks and sizeable infantry. They were able to decisively execute their operations.

In the early hours of November 4 ^{They} encircled the Parliament building, the Ministries of Defense and of the Interior, and they occupied all the bridges. They also seized the various plazas of Pest and used their heavy artillery to bombard strategic sections of the city's interior. The whole operation, both in respect of weapons employed and in strategy followed, as well as in respect of battle tactics, had the earmarks of a carefully laid-out general staff plan, the aim of which soon became clear to us all.

The Russians first determined the exact geographical location of the more important resistance centers in Budapest, Pesterzsébet, Ujpest, ~~NE~~ Óbuda, the Schmidt-castle (Schmidt kastély), and other places. They then trained their heavy artillery on these locations and opened up a devastating barrage of fire. The softening action of the artillery was followed up by the deployment of tanks and infantry units, working in close cooperation.

As a result of this precise and overpowering assault, the Hungarians' fight for freedom was completely beaten by November 4

and 5.

That the by then hopeless struggle was still continued can only be explained by the fact that the insurgents literally fought for time. They wanted to provoke the dispatch of a United Nations delegation to Hungary and they wanted to ensure that the struggle continued at least until the United Nations delegation arrived. The odds against them were disproportionately great and the insurgents saw themselves forced to change their battle tactics. In this the Petöfi Circle and the Central Budapest Workers' Council actively participated. By this time, regular contacts have been established between the various resistance pockets. It was agreed and decided that the insurgents split up their forces into smaller units and henceforth conduct a guerilla-type warfare.

Everyone saw the end, the inevitable, and the fight was continued only to give time and opportunity for the United Nations delegation to arrive to Hungary. The United Nations delegation was expected to take a firm hand and to contribute to the prevention of retorsions and executions which everybody recognized as the inevitable consequence, should the United Nations intervention fail to materialize.

This condition continued until November 12. It is during this period -- November 4 - 12 -- that the freedom fighters suffered their heaviest casualties. November 12 introduces that period ~~that~~ when the various fighting groups were forced out of the Capital. The forces of Dudás are practically annihilated. The Corvin, Kilian, and other groups retreat first to the Pesthidegút area, and later

to the Dunantul province. The struggle, occasional and sporadic, continues and the almost endless exodus to the West begins. Freedom fighters fought their way to the Austro-Hungarian border and crossed the frontier with arms in their hands.

In Budapest, the Russians were the absolute masters of the city. Russian troops combined with the newly-organized Kadar-units -- the latter were made up of AVH-members and loyal Communists -- to enforce and maintain a terror-laden order and peace. This combined force also continued liquidating remnants of the by then isolated but still resisting revolutionary pockets. The Russians assumed the role of the wielder of the big stick in these operations, letting the Kádár-forces to perform the distasteful and bloody job of liquidation. The Kádár-forces visited hospitals and forcefully removed all the wounded revolutionary fighters.

Coupled with the physical aspects of fighting, the propaganda campaign was also continued. In the second part of November, the leaflet and placard war reached its ~~XXXX~~ height; printing presses were no longer available to the revolutionaries, and stencil machines from various offices and factories were used instead. The streets of Budapest were flooded with revolutionary leaflets; in these leaflets the population was asked to continue resisting and to maintain the strike.

During this period, the revolutionary workers' councils represented the principal political power in Hungary. The leader of the revolutionary councils' central Budapest organization was

Sándor Rác, a 30-35-year-old tool and diemaker. In this central council both the Writers' Association and the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals were well represented.

It was also during this period that Kádár tried to cement and consolidate his power. He did not, as yet, decide to do away entirely with the revolutionary councils. He actually conducted negotiations with the leaders of the revolutionary organ, but the understanding reached was not honored by the Russians. The Kádár-group also tried to win the cooperation of the leaders of the democratic parties. Kádár ~~had~~ proposed the formation of a coalition cabinet, with the lion's share of power to rest with the Party of Workers and Peasants (Communist). The manoeuvre did not succeed because Kádár refused to recognize the Social Democratic Party as a separate and distinct entity. The Smallholders' and the Peasants (Petőfi) Party previously concluded a mutual agreement with the Social Democratic Party not to enter a coalition with the Communists except en bloc. Now, faced with the Kádár-proposal of a coalition without the Social Democrats, they flatly refused their cooperation.

This intra-party mutual agreement was negotiated and signed between November 20 and November 22, stipulating that neither party shall ever enter the coalition, nor ~~it~~ will discuss any matter with the Communists on an individual basis. The three parties agreed, in other words, to always act in concert. Since neither Kádár nor the Russians were prepared to recognize an independent Social Democratic Party ~~— they said, in effect, that such a recognition would result in the splitting up and in~~

independent Social Democratic Party -- they said, in effect, that such ~~EE~~ a recognition would result in the splitting up and in the destruction of the unity of the Hungarian workers' movement -- the coalition never came into being.

Kádár continued to threaten both the parties and the nation, saying that, if he should not succeed in consolidating the situation, Russian military ~~military~~ dictatorship would be bound to follow. The threat, ~~MINUTE~~ ^{KNEW} did not carry any weight, however, for everyone ~~know~~ ^{KNEW} that such Russian military dictatorship was already an actuality. It was not Kádár who commanded in Hungary.

After November 20, for instance, András Sándor, a young Communist writer and one of the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ leaders of the Stalinváros radio station during the Revolution, was arrested. Sándor was accused of having directed the Stalinváros battle against the second Russian wave. A delegation of the Hungarian Writers' Association visited Kádár on Sándor's behalf. The delegation, with Sándor's wife as one of its members, heard Kádár solemnly pledge that the accused writer would immediately be set free. Actually, Kádár could not have acted differently, since the accusation, -- direction of and participation in the struggle against the Russians -- was not a punishable activity at the time. At any rate, Kádár did issue the necessary orders for Sándor's release. However, when the order was presented at the ~~XXXXXX~~ prison, the Russian commander refused to honor it or to abide by it, and András Sándor was not set free. He was, by the way, sentenced just a few days ago.

This is what Kádár's promise and executive power amounted to. Hungary was, in effect, ruled by a Russian military dictatorship. This dictatorship became all-embracing in scope and its activities were characterized by a constant intensification; the Russians, soon after Kádár's position became more or less stabilized, demanded a thorough and merciless liquidation of the Revolution.

Kádár's political attitude and behavior underwent two abrupt and highly significant changes during October-November, 1956; on October 30, in a speech, he ~~did~~ frankly admitted ^{that} ~~the~~ the Hungarian Communist Party was in a process of rapid disintegration. On November 1, he went one step further and announced the formation of a new Communist Party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, which, while proclaiming a platform of defense of socialist achievements ^{and} of fighting any counter-revolutionary moves, it firmly approved the Nagy-government's program in all respects, including Nagy's demand for a complete withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary.

Kádár spoke on this occasion (November 1) of his firm determination that Hungary must not be dependent any longer. And yet, two days later, he became a Russian stooge who readily organized a counter-government and repudiated Nagy and Nagy's program in its entirety.

The apparent contradiction of Kádár's attitudes is traceable to this compromised political past, a fact which the Russians fully

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