

clique within the Party. These records provided an unmistakable evidence of Kádár's disloyalty both to the then Hungarian Communist leadership as well as to the policies of the KPSU. The records proved beyond doubt how both Rajk and Kádár desired to establish a Titoist Hungary. Rákosi and Gábor Péter transmitted these recordings to the Russians long before the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution. The Russians kept the records and decided to use them against Kádár in the night of November 2-3. Kádár, a virtual prisoner of the MVD, and confronted with irrefutable evidence on November 2-3, when at the mercy of the Russian secret police, apparently did not see any other to him acceptable alternative but to abide by the Russians' wishes: to form a new, puppet government.

Kádár reversed himself again on November 25. From the time of the Szolnok proclamation up until November 25, Kádár never spoke of calling people to account for the part they played in the Revolution. He did speak a great deal about counter-revolutionaries and about misled young people who have innocently and inadvertently participated in a popular uprising, the true nature of which they did not know and did not understand.

On November 25, Kádár delivered a speech in which he identified the events of October 23-November 4 as a Fascist and American-imperialist counter-revolution, and in which he for the first time posed the question of responsibility and of calling to account those responsible.

The speech signaled the beginning of the renewed terror in Hungary. People were to be punished for their revolutionary acts. The other political parties, which until then hoped in the possibility of some compromise-solution, suddenly retreated. Immediately after November 25, the mass exodus to Austria reached its peak. The system of border patrols was not yet organized and only occasional Russian units ~~hindered~~ hindered the refugees' flight.

November 25 introduces a new era, in which those forces which gave a positive evaluation to the Revolution submerge and continue their activities illegally. Sándor Rácz and Mihály Bálí vanish from the scene. The AVH prohibits an announced meeting of the workers' councils' central organization, which planned to meet at the Budapest Sport Pavillon, and the mass deportations begin.

It is significant and characteristic for this period that Colonel Mátyás, the AVH commander of the Fő-utcai prison, restricts himself to the signing of the arrest orders, while the actual interrogation of the prisoners and decisions of their future fate is completely in the hands of the Russians. Equally significant, the Russian commander of Budapest is the virtual master of the city, to whom Kádár dutifully and regularly submits his reports.

(4 b) There were many such instances. I personally was not an eyewitness to any of them, but a few instances are generally known, such as Maleter and his role at the Kilian barracks. The Defense Minister and the Division Commander gave direct orders to Maleter to go out there and to quell the revolt. Maleter proceeded to the

barracks, went over to the side of the revolutionaries, and soon thereafter was elected commander of the Kilian forces.

Equally well known is the fact that the National Guard forces, made up of university students, were commanded by young army officers.

A significant portion of the Hungarian army, excepting the high-ranking army officers, sided at one time or another, some sooner some later, with the Revolution.

The Defense Minister of the present regime, trying to defend the reliability and the effectiveness of the Hungarian army, declared not so long ago that the army could have ~~been~~ successfully combated the Revolution. He could <sup>cite</sup> set only one example, however, where an army unit did go against the Revolution.

In the night of October 23, the revolutionaries did not have a single piece of weapon at their disposal. The fact that they did possess a considerable supply of them later, clearly testifies to the fact that there were army formations which either gave their own weapons to the revolutionaries, or opened their warehouses to them, or transported weapons from warehouses and arsenals to resistance centers.

The regime's one and only loyal military formation was the AVH, whose members were so thoroughly compromised that they really did not have any alternative or choice.

The fact that the Revolution, in its first phase, succeeded

and became victorious, is attributable in no uncertain measure to the circumstance that the Hungarian army sided with the insurrection. At this very moment, numerous members of the frontier guard and of the regular army are tried by military tribunals. The fact of these trials, and the number of accused military figures, provides us with ~~is~~ still another possibility of measuring the extent of military participation on the side of the Revolution.

- (4 c) I have seen only one instance of mob violence. It happened on the Szent István körút, on the Marx Square. The people seized an AVH first lieutenant. The lieutenant walked in civilian clothes and somebody recognized him. I arrived a few minutes after the seizure. The lieutenant received a savage and merciless beating right there on the spot. Soon a national guard unit arrived, took the prisoner out of the mob's hands, and took him, as far as I could ascertain, to an assembly place for AVH prisoners to be tried later.

As to how I felt about it, I never did like mob violence. We were fighting already in 1945 against widespread Communist mob violence. But this time the people had positive reasons for their actions, whose underlying causes were both determined, real, and deep. The ~~AVH~~ fame and renown which these AVH-men achieved for themselves at the Andrásy-út prison was based on such acts of brutality and ~~AVH~~ inhumanity which are beyond the ordinary person's imagination. The AVH was a state within the state. Not even the ministries knew what the AVH was doing. Only the topmost leaders

of the party, Rákosi for instance, was kept informed of the AVH's activities.

If someone was unfortunate enough to become one of the AVH's victims, such person was no longer his own master; he became a slave of his capricious torturers and interrogators. Cooperatives, villages kulaks, better ~~XXXX~~ Social Democrats, Rajkists, -- all these and many others experienced on their own skin the bestiality of the AVH. Even the regular police force was afraid of the AVH. Not even they had any means of defending themselves against the AVH's encroachments and treachery.

All these facts and circumstances were ideally suited for the instilling of intense fear and of unlimited hate in the hearts of many, so that whenever an AVH-man was beaten or slain, it was never just the result of mob psychology and/or mob violence, there always were positive, concrete reasons behind it.

The ~~XXXX~~ attitude and aim of the Revolution was to disarm these people (the AVH) and to bring them to justice in regular courts. Whenever decisions to lynch some of them were made, such decisions always had a concrete reason. A series of efforts were made to halt these irregularities by the Cabinet, by Mindszenty, by Béla Kovács, by the workers' councils, by the Petőfi Circle, and by other revolutionary organizations. The population was admonished and warned both ~~XX~~ on the radio and by other means to refrain from these illegal lynching procedures. Constant

reference was made to the normal, legal possibilities available in this connection.

(5) Not applicable.

(6) I did not strictly belong to any one group. The very nature of my assignment placed upon me the necessity to be at different sections of the city. I was at the Széna-tér several times, I was also a couple of times at the Mórícz Zsigmond kórtér. All this until November 4.

After November 4, a determined effort was made to ~~we~~ adopt guerilla warfare tactics, after we recognized that regular fighting methods could not be applied against the overpowering might of the second invasion. The procedure adopted was to split up into smaller groups, to take cover in a house and to proceed from this base to a preferably distant location, there to engage in battle with the Russians and, upon inflicting damage and confusion, to suddenly ~~retract~~ retract to the base again. It was our endeavor to bring about a unified and identical point of view in this respect among the writers, the leading members of the Petófi Circle, and the leaders of the guerilla groups. Having this aim in mind, we visited all the universities and discussed this new fighting procedure with leaders there. It was in this capacity of a liaison officer that I visited the Kilian Barracks, the resistance groups at the Korvin-tér, at the Széna-tér, and at the Statisztika-tér, to which latter place the forces of János Szabó retreated. They later left the city altogether and assumed new positions

at Pesthidegkút.

Unfortunately, I cannot fix the exact time of these events, the situation was rather confused and fluid, where day and night flowed together and became quite indistinct.

(6 a) See answer to Q.6.

(6 b) Let me describe to you the emergence of one group, the one which operated on the Mór:os körtér. The heaviest fights took place there on November 5 and 6, when the whole plaza was destroyed. But let us go back to the formation of the group.

At the beginning of the first phase of the Revolution, the news spread that the Russians are on their way to invade the city. They were reported to be proceeding from the direction of Budaörs. Immense masses of people stood or walked on the streets. When the news that the Russians are coming reached the plaza, people began to build the barricades. I, too, joined them and became one of a chain, handing pieces of stone to those engaged in the erecting of the walls. While we built the barricades, I could observe only five or six men who were actually carrying arms. In the immediate vicinity there was a school building and the school janitor was also in our ~~group~~ group. The barricades extended from house to house and we left only a narrow pedestrian path open. The janitor told us that he left the school building open <sup>and</sup> that we may use it if the need should arise.

One man in the crowd worked especially hard and made skilful-

and smart arrangements as the barricades were built. The others saw that everything he did was right, and whatever he said made good sense, and therefore they did whatever this man told them to do. He became the leader, the commander. He told me also to go into one of the houses. We escorted the women to safe places. The Russians arrived in about three or four hours. They came from three different directions, proceeding from the outskirts of the city. They stopped in front of the barricades and began to shoot. They were too far away, out of our range, so we could not return the fire. The Russians did not have an infantry.

At the instruction of the "commander," three or four smaller groups left the buildings which served as our cover, and using various side streets, tried to reach a position where they could attack the Russians from the side. The strategy was to try to ~~we~~ disturb the Russian formation at various points from the side. <sup>attempt</sup> The ~~attempt~~ was highly successful and the Russians retreated in about two hours.

This was not a big thing really. Altogether there were only two-three wounded in all. The barricades were built well and they served ~~well~~ an excellent purpose. The Russians could not proceed past them. The city here had large and wide avenues, there was no possibility for us for an intensive attack.

You are asking me, who the "commander" was. I don't really



know. No one in the group seemed to have known him personally. He issued his orders in an intelligent and sympathetic manner and everyone listened to him and obeyed him. Nobody contradicted him and there was no one who would not obey. The Russians left us and I, too, took leave of the group. The whole thing took place in the early afternoon hours. There were men, women, and children. After the battle was over, the superfluous people left the place. This one man took upon himself the responsibility to both build the defense line and to actually direct the defensive operations. There were a few people who disagreed with him at the time we built the barricades. Others disagreed with him as to what the type and location of the barricades should be. He had a winning personality and he patiently explained why things should be done exactly this way and why the counter-proposals would be disastrous. The others listened and understood him and his plan, and accepted both the plan and the man.

In other localities, things were slightly different. At the Széna-tér, for instance, Uncle Szábo (Interviewer's note: reference here is made to János Szabó, the Széna-tér commander) used to call a small citizens' meeting (népgyűlés). His men assembled and Uncle Szabó laid bare and explained the situation and told of his plan to meet it. There was hardly any contradiction or dispute, for everyone knew the general situation quite well. A citizens' meeting was called on November 12,

or November 13, the last meeting of the Szabo group, when it was decided to abandon Budapest and to go to Pesthidegkút. The procedure was similar to previous meetings, except that on this one Uncle Szabó himself had to be convinced that his ideas were not acceptable. Uncle Szabó wanted ~~I~~ to remain in Budapest, come what may, until the United Nations intervention arrived. But the probability of such intervention dwindled, until, on November 12 - 13, it became quite hopeless. The Budapest buildings, all agreed, afforded no protection against Russian artillery barrage and against Russian infantry troops.

(6 e) More often than not this did not amount to a question at all. If someone proceeded to the Kilian Barracks, for example, and said there that he wanted to fight, he was given every opportunity to do so. Or, if a man wanted to fight, he simply went to the Széna-tér, stopped at one of the corners, and fought. Nobody questioned <sup>ed</sup> him, nor did anyone hamper him in any way.

On the other hand, the Széna-tér group, under the direction of Cserbakói, executed one of their own members, after it became evident that he was an AVH-man. This, however, took place after November 4. Up until then, those who wanted to fight did so, those who did not, refrained.

Generally speaking, there was no recruiting. There was no time for this. And there was no ~~IE~~ organization, nor was there personnel available for this purpose. I know, for instance,

that trucks were sent out to the neighboring villages, and any person who desired to come into the city was offered a ride. But there was no organized recruiting.

(6 d) Not all the groups had the same fate. Those fighting on the Korvin-tér were forced to abandon the plaza around November 6 or November 7. They moved first from the Korvin-kör to the Ninth Precinct and fought there for a while, ~~then~~ later retreated to Óbuda and, retaining their weapons, they proceeded towards the West. They crossed the Austrian border between November 20 and November 26.

The Széna-tér forces retreated on November 12-13 to Pesthidegkút. There they remained, as a closed and organized unit, for four-five days, when some of them hid their weapons and, under the leadership of Cserbakói, returned ~~to~~ to Budapest. János Szabó and three of his comrades were betrayed by someone and were seized by the Communists in a week-end house. I have not witnessed the seizure myself, but I have it from an eye-witness who is now living in Europe. My informer was a close friend and co-fighter of Szabó. Szabó and others sent him to Budapest to settle some pending family business, both his own and of some others. He was to return and to join Szabó at the week-end house and the entire group was then to proceed to Austria. ~~witness who is now living in Europe. My informer was a close friend and co-fighter of Szabó. Szabó and others sent him to Budapest to settle some pending family business, both his own and of some others. He was to return and to join Szabó at the week-end house and the entire group was then to proceed to Austria. As he was returning and reached the vicinity of the week-end house, he was witnessing, from a safe distance, the last stages~~

of his comrades' seizure. Russians and officer detachments of the Kádár-regime were kicking and throwing and hurling Szabó and his friends to a waiting military truck. Cserebakó, too, fell into Communist hands and became their prisoner in Budapest in the early days of December. A few members of the Szabó-group did manage to flee to safety and crossed the Austro-Hungarian border in the last days of November.

The Pozsár-Perger group. These two commanded a group of university students who studied at the Budapest Institute of Technology ~~KEMÉ~~ (Műegyetem) and at the Péter Pázmány University of Budapest. The Pozsár-Perger group fought principally in the Calvin and Baross streets during the first phase of the Revolution. After November 4 they continued the struggle for a while, conducting a guerilla-type warfare. Later some of the members of this group concealed, hid, or threw away their weapons and returned to their homes. Pozsár and Perger were also engaged in the manufacture and distribution of Russian-language leaflets, until both of them were arrested sometime after December 4. Both Pozsár and Perger have since been sentenced.

The Dudás-group. Dudás maintained himself in the Szabad Nép building during the entire period. I saw him there, for the last time, on November 4. I took Franz Germani, the Budapest correspondent of the German periodical Der Spiegel to Dudás's headquarters. I met Mr. Germani in the morning hours of November 4 at the Déák-tér Church. He approached me, and I

willingly took him to Dudás's headquarters. Unfortunately, we could not talk to Dudás, he was wounded shortly before our arrival. We saw his assistant instead, a first lieutenant of the Hungarian army. The Russians were reported as proceeding from the direction of the Keleti Railway Station and the entire Dudás force was in a state of general alarm. We remained there for only one hour and just about managed to leave the scene before the arrival of the Russians.

This day (November 4) witnessed the greatest single attack which was ever undertaken against the forces of Dudás. They stood their ground and defended the Szabad Nép building till late in the evening, suffering very many casualties. They then gave up the building and retreated.

This was one of the most formidable and most significant forces of the Revolution. Against this force the Russians proceeded most savagely and with <sup>resolute</sup> ~~unshakable~~ determination. As a result, it was this group whose members scattered and dispersed almost completely.

After November 4, the Dudás-force disintegrated into smaller units. Dudás himself remained for another four days in one of the buildings of the Péter Pázmány University. Then some of his faithful worker-followers removed him to Kőbánya, placed him in a factory there, and watched over his safety day and night. The majority of the Dudás-group consisted of factory workers of

Köbánya, and these people continued to defend their leader, so that the Russians were never able to take the Dudás factory, nor to liquidate the remaining portion of his group. It was Kádár who, plotting for the arrest of Dudás, brought about his seizure. Kádár invited his adversary to a conference in the Parliament building. Dudás, in good faith, accepted the invitation, and, as soon as he entered the Parliament building, he was seized and arrested. The first lieutenant, Dudás's deputy, was also arrested and sentenced. ~~TEXT~~ Two other, important Dudás assistants are now in Canada.

- (6 e) The revolutionaries had hand weapons, -machine guns were rather rare. Dudás had a few smaller arms, such as machine pistols, and ~~TEXT~~ especially rifles were available in great quantities (szántalan volt). The most important and the most effective anti-tank weapon was the so-called Molotov-cocktail.

What weapons we possessed we got from Hungarian army arsenals and warehouses, an operation facilitated and made possible by the Hungarian army itself. The initiative in this connection came from citizens of Budapest, particularly from people who were only recently discharged from the army. These people gave us the clues and tips as to the location of military warehouses, etc. I know of no instance where the army would have refused to open to us its warehouse or would have refused in any way its cooperation. As a matter of fact, in most instances the army

itself  
/ undertook to transport both the available weapons and ammunition to prearranged localities at predetermined intervals.

The victory of the Revolution, in its first phase, is due to the Molotov-cocktails. Rifles served only for personal protection, at times when, after the tanks were ignited, one was obliged to take up the struggle with the tank's personnel.

But even more important than all this was the fact that the Hungarian army did not use its own might and weapons against the Revolution. The army held the key. While they did not support us en masse, actively, they did not turn against us either, and supplied us with the weapons we needed. The army continued to be beyond the reach of either the AVH or of the Rákosi-clique, and individual soldiers either became active participants on our side or quit the army and went home.

Between Törökbalint and Diósd is a sizable and important army arsenal, from which we received immense quantities of ammunition and weapons. It was precisely this fact which made the Mórész Zsigmond area so important. The supplying of the Revolution with both arms and ammunition took place on this route. This is why the Russians fought with such savagery and determination against this area.

(6 f) There definitely was discipline. And for two reasons: first, there was a danger, felt both by individuals and groups, which

made disciplined behavior an imperative necessity. Second, leaders of fighting ~~XXX~~ revolutionary groups were absolutely recognized and respected by all the members of the group. These leaders were elected in many instances by the group members and enjoyed the unqualified trust, confidence, and esteem of every member of the group.

I never did like military discipline, but this was a voluntary discipline, a relationship into which everyone entered entirely of his own free volition. Because we lived so long under a dictatorship, and because we were subjected for so long to an involuntary and oppressive discipline of the party, we were extremely careful and we made doubly sure to elect only those, whom we considered to be our real leaders, to positions of leadership.

While an immense danger and the prospect of peril faced each and every<sup>one</sup> of us, and our nation as a whole, and ~~XXXXX~~ though we were in the middle of a savage war, we made sure that democratic processes were strictly observed and followed even within semi-military organizations<sup>ns.</sup> In the Kilian Barracks regular meetings were held and matters of principle were thoroughly aired and discussed before any decisions were reached. On one occasion Maletier, the commander, was voted down in connection with an organizational question, and Maletier was obliged to give



up his view and to abide by the majority's wishes.

This same may be said of the Széna-tér group. Szabó, who wished to remain in the city even after November 12, was obliged to comply with the majority's wishes and to withdraw his troops from the capital. People, even in the most difficult and perilous situations, continued to search for ways and means of just, equitable, and democratic solutions.

When the <sup>man</sup> ~~MAN~~ who joined the Széna-tér group after November 4, the individual who was later executed as a spy (see also Section R, Q. 6 e), the act of execution was preceded by a thorough discussion of his case. Cserbakói, his accuser, proved beyond doubt on a meeting attended by all, that the man was an AVH-spy. He was sent there either to report on the group's activities or to try to soft-pedal and pervert the group's members. At any rate, his case was discussed in a democratic manner. Everyone could speak his mind and everyone could justify and give reasons for his stand.

We, too, during one of our visits, while in no way members of the group, were permitted to fully explain in public our views on whether the Széna-ter group should remain in the city or whether it should rather retreat. We took the stand, incidentally, (November 12) that the situation was hopeless, and that they should therefore leave the city.

(6 g) Yes, there were leaders. Let me try to describe some of them to you.

János Szabó, leader of the Széna-tér group, was about 55-60 years old. He was a laborer, a transport worker (fizikai szállítómunkás) by profession. He must have been a soldier, but if he was, he certainly did not have a higher rank than that of a sergeant. He became a leader of his group because at that time, and under those circumstances, he possessed the clearest vision of them all and he recognized most fully what was going on and what ~~HE~~ to do about it. He was a very competent and skilful organizer. He cared for his men and was anxious to be of service to them. He was competent and he had the ability to do the right things ~~HE~~ at the right moment. He was the ~~HE~~ father of his young adherents. He scolded them and he praised them as the circumstances demanded, and as their good or bad behavior warranted it. He was recognized and respected by all, both as a man and as a leader. To be that kind of a leader one obviously must possess undeniable ~~LEADERSHIP~~ leadership qualities. And Uncle Szabó possessed just that. <sup>He</sup> ~~HE~~ fervently believed in what he was doing, and he had the ability to put in apt and convincing words the essence of his beliefs.

Dudás was a mechanical engineer, about 40-45 years old, an illegal (underground) Communist worker of long standing. I am not familiar with his military qualifications. He was Transylvanian by origin, entering Hungary illegally in 1941. He was arrested

shortly after his arrival and spent one and a half years in Hungarian prisons during the Horthy-regime. He was one of the members of the Hungarian armistice delegation and, with Horthy's acquiescence, he visited Moscow together with Domonkos Szentiványi and Gábor Faragó towards the end of the Second World War and helped conclude the Hungarian-Russian provisional armistice agreement.

Soon after his arrival in Hungary in 1941, he joined the ranks of the Hungarian Communists (he had been a Communist in Transylvania for a very long time and spent nine years of his life in jails there), became a Rákosi-supporter, and participated actively in the underground work of the party until he was arrested.

He vehemently opposed the Moscow line and the Rákosi group's tendencies and, after Rákosi's triumphant return he became both disappointed and disillusioned. He quit the party in 1945, later entering the ranks of the smallholders as a parliamentary delegate (Representative) and actively participated in the judiciary committee.

Though a Smallholder Party member, he continued to maintain his contacts with the anti-Rákosi faction of the Communist Party. He was a close friend and cooperator of Aladár Weisshaus. Weisshaus was arrested in 1947, and Dudás himself returned to jail in 1948. He spent some time at Kistarcsa, was later transferred to Reesk, and still later was taken to a Budapest prison.

I became closely acquainted with him at Reesk and came to know and learn his human qualities there. He was a leader there of a small work-group. Dudás was an extremely friendly fellow, the most helpful and comradely of friends, who took very good care of his men in the ~~g~~ toughest and most difficult situations. He had the capacity to say a few warm, sincere, and suitable words to everyone in the right moment. The inmates of Reesk were enthusiastic about him and everybody admired him.

Dudás had long-established and friendly relations in Hungarian workers' circles. He was a friend of Aladár Weisshaus, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the anti-Semitic Jew, who conducted well-attended seminars among workers, peasants, and intellectuals. Dudás himself was very well acquainted with these people, and he continued to maintain his good relations with the Weisshausists.

The Weisshausists, needless to say, were oppressed and persecuted after 1947 and both Weisshaus and Dudás were imprisoned. But Dudás was freed in 1954 and he found ready contacts among the Weisshausists. It was these people who formed the nucleus of his revolutionary army. Others, too, rallied to his support, so that Dudás had under him eca. 130,000 armed men during the Revolution.

His situation was the easiest and smoothest one of all the ~~XX~~ revolutionary leaders. He had an absolute prestige among his followers and every command of his was immediately carried out

without a sound. He had attractive, warm, and winning personality traits, one of which was that he always took care of his own needs last, only after the needs of everybody else were completely satiated. This contributed a great deal to his prestige and explains to some extent his ~~unparalleled~~ unparalleled personal triumph.

The Pergel-Pozsár group was made up exclusively of university students. I don't know very much of either Pergel or Pozsár because I did not know them that well. They were young people, active in university circles, notably in the Budapest Institute of Technology, in the Economics and Law colleges. They participated in the early demonstrations, in the organization of the MEFESZ, and in the formulation of the MEFESZ points. These activities of theirs ~~made~~ made them both suitable and qualified leaders.

I must note here that as far as the university students were concerned, their group was not as close-knit as ~~was~~ was the Dudás or Szabó group. Their situation was characterized by a more pronounced fluidity and they were molded by more than just the influence of their nominal leaders. Their status was also different from that of the other groups. The Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals succeeded in establishing a ~~friendly~~ friendly contact early in the Revolution with Sándor Herpay, a high-ranking officer of the regular Budapest police force. Herpay's cooperation made it possible for university students to legally possess and carry arms with them. They became a part

of the National Guard.

The role of Perger and of Pozsár became more pronounced and more evident only after November 4.

- (6 h) The question of leadership was inextricably ~~XXXXXXXX~~ interwoven with human qualities. The entire atmosphere of the Revolution was such that it brought the ideal and desirable human characteristics to the fore. The good and the beautiful human qualities only were supported and these were permitted to fully assert themselves.

Let me give you an example. It happened in the first days of the Revolution. We were standing in line in front of a Köszért store. Stores opened only occasionally in those days, and a friend of mine and I joined the waiting crowd. The store distributed butter, milk, and other things, and suddenly I ~~HE~~ realized that I had no container with me. I remarked how annoying it was to stand there without a jug, when my small child certainly could use some milk. Behind me was standing a lady. She immediately offered to give me one of her two jugs, explaining that I need not even bother returning it. I have never seen her before or after. To you this little episode may seem dry and pointless, but never in my life have I experienced or seen anything like it. The people standing in line there were nice and pleasant and understanding. Shortly thereafter the storekeeper came out and explained that he alone was on duty and asked

the crowd to file into the store in groups of five at a time. Quietly and calmly, and in a disciplined fashion, proceeded the distribution of what food there was.

This, then, was the atmosphere of the Revolution, and good human qualities triumphed in minute little chores just as well as in national undertakings. To positions of ~~the~~ leadership came not ambitious and careerist-minded people, but individuals who were fit and ~~well~~ suitable to work and lead and operate in, and in conformity with, this revolutionary atmosphere.

(6 1) Decisions were always made in a democratic spirit. Citizens' meetings were most widely employed. Everyone was permitted to express his opinion and the decision of the majority was always accepted as binding by all. This, I realize, may not be especially revealing either to you or to Americans in general. But in Hungary it represented a tremendous change. We missed this procedure very much in the past decade and the people, having once again recaptured it, clinged to it tensciously.

There were situations when a decision had to be made as to who is to be included as member of a certain delegation. The revolutionary council proposed one or two people. Individuals stood up and made their own nominations. Finally a vote<sup>e</sup> was taken. Those who approved of a man raised their hands. Then those who disapproved of him raised their hands. If necessary, hands were actually counted. Thus, some 350-400 people decided

who those six individuals should be who will represent them. There were, of course, always some who were better known than others, and these had a better chance of being elected. The innocent childhood of the democracy was this, an innocence which, in practice, perhaps never existed and does not exist anywhere.

It was quite natural and understandable that this state of mind and practice developed, especially in the first phase of the Revolution, when the battle raged between the people and their government; the people's main strength lay in their unanimity of goal and purpose, and they invoked their main weapon, the power of the unanimous masses, and they used effectively the only means of mass expression available to them, namely the resolutions and the delegations.

- (6 j) During the first phase of the Revolution, there was practically no contact between the various groups and discussions, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ of plans, or exchange of information did not take place. Actual contact was only created later, after the victory of the Revolution. Groups physically close to one another did maintain a sort of practical relationship in that they supplemented one another's weapon or ~~IX~~ munition needs and the like, but there was never any attempt to consolidate plans or discuss policy among the various groups.

During the second phase of the Revolution, determined attempts were made to bring about some sort of a unity, but even then



centralization was neither intended nor desired. I, myself, too, was engaged in such a synchronizing operation. Dudás, for instance, visited the Széna-tér on October 26, spoke to the men there and told them of his ideas and plans. But this was about all. I don't know of any other such instance. Central synchronizing organs did not exist at all. I wish we had them. This is why we tried to bring about some sort of a centralization after November 4.

- (7) Undoubtedly the Kilian, the Korvin-köz, the Széna-tér, and the Dudás-groups had the greatest prestige and the greatest authority. There were several reasons for this: these were the largest groups and the leaders of these groups, because of their personal character and because of their success in battle, became both recognized and respected. Dudás, besides being the commander of the largest single group, also edited and published a national newspaper. Both the Kilian and the Korvin-köz groups published a mimeographed ~~newspaper~~ newspaper of their own.

Dudás's paper, the Magyar Függetlenség, was widely distributed, in the city first, later also in the provinces. The distribution in the provinces was not organized in any way; whenever a truck or car left for Szeged or Debrecen or some other city, it carried a large number of Magyar Függetlenség with it.

- (7 a) I do not know of any conflicts or disagreements, except the one which flared up when Dudás published his foreign policy plan. There was then a disagreement between Dudás and the Nagy Cabinet.

Dudás wanted the Nagy Government to turn to the United Nations and have the United Nations recognize the Revolution as a belligerent party. Dudás was bent on attacking and occupying the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this connection. Imre Nagy opposed this whole scheme and Dudás was actually held a prisoner during one night a few days before November 4. I believe it was on November 2.

There was also the incident in the Kilian Barracks, when Maléter was voted down. The vote taken concerned a small matter of organizational nature. Maléter abided by the majority vote and continued as commander of the Kilian. ( I knew of this only through others, who related the incident to me.)

(7 b) I don't think the fact that someone was a BH student, some other a worker, did carry any weight with it. It did not matter and it was of no moment. János [redacted], for instance, was a worker, and yet he was a leader of army officers, university students, university graduates, and of course of many workers.

Social background and belonging to this category or that was definitely not a problem. This question in Hungary, even before the Revolution, ceased to be an explosive one and classes did not represent the extremes they do elsewhere in Europe or even here in the States.

Many a university graduate, because of his bad cadre status, became a worker. And many a worker held leading, responsible positions. Also, the majority of university students were of

worker or peasant stock and they did not consider their state of being students to be constituting a special rank. This was no longer a problem in Hungary.

Cooperation between the various groups was completely natural, and it worked out very well.

- (7 e) Yes, I had innumerable contacts with all of these.
- (7 d) I was a member of the Presidential Council of the Petőfi Circle. I was also a member of the Hungarian Revolutionary Council. In this latter group Catholic priests and Protestant ministers were also to be found. Later on I also became a member of the steering committee (intézőbizottság) of the Smallholders' Party. I was also active in the newly-organized ~~PEASANT~~ Peasant Union (Parasztszövetség). For the rest, I was engaged in the reorganization of the Smallholders' Party in the provinces and I also lived in a provincial village.
- (8) The behavior of the Russian troops may be said to have varied according to the widest scale.
- (8 a) After the events of October 23, the Russians first of all occupied the Parliament building, the buildings of the Defense Ministry and of the Ministry of the Interior, and all the Danube bridges. The Russians took their prisoners to the Defense Ministry. At times there were as many as 3,000 prisoners there.

There were heavy fights in the immediate vicinity of the Defense Ministry. People mistakenly thought the AVH headquarters to be situated on the Jászai Mari Square. There were many casualties. ~~Revolutionaries usually entered the nearest building, called up the ambulance, and the wounded were taken away.~~

casualties. Revolutionaries usually entered the nearest building, called up the ambulance, and the wounded were taken away.

Another incident took place on the Néphadsereg út, the Russians were firing in the direction of the Defense Ministry. A pedestrian, who was not even a freedom fighter, fell wounded and bleeding profusely. Revolutionaries pulled in the wounded man under the gateway of house No. 6. The ambulance arrived and, as soon as the white-coated doctor stepped out of the car, the Russians, standing only ~~200-300~~ 200-300 meters away, began firing and killed the doctor. The wounded man continued to bleed. Another ambulance was called and, as soon as the doctor stepped out of it, he, too, was killed by the Russians. The wounded man died in the meantime. The Russians did not fire except when the ambulance arrived.

Take another example: in Győr, the Russian commander refused to shoot even after ordered to do so by his superiors. He was quickly replaced and was later taken away.

In the Kilian Barracks there was a small Russian detachment, about 30-40 people, who deserted their unit/s and came over to our side in the early hours of the Revolution. They stood their ground to the bitter end, giving their lives for Hungary's freedom.

(8 b) I have no knowledge of Russian students studying in Budapest.

(8 c) There were a few foreign scholarship students from Korea, <sup>North</sup> Vietnam, and other places, who studied at Budapest University. Eight-ten

of these took active part in the Revolution, and a couple of them even crossed the Austrian border. I was asked by the Attache of <sup>North</sup> the Vietnamese Legation in Paris what I knew of <sup>North</sup> Vietnamese students and of the role they played in Hungary. The majority of these students studied at the Budapest Institute of Technology and they participated in the Revolution there. Others, a smaller group, joined the Kilian forces.

These foreign students returned to the student hostels after the victory of the Revolution and remained there till the middle of November. AVH-men interrogated them and informed them that they would be recalled by their own governments within a few days. Those who left Hungary and went over to Austria did so because they feared that they would be called to account by their own governments. These were <sup>North</sup> Vietnamese and North Korean students. I had a long conversation with them in Vienna. If you are interested in more details, the <sup>North</sup> Vietnamese Legation in Paris would be the most logical source.

These students held a well-attended press conference in Vienna, in the beginning of February. There are detailed reports in the Vienna newspapers.

(8 e) There were Russian groups at the Kilian aid elsewhere. Five Russian tanks defected during the battle at the Parliament building. There were many individual Russian soldiers who defected here and there.

(8 f) It is obviously difficult to gauge the extent of the influence

Soviet authorities exerted. As far as the Soviet military authorities are concerned, ordinary Russian soldiery was confined to its barracks before the Revolution. Higher Russian officers undoubtedly maintained <sup>some</sup> contacts with Hungarian officials, both military and civilian, but just how much influence they exerted I am not able to tell you.

Russian political influence and Russian economic involvement were immense; there were joint Russian-Hungarian undertakings and establishments, and Soviet Russia was the greatest single customer of many a Hungarian factory.

It is my firm belief that nothing occurred in Hungary which was not Russian-directed or which did not bear the seal of approval of the Russians. Hungary's position and status was similar to that of a colony, with Russia assuming the role of the mother country, except that instead of the office of the Inspector General, the Russians ~~did~~ permitted the functioning of a quasi-formal government. This was the situation before the Revolution. During the Revolution those Russian troops which were engaged in combat against the Revolution, were in no position to exert either political or economic pressure on us. On the other hand, various representatives of the Soviet Government frequently visited Budapest, with Mikoyan alone visiting our capital on four different occasions. The Russians considered it important to keep themselves informed of the Hungarian events and they no doubt tried to exert ~~the~~ what influence they could

both on the progress and direction of the events.

During the period of Imre Nagy's captivity in Akadémia utca, the Hungarian Government was completely at the mercy of the Russians. Both Mikoyan and Suslov frequently appeared there.

After November 4, everything proceeded according to the dictates and wishes of the Russians. Kádár formed the *évolnok*-government on Russian pressure. On numerous occasions Kádár freed certain Hungarian prisoners who were captured during the Revolution, that is to say, Kádár issued orders of release, which subordinate Russian officers, acting as prison commanders, simply ignored and refused to abide by.

The liquidation of the Revolution, both of individuals involved in it, and of institutions and changes which the Revolution had brought about, was undertaken on direct Russian pressure.

In the Pestkörményeki prison, Colonel Mátyás, the AVH officer, limited himself to signing the arrest orders only. The actual interrogation and further fate of the prisoners was completely in the hands of the Russians.

The mere fact that Russian military tribunals were sitting in judgment over Hungarian citizens and sentenced them, clearly indicates both the scope and extent of Russian influence in Hungary. Only the Imperial Bledy Assizes (*Császári Vértörvényszék*) have ever undertaken a similar step against Hungarian sovereignty. Such a Russian military tribunal sentenced 40 individuals in the

city of Debrecen alone. Another Russian military tribunal operated in the city of Keeskemét. (I gained information concerning the Keeskemét tribunal by mail, forwarded to me by confidential informants in Hungary.)

A very close friend of mine was arrested in Budapest on November 8, 1956. We were imprisoned together at Reak before the Revolution. He was active during the Revolution in Christian Democratic circles. His arrest occurred during the deportation days. People were simply picked up from the streets. He, too, was arrested while walking on the streets of Budapest. They found a Russian-language leaflet in his briefcase. He was brought to the Defense Ministry building first and was transferred later to Debrecen, where he was sentenced by a Russian military tribunal. I don't know what the sentence was, nor am I at liberty to disclose his name at this time.

Russian military tribunals operated on the supposition that Hungarian citizens tried and sentenced by them committed crimes against the Russian armed forces. These Russian acts flagrantly violated Hungarian sovereignty and also constituted a clear violation of the Hungarian Constitution. As far as I know, the Warsaw Pact delegates no such sovereign rights to Russia.

We have given wide publicity to these Russian acts in Europe and, presumably as a result of our action, the tribunals ceased functioning. They do not operate any longer. However,



if the Russians would have had a legal right to proceed, I doubt it very much if they would have stopped.

- (9) There were various means at our disposal. First of all, there was the radio. Broadcasting stations, especially in the provinces, were in the service, and at the disposal of, the Revolution. In Budapest, the telephone, aside from minor obstacles, caused by damage, functioned satisfactorily. To clarify a point, I must mention here that the Communist regime maintained 16,000 automatic telephone monitors at strategic centers of the city. These monitoring devices were dismantled by workers of the telephone factory during the first days of the Revolution. Telephoning after that time became natural again. You must note here also that bakeries, stores, and employees of telephone centers continued to work throughout the Revolution.

After November 4, telephoning became increasingly difficult and dangerous again, because the monitoring devices were gradually placed back into operation.

- (9 a) Everybody read newspapers during the Revolution. This was one of the advantages of the regime; everybody was forced to read. People were forced to become subscribers to newspapers, to read them, and to comment on what they read. Reading became a second nature with most people, and this brought tangible results during the Revolution.

I read practically all of them; Magyar Függetlenség,

Népszabadság, Népakarat, Igazság (this was the best of them all, edited by József Gáli and Obersovszky), Magyar Nemzet, Kis Ujság, Szabad Szó, and others.

Everyone was very eager to read, for the newspapers wrote the truth, not as formerly. This probably explains the great popularity these newspapers enjoyed. Because of the great demand, newspapers were extremely hard to get. To obtain a newspaper represented a great feat.

(9 b) Let me give you an example; the Petőfi Circle met in the afternoon of November 3. The Chairman informed us that an agreement had been reached with the Russians and that the Russians will evacuate the country. This was at the time when Maléter still conducted his negotiations with the Russians at Tököl.

Information of a confidential nature we gave and received by word of mouth even during the first phase of the Revolution, but especially during the second. Transmission of information by word of mouth was actually safer and this procedure was used when transmitting information of conspiratorial nature.

A tremendous amount of food was brought to Budapest by peasants from the provinces. These people told us of the events which took place in their localities. It was through these people, for instance, that the re-establishment of Smallholder Party contacts with the provinces again got under way and developed.

(9 c) We did listen to the radio, during the first phase of the

Revolution -- if ~~had~~ when we had time to it. We listened primarily to Hungarian and secondarily/<sup>to</sup> foreign broadcasting stations. Of the foreign stations I listened to Free Europe, BBC, to the Voice of America, and to Radio Paris. Radio Paris and the BBC were the most objective.

- (9 d) This is a very unfortunate wording. The question does not make sense. It always depended on the nature of the thing. From the viewpoint of reliability the telephone ~~g~~ was quite acceptable during the first phase of the Revolution. One did not have to conspire or speak in ~~SECRET~~ terms of coded messages. We called up Imre Nagy and did not pay any attention to the AVH. We knew that ~~th~~ 16,000 monitoring devices were out of commission. Then, again, there were other, concrete battle tasks, which demanded immediate consideration and attention. If such was the case, we stopped at any street corner and discussed the issues and made our decisions.

The second phase of the Revolution was different. Ours was more or less a conspiratorial status again, and we had to act accordingly -- even though the telephone service was relatively reliable even then. The installation of the monitors proceeded only slowly, because the workers went on strike. As late as December, the apparatus for censoring letters was not yet functioning. This is no longer the case today.

- (10) We, the leaders of the Independent Smallholders' Party, moved in, and re-occupied our old party headquarters building at

No. 1 Semmelweis Street on October 29. Our building served as a Russian ~~and~~ culture home before the Revolution. Immediately after we took possession of our building, we informed (by telephone) József Halász, the Under Secretary of State in the office of the Prime Minister (minis~~ter~~elnökségi államtitkár), bringing to his attention our action, asking him for acknowledgment and approval. Halász, who later vanished from the Budapest scene, immediately ordered the custodian of the building to stand with his crew at our disposal and to facilitate our using of the adjoining garage.

Members of the Cabinet stayed at the Communist Party headquarters building in the Akadémia-utca from October 23 to October 26. On the 26th, the Cabinet was enlarged and the members of the Cabinet left the building. ~~None~~ Members of the previous Cabinet continued to live in the city, except for those who fled. They were frequently seen on streets, the only change being that they now walked on their own feet and no longer traveled by car. I have met quite a few of them myself. Their persons were in absolutely no danger.

Employees of what used to be the Hungarian-Soviet Cultural Association (Interviewer's note: elsewhere identified as Russian Cultural Home), all former AVH-men, vanished from our No. 1 Semmelweis-street party headquarters. We gave them their work-books and their pay for November, and they departed. Zoltán [redacted], my friend, did all this. I reproached him for this,

but he remained firm and adamant and declared that these people will sooner or later be brought to court, and, if guilty, will be punished, but that their pay was an entirely different matter, they have a right to that.

This method, by the way, was characteristic of the procedure whereby human beings were treated throughout the Revolution.

In the office of the Attorney General (legfelsőbb ügyészség), a revolutionary council was quickly organized. This council decided to literally prevent the entrance of György Non, the former Supreme Prosecutor (legfőbb ügyész) into the building. Non continued coming to "his office" in the first few days as if nothing had happened.

Let me tell you a few words about this man. György Non, Hungary's Supreme Prosecutor, was Rákosi's confidence-man and one of the members of Rákosi's inner circle. In his youth he studied to become a Catholic priest. In 1942, he was put in the Margit-körút military prison for his illegal Communist activities. In 1945, after the liberation, he became the president of the MADISZ (Magyar Dolgozó Ifjúság Szövetsége). He was one of my greatest enemies. The fact that both the youth organization I led and I were persecuted and ruined, and that my fate after 1948 turned out to be as miserable as it did, is due largely to him.

We endeavored to form a youth association after 1945, but

we failed completely, largely because of the Communist youths' bullying tactics and violence and conspiratorial machinations. We simply did not have a chance within the framework of the MADISZ. As a result, the Smallholder, Social Democrat, and Peasant Party youth severed their relationship with MADISZ and formed their own, separate, youth organizations.

At the beginning of 1948, the various independent youth organizations were completely destroyed, their leaders were incarcerated, and the youth of Hungary was forced into one, unitary Communist camp. All this came to pass thanks to György Non.

Towards the end of 1948, Non becomes Minister of Popular Education (népművelési miniszter). The establishment of factory cultural groups and the organization of the seminar system are closely associated with his name, these novel creations were his brainchildren.

After 1953, in accordance with the new path and spirit of the Twentieth Congress, Communist everywhere clamored for the re-establishment of Communist legality. Hungarian Communists were no exception in this respect. Rákosi, fearful of dangerous and harmful revelations which might undermine his own political <sup>U</sup>feature, was very much interested in putting into the office of the Supreme Prosecutor ~~III~~<sup>a</sup> man whom he could trust. György Non was his choice. Thus Non, without any qualifications for the

~~HE~~ post, -- he did not even finish his university training -- became Hungary's Supreme Prosecutor. But qualification was only of secondary importance, the main thing was Non's political reliability and his slave-like fidelity to his master and benefactor. The important consideration from Rákosi's point of view was the establishment, at least formally, of a machinery that was to deal with the burning question of legality, and with the review of the cases of political offenders to be undertaken by a man who made sure that no Rákosi-incriminating evidence would ever see the light of day. And Non remained faithful to his master to the bitter end. He continued in his office even after October 23, until the revolutionary council formed by his subordinates finally decided to lock him out.

At the time of the formation of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Kádár and his associates passed a resolution barring from membership those individuals whom they considered to have been Stalinists. High on the list of former Stalinists was the name of György Non. And yet he occupies an important position again.

The fate of county and of city councils always depended on what was going on in the provinces. The intensity of revolutionary waves differed from place to place. It could truthfully be stated that in the provinces ~~NEA~~ these officials had fewer sleepless nights than those in Budapest. At worst, they were arrested and were locked up. I did not hear of more extreme procedures. Take the

case of Béla Jonás, presiding judge of a people's court (nép-  
~~tanácselnök~~ <sup>bírószági</sup> tanácselnök); he committed suicide on November 3.  
He was unable to wait till November 4, when all would have been  
well for him again. Generally speaking, the Revolution was not  
brought about anywhere with the purpose of eliminating these  
officials. If liquidation of officials did take place in a few  
isolated instances, there were always very grave reasons for such  
action. Such officials must have given very grave cause if the  
~~insurgents~~ insurgents actually lynched them. Such lynchings  
occurred in Pécs and Miskolc only, and the officials lynched were  
known to have ordered ~~the~~ firing at innocent and defenseless people.

The Party of Hungarian Workers (Magyar Dolgozók Pártja),  
created in 1948, was the result of the forced unification of the  
Social Democratic and Communist parties. This new party was  
essentially Communist, with a few Social Democrats also in it. This  
party had a tremendous network, operating with a monthly ~~budget~~  
budget of several millions. The party had a current running account  
with the Hungarian National Bank. In many cases the party had  
parallel organizations. If, for example, there were more than 20  
members in a given factory, then a party secretary was assigned to  
them.

During the Revolution, the various party organizations collapsed  
and disintegrated with surprising rapidity. It became evidently  
clear then that it was the fear from the AVH, and the necessity



to hold one's job, and to earn some livelihood, rather than ideological conviction, that held these people together. Many a party member ripped to pieces and burnt his party book at the first sight of freedom. These people lived in a constant fear and their reaction, when free again, was tremendous.

On October 27, the Imre Nagy government is enlarged, is moved to the Parliament building, and is freed from AVH supervision. Kádár is experimenting for a while with the thought of maintaining the party. Within a few days he recognizes the hopelessness and the futility of his efforts. Thereupon he proclaims the forming of a new party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. He reads his proclamation on the radio on the 31st, and on this occasion, he gives a positive evaluation to the Revolution and renders splendid criticism of both Stalin and Rákosi, laying bare their sins and mistakes.

The Hungarian Communist Party (of the pre-revolutionary era), founded and maintained with tremendous effort, and at unbelievable cost, did not prove to be a strong and lasting organization, underlining again the old dictum that brute force and coercion cannot hold people together for long.

Party secretaries and personnel section chiefs rallied to the support of Kádár in the newly-founded party. It is these people who make up the rank and file of the Kádár force in Budapest after November 4, and it is they who execute Kádár's first orders

of revenge. (Megtorló rendelkezések.)

- (10 a) Collapsed the party, the government, and the entire administrative apparatus. City, county, district, and village councils were reorganized and were known as revolutionary committees (bizottság). The old leadership and administrative setup of industrial enterprises collapsed, too. Their functions were taken over by revolutionary workers' councils.

Collapsed the AVH. Collapsed the Hungarian-Soviet Cultural Society. This latter was the largest single social organization in Hungary. It had member organizations in every Hungarian village. The same fate befell the Society of Hungarian Veterans (Szabadságharcos Szövetség). The nucleus of this organization was the Society of Hungarian Partisans. This latter group had for its aim the military education and training of Hungarian youth. It conducted training sessions on Sundays before the Revolution. The Revolution benefited greatly from this activity, because the young people knew how to handle the weapons.

These were the institutions which the Revolution necessarily destroyed, either because of their aims or because of their past performance and actions. Many of these institutions were abolished and dissolved, others were transformed by the Revolution and continued functioning in their new form. Many of the organizations appointed revolutionary committees, a new slate took over their direction, and the organization continued on existing. Hundreds of

organizations were so affected, all the way down to the philatelist societies.

The general aim of the insurgents may be stated to have been an attempt to get rid of the stalinist elements, to have these replaced by democratically-minded people who were loyal to the Revolution.

As far as the army was concerned, it was sufficient to replace a few people who occupied more important positions. The army caused the greatest surprise to both Rákosi and to the Russians.

(10 b) Party buildings -- and there were one-two well equipped and well furnished houses in every village -- were returned to serve as dwellings again. There was a tremendous housing shortage in Hungary. In Budapest there were innumerable examples where people, bombed out of their dwellings, simply moved in into empty buildings. Whatever valuables were found in a party building were recorded in an inventory by the revolutionary councils and were locked and sealed. In Budapest, the building of the Hungarian-Soviet Cultural Society was robbed and pillaged by the very employees of the Society. There was fighting around the building, the Russians bombarded the building and set it afire. Thereupon the employees undertook to "save whatever could be hauled through the doors."

The newly-formed parties received back their old buildings. The Smallholders' Party, too, got back its old property, the building

under Semmelweis-utca 1. Ferenc Erdei, a member of the old government, signed the necessary transfer papers on October 30.

- (10 c) The blue police served well, in essence, during the Revolution. There was a world of a difference between this force and the AVH. They, too, used to be supervised by the AVH, and the blue police did not take kindly to this interference. There were blue police units which remained intact as a unit. They moved around freely and unmolested. AVH members in numerous instances put on blue police uniforms.

There was a fine cooperation between the blue police and the university students. The students received many weapons from the police force. Sándor Kopácsy, a K&E lieutenant-colonel of the Budapest blue police force, consenting to the organization of the National Guard (Nemzetőrség), armed a great number of the students.

The National Guard was so organized that a group of students, under the direction of a police officer, assumed the duties of maintaining peace and order. The police, as such, did not take part in the Revolution.

- (10 d) The AVH fell to pieces completely. The government threw the AVH into battle to fight on the side of the Russians in the first phase of the Revolution. The fact that the AVH began the actual shooting and slew the first victims of the Revolution, would have sealed the fate of this group even if they did not have the bad and

~~and~~ dreaded fame. All the dirty jobs which Rákosi and his cohorts wanted done were entrusted to the AVH. No other group was reliable and trustworthy enough.

In 1950-1951, AVH-men were sent out into the villages and were entrusted with the organization of the TSzCs cooperatives. It was their job then to liquidate the independent farmers. These people would ~~descend~~ descend on a village, would enter the house of a maszek and would ask him in a "friendly" tone why he did not want to join the TSzCs. They would continue asking why does the peasant excite the other peasant and why does he agitate against the TSzCs. This "friendly" visit was ~~enough~~ sufficient enough. The following day the intimidated peasant ran helter-skelter and signed up voluntarily as a member. Or, if he did not give in so easily, the AVH had ready-made trumped-up charges against him.

It was these people who descended upon the peasants with the bailiff ~~XX~~ (végrehajtó) and took away the last of the peasant's animals in lieu of back taxes. If some of the peasants did manage to pay the taxes, new taxes were quickly invented and the unfortunate soul had no way of escaping his fate.

All these activities did not make the AVH sympathetic in the eyes of the people. In the factories, the AVH held equally tight controls over the people. Such offences as ~~planned~~ <sup>plant</sup> sabotage, instigation against production and against the norm fell under

their jurisdiction. And they did not treat their victims with gloves on their hands. Even the most loyal of Communists were taken aback when a harmless enough person was imprisoned just because of a mild slip of the tongue.

During the Revolution, these people (the AVH) disguised themselves as physicians and as attendants and supplied ammunition with Red Cross ambulances to sealed-off AVH units. All these activities of theirs justified and made it necessary that the Revolution turn against them. Already the first revolutionary slogans were directed against them and the antipathy and wrath of the population ~~did~~ not only did not subside, but it became more and more intense as the days went by.

There were in this detestation and hate of the AVH many other things too; take, for instance, the times when, because of the great capital investments made by the government, the people were not making enough money to provide the minimum food requirements for their families. These people <sup>(The AVHs)</sup> lived in great luxury and they did not even try to keep their good fortune a secret. This, too, turned the people against them. They acted as kings then (kiskirályok voltak).

There were innumerable instances where young people were jailed simply because they called to order (rendreutasítottak) an AVH member at dance parties, where the AVH man did not know

or did not want to behave.

During the first days of the Revolution, the AVH was completely beaten and destroyed. At the time of the victory of the Revolution, there were no more AVH units. Many of them donned blue uniforms and tried to save their skins as individuals. In the provinces, most AVH units were arrested. On November 1 or 2, a government proclamation was issued in Budapest, ordering all AVH members to report to the Markó-utca, so that their background could individually be investigated. Those who have not committed crimes, -- went on the declaration -- would not be held responsible just because they were members of the AVH. Many an AVH-man went to the Markó-utca and reported.

The AVH, or at least many of them, put all their trust in the Russians and hoped in a Russian victory. These people resisted and fought to the end. They were annihilated.

Even if we do not approve of lynchings, we can understand the attitude of the people and we can understand the reasoning behind their actions.

The high-ranking officers of the AVH fled during the first days of the Revolution to the Akadémia-utca, and from there they proceeded, together with Hegedűs, Gerő, and László Piros, and under heavy Russian cover left the country.

- (10 e) Béla Jankó was scared to death and took his own life on November 3.  
I don't know of any other case where a member of ~~MARKÓ-UTCA~~ the courts would

have acted so wisely. I don't know of any instance where court members would have been held responsible for their past actions.

A revolutionary committee came into being in the Ministry of Justice, which discussed the question of the courts and dealt with the problem of a reorganization of the judiciary system.

(10 f) Army units were among the first organized groups which went over to the Revolution. Troops stationed in various localities, even if they did not fight, they at least remained neutral. The Rákosi-group made an attempt to bring up troops to Budapest from Székesfehérvár. These troops never arrived, because they did not want to side with the Russians against the population.

The most particular instance in this respect is the case of Maleter, who, having been ordered by the Minister of Defense, proceeded at the head of an armed unit to quell the uprising at the Kilian Barracks. He arrived and he went over with his entire unit to the side of the insurgents. Two days later he was elected commander of the Kilian force.

The Úllői-úti Ludovika Akadémia (an officer-training school) -- it functions under a different name now, but I cannot recall its present name -- is another instance; the entire school sided with the Revolution in the first days of the uprising.

The Petőfi Akadémia (an officer-training school located at Pesthidegkút) cadets were at first engaged in battle against János Szabó at the Széna-tér. Within 24 hours, they, too, went



over, and became the main bulwark of the Széna-tér force.

The attitude of the army and of the blue police force, and the position these groups took, became decisive for the Revolution. These troops were supposed to supply the infantry units to the Russian tanks, -- a combination which in all probability would have been quite effective. If the Hungarian army had sided with the Russians, then the Revolution most certainly would have been beaten at the very outset. Their neutrality and their cooperation, their readiness to give us arms and ammunition, the fact that officers came over to us and gave us valuable expert advice, -- all these things contributed a great deal to our victory over the Russians.

(10 g) During that period of the Revolution when it again became possible to move around and to communicate -- the period after October 27, -- in every ministry revolutionary committees were set up, patterned after other similar committees, as organized throughout the country. Ministry officials, especially lesser officials, were never too fanatic about the regime. They remained silent and they suffered because their job was their bread. At this moment all these people, with the exception of the compromised few, took new lease on life and elected trustworthy people, usually a former political prisoner, to head the committee.

All governmental bureaus were operating. This is not to say that people actually worked, but they were there, at least a substantial number of them, to receive their pay, etc. There

of course were no contacts between the ministries and the factories, because the factories did not operate. As a result, there really was not anything to be done in the offices. What work had to be accomplished in the factories was done by the revolutionary workers' councils. Conversely, in the ministries, the ministerial revolutionary committees were the only groups who did anything at all. These groups were engaged in planning activity, discussing the new constitutional principles and new ways and means to implement the expected new setup.

There were a number ~~EXM~~ of ministries and a great number of governmental bureaus, which were outright superfluous. Ministerial officials were well aware of this, and they just did not know what they were supposed to do. One of the ministers, Antal Jenes, newly-appointed head of the Ministry of Forced Deliveries (Beszolgáltatásügyi) issued his first and only decree, abolishing the forced delivery system. His next act was similarly dramatic; he abolished the Forced Delivery Ministry itself. (Question: Why was it necessary for white-collar workers to go in to their offices?) Food brought up to the capital during the Revolution was channeled to various centers and it was distributed free of charge from these centers. Ministries were such centers. Budapest continued to have its regular means of food distribution, and state stores continued in operation. State stores alone could not have supplied the population with food. Stores continued to handle such items as bread, milk, and sugar. Even with this dual supply

of food, we just about managed.

- (10 h) Local councils were all replaced by revolutionary councils. These councils became the directing force in the life of the villages. The changeover from the councils to the revolutionary councils was relatively more peaceful in the provinces than in the capital. In many instances it took place to the accompaniment of a village celebration with steers being slaughtered and roasted for the occasion. There were no superior authorities and the revolutionary village councils were able to act independently, at least in the first days.

Schools continued to operate in many localities and the peasants performed their regular work in the fields, taking care of the important autumn-tasks.

An extremely interesting phenomenon was the disintegration of the TSzCs cooperatives; about 65 percent of these cooperatives disbanded. The forceful deliveries ceased and people everywhere in the villages slaughtered their pigs, fearful that the Russians might return and take their animals from them. (Slaughtering was strictly regulated before the Revolution and those who did receive a permit were legally bound to deliver a fixed amount of lard to the state.)

The change-over was expected and appreciated by the peasants more than by any other group. But the peasant masses are an

individualistic lot, very difficult to organize, a group requiring a long time to develop its views and to decide to act. The process of TSzCs disintegration, for instance, while originating during the first days of the Revolution, has reached its height only much later, during the Kádár-era, when Kádár and his associates made determined efforts to stop it.

- (10 1) Religious instruction became free and was made part of the school curriculum. Before the Revolution, such instruction was given only outside the school curriculum, under the supervision of the principal, if ~~both~~ both parents expressed their desire for such instruction in writing.

In 1948, an agreement reached between the Churches and the state regulated the Church-state relationships. Church leaders who opposed these agreements were simply eliminated. The fate of Cardinal Mindszenty, of László Ravasz and of Lajos Ordass are well known and I need not repeat them here. Their places were taken by other men -- László Dezséry became the Lutheran-Evangelical Bishop, Albert Bereczky succeeded Ravasz -- men who were more subservient than their predecessors.

The position of the Catholic Church was more complicated. The government could not replace Mindszenty without the agreement of the Pope, and such agreement was out of the question. To remedy this situation, the government organized the National Peace-Committee

of Catholic ~~ME~~ Priests (Katólikus Papok Országos Békebizottsága) and appointed Richard Horváth chairman of this group. This renegade priest delivered innumerable speeches in the Hungarian Parliament, praising ~~XXXX~~ Rákosi to the point of tastelessness.

Richard Horváth and the other leaders of the Peace Committee were paid agents of the AVK. They were the executors of the process of purification (tisztogatási folyamat) and caused many priests to be arrested, fired, or pensioned.

After the ascendancy of Imre Nagy in ~~ME~~ 1953, the criticizing mood as exemplified by the Twentieth Congress, asserted itself also within the Hungarian Churches. At meetings ~~ME~~ and congregations of priests, more and more criticizing speeches were made. These speakers denounced the religious leaders, spoke of the injustices affecting the clergy, and went as far as to propose disciplinary action within the Church against the clerical offenders.

The outbreak of the Revolution has found groups within the Churches who sharply criticized and challenged the top leadership of the Churches. Bereczky and Dezséry were forced to resign from their respective positions and Horváth was excommunicated.

~~X~~ Zoltán Tildy expressed to a visiting Catholic delegation his desire to see Mindszenty return and assume his former duties and functions. Thus encouraged, a group of soldiers freed Mindszenty from his house arrest and brought him to Budapest.

Ravasz was elected Bishop of the Reformed Church. Soon after

his re-election, he spoke in the radio, expressing himself in favor of legality, and urging his adherents to refrain from lynching of AVH members. These, he said, should be brought to court and be tried, shedding thereby some light on the lawlessness of the regime.

László Dezséry, an ambitious young man, but devoid of talent, resigned as Evangelical-Lutheran Bishop and László Ordass, only recently released from prison, was re-elected Lutheran Bishop again. Ordass was well-known throughout Europe, and his release from jail and re-election as bishop, was warmly greeted everywhere.

The Churches performed their work in complete independence from the state during the Revolution. After the defeat of the Revolution, the pre-revolution<sup>ary</sup> conditions were again re-established.

The National Peace-Committee of Catholic Priests was again re-established, and Richard Horváth, in one of his declarations, condemned Cardinal Mindszenty's counter-revolutionary activities. Dezséry and Bereczky are Protestant bishops again. ~~Formally~~ <sup>Formally</sup> ~~EVERYTHING~~, at least, everything is as before the Revolution. In reality, Kádár was unable to recreate the pre-revolutionary conditions. A slight improvement is noticeable; the government does not dare touch the explosive Church question, just as the system of forced deliveries was never re-introduced. (Question: What is the role of the

Peace Committee and how does it function?) The Peace Committee of Catholic Priests is an association of a group of Catholic priests. There is no connection, official or otherwise between it and the Catholic hierarchy. It is the duty of the Peace Committee to point out counter-revolutionary activities and to accuse those who abuse their authority. The Committee has a dual function: its members serve as agents provocateurs and as AVH informers. They organize meetings, they pass resolutions, and they take a public stand on issues and on personalities. They were, for instance, responsible for the imprisonment of Janos Petery, the Bishop of Vác. They kept on talking about the Bishop and denounced him until he was finally put in jail. The Committee accuses a person, the AVH steps into the matter, there is the usual investigation and the usual result.

Take Istvan Balogh, for example, a typical peace priest; he was an Under Secretary in the Debfacen Cabinet. He was the founder of the Balogh Party and had 14 or 15 representatives in Parliament after the 1947 elections. Balogh was the fattest (legkövérebb) man in Hungary. He liked beautiful paintings, beautiful women, and good drinks. He was latter appointed Commissioner of Abandoned Goods (Elhagyott Javak Kormánybirtosa), he stole vast amounts, but he never could be proven guilty. Balogh and Parragi and Dobi assisted the regime to the best of their abilities. On appropriate occasions they stood up in Parliament, or in popular

assemblies, and praised Rakosi. Their services were appreciated and they were never brought to account for their previous wrong-doings. Rakosi needed such men, because they were admirably suited to do certain things with Rakosi, as a Communist, could not have done himself successfully. It would have been bad politics for him even to attempt to do so.

In the Reformed and Evangelical Churches there are no such "peace" organizations; there was no need to organize such extra-church associations there, because the purpose for which the "Catholic" association was formed, outside of the Catholic Church proper, was easily accomplished within the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches.

The Catholic Church was different. It was much strengthened in numbers and superior in organization. While the regime was free to arrest priests and bishops of the Catholic Church, it could never hope to replace them with its own men. Moreover, in important matters of church-state relations, the Pope's approval was absolutely necessary.

In contrast to this, respecting the Lutherans, the Communists succeeded in placing Ernu Mihalyfi, one of Rakosi's ministers, in the position of supreme lay supervisor ( egyereses vilagi felugyeld) of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church. The same may be said of the Reformed Church. To give you just one example, Jozsef Darvas became the lay chairman of the Debrecen diocese of the reformed.



RKH Church.

- (10 j) The Revolution operated through the revolutionary councils, the revolutionary workers' councils, the Association of Hungarian Writers, the Petőfi Circle, and the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals.
- (10 k) The revolutionary councils, the revolutionary workers' councils, and the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals were new organizations. The latter group embraced such people as newspapermen, artists, professors, actors, researchers (kutatók), and university students. The Association of Hungarian Writers and the Petőfi Circle were also integral parts of this council, though they also operated as separate and distinct entities.

Professor György Ádám was the chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals, and the various member-associations sent their delegates to it. The various Churches were also represented. It was this council of intellectuals which directed the political and ideological battle of the Revolution. It was this council which set the pace and took the stand in questions of principle. It was this council which set in motion its resources to free Nagy from the clutches of the AVH in the Akadémia-utca. The council opposed most energetically instances of lawlessness and of lynchings. The council continued to act even after November 4. In collaboration with the democratic parties, the council attempted to effect a compromise solution and to block attempts of some

Communists to call to account revolutionaries. In this the council did not succeed.

Also after November 4, an action was inaugurated within the framework of the council which led to the centralization of the revolutionary workers' councils. Representatives of the council visited factories and other enterprises with a view to create a uniform stand among the workers. The demonstration of women on December 4 was also organized by the council. Professor György Ádám was arrested in the middle of December, and with his arrest the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals also came to an end.

- (10 1) The workers' councils came into being during the first phase of the Revolution: at the time when the program of the Revolution called for the ousting of Stalinist and Rákosi elements.

The direction of the industrial enterprises was taken over by the workers' councils. Their aim then was solely the direction of industrial production. It was the necessity of the hour, and the subsequent turn of events, <sup>which</sup> did force them to assume roles and responsibilities far greater than direction of production.

They were forced to assume a political role also, and parallel with this they took upon their shoulders the added duty of defending the economic interests of the workers. (The labor unions remained even during the Revolution Rákosi-creatures). There was also the

added task of organizing and maintaining of a defense group, in whose members were entrusted with the defense of the factories from both the AVH and the Russians. This latter task was a very important function, since a great many of the workers actively participated in the Revolution.

After the unfolding of the first phase of the Revolution, when the Russians withdrew their forces, the workers returned to their factories and organized the workers' councils, -- organizations which Imre Nagy recognized as corporations directing the operation of the factories (üzemeket vezető testületek).

The main object of the workers' councils at the termination of the first phase of the Revolution was the reorganization of the labor unions. The councils wanted a new labor union leadership, to be elected by the rank and file, and to which the representation of the political and economic interests of the workers could be entrusted, with the councils retaining only the role of directing the industrial production.

Circumstances forced the councils to assume political roles also. They did take a definite political stand when declaring themselves against the return of factories to their former owners. With respect to the question of the future proprietorship of industrial enterprises, the councils proposed a combination of state ownership for some and of workers' joint stock companies

(munkás részvénytársaság) for others. At no time was there any question of returning to the pre-World War conditions.

After November 4, the workers continued to strike, the election of a new labor union leadership became an impossibility, and the workers' councils were obliged to continue to play an active role in politics. After November 4, the workers' councils alone were capable of advancing demands against the government and, to do their job more effectively, the Central Workers' Council was established.

The workers' councils turned to the Hungarian writers for help and advice. This step appeared quite natural, especially after the writers expressed their opposition to lawlessness (törvénytelenység) and to the norm-system. The industrial workers looked upon the <sup>WRITERS</sup> writers as their advisers and the writers were ready to accept this task. Very often a reputable writer would visit a factory and the workers would stand around him with both confidence and love.

It was the writers, for instance, who proposed the organization of the Central Workers' Council. Only such a central workers' council <sup>will</sup> ~~will~~ be able to create an actual authority in Budapest, argued the writers. And indeed, throughout November, the workers' councils represented the only power and authority in Hungary. They relied on such devices as strikes and <sup>Resolutions</sup> resolutions, and Kádár did not dare touch them. As a matter of fact, Kádár, as late as December 1956, conducted constant negotiations

with them. Meanwhile, the AVH was sufficiently reorganized and a network of informers was again built into the factories.

As soon as this reorganization was accomplished, Kádár changed his tactics and began opposing the workers' councils. He first limited the scope of the councils' authority and later abolished them entirely. By that time, leaders of resistance groups are simply kidnapped and Sándor Rács, as well as his deputy, simply vanish from the scene. In the factories, mixed Hungarian-Russian troops are stationed and AVH-troops and Russian soldiers stand with machine guns behind the workers.

The first revolutionary workers' councils were organized in Csepel and in the Ganz works. They were patterned after the Revolutionary Committee of Hungarian Intellectuals. Revolutionary councils were organized in non-productive establishments, while their counterparts in factories and stores were called revolutionary workers' councils. Many Hungarians were thoroughly familiar with the economic structure of Yugoslavia, but the Hungarian revolutionary councils and revolutionary workers' councils were no conscious copies of the Yugoslav model; the Yugoslav system was left behind, and was far surpassed, at the very beginning of the Revolution, as evidenced by the 16 points.

- (10 m) See previous passages throughout this interview section, but particularly the very beginning of Section R.
- (11) Yes, I think very much about the Revolution. Subjectively considered, the Revolution was the greatest and fullest experience of my life. I was, on a number of occasions, in important situations where I could observe significant

historical events between 1944 and 1947. But in all my experiences I have never seen an event more beautiful and more interesting than the Revolution. I came to know only later that the Revolution was regarded as such not only in Hungary, but throughout the world.

(11 a) I have the feeling that the Revolution was unavoidable. (kikerülhetetlen volt). Its usefulness is a question of secondary importance. To that question <sup>I answer</sup> with a yes and a no. In a certain respect the Revolution was useful; it answered decisively many a burning question which existed in Hungary and troubled the lives of most Hungarians, -- questions which could not have been answered any other way. On the other hand, 50,000 Hungarians died in the Revolution and yet the situation is not much better now than it was before. I really do not know if the balance is a positive or a negative one. One thing is certain: no matter how the situation in the world, and in Hungary, may develop, the results and achievements of the Revolution will continue to be cited and used as primary sources (eredményeire nagyon sokáig kútforrásként fognak hivatkozni). Also, if a revolution is at all endowed with the power of creating rights and legal claims (ha van a forradalomnak jogteremtő ereje), then the Hungarian Revolution undoubtedly bestowed upon Hungary the right to independent and democratic existence.

(11 b) Yes, the Revolution could have won. It had all the means and prerequisites to success. The fact that it was unsuccessful is traceable, besides the Suez events, to the attitude of, and the stand taken by, the United Nations and the United States who, to a certain extent, are responsible for what happened.

I do not believe that the Hungarian events under any circumstances could

have led to the third World War. The Russians were in no way prepared for such an adventure. If the West is afraid of a world war, the Russians are at least equally scared. It is my firm conviction that a determined stand taken by the United Nations would have been sufficient to stop the shedding of blood. If Hammarskjold had decided to land on the Budapest airfield, I do not think Kádár would have dared to endanger his life or stop him in his activities.

The frequent visits of Mikoyan and of Suslov, and their contradictory statements, intentions, and advice fully attest that the Soviet Government did not know what to do with the Hungarian Revolution. I am fully convinced that the Soviet Government would have been more than prepared to agree to a compromise solution, possibly on the ~~HEXHEXHEX~~ Polish model, possibly to even much more than that, in order to secure to itself a graceful way out of a disagreeable situation. After the Suez events, of course, the military intervention of Russia became a natural stand. While an effective Western stand prior to the Russian intervention could have secured Hungarian independence, acceptable compromise solutions could have been effected even after November 4. The very fact alone that for a long period after November 4, the various Hungarian democratic parties not only were not attacked by either the Russians or by the Hungarian authorities, but were actually the recipients of a number of compromise overtures, would in itself underline my above contention. Both Kádár and the Russians did everything to win these people over and to convince them that there was ample room for compromise and development, ~~HEXHEX~~ if they cooperated with the regime.

As far as the possibility of a third World War is concerned, which, it is contended, may have resulted as a consequence of <sup>a</sup> the strong Western stand,

I say that you have two opponents here (U.S. and Russia) facing one another. Both of them are fearful and the outcome of their struggle is determined by which of the two is more apprehensive.

I have the feeling that both the United Nations and the West have permitted a historical opportunity to slip out of their hands, an opportunity which may never again come their way.

- (11 c) Yes, we of course did expect Western assistance. We expected the intervention of the United Nations. In the early morning of November 4, Imre Nagy appealed for direct help to the United Nations. Prior to that we already declared that we withdrew from the Warsaw Pact. We declared Hungary to be a neutral country and we asked that this neutrality be internationally recognized. More than that, after the second Russian attack on November 4, we continued the armed struggle until the middle of November only to give renewed opportunity to the West to intervene.

The attitude and stand the West took in connection with the Hungarian Revolution frightfully resembles the position taken by the Western world in 1939-1940 in connection with Poland and the Baltic republics. In 1939-1940, the West sanctioned the Russian occupation of these countries and we now have the feeling that in the case of Hungary the same thing has happened.

I fear that the West, in line with its traditional method of searching for easy and comfortable solutions to difficult problems, has quieted its conscience by relying too readily on its wish and hope that Russia, after all, will collapse anyway. A policy of this kind, while extremely comfortable, is rather hopeless. And this is an extremely dangerous game; should the nations of the world one day



be forced to conclude that the West supports only such trends and actions which directly serve its selfish purposes and abandons the little nations to their fate, a re-orientation of immeasurable magnitude will inevitably follow. This same thing holds true for the United Nations. The United Nations would have had a splendid opportunity to prove beyond doubt that it ~~does~~ intend to operate and abide by the lofty principles which are laid down in its Charter. Nowhere in the world was resistance against oppression and exploitation greater than in Hungary.

As to the form of Western assistance, we expected primarily political assistance and moral support. The Hungarian nation was convinced that a strong and determined stand taken by the U.N. would have been sufficient, and that such a stand, if taken, would have had its political results.

After November 4, individual ~~XXXXX~~ pockets of freedom fighters appealed for direct help also, pleading for direct military assistance. Such requests were made only in the midst of pressing, extraordinary circumstances of the hour. In Dunapentele, for instance, heavy fights were going on, and the radio continued in operation, pleading for help to the last minute.

It is my conviction that political assistance by the U.N. would have been sufficient, especially if the United States applied its often repeated principle of carrying its fight to the brink of war. Dulles was preaching this principle time and again, and

yet he remained strangely inactive when it came to applying it.

It was not a coincidence that Mikoyan sojourned in Budapest. His stay in the Hungarian capital seemed to show that the Soviet Union was ready to give recognition to the Hungarian facts. Then came the Suez events; England and France used the Hungarian situation to fish in the troubled waters of Egypt and to present the world with a fait accompli. The Franco-English violence gave a rare excuse to the Russians to act in a similar manner.

But even after November 4, the Russians were ~~careless~~<sup>careful</sup> to instruct Kádár not to touch the democratic parties, -- a fact which shows that the Russians even then were still expecting a Western intervention.

It was wrong to adjourn and to postpone the U.N. session scheduled for November 6, and it was equally fatal to decide not to apply sanctions, especially when, after the mass deportations, it became clear that the Russians were guilty of genocide.

The Soviet Union feared war at least as much as did the West. It is true that the Soviet commanded the greatest land forces in the world at the time, but to what extent this force could be relied upon, ~~is~~ especially after the Hungarian events, is rather questionable.

Sanctions could have been applied freely. The ideological and political accomplishments of the Revolution could have been safeguarded. The Revolution was painfully correct towards the

Soviet Union. We emphasized again and again that we wanted to live in peace with the nations of the world, but that we wanted peace first of all with the Soviet Union.

The Hungarian Revolution and the stand taken to it clearly demonstrated that ~~NEITHER~~ neither the United Nations nor the United States, nor the so-called Western world has any political blueprint, or even something remotely resembling a blueprint, for the solution of pressing European problems.

The United States did have a schema, it is true, that Titoism or Gomulkaism is to be assisted and supported. But what Hungary did, neither Tito nor Gomulka ever dreamed of doing. The Hungarian act was of an entirely different order, leaving Titoism and Gomulkaism ~~NEITHER~~ hopelessly behind. For this the United States was not prepared. Characteristically, the United States decided to rather give up the whole Hungarian question than to deviate from its schema. Because they did not know what to do with the problem posed by the Hungarian Revolution, they did not do anything at all.

- (11 d) It is difficult to try to support with concrete, objective facts any theory which one may advance in this connection. There are many, primarily subjective, facts which caused the Revolution to break out in Hungary, and not some place else; the Revolution may be explained by, and in the light of <sup>The</sup> ~~this~~ centuries-old desire of Hungarians to live as a free and independent nation.

History clearly proves that Hungarians always fought to free themselves from foreign interests and domination.

The attitude of Rákosi and of the Muscovite group contributed a great deal to the outbreak of the Revolution. These people served fully and perfectly their Russian masters, their performance in the field of political and economic exploitation reaching at times ~~disproportionate~~ proportions over and above those actually demanded by Moscow.

Then you have the role of the Hungarian writers. Theirs was a special role. Hungary was fortunate in having an exceptionally capable and valuable group of writers ever since the termination of the first World War. These people kept their independence and integrity even vis-a-vis Rakosi. Or, if the writers happened to be communistically oriented, they, too, saw the clear-cut contradictions between Communist theory and practice.

Then you had the Rajk funeral. This was an unique occasion, and the opportunities it presented were fully utilized. It was at the funeral that loud and personal criticism was levelled against Rákosi for the first time. Last, but not least, is the geographical position of Hungary; of all the satellite countries, Hungary lies closest to free Europe.

- (11 e) Imre Nagy was a Communist. After the abortive 1919 period, he fled to Austria or Germany, going later to Moscow. He concerned himself primarily with agricultural problems and, as such, he did+

not have to closely associate himself with Rákosi. Nagy's role after 1945 was characterized by a straight and unswerving line. I consider him a very valuable and honorable man, who deserved the love and respect of his co-patriots. The Revolution, of course, went much further than Nagy's principles; Nagy wanted a return to the 1953 conditions. The Revolution demanded complete freedom and complete independence. Nagy ~~XXXXXX~~ wavered, and vacillated too long. In the first days of the Revolution, he, too, looked upon the Uprising as a counter-revolution. After November 1, he saw clearly what was going on and he accepted the fact that the Hungarian people made their final and clear-cut decisions on the questions affecting Hungary. On November 4, in the morning, he declared that the Hungarian Government opposes (szembefordul) Russia.

It is interesting to note that post-revolutionary Hungary continued to use and apply the agricultural policies of Nagy. Such principles as no forced deliveries, voluntariness of agricultural cooperatives, are still maintained. The regime did not as yet dare touch the peasants.

Imre Nagy was extremely popular even before the Revolution. His popularity was based on two factors: his own, personal qualities; he was a jovial, intelligent and cultured man. Also, the Hungarian people underwent a tremendous change in the last

decade; when Parliament, on February 1, 1946, changed Hungary from a kingdom into a republic, the people, apathetic as they were, did not care what constitutional forms they were living under. By 1956, in contrast, everyone thought in terms of a republic. Thus Imre Nagy, the Communist leader, was able to command a widespread respect and popularity amongst the people because he represented, in the minds of ~~XXXXX~~<sup>most</sup> people, that democratic republic which Hungarians wished to bring about.

- (11 f) Of the cabinet members, Tily'd position was the most eminent. Zoltán Tildy was not too popular either with the masses or with his own Smallholders' Party. He was the first president of the Hungarian republic. At the end of 1947, the Rákosi-forces interned him and kept him under surveillance until the end of 1955.

Tildy's political past was not very fortunate; his political start after the war was characterized by cooperation and identification with those elements of the Smallholders' Party (Dobi, Buttai, Mihályfi, Lajos Dinnyés, Sándor Barcs, György Parraghi) who were later responsible for the break-up of the party and/or who actively assisted Rákosi in his endeavors.

Before the Revolution, Tildy spoke occasionally in the radio and wrote a few articles in the papers, extolling the advantages of cooperative farming (TSzCs). While he undoubtedly spoke the truth, his assertions were not well received and were not calculated

to increase his popularity.

Imre Nagy asked Tildy to join his cabinet, hoping thereby to win the support of the Smallholders' Party. The Smallholders themselves were undecided as to whether to support Tildy or not. The question was debated and eventually the party's executive committee endorsed ~~him~~ Tildy.

It is interesting to note that while the reborn Smallholders' Party officially began to function on October 30 (1956), Tildy was not a member of ~~its~~ executive committee, even though he served as minister of state in the Nagy cabinet ever since October 25.

Tildy was the man with the clearest vision and the only member of the cabinet who had a definite program. We must do everything, he said, to stop the government from aimlessly walking (kullogni) after the Revolution. The government must stand at the head of the uprising. The government must not vacillate and must make all the demands of the Revolution <sup>its</sup> ~~his~~ own. Having assumed the leadership of the Revolution, we must unite all forces, churches and other groups (testületeket) and with their cooperation we must reestablish weekday tranquility (vissza kell állítani a hétköznapok nyugalását).

Tildy's role and task in the government was both immense and significant. Though he made innumerable mistakes before, he now acted flawlessly (hibátlanul). He considered the direction of the Revolution the last great political task of his life, and his

~~XXX~~ popularity undoubtedly would have increased -- deservedly -- had the Revolution succeeded.

Of the actual revolutionary leaders, the most significant role was that of Dudás. He commanded the largest group of freedom fighters and he also published a daily newspaper, thereby exerting a political influence on public opinion also.

Another name of importance was that of Maletz. After his ingenious defense of the Kilian barracks, Tildy decided to take him into the cabinet, where he assumed the direction of the Ministry of Defense.

I must also say a few words about the Church leaders. These leaders were extremely important insofar as they exerted a considerable influence on public opinion.

In 1948, Rákosi concluded an agreement with the Churches. One of the consequences of this agreement was the forceful removal ~~and~~ and imprisonment of leading Church figures who opposed this agreement. The case of Mindszenty is well known. László Ravasz was forced to resign in 1948. Lajos Ordass was ~~XXX~~ pushed out of the way by means of trumped-up charges of currency blackmarket dealings. New people were appointed to high Protestant Church positions, people who were more eager to see things from Rákosi's point of view. Needless to say, the new bishops were not too popular. Their popularity suffered even more as the bishops,



willingly or not, actually performed such tasks which, in the eyes of the population, were decidedly anti-Christian.

Going to church became more and more difficult. Churchgoers were watched and religious life was subjected to ridicule in public. Religious instruction of children became uncomfortable, since both parents were required to file a written authorization with the authorities, authorizations which everyone knew came into the hands of the AVH. The AVH has used these <sup>at</sup> as its discretion, often very successfully, to blackmail the parents.

The older generation remained adamant and continued loyal to its religious convictions. There developed an interesting process in the decade ~~XXXXXX~~<sup>1956</sup> of 1948-1956; the practice of one's religion was subjected to many restrictions, more veiled than open, at the same time, as a result of these restrictions, people craved to go to church and their desire for religion and religious experience increased.

On October 31 (1956), Tildy received a delegation of workers and told them it would be a good thing (jó lenne) if Mindszenty came back to Esztergom. (Tildy actually went to Esztergom sometime later in the company of Maleter). The following day (November 1) Tildy received in audience Endre Hamvas, the (Catholic) Bishop of Csanád.

Tildy clearly recognized the tremendous influence the Churches exerted on the Hungarian population. He set in motion a process

(teret engedett olyan folyamatnak) whereby both Ravasz and Ordass were rehabilitated. Tildy wanted the Revolution to proceed within the existing legal framework, he desired an early resumption of production and a consolidation of all the forces of the people.

Church leaders quickly responded to Tildy's bidding, made their stand public, and helped immeasurably in steering the Revolution clear of excesses.

Political parties; the Independent Smallholders' Party was destroyed after 1947 with the assistance of such Smallholders as Dobi and company. Only 15 party members remained in the Parliament and these received monthly support monies from the regime to the tune of 100,000 forints per month. These fifteen supported actively the establishing of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the maintaining of the new social order.

Béla Kovács, another Smallholder, reappeared during the Revolution. He assumed the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture on October 25.

Kovács was a peasant from the Baranya district. In 1941, he was a leading member of the Peasant League (Parasztszövetség), becoming the secretary general of the Smallholders' Party after the war. He was an extremely popular figure. Kovács and Tildy represented the opposite poles within the Smallholders' Party, Tildy being the spokesman of the extreme-left faction.

In 1947, Kovács was the leading actor of a conspiracy-trial.

False and trumped-up charges were levelled against him, but, as he was a Member of Parliament, his prosecution was more difficult. Parliament had to be asked to extradite him and this did not go smoothly; Parliament held the extraditing session in April 1947. There was a fierce debate and, when it came to voting, the Smallholders, representing the majority, voted down the extraditing resolution. That very evening the NKVD kidnapped Kovács, and Parliament, subjected to extremely heavy pressure, and threats, consented and voted for Kovács's extradition. Kovács was tried by a Russian military court, but was never sentenced. He was kept in various prisons, held as an accused person under preliminary investigation. In 1955, Kovács was set free, returned to his native village in Baranya and remained there until the Revolution.

Kovács issued a statement in Pécs (31 October) and in Budapest (November 1, 1956), in which he gave a splendid review of the Hungarian question. He emphasized that the Hungarian nation in the past twelve years was subjected to a bitter and grueling, but useful lesson; that the reforms and achievements gained immediately after the second World War and after are not to be given up, and that after the Revolution neither the land nor the factories are to be returned to their former owners.

The Smallholders' Party itself was organized in 1930. (The idea of a smallholders' party was first advanced by István Nagyatádi Szabó (himself a peasant and Member of Parliament who



of personal integrity. He remained a brave champion of his ideals, openly advocating in Parliament the severance of all connections to Hitler and to Berlin. We must steer clear of Berlin immediately and we must get out of the war, he said. He enjoyed a very wide popularity. In 1944, the Germans arrested him. He resisted the arresting Germans with a gun in his hand. His attitude and spirit continued very high even in jail. The Germans executed him on the 24th of December, 1944.

In 1945, the democratic parties were organized. Of the parties formed, the Independent Smallholders' Party appeared to be the most determined anti-Communist stronghold. This explains its 53-percent majority in the first post-war elections. People voted for this party not because they were smallholders, nor because they favored its program, -- it did not have any,-- but because it seemed to best exemplify their own anti-Communist sentiments.

Gradually an organizational life emerged within the Smallholders' Party. The party had its own youth organization -- the Independent Youth Movement (Független Ifjusági Mozgalom), the largest youth group in Hungary.

The Independent Smallholders' Party of 1956 resembled closely the Smallholders' Party of former times. The only striking difference was the change in its leadership personnel. There was a change of generations (generációs váltás). The 1956 leaders were essentially young people, recruited from former members of the

Independent Youth Movement. These people were brought up, were nourished and educated by the populist writers (népi írók).

The populist writers; these people made the re-discovery of Hungary their goal and program. They conducted research into the economic and social life of the nation. They analyzed the causes of economic and social troubles and maladies. They trained the young generation in logical and methodical thinking. The populist writers also found eager and active support among the lower clergy of the villages, who looked upon the populist literature as a justification of their own views. The generations born after 1920 received their very intellectual bread from the populist writers. These young people joined the political forces in 1945; they created strong youth movements and endeavored to mould the future of Hungary both in theory and practice along the lines of principles enunciated by their mentors.

After 1947, the youth organizations were destroyed. Their leaders were incarcerated. But in 1956 these young people reappeared again from their obscurity and formulated and put forward their demands. These people represented a uniform and identical view and stand, because they all received identical training. They all viewed similarly Hungary's future and they all held similar reforms necessary. All agreed in the necessity of land reform and all wanted to maintain the means of production under the supervision of the workers.

In 1938, populist thought invaded even the KALOT (Catholic Youth Movement) organization. (Interviewer's note: the KALOT was an organization of rural Catholic youth, under the leadership of Father Kerkai, S.J. Father Kerkai advocated, among other things, at least a partial secularization of the Church domain.)

Béla Kovaács sided as early as 1945 with those forces who in 1956 became the leaders of the Revolution. This explains his forceful declaration of Pécs.

Another important role was played by the Central Workers' Council. Its leaders, Sándor Rácz and Mihály Báli, were the product of the workers' councils themselves. Neither of them had any political past. The Budapest workers' councils elevated them to positions of political importance and personal prestige, a fact rather unique in Hungary.

Rácz and Báli wanted no more for the workers' councils than the right to economic and administrative supervision of the means of production. They assumed political leadership only as a practical and inescapable necessity.

The formation of a central workers' council was the writers' idea, and its organization proceeded on their inspiration. The writers wanted a single organization, strong enough to make ~~the~~ demands on the government. The political wisdom of this decision (to form the central council) soon became evident; the Council came to represent the only political power in Hungary.

After November 4, it was the Council which effectively kept alive the revolutionary demands. Around November 20, both Rácz and Bálí were kidnapped. From November 4 to November 20 these two people were the most important political personalities in Hungary.

Béla Király -- I heard his name only after the formation of the Supreme Command of the Budapest National Guard. Király became the commander of this force, with Huleter as his deputy. Otherwise I am not familiar with his affair (nem ismerem az ügyét).

Of the writers the most important were Istvan Márkus and Tibor Déry. The workers' council was Márkus's brainchild. It was Márkus who formulated the October 26 declaration of the Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals. It was Márkus who led the workers' council deputation. It was Márkus and Miklos Gyimes who organized and kept alive the struggle after November 4 (Gyimes was editor of the Szabad Nép after 1945. He loses his position, but returns in 1953, sides with Imre Nagy and becomes editor first of the Szabad Föld, later of the Szabad Nép. In 1956, he is assistant press secretary in the office of the Prime Minister.). The workers' council asked the writers for help and advice. Márkus, Gyimes, Déry, Gyula Hay, and Tamás Aczél went from factory to factory and told the local councils what to do and how to do, how to lead and how to continue the struggle. They were engaged in the production of illegal newspapers and leaflets, in the



organization of strikes and of demonstrations.

Note. I tell you these things freely, for the sake of truth, but I also ask, ~~for~~ since some of these people are still in Hungary, that they not be compromised.

Tamas Aczél -- he was the first man in Hungary who publicly <sup>accused</sup> announced and denounced the AVH. I had no contacts with him before the Revolution. During the Revolution his attitude and behavior were exemplary.

György Lukács -- after 1919 he went to Austria, later to Germany, and still later to Moscow. Lukács is a materialist philosopher. He made an attempt to interpret social phenomena on the basis, and in the light of, marxist-leninist doctrine. His teaching and influence went beyond Hungary's boundaries and he had ~~an~~ an European reputation. After 1948, he came into conflict with Rákosi. Between 1948 and 1956, Lukács is brushed aside, but the regime did not dare put him completely in cold storage. Révai stated often enough how Lukács still needed a great deal of development and that he must free himself from the West. The Revolutionary Council of Hungarian Intellectuals wanted Lukács to become a cabinet member. This is how he became Minister of Adult Education. Lukács sought asylum, together with Nagy, at the Yugoslav Legation. He, too, was interned in Rumania, returning to Hungary not too long ago. Lukács's position is rather insecure (labilis). He is alive because he is indispensable.

Hungary has very few well-known professors as it is.

(11 g) The demonstration of October 23, complete with the 16 MEKESZ points, was started by the students. The demonstration was to be a sympathy demonstration in support of the Poles. As the demonstration progressed, workers and the general population joined in. We may say then, that in the starting of the Revolution the students had the main role. As far as the carrying on of the actual struggle for freedom, and the playing of important roles in it is concerned, again, the pre-eminent role belongs to the students. Workers, however, also participated. I would group the participants in the following order: students, workers, intellectuals, soldiers, and peasants.

Irresponsible elements there were only during the second phase of the Revolution. To give you an example of the cleanness of the Revolution: on October 28, the League of Hungarian Writers conducted a collection for <sup>The families of</sup> those who have given their lives for the Revolution. The containers used for this collection were nowhere supervised.

To give you an example for the irresponsible category: on October 31, I saw a man carrying two typewriters in the street. That was stealing. Another example: Count Almásy demanded his estate back.

I placed the peasants last because their active role was less

than that of the other groups. But this generalization does not hold true universally. The peasants' role in Miskolc, Pécs, and Győr was very significant. The peasants took their full share in such activities as transporting food, reorganization of the political life of the villages, (the dismissal and replacement of councils and the disarming and arrest of the AVH). Peasants were also active in the dissolution or reorganization of the TSzCs cooperatives.

This same may be said of the army; while the army as a whole did not participate in the Revolution, the siding of parts of it with the Revolution and the passivity of all the others was in itself of immense importance.

- (11 h) Thus far, every revolution has always found the students in the midst of it, particularly the university students. I did not think there was going to be a revolution. Once it came about, the students were the most versatile and the most determined fighters in it.
- (12) I have decided to leave Hungary on several occasions. Between November 12 and December 4, I made such a decision five times. The decision was not easy. I am no longer a very young man, and the years which I ~~spent~~ spent in jail had their effect. But I have already spent five years at Reesk. I had to choose between renewed incarceration and exile. And finally the thought of Reesk prevailed. I think quite often, though, that perhaps it

would be better if I were home, among friends, no matter under what circumstances. I cannot help feeling ashamed, knowing that one of my best friends is sitting in jail, sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment, while I am out here, free, but unable to help him. I left Hungary on December 4, 1956.

- (12 a) The thought of Reesk, the certainty of my renewed incarceration.
- (12 b) I discussed my decision with a great many people. This is why I started out five-six times.
- (12 c) We were in the <sup>Revolution</sup>. My friends were sentenced to jail terms or were executed. If I had stayed at home -- something I was seriously considering -- I was thinking of engaging in illegal activity; after November 4 there was a military dictatorship in Hungary. There was no other possibility but illegality.

At the time I left Hungary, a comparatively late period, escapees were required to pay huge sums of money to those who helped them across the border. I came to Austria without paying a forint; the truck which I boarded was loaded with people who paid heavy sums for their passage. Fortunately, the driver and another man -- a former director --, the two were in charge of the truck -- knew me personally and they realized that I had to flee. They let me ride with them free of charge.

Our trip proceeded smoothly until, somewhere between Győr and Mosonmagyaróvár, we encountered both Hungarian and Russian troops. The commander of the Hungarian tank unit, a lieutenant,

stopped our vehicle and the Russians forced everyone down from the truck, taking away our identification papers. The Hungarian officer, obviously trying to help us, called out to the driver: "Let me see your trip ticket!" The driver did have a forged trip manifest, authorized <sup>in;</sup> him to proceed to a nearby village, but only a few names were on it. The lieutenant, in a remarkable outburst of both ingenuity and humanity, proceeded to read the document, adding fictitious names to it as he came to the end of the line. We immediately grasped the situation, and one by one, the whole group climbed back on the truck. We were saved.

(1) I was a student at the University of Political Economy (Közgazdasági Egyetem). I completed three years of study.

From 1945 to 1947 I was a Member of Parliament, representing the Independent Smallholders' Party. During this period I was also the president of the Independent Youth Movement.

I was arrested in 1948, spent two years in various jails. In 1950, I was placed in the internment camp at Reesk, where I stayed until 1953. In September 1953, I was freed and was permitted to settle in a small village near Budapest, where I was placed under police surveillance. I was not permitted to leave the village and I was restricted to physical labor, to be performed within the confines of the village. I found such work in a brick factory and started working on October 1, 1953, continuing to earn my livelihood there to the outbreak of the Revolution.

In the factory I was a physical laborer in the beginning, and was appointed later to a supervisory position, directing the work of some 6-8 men.

While in Parliament, -- I was the youngest Member -- I was assigned the task of parliamentary reporter (jegyző). I was a member of the cultural and agricultural committees. All this from 1945 to 1947.

In November 1945, the elections were held. A great amount of preparatory work had to be done prior to the elections. During this campaign, I traveled a great deal, visiting every part of Hungary, attending meetings and conferences. After the elections,

the long and drawn-out wrestling with the Communists began. We have made determined efforts to stop the Communist drive to power, but our attempts were unsuccessful. Prior to the elections, up until November 4, 1945, a provisional parliament was holding its sessions in the city of Debrecen. The elections, held in November 1945, returned an exceptionally strong Smallholders' Party to Parliament. We received 53 percent of the votes cast. The Social Democrats had some 18-20 percent, the Communists 17 percent. Ten-eleven percent were allotted the National Peasant Party, whereas the ~~MSZDP~~ Bourgeois Democratic Party (Polgári Demokrata Párt) had one or two parliamentary members.

Immediately after November 4, a coalition government was formed with Zoltán Tildy as Prime Minister. The parties, with the exception of the Bourgeois Democratic Party, were all represented in the Cabinet in proportion to their parliamentary strength.

The Communists sought, and received, the Ministry of the Interior, the Economics Ministry (Gazdasági Minisztérium), and the position of Deputy Prime Minister. The distribution of the key ministries was as follows: foreign affairs: smallholders; defense: smallholders; industry: communists; commerce: communist; interior: communists; agriculture: national peasant party; education: smallholders; information: smallholders.

Prior to November 4 (1945), there was a lively debate as to

how to hold the elections; the Communists wanted a one-list representation (közös listát akartak). This was entirely unacceptable. Then they endeavored to at least have a common list with the Social Democrats. But even this was rejected (Peyer, Ban, and Szelig were running as representatives of a separate party). Having failed in their attempt to establish a unified electoral list, the Communists proposed the formation of a coalition government after the elections. The Allied Control Commission of Hungary was completely Russian-dominated, Voroshilov politely dictating on important issues. We vainly approached Schonfeld, the United States Representative, he declined to "meddle" -- as he put it -- in the internal affairs of Hungary.

We were frequently in Voroshilov's offices. Our Cabinet members were subjected to heavy Russian pressure there. We endeavored to minimize the Russian pressure (csökkenteni akartuk). At last it was agreed that the differences be resolved by conferences.

The 1945 Coalition Government came into being as a result of direct, but veiled Russian pressure, clothed in presentable garb, a procedure in which the United States and the other members of the Control Commission willingly assisted their Russian colleague.

A group of smallholders -- ignorant as yet of the Yalta commitments -- visited Schonfeld and asked him what possibilities were there for Hungary's internal development, what precisely were the objective facts which the smallholders, though a majority



party, must face and acknowledge? Schonfeld told us that we belonged to the Soviet orbit and that our policies must correspond to this basic fact (mi a szovjet övezetbe tartozunk és politikánk ennek meg kell hogy feleljen).

Having received this cold-water treatment, the smallholders' sentiments cooled down, and the idea of a coalition cabinet was accepted.

The Communists had only 17 percent of the votes, but their influence in the government was proportionately much greater; they held sway over the interior and economic ministries and, viewing realities as they were, we knew we must primarily look to them to obtain economic assistance for Hungary -- Russia being the only country willing to give us sizeable help.

The AVH organization was built as early as 1945. Gábor Péter was its founder and organizer. He selected his men in such a fashion that he could trust them unquestionably.

There was a long and drawn-out political struggle, centering around the many abuses of the police and of the AVH. The tendency of the Smallholders' Party from the very beginning was to retain the Interior Ministry to itself. The realization of this tendency proved impossible because of Voroshilov's opposition. We succeeded in placing a smallholder as Under Secretary of State in the Interior Ministry, but in practice this man was completely

ineffective. The Communists were able to retain for themselves all the power and authority by resorting to their conspiratorial tactics.

The Communists have, from the very beginning, used the Interior Ministry as their own exclusive domain. As early as the beginning of 1945, in the Szeged Cabinet, and later in the provisional Debrecen Cabinet under the leadership of Miklós Dálnoky, the Ministry of the Interior was already in the Communists' hands. As the fighting Russian troops advanced on Hungarian territory towards the end of the second World War, Muscovite and local Communists followed in their footsteps and organized the local police forces in villages and towns.

The local police forces in the liberated parts were under exclusive Communist control from the outset. When it came to the formation of the post-election cabinet, the smallholders were left cold by Schonfeld and by the other Western representatives and, at the same time, were told by Voroshilov that the proposal advanced by Rákosi represented the only possible basis for the formation of the government. Faced with this situation, we were forced to accept not only the coalition, but the Rákosi plan of distribution of cabinet posts also.

Hungary was swarmed by a large number of Russian troops, our country was in the midst of a serious economic crisis, atrocities

were innumerable, the illegal operation of the NKVD reached incredible dimensions and notoriety. Our plan was to stop all this as soon as possible. The only way to do this, -- we thought -- was to abide ~~with~~ by Voroshilov's demands, to accept Rákosi's proposal. The Smallholders' Party took it for granted that the Russians would leave the country and that a later possibility of rectification still existed.

We were satisfied with the distribution of the cabinet portfolios, but the question of the Interior Ministry continued to be a vexed and exciting one; determined efforts were made for the preservation of legality, and Members of Parliament have attacked ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> innumerable interpellations ~~the~~ Minister of the Interior, laying bare the illegal machinations of the AVH.

The Russians withdrew their forces, it is true, shortly after the coalition was formed, but the Allied Control Commission remained. The Russians' political and economic influence continued ~~to~~ to be intense, and the Russians were able to keep the Hungarian nation in a state of complete insecurity. The Communists, under the leadership of Rajk, organized the three-party leftist bloc (baloldali blokk) to counterbalance the smallholder majority. The Russians used the age-old motto of divide et impera, inciting and supporting one group of Hungarians against the other.

The structure of the Smallholders' Party was not a very fortunate one. Outwardly, it is true, it gave the appearance of a determined

anti-Soviet sentiment, but it lacked unity, both organizational and ideological. There were numerous parties within the party, each group fighting for its own point of view.

The smallholders regarded the politically compromised elements of the Horthy-regime as untouchables, abandoning them to their fate. But not so the Communists; Révai came forward and not only defended the nyilas fellow-travelers, but opened the gates of the Communist Party to them.

The Communists, operating through their "built-in" (beépített) agents, ~~SKXX~~ skillfully placed one smallholder group against the other. Soon the groups were fighting one another and the salami politics (szalámpolitika) turned out to be eminently successful. Sulyok and twenty other Representatives suffered expulsion from the Smallholders' Party. Later Pfeiffer and twenty other of his colleagues met the same fate.

Still later the Communists assaulted the main bloc of the Smallholders' Party, attacking Ferenc Nagy and Béla Kovács, and depriving another group of 20-25 ~~ME~~ Members of their mandates. Sulyok organized another group, the Hungarian Freedom Party, and Pfeiffer formed the Hungarian Independence Party. Both of these groups ran for re-election in 1947 and achieved significant results. But both groups were crushed to pieces shortly thereafter.

In 1945, Hungary still retained its old state form (államforma).

On February 1, 1946, a new constitution was adopted and Hungary became a republic. Under this new constitution, every party, save the Fascist, was permitted to operate.

The parliamentary rules and procedures under which we operated during 1945-47 were entirely satisfactory and they corresponded to the requirements of the times. They were on an European niveau. The liquidation of the parties was not the result of faulty rules, it took place by means of back-door tactics. (A felszámolás hátsó kapukon történt.) The Ministry of the Interior had a lion's share in this; the AVH, after 1947, while nominally under the control of the Cabinet, in reality received its orders and reported to none other but Rákosi and the Russians.

Economically, too, we were under complete Russian domination. Old German interests, real and imaginary, became Russian property under the terms of the peace treaty. Such concerns -- and there were a great many of them -- were completely Russian-dominated.

Politically our hands were tied. Voroshilov was the Chairman of the Control Commission and the Hungarian Government could do ~~nothing~~ nothing at all without the prior approval of the Russians. Schonfeld did not help us in any way. Yalta, and the dreadful implications and hints as to its contents, became known only much later. Our fight was that of a determined ~~man~~ but helpless blind man who fights, but does not know what, -- we did not <sup>know</sup> know of Yalta,

much less of what it represented, but the Russians were well aware of their opportunities under it.

Gábor Péter, a Russian citizen, created a dreaded renown for the AVH. The Communists continuously presented the nation with faits accomplis. The arrests and the fate of those arrested were most ~~KKKK~~ carefully planned and irrevocably sealed. The Smallholders' Party fought a futile and hopeless Don Quixote sort of windmill battle against these encroachments.

The Leftist Bloc was organized, under the leadership of Rajk, to prevent the Smallholders' Party <sup>from taking</sup> ~~to take~~ over the Interior Ministry. Even as it was facing this renewed threat, the Smallholders' Party became disunited. The Communists used the situation to their own advantage; they attacked its vulnerable points and inflicted whatever damage they could.

Dobi and his ~~M~~ colleagues, the left-wing of the Smallholders' Party, were engaged in a constant fight within the Party with representatives of the right wing. Tildy, too, was with the left wing. As a matter of fact, it was Tildy who provoked this fight and, once started, he gave it his full support.

Our parliamentary rule provided that Members of Parliament could not be arrested except in cases where they committed felonies (murder, grand larceny, breaking and entering, rape, etc.). The State could ask that ~~KKK~~ a Member's immunity be lifted if accused of embezzlement or of mismanagement of funds entrusted to him.

This same held true if a Member was accused of abusing lawful authority. The rules on immunity (mentelmi jog) state explicitly that a Member of Parliament cannot be prosecuted on account of his political work.

If a law court or prosecutor's office asked that a Member's immunity be lifted, the papers relating to the accused Member's case were sent to the Parliamentary Committee on Immunity. The Committee on Immunity then made its recommendation to the full Parliament. This rule was valid until 1947. The Communists did pressurize the Committee on Immunity even before 1947, but the Committee did not easily accede to their demands. (Question: Could you give me an example where the immunity of a Member was actually lifted? Answer:) Take the case of Ferenc Vidovics. He was a smallholder, a Representative of the County of Somogy, the prefect (főispán) of Somogy County, a good organizer and speaker, and extremely popular as a person. The Communists were unable to fight him in his native Somogy stronghold, but, bent on getting rid of him, they introduced false testimony against him, accusing him of bigamy and of having authored some pro-German articles. The evidence, though undoubtedly false, was presented and Vidovics's immunity was lifted.

There was the case of Károly Vértessy; Vértessy was accused of having been a member of the Prónay-corps and of having

participated in the struggle against the Communists in 1919. Whether the accusations against Vértessy were true or false I do not know to this day. But his immunity was lifted.

There was the great conspiracy charge of 1947. The accusation was general in nature and the "conspiracy" did not have a leader at first. Later Béla Kovács and Ferenc Nagy were named as leaders and were accused of having formed a secret society for the purpose of overthrowing the republic and restoring the monarchy. The fate of Nagy is well known. The other accused, Sándor, László Vatai, Tibor Ham, and Béla Kovács were picked up by the NKVD. These people were arrested first and only later did the authorities request the lifting of their immunities. The immunity proceeding was slow, the Russians intervened and Parliament, barely representing the quorum, (csenka parliament), finally voted for the lifting of the group's immunities.

By the time of the second elections, in 1947, the parties of both ~~XXXX~~ Sulyok and Pfeifer openly admitted their opposition status. Perhaps<sup>or</sup> precisely because these parties were opposition parties, both of them were highly successful in the 1947 elections, (even though the Communists were guilty of many irregularities).

In 1947, and after, the Smallholders no longer had a leader. The Communists permitted both Sulyok and Pfeifer to run for re-election because they hoped to thereby weaken the Smallholders<sup>v</sup>



Party. They supported, at the same time, the Dobi faction of the Smallholders' Party. The Smallholders' results in the 1947 elections were very miserable. Sulyok, Pfeifer, and Barankovics's Christian People's Party (Keresztény Néppárt) received sizeable portions of the smallholders' vote. The Smallholders, for all practical purposes, were completely beaten and destroyed. Later the Sulyok, Pfeifer, and Barankovics forces were simply erased (kiradirozták), in spite of the elaborate rules of parliamentary game. After 1947, Members of Parliament were first arrested and only later came the request for the lifting of their immunities.

The fight also began against the right wing of the Social Democratic Party. Peyer was thrown out of the Social Democratic ranks. In 1947 the 1947 elections he and Bela Zsolt were running at the head of a new party. Szakasits and Marosán were meanwhile fighting it out with Szelig.

The situation was similar in the National Peasant Party. There the leadership of the right-wing Imre Kovacs was successfully challenged by the fellow-traveler Ferenc Erdei.

(Question: What was your attitude regarding these baseless accusations of Members of Parliament? Answer:) In the Vidovics case, Vidovics himself vehemently denied the charges. I did not believe the accusation myself. But it was extremely difficult to prove that the charges were without foundation. The produced

evidence could not be proven false or forged and there was nothing we could do about it. The only thing one could do was to stay away from the ~~proceedings~~ proceedings. That is exactly what I did.

The great conspiracy ~~XX~~ charge against Kovács was different. It interested me more because I, too, was affected by it. What I want to say is that the same sort of method and tactics was employed in the Youth Movement also, with somewhat less success, I must add.

My situation was more stable there than Kovacs's position in Parliament. There was a coalition body which embraced the major youth organizations. This was the Magyar Ifjúság Országos Tanácsa (National Council of Hungarian Youth). I was chairman of both this coalition group and of the Független Ifjúság (Independent Youth). While György Non, the chairman of the MADISZ, held the position of ~~X~~ secretary general of the Magyar Ifjúság Országos Tanácsa.

In 1947, I was forced to resign my chairmanship of the Független Ifjúság. The Communists thereupon engineered a coup and brought all youth organizations under one leadership; the Egységes Ifjúsági Szervezet was called into being. The KALOT, the KIE (the Hungarian YMCA) and the scout movement was stamped out even earlier.

As soon as I resigned as chairman of the Független Ifjúság, Zsigmond S. Nagy, in the name of the Független Ifjúság, accepted the Communists' bid and signed the Dobogókői accord (egyezmény)

in 1947, which abolished the various youth movements and created the Egységes Ifjusági Szervezet.

To come back to your question, which is a legitimate one, I must emphasize that you must view things in their proper perspective and analyze our attitude in the light of the milieu and circumstances which confronted us; Russian influence was overwhelming, the initiative, both in the political and economic spheres, was in the hands of the Communists. There was the pending question of the peace treaty. Up until the conclusion of the peace treaty we were living in a state of war. The Russians were able to do anything they pleased. The police force and the AVH were Communist dominated. In an atmosphere like that it would have been extremely difficult to justify politically a refusal by Parliament to lift the immunity of its accused members. You must understand the nature of the Smallholders' Party, its impotency, its many mistakes and blunders which, in the final analysis, was the result of its very structure. Before the second World War the Smallholders' Party was no more than an election-day party (választási párt), ~~XXXXX~~ it never amounted to more than an opposition party, a party devoid of any organization, a group existing in the club-life of Parliament only, and nowhere else. It did not have a tradition (nem volt mozgalmi múltja), it lacked experience, it had neither tactical principles nor a ~~XXXXX~~ clear-cut program. If it had not been for Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, the Smallholders' Party would have even ~~XXX~~ lost its significance. Bajcsy-Zsilinszky's participation in the Independence Movement ~~during the war gave it its raison d'être. In a word, the XXX party was not prepared for the task which awaited it after 1945.~~

Movement during the war gave it its raison d'être. In a word, the party was not prepared for the task which awaited it after 1945.

But even assuming that our party had all the qualities which it actually lacked, even then, while we could have postponed our fate, its coming, at a later date, would have been inevitable.

In the 1945 elections all those who did not have a political conviction deeper than opposition to the Russians voted for the Smallholders' Party. Merchants and artisans voted Social Democratic. The Communists received the votes of Communists, of bureaucrats who worked under immediate Communist supervision, the ~~NY~~ Nyilas vote, the vote of Germanophiles and of rightists. For these latter groups voting with the Communists became an existential question.

The National Peasant Party was in no better shape. It was founded in the city of Makó, in 1938.

In the interbellum period the populist writers were the strongest, most talented and most effective intellectual force in Hungary. They rediscovered Hungary both economically and socially, pointing out the nation's maladies. <sup>Their</sup> ~~THEIR~~ unanimous conclusion: the necessity of a land reform. But the Horthy-regime was based on a narrow, exclusive group. Behind the regime the <sup>Etelkőzi</sup> Szövetség stood guard. These people ruled Hungary between the two wars. They ~~THEY~~ jealously guarded their positions.

They did have a guilty conscience, it is true, and, as a result, they permitted a degree of intellectual freedom. Bozok could be published and people were permitted to engage in academic discussions as long as they did not attack either the political or the economic status of the Etelközi Szövetség.

The populist writers were attacking the status quo and this brought them their popularity. The Interior Ministry was constantly after them, and the writers' attempt to form a political party was thwarted. The populist writers finally succeeded in organizing the National Peasant Party. The Peasant Party did not have any significance between the wars. We knew it existed, but that was about all. It did acquire some importance after the second World War, however.

The Peasant Party had an extremely bad start in 1945. Many people will tell you that the Peasant Party was no more than a sister organization of the Communist Party. This is not true. It is true, however, that the Communists feared the Smallholders' Party and the possibility of there emerging a single and strong agrarian party in Hungary. To prevent this, they actively supported the Peasant Party.

The Allied Control Commission and other public bodies, including the Communist Party, gave all the support they could give to this rival agricultural party. The Peasant Party was the recipient of money, cars, and of electioneering. Precisely because of this overwhelming assistance, the Peasant

Party fared very badly in the 1945 elections. Many a person who would have liked to vote for them, gave his vote to the Smallholders Party.

The leadership of the Peasant Party (Péter Veress, chairman; Imre Kovács, secretary-general) tried very hard to correct these initial mistakes after 1945. They made an attempt to extricate themselves from the Russian tutelage and to assert their independence again.

I did not participate in the 1947 elections. The Smallholders suffered heavy losses in that election. But weakened as they were, the smallholders could ~~MM~~ have still formed a coalition with the Balogh and Imre Kovács forces. Many former smallholder representatives were in both these groups. There was such a plan after 1947 to secretly unite the Smallholders' and Balogh parties. The united party would have still been the largest single group and as such it could have effectively resisted the Communists and raised its voice in the affairs of the nation.

István Balogh, Imre Kovács, and a number of smallholders, Dobi among others, actually met in the Független Ifjuság headquarters and agreed on a merger. They also worked out specific plans of action. Unfortunately the whole agreement was betrayed to Rákosi the very day it was reached, and Rákosi promptly shattered the whole deal. (The only person who could have betrayed this remarkable plan was Dobi, who was chairman of the Smallholders' Party at the time.) This was the last attempt to save the country

from falling completely under Russian domination. After this only smaller groups fought their losing battles.

(Question: Could you tell me something of the Hungarian youth movements and of the role you played in them? Answer:)

Sándor Kiss, Antal Jenes, Béla Koss and I organized the Freedom Front of the Hungarian Youth (Magyar Ifjusag Szabadság Frontja) back in 1943.

We tumbled down (lebuktunk) in November 1943. The gendarmes arrested Sándor Kiss, Pál Jonás, János Horváth, and me. We were taken to the Margit körút prison and were subjected to a long investigation. Meanwhile the Germans encircled Budapest. We were later taken to the Markó-~~utca~~ utca where we were under the supervision of the Gestapo. Still later they took us to the Pestvidéki prison and finally to the basement of the Parliament building. In January 1945 we were handed over to the Nyilas authorities. We have passed from one nyilas prison to another and these people treated us cruelly and in a barbaric fashion. They beat the Jews to death. We escaped on January 11 (1945).

Between 1942 and 1944, there developed in Hungary a solid youth front within which young people knew one another fairly well. These people became the leaders of the various youth movements. There was a fine cooperation among us, and we fought, in 1942-1943, at the University, for the creation of a unitary (egységes) youth movement. We were quite ready to cooperate with the various groups and factions.

We brought into being, in January 1945, the MADISZ organization. Sándor Kiss was chairman, Jenes was secretary-general, Jonás became the leader of the university organization. Nyeste served as organizer. All parties were represented in the MADISZ.

The youth of the Communist front employed the same tactics within the MADISZ ~~which~~ which the representatives of the Communist Party used in Parliament; Their aim was to secure for themselves the key positions and, using conspiratorial tactics, they endeavored to force their opinion and stand on all the others.

But this sort of thing did not work with us. We resisted and, in March 1945, the MADISZ disintegrated. The first to leave the MADISZ were the Social Democrats. Later we, too, abandoned it. I brought into being the Independent Youth Organization (Független Ifjusági Szervezet). Still later the Peasant Party also abandoned the MADISZ, so that only the Communists remained.

Up until the 1945 elections the various youth organizations operated as separate entities. After the formation of the coalition Cabinet, the government proposed that the youth organizations also form a coalition. As a result, the National Council of Hungarian Youth (Magyar Ifjúság Országos Tanácsa) was organized. This organization was to serve in a ~~consultative~~ consultative capacity. It concerned itself with cultural problems and was to be the means of expressing the youth's stand in political questions. I was elected chairman of this organization, while György Non became



its secretary-general. Non also retained his post as secretary-general of the MADISZ. Because there were so many profound changes in Hungary and because Hungary existed under an entirely new set of circumstances, political questions were extremely important for us and we devoted a great deal of time and effort in this direction.

Let me say now a few words about the Independent Youth Organization ~~YM~~ (Interviewer's note: this was the youth affiliate of the Smallholders' Party); our organization consisted primarily of peasant youth. We had a sizeable membership in Budapest also, but that was not significant. The significance of our group in Budapest was felt at the universities rather than within the circles of the Budapest youth proper.

Young ~~H~~ people born after 1920 were reared (intellectually) by the populist writers. Their mode of thinking and their Weltanschauung thus molded, they naturally reacted very sensitively to problems of Hungary and particularly to problems affecting the Hungarian peasant class. Many of our youth actively participated in the execution of the land reform and our youth organizations played an important role in the social and cultural life of the villages.

Ours was a democratic movement, both in its organization and structure. We had our local organizations. ~~Below~~ Above these were the district and county organizations, with a centralized, national leadership. The central organization consisted of the

chairman, of the secretary-general, and of the youth council. The council had 16-18 members, elected from among the most popular youth leaders, and it functioned as a policy-making (irányító) and controlling body. The council met once a month.

The Independent Youth Movement concerned itself primarily with cultural problems. We laid great stress on teaching our members in constructive and systematic thinking. We also instituted courses in rational agriculture, awarding certificates to many a student (arany- és ezüstkalászos tanfolyamok). We were concerned with all phases of agricultural problems.

The courses in agriculture were offered during the winter season; they started in November and terminated at the end of March. These were intensive courses, students lived together and studied together. One course ran for two years, the other for <sup>four</sup> ~~two~~ years. Each terminated by a comprehensive examination. The two-year course resulted in the Ezüstkalász diploma, those who completed four years received the Aranykalász diploma.

Our aim with these winter courses was the propagation of methods and principles of intensive agriculture (belterjes mezőgazdaság) on the Dutch and Danish models. Our problems were similar to those of Holland and Denmark: small territory, large population.

The land reform created small agricultural units (farms). Our position was that the Hungarian farmers ought to engage themselves in the cultivation of such plants which assured them of a

good income, -- a type of agriculture which affords them enough ~~time~~ leisure to cultural activities also.

We wanted small agricultural machines, suitable for the cultivation of orchards and vineyards. We envisioned immense opportunities for our people in <sup>the</sup> fields of fruit growing and fruit packing industries; both our soil and our climate are perfectly suited for quality fruit growing.

Even more important, Hungary abounds in sodaic soil (szikes talaj) which, at the present, are ~~is~~ <sup>at</sup> barren wastelands, not ~~is~~ all adaptable for conventional agriculture. There were attempts to improve these lands and to use them for growing of wheat and corn. But the improvement so achieved is extremely costly, while the effect of the improvement is only temporary and in need of repeat<sup>ing</sup> ~~ed~~ every few years. Such sodaic (szikes) soil is ideally suited for the growing of nut-bearing fruit trees, without any need of special improvement. The possibilities of exporting such fruit (walnut, almonds, etc.,) are limitless.

We also organized seminars which, unlike the arany- and ezüstkalászos courses, were not concerned with the attainment of technical skill in the field of agriculture. We conducted discussions here to find out, for instance, how would it be possible to reorganize Hungarian agriculture, how could we make it profitable, what would be the social and cultural consequences of such a reorientation, and how could we best meet them. We also discussed ways and means of defending smallholders against the current of

agricultural collectivization.

We also conducted political seminars for our members. Our aim was to acquaint them with the various civilizations of our age and to introduce them to the main political thought-currents of today. Even under Horthy, Hungarians received a rather one-sided view of these things, looking at the world through German and Italian eyeglasses. We analyzed the ~~MM~~ Marxian tenets as well as other important political thoughts, giving a thorough description of the American form of government. We tried to be objective in our discussions and to pinpoint faults as well as advantages of the several systems. Above all things our aim was to train ourselves in the principles of methodical learning and to develop a habit of political thinking.

We were also concerned with purely cultural problems. In this we followed in the footsteps of the populist writers; we wanted to acquaint ourselves with the ancient Hungarian culture, we wanted to learn and to ~~KN~~ know more of the artistic and literary products of this culture. It was our aim to absorb as much as possible of our native culture and, going one step further, to familiarize ~~ME~~ ourselves with the outstanding creations of European and other cultures.

In a word, we wanted to become truly European men by fully accepting our own cultural heritage and absorbing as much as we could of the super-national, European spirit. Our cultural ideal was Béla Bartók.