

(1) I think the question is difficult to answer. In my opinion it is not so much the fact or certain events that are important from the point of view of this study, as the psychological basis of the revolution. It is that which you should study very carefully. The Hungarian people have a peculiar psychology. They are in many respects different from other peoples. They tend to be idealistic, they tend to be romantic and even ^{not} ~~hand~~headed. They have a certain purity in their behaviour and when they decide upon ^{political} ~~personal~~ action, they are not likely to stop or consider its consequences. It seems to me that it is this characteristic or rather this series of characteristics that must be taken into consideration in studying the events that led to the revolution and in understanding the revolution itself. We can talk about this more, later. But I want to call your ~~own~~ attention to this fact so that you will be able to appraise it properly and devote considerable attention to it.

(2) The kernel of the revolution undoubtedly lies in the period of liberalisation which began in the summer of 1953. Events such as Moscow's capitulation before Hungary and later on Rakosi's dismissal as the First Secretary of the Party, undoubtedly had their effect. There were of course, others. The 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party had a tremendous effect on party members in disorienting them. The Poznan events of June, 1956, were closely followed in Hungary. Of course, they coincided with the notable debate of the Petöfi

Circle on June 27, and were somewhat overshadowed by them, although people in a way saw a certain similarity between them Poznan events and the strong tone of demands voiced at the Petöfi Circle meeting. The funeral of Rajk on October 6 was also an event of considerable importance. It was certainly a silent demonstration of the people against the regime. It is possible, perhaps, to call that a turning point in the developments. Finally, the Polish events of October were again closely followed and had an impact. They fired the youth of the country with enthusiasm and people began to think in terms of duplicating what happened in Poland. Of course, as you well know, events exceeded the Polish events in their intensity on the very first day of the revolution. With respect to the role of the writers it is very difficult to say exactly how influential they were. Certainly, there were writers who had an effect upon public opinion. Their change of heart had an influence on people's thinking. It gave people heart, it made them reflect upon the problems and upon the possibilities of improving upon the situation. It is, of course, also possible that some of the activities of the writers were at least at first inspired by the regime itself which wanted to let off steam and somehow guide or channel the stream of discontent. The people who say that the writers' activities were inspired from beginning to end have some element of truth in their contention. It cannot be doubted, however, that the change in attitude on the part of the writers was at times spontaneous and went beyond what was decided by the party leadership. The influence of the literary journal was in the last half year quite considerable and as you

well know, it was ~~brought~~^{bought} up the minute it appeared on the news stand.

- (3) It is very difficult to say what the chief causes of the revolt were. Nobody planned it, it sort of bubbled up from nowhere. The original demands voiced at the time of the revolution certainly did not envisage this kind of overzeal. You say that you have heard a great deal about the communist and soviet system and organized supervision. I can tell you only that the misleading information of Party secretaries which they sent up to their party bosses must have, and undoubtedly did, cause the party leadership to evaluate the situation in the country improperly. I think the Communist leadership itself was surprised by the intensity of the opposition to it that it almost consciously had permitted itself to be misled in this regard and that it was due to their ignorance, I repeat, their ignorance of the actual state of affairs that ^{and} the revolution could break out ~~in~~ this system would be swept away so rapidly. To this I would like to add a second fact and this is the underestimation of the youth of the country. I must say that even we, the intellectual oppositionists, had had absolutely no inkling of the intensity of the feeling of the youth against the Communist regime. I think that the party leadership itself had absolutely no way of knowing how badly its indoctrination had done and how strongly the hatred against the regime burned in the hearts of the youth. As I

say, we didn't know it and people were very surprised to see how the young people who had been fed on Communist indoctrination for well nigh ten years, fought for the ideals of freedom and how little the tenets of Marxism and Leninism had taken roots in their minds and hearts. With respect to the demands of those who participated in the demonstration of October 23, I think I can say that the sixteen points which had been printed the night before ~~in~~ and distributed widely throughout Budapest and among these the return of Imre Nagy to the premiership were the most important. I doubt that the demonstrators of October 23rd intended to transcend these demands which in general were oriented toward a liberalization internally and a more equitable relationship especially in economic affairs with respect to the Soviet Union. I couldn't tell you who opposed the revolution, who was neutral in it, there were undoubtedly some people who fought more strongly than others who were more cautious. But on the whole, the entire people supported it. The most outstanding and most popular slogans of the revolution were independence and neutrality, I repeat independence and neutrality. In my opinion, the revolution was not anti-Communist, it was of course, in the first place directed against the internal power of a group of Communist leaders. It became anti-Russian after a fashion only later but I say that it was not anti-Communist either at the beginning or at the end, because ~~that~~ no real measures of reprisal were taken against Communists as individuals. The

members of the Secret Police were at times manhandled but Communist Party members were not. There were many Communists fighting alongside the revolution and I would not say that the Revolution was anti-Communist at any time. It developed in the following fashion. It started as a demonstration, it became a revolution and it ended in complete freedom until of course, the Russians intervened the second time. In general, it is important to ~~be certain~~^{divide} the revolution into two phases, one, prior to November 4 and one after November 4, when the Russians moved in to crush it.

(4) and (5)
combined

My activities during the revolution did not include actual fighting. The best way to characterize what I did would be to say that I was milling about, the Hungarian word for this is *neyuzsozni*, I was running about Budapest and the countryside as much as I could getting people from one place to another, getting things organized if possible. There was no clear-cut motivation, no clear-cut orientation in my activity. Some of the highlights of the things I did include the following:
I requisitioned a ~~truck~~^{car} of the secret police and with it I went to get Mr. Ferenc Farkas, the eventual leader of the ~~free-born~~^{re} peasant party, which was called the Petöfi Party. As we were riding along we were stopped by a group of armed freedom fighters. The situation was touch and go, we didn't know whether they thought we were members of the Secret Police and would shoot when we stopped or that they were members of the Secret Police in disguise and would shoot when they

found out that we in turn, were not members of the Police. We dashed on with the car, found some people who were indeed freedom fighters, returned to the group and straightened matters out. Another interesting episode was in connection with the creation and election of ~~an~~ ^{the} executive committee of the former political prisoners. It so happened that some friends of mine and I wandered into the theater where the meeting of former political prisoners was being held. The scene on the stage of the theater was incredible. People were milling about, pushing one another, ~~snatching~~ ^{yanking} ~~take~~ the microphone out of one another's hand, everyone wanted to have his say, everyone wanted to praise someone and smear someone else. I myself was somewhat disturbed by all this and thought that I would leave when a friend of mine grabbed the microphone and gave it to me and announced that I would have something to say. I tried to say something sensible about the role of the political prisoners. Somehow I got ~~so~~ ^{through} my speech and then I was elected chairman of the executive committee of the political prisoners association. I could not say that my activities as chairman of this association amounted to much. Another time, on October 30th, I believe a delegation of us went to see the Prime Minister about some affairs. At the time, Mr. Nagy seemed resolute and made a very good impression on me. On the whole, as I have said, I was busy during the revolution running about, participating in meetings, organizing things, getting in touch with as many personalities as I could, seeing a little bit of the organizing activities of all the political parties

and trying to get oriented.

- (6) Is not applicable.
- (7) Of the fighting groups there were three that seemed important. The so-called Korwinist group, the group led by Dudas and the group by Maleter. At first, Maleter opposed the Korwinists, later relations among them were good. It would be impossible to say which one of these groups was the more important. Dudas certainly fought with incredible heroism, he himself was an amazing figure, reckless but brave, who did amazing things during the revolt. He captured several ministries, he stormed buildings, he had well equipped troops under his command, the had tanks and guns, goodness knows where he got them from and in fact, he was so extreme in his expectations and in his activities that he had to be accompanied by someone ^{at} all times to calm him down and prevent him from doing things that would be in-appropriate. It is difficult to say what kind of conflicts and differences of view there were between the various revolutionary groups. Undoubtedly, there were no serious immediate disagreements. At the same time what the situation was with ~~the~~ respect to the future could not be told.
- (8) Russian troops behaved very differently in various phases of the revolution. At first, they did not fire upon the population, this was at the very beginning of the revolt. I myself did not see or witness any desertion by Russians

but I know I heard from reliable sources that many many Russian groups joined the revolutionaries. This was in the period preceding November 4. The groups that came after that were of an entirely different make, they were troops that had not been stationed in Hungary, they had been brought in from far, they did not know where they were and they fought recklessly and without regard.

- (9) One got news during the revolution in many different ways. The newspapers had disappeared for a while and then everybody was printing newspapers for a little while, one read them when one could but this was sporadic. The radio was listened to, the domestic radio was not as important as foreign broadcasts but I listened only when I got time. A great deal of news was passed by word, as I say, word of mouth was an important means of communication. News came from everywhere, was passed on to everybody, people talked about this and that, it wasn't easy to know how much of it was true, how much of it was not. One couldn't ascertain the veracity of anything, one in fact felt ^{how} somewhat isolated. Nevertheless, things slowly, as the revolution went on, began to crystallize and toward the end it was easier to have a general view ^{of} what went on than at the beginning.

- (10) Well, about the only way I could say what happened to the Party, its organizations and the government, would be to

- (1o) characterize their activities as not existing beginning with the first day of the revolution itself. To be more specific, all institutions save possibly the AVO collapsed. They simply dissolved. There was no government except in the House of Parliament where Nagy held forth and where everyone went with questions, demands, petitions, everything. The AVO, however, displayed remarkable ability in informing itself of decisions made by freedom fighters, with respect to signals, armbands, etc. and often had these before the freedom fighters could effectively distribute them.
- (1ob) There were a great many new institutions or organizations that came into being, among them revolutionary councils and the political parties which came to life early.
- (1o 1) I have no specific information how the workers councils came into being. They grew out of some sort of push "from below" quite spontaneously. Their leaders came from the ranks of the workers. They played a most important role after November 4, when they were the center of opposition.
- (1om) In my opinion, a hybrid system of government would have emerged. Certainly features of nationalization or rather socialization of property would have been retained alongside with political democracy.

- (11) The revolution was useful in the sense that it taught everyone a lesson. It exposed the Communists and the Russians with all their brutality and showed the fruits of Communism in Hungary.
- (11 b) The revolution could have been successful with Western help. By this, I mean not necessarily military aid, but diplomatic demarche which would have kept the Russians out.
- (11 c) We expected some help. Especially disappointing was the realization after we escaped that there was none of the armed preparedness in Germany which we were led to believe, existed. Communist propaganda really sold us a bill of goods which we believed. It was incomprehensible that the West, armed to its teeth, should not come to help. We did not know the situation in Germany.
- (11 e) Nagy was a Marxist but he was decent. He was not a strongman. He lagged behind developments and instead of leading them he sort of kept acknowledging what was already a fact of the revolution.
- (11 f) Few other people were known. The name of Maléter and Dudas were well known. Kovacs Bela also had some reputation, but it is difficult to say how popular he was.

- (g) The leading role in starting the Revolution undoubtedly belongs to the youth, the university youth. The workers joined in and did a lot of fighting. The peasants supplied food. The military broke up into two groups, one that joined, the other that did not.
- (12) We decided to leave November 7th because it was certain that we would be picked up by the police. We crossed the border on the 13th. There were several of us belonging to the same group who crossed.

- (1) This section is strongly influenced by the fact that respondent's career was clearly broken off in 1948 when he was imprisoned. His work beginning in 1954 in no way corresponded to his talent and could hardly be called more than compulsory employment.
- (2) I was trained and found employment in the field of foreign trade. I am an economist by profession and from 1946-48 worked in the Ministry of Foreign Trade in the political section dealing with Western Europe. My job was to deal with general question of foreign trade, evaluate the conditions of trade for Hungary, and help in drawing up trade treaties.
All this came to an end in 1948 when I was arrested. In 1954, following my release in prison I found a job as, you might say, a common laborer. I drove a truck, distributing vegetables and fruit in Budapest. Even this took some doing.
- (3) There can be no talk of having liked my job as truck driver. I worked six days a week about 12 hours a day. Conditions of work were not really bad, I was on my own and out in the open a great deal. I can't say that there were other advantages except perhaps the fact that I could steal food quite freely and we never looked for all sorts of hard-to-get items.

- (4) The question is applicable only generally. Many of my colleagues were people like myself, declassé intellectuals, and middle class people. The company thus was not bad. In the kind of work I was doing it was difficult to stick to industrial regularities so that the trade union and political questions you mention hardly came up.
- (5) For me it was impossible to change jobs after 1954. Had I been free I would have gone back to the Ministry of Foreign Trade. There was responsibility in that job, also prestige and service to the public and relatively good living as well.
- (6) My family was definitely worse off after the war than before.
- (7&8) I made about 1,200 Forints per month including premiums. My pay was based on a complicated accounting. It included fixed ~~minimum~~ salary, norms, overfulfilment of norms, i.e., volume of goods distributed and the like.
- (9) I don't remember exact figures. I lived with my mother and shared many expenses with her. Certain things were terribly expensive. For example clothes cost about 2,000 Forint for a suit. Who could afford it? I did not spend much on entertainment.

- (10) Hungary's general economic situation deteriorated after 1945. This is not to say that everything ^{was} rosy before 1941. There were tremendous/inequalities then. But what happened to agriculture after 1945 and especially 1949 is incredible. The standard definitely declined. There was also tremendous ^{shortage} in building. With respect to the private sector following 1953 my wife could give much more information. (See respondent No. 219) The situation in 1956 was no worse than before, perhaps a little better.
- (11) Material considerations played an important role in the general discontent. People considered it their duty to steal and thus harm the state. But political grievances were perhaps more important in touching off the revolution.

- (1) Finished university. 1940 - 1946. Got diploma in economics. There was no change in the curriculum after 1945 and all old professors remained at their posts. My dissertation ~~was~~ topic was on Hungarian foreign trade following the Trianon peace treaty.
- (e) I liked the particular course of studies because it afforded a triple possibility of acquainting myself with economics, learning about ~~about~~ diplomacy and trading abroad.
- (2) Yes, although I enrolled in an evening course of law, but it was too much to handle.
- (e) Yes, of course.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) It wanted to raise a new generation devoted to it, not addicted to old values.
- (b) Well, it was not. We all thought that it was more successful in indoctrinating children and young people, but the revolt showed how unsuccessful it had been.
- (5) Bank officer. Elected president shortly before his death in 1935. The family was well steeped in banking, though no one had owned a bank.
- (f) We lived well.
- (g) Five.

- (h) Father died. Mother pensioned, still lives. Sister married. Brother works for National Bank.
- (i) Mother. Because was not permitted to live in Budapest legally so had to be "visiting" mother.
- (k) Definitely disadvantageous.
- (6) No.
- (7) Not applicable.
- (8) Not applicable.
- (9) Not applicable.
- (10) Not applicable.
- (11) Good.
- (12) No.
- (13) No.
- (14)
 - (a) Close. Perhaps closer than prior to Communist regime.
 - (b) Difficult to answer. On the whole families were drawn close to one another.
 - (c) Different things. With friends, discussions, movies, theater.

- (g) None, except 6 years of imprisonment and of police.
- (15) Strengthened.
- (e) Yes. Mothers could not give their children the upbringing they would have wanted. Parents worked. Children were on their own.
- (16) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (e) Yes.
- (f) With respect to party members they were strict. Nevertheless many party members lived lasciviously. Otherwise they were looser than previous regimes.
- (h) Yes.
- (i) Definitely. Many more work. Their situation is worse than before.
- (17) Dropped. Stealing was an accepted thing. Everybody stole from the state. There was even a so-called "10 Forint" movement, aiming of stealing 10 Forint from the state every day.
- (18) In school.
- (c) Discussions.
- (g) Friendship itself with all that means.
- (i) Large, congenial.

- (19) I am Protestant. Hence I grew up in a less bigoted atmosphere than Catholics. I have no strong religious feeling.
- (20) Yes, of course.
- (b) No. They wanted to break the church leadership. Persecuted especially the Catholics and wanted to use the church for the propagation of their peace campaign, but nobody believed it.
- (h) Yes.
- (i) Yes, but because it represented a silent demonstration against the regime.
Sundays there were regular mob scenes before churches taking on almost the aspect of demonstrations.
- (k) Much less. Because they received less religious instruction and much of church going was of political nature.
- (l) Very small, almost nil. The priests were afraid, because they could be removed any day and silenced.
- (21) It really depends on many things, the person's talents and disposition, etc. The best occupations were now the arts and sports, but, of course, one had to have some talent.
- (22) Intelligentsia, old middle class, peasants, workers. Old top 10,000 (aristocracy, intelligentsia) were worst off, peasants also suffered and workers were relatively

less bothered.

- (a) Of course, I belonged to the intelligentsia (this means people in free professions, lawyers, doctors, university graduates).
- (b) I was quite happy to belong to the particular group, but it was ~~it~~ discriminated against.
- (23) This is a difficult question. The same groups as before. There was tremendous "class struggle" instigated by the Communists, everywhere they operated, even in the camps where, for example, they put a social democrat in charge of a group of former aristocrats or the like. Nevertheless, there was greater equality among people, less acrimony, because many were equally persecuted.
- (24) No. There were no national minorities to speak of.
- (25) The same as other people. Could only determine ~~if~~ on the basis of individual cases.
- (26) I had a lot of Jewish friends. Some were with me in concentration camps. They behaved as everyone else. There were some, of course, who associated themselves with the regime.
- (27) No, remained about the same. Anti-Semitism was largely directed against individuals who were in leading positions in the party. During the revolt in a queue waiting

for food someone started to swear at the Jews for being responsible for this or that. A Jewish friend of mine who spent years in Recsk and looks Jewish stepped up to the guy, and told him to shut up and then hit him. The mob viewed this with approval and the loud mouth slinked away.

- (1) Yes, very much, always.
- (a) It is hard to say in percentage terms, but I toyed with the idea of going into politics.
- (2) I was active in the student's political movement. Already in 1944 I participated in the anti-Nazi conspiracy. This in fact was held against me when I was arrested in 1948 because they told me that anyone who is a revolutionary in 1944 could be one in 1948, too. I had no answer to this.
- (a) I was a member of the National Peasant Party. The whole idea of the peasant movement interested me. The peasant explorers of the late 1930's had a great influence on and fascination for me. But that does not mean that there were no disagreements within the party. I belonged to the Kovacs Imre group and in 1947 I left the party, after he emigrated.
- (e) My attitude toward Communism was based on natural rather than emotional bases. I read Marx and even Lenin and could not at any time call myself a Marxist. What I objected to mostly was Marxist economic theory. With respect to the Communist Party I felt that it subjected all to politics, nothing mattered but political motives and this distorted relations quite considerably.
- (f) (11)
- (3) This is a difficult question. I was in prison for 6 years

and what can I say. All of the things affected me somewhat. On the whole, fear from arrest may be said to have been most offensive. There was an expression about this. People had "csengő fress" (i.e. "door bell d. t's"). The economic things were not so bad or offensive. Interference with family life and religion was bad and so the violations of national dignity and traditions as well.

- (b) For me the economic factors were the least important.
 - (c) Well, the political and intellectual factors, entertainments, etc.
 - (d) In general all of them.
 - (e) The same.
 - (j) None.
- (4) I don't understand what you mean. In any event the Party leadership was the most important; the government was subordinated to it. Rákosi perhaps played the most important person. But there was some talk that Friss (István) and Kovács (István), were very important behind the scenes. I could not say whether they overrode Rákosi or not.
- (d) The Parliament had no importance.
 - (e) Elections were held to show the outside world, the unity that allegedly prevailed in Hungary, but everybody laughed at it.
 - (f) Of course there was bureaucracy. That is unavoidable in a centralized system. It was much worse than before 1944.

- (h) Mostly from young people, so-called people's or workers' cadres.
- (5) Well, this was an organization which did not work out at all as the Communists expected it. Membership had no advantages since everybody had to belong.
- (e) I, of course, did not have to belong because I was too old by the time it became the only official youth organization.
- (6) Membership in the CP had advantages. It meant a good job and a lot of extras.
- (h) I was not a member of the party. Only once did they suggest that I join, that was on the very day they arrested me.
- People joined the party for many reasons. Mostly they had economic motives. It was for this reason that so many people could not be counted as stalwart support for the party.
- There were many reasons for disappointment in the party. That varied ^{with} groups.
- (7) No, except the trade unions.
- (8) As I have said most people joined for their own reasons. Percentage wise one could have a hard time pinning down the number of convinced Communists. Perhaps 5% or less

were convinced Communists.

- (9) They did not really become centers of opposition. Every organization harbored opposition elements who came to the top during the revolution.
- (10) It is fairly simple to say why the AVH was organized. A terror machine was necessary. It was an executive arm of the party. It is difficult to say whether the AVH tried to usurpe power. It was said that Gabor Peter was very subservient to Rákosi and had no personal ambitions. It is hard to say whether Piroc was different. The members of the AVH were recruited in different ways. Mostly they were the worst types taken from the lowest strata. The guards at Reesk were inhuman mix in many ways. There were many outspoken sadists among them. Even though, every AVH member tried to be decent to a few people so as to have a coterie of victims who would vouch for him if conditions changed.
- (j) The AVH was superior to the police.
- (k) Already answered above.
- (11+12) Yes, for six years from 1948 to 1954. You know that I was a part of the greater student conspiracy, that is former university student, who were active politically and had a common background. I was arrested in the fall of 1948 under somewhat peculiar circumstances. It was

a Saturday, I had picked up my pay and was ready to escape from the country that night. It was then that they arrested me.

You know, too, that we never had a trial either closed or open. The charges against me were various, including espionage (this is understandable because of the type of work I did in the Ministry of Foreign Trade), but no trial was held because the Mindszenty affair and then the Rajk affair intervened, overshadowed our case and it was never finished. This meant in a sense that I was worse off than those who had stood trial. For in my case there was no sentence of any specific amount of time so that I was in prison indefinitely. It was unpleasant. I was let out just the same early in 1954 when the camp (Recsk) was liquidated.

It is difficult to say who was most exposed ~~to~~ to arrest. That varied from time to time. On the whole the Communists tried to ferret out all their opponents.

You ask about prison conditions. The general story is pretty well known. Recsk, of course, was only one of the places where we were held, to be sure for the longest time. Certainly they mistreated us. I know of a man whose hands were tied and placed near a hot stove so that two of his fingers burnt off. I can give you his name. I myself held the camp record for being tied up (Guzsbakötés), something like ¹¹¹ ~~111~~ hours. (Others have confirmed this information, estimating the number of hours so spent of respondent even

higher. They also said that respondent was a) among the more heroic, b) among the few who refused to work as a matter of principle. Interviewer.)

After I was freed, I was not permitted to move ~~myk~~ back to Budapest. Nor could I get a decent job. I was officially residing in a village near Budapest but actually lived with my mother in Budapest. The only reason this could be done was because the janitor was a decent man and did not ~~give~~ ^{give} ~~fire~~ me away. As to job, I found something with a food distributing concern as a truck driver. There was no question of rehabilitation until two weeks before the revolution when I was approached and my return as clerk to a concern dealing with export matters was brought up. There was no financial rehabilitation. There was one additional disturbing fact and that is that I never had a court hearing cleaning me of the charges. This meant that I could be picked up any time. I wanted to go before court and asked for that opportunity so as to be cleared like some of my friends.

- (13) This is an impossible thing to answer. I suppose if one keeps entirely to oneself then one might avoid trouble. Otherwise anyone can get in trouble as an individual. As classes, the workers undoubtedly were less persecuted than others.

- (14) Yes, there were ups and downs ~~in terms~~ ^{at times}, but since I was

in prison from 1948 on I would not know at first hand how serious these changes were. The fact is that after 1953 things were easier.

- (15) In my opinion Soviet influence was indirect rather than direct. I could not say how it manifested itself most noticeably.
- (16) We have talked about this before. Of course, one did not shoot off one's mouth but everyone acted in accordance with his convictions. One could be quite outspoken with one's friends, even with Communists at times, especially after 1954. But one had to know the person one was talking to.
- (17) There were numerous examples of avoiding regulations or circumventing them. I told you of my own decision to live in Budapest. There was always an element of risk involved, but everyone cheated, stole, or damaged somehow and regularly if possible.
- (18) Under Stalin, brutal as the regime was it held together. It was consistent and had a purpose to it. These were the things that held it together. When liberalization began the Communists became disoriented and found themselves at odds in a number of ways. This started a process of disintegration.

- (19) Resistance to the regime manifested itself in many ways. But it is difficult to say ~~was~~ how until the revolution. Perhaps the declassé intellectuals like myself opposed the regime most violently and consistently and the middle class or what remained of it and the civil servants gave ^{noticeable} least evidence of opposition.
- The creation of the Petöfi circle was undoubtedly condoned by the party perhaps to let off steam. Only Communists could speak up at first, then along we could participate, too. Its activities tended to gain momentum and grew. I could not say to what extent the Party approved or opposed them, by this time there was no such thing as a united party, but only quarreling factions.
- The MEFESZ came into being in SZEGED. Young people wanted their independent student organization and set it up. Things were moving at a fast clip by this time and so it is understandable why this happened.

- (1) For six years I was in the concentration camp and I can tell you that there were few places where the official organ of the Communist Party was as thoroughly read as there. You know how we got hold of it so I don't have to tell you about it. After I got out I listened to the radio quite frequently and of the stations I would say that Radio Free Europe was the most important source of my information.
- (2) After I got out of concentration camp I read a lot of newspapers and periodicals, as many as I could get hold of, and as many as I could read, given my exhausting type of occupation. Of those that I read first place belongs the official organ of the Hungarian Communist Party. I also read the paper of the trade unions, the former Social-Democratic paper, the Monday Journal, the Literary Journal, and the Star which was also a literary journal. Every once in a while I managed to see a foreign journal, too. Once I got hold of Life magazine, a few times I saw the Reader's Digest but that was about all. I used to go to the movies quite often because it was a good source of diversion and entertainment. I must honestly say that I did not like the Soviet pictures. I saw one called Chapayev and after that I refused to see more. As a matter of fact my wife berated me for that because there were some that were artistically very worthwhile. But I could not stomach them. The regime permitted

the presentation of foreign Western movies for social content and I used to go to see those. I am sorry but I don't remember any of the names. My memory in that respect is very bad. Quite often the movie pictures which were permitted by the regime for their social content were visited by the population for the entertainment value that they presented in addition to their social message. In this way the regime's purposes were thwarted.

- (4) Yes, I read a lot of books. Of course, our library at home contained a great many Western works of the pre-war period and much of Hungarian literature. After I got out of prison I did not have a great deal of time to read books because I worked for about twelve hours a day and I was too tired. However, I tried to maintain an interest in the better new literature and read a few works by authors such as Nemeth László, Deri Tibor, Szabo Paul, Veress Peter, Zelk Zoltán and others. There were quite a few lively discussions about the contents of these books and some of them as a matter of fact enjoyed quite a bit of popularity despite their outwardly pro-regime nature.
- (5) No, I did not because it was boring. Every once in a while I listened to the news broadcast but otherwise I listened to foreign broadcasts of BBC and Radio Free Europe.

- (6) This was answered in part in question (5). I repeat that I did listen to foreign broadcasts, especially in the evening whenever I could to BBC and to Radio Free Europe. I must honestly tell you that the BBC was more objective, however, Radio Free Europe did accomplish a few successes by exposing Communists and police officials whose life became intolerable after their exposure and mention by RFE.
- I might say here that the case cited by Miss Anna Kethly whereby she claimed that RFE had damaged certain individuals and exposed them to police persecution is completely fictitious. To my knowledge nobody suffered as a result of RFE activities except the Communists and police officials whose names were broadcast and who were thereby made known to the people. RFE was not quite as believable as BBC.
- (7) Yes, of course, a great deal of information was passed by word-of-mouth. I had some friends in the Swedish and The American Legation and once or twice I managed to get information from them and everything was discussed quite avidly by people who met and trusted one another. For the most part discussions were held in one's home. There one could be sure that no outsiders were listening in.
- (8) The news printed in Hungarian papers were not reliable and in this sense perhaps the Hungarian press tended to distort things more and more as time went by. Especially

the news about ~~the~~ domestic developments increased in distortion. However, it was quite possible to test the veracity of this information. People made quite a sport of this sort of thing and trained ^{themselves} in reading between the lines in comparing what the press had to say with ~~what~~ ^{what} was obviously the truth and thus they ought to and quite often managed to derive even ^{the truth} from the distorted presentation of the Hungarian press. I could not say that there were certain newspapers or radio stations that were considered more reliable than others. With respect to the Literary Journal I can say that I read it very much as often as it came out and was very interested in its content.

(9) Yes, indeed people tried by every means to be informed and to learn the truth about events both domestic and foreign. Of course, the intelligentsia developed the art of deriving information better than other social groups ^{everybody} but ~~everyone~~ in Hungary was just thirsting for information and intensely interested in finding out things.

(10)

(a) Yes, I knew but this was before the Communist regime came to power and we discussed ^{as} yesterday there was some question in my mind whether this was necessary and moral. Of course, I have no way of determining whether it was military justified or not.

- (b) It so happens that I found out about the outbreak of the Korean War in the bathroom in the concentration camp where I was. To this day I have no clear idea who began the Korean War. Could you tell me whether it was the North Koreans or South Koreans who did it?
- (c) Of course I read what the Communists, especially Mr. Tibor Merai wrote about it and it was quite believable. I should like to ask you whether there was such a thing as bacterial warfare by the Americans. At the present time you probably know that Mr. Merai is being well paid for denying the stories he wrote and claiming the very opposite.
- (d) Yes, I believed that Western Germany was being rearmed and remilitarized and it was on this basis that many of us had hopes that the West would come to our aid in a military way. The Communist propaganda had really done a good job in making us believe that West Germany was simply an armed camp and everybody was armed to the teeth. Their propaganda backfired in a sense because while they wanted to make us anti-Western in this manner we all hoped that this would hasten the day of our liberation. It was only during the revolution and afterwards that we found out that there was no cause for belief in this sort of aid.
- (e) Yes, I knew about the balloons but I never saw one and never saw any of the leaflets that were dropped from the balloons but I did hear about them.
- (f) I heard about it only after I got out of camp. No, as a matter of fact even in the camp we knew about it and it

gave us hope that things would move in Hungary, too, and something would be done.

(g) Yes, I knew about the Geneva Conferences. This was already after I got out of prison. I felt that perhaps the Russians needed these conferences but I did not quite see that they could lead to anything. I was convinced on the other hand that the Russians did not want to start a war and were in no position to start a war and that perhaps some kind of neutral zone in the middle of Europe should be worked out which would encompass even Hungary and would improve the situation there.

(h) Well, all I can say is that we thought only the best about the Hungarian emigres. We thought that they were doing a great job to help the country, to promote its interests among the Western powers and West^{ern} peoples, and idealized many of them. It was quite a surprise to many of us when we came out of Hungary and found out what the real situation was.

(1) It would be most important to introduce a bi-cameral parliament in order to give popular representation and a multi-party system. It would be equal^{ly} important to undo the excessive centralization of economic life, to improve upon the solution of the land question and by this I don't mean to return all land to the former owners but to regulate land ownership in accordance with the conditions prevailing in certain localities, to dis~~pose~~^{bank} the collective farms and perhaps encourage voluntary cooperatives. With respect to the return of industrial property to former owners a much more difficult situation would arise because there was after all a great deal of investment by the state and even where former owners could be identified it would be difficult to say to what extent the worth of the factory was due to the original building or to state investment during the past few years. Some solution for this would have to be found.

(2) Yes, of course. There is a necessity for political parties. Everybody must have a right to belong to or found a political party and the only exception I would make in this respect ~~was~~ would be the rebirth of an extreme right wing arrowcross type of party based on concepts of national socialism as renewed during the war. It was after all the responsibility of the arrowcrosses that Hungary was exposed to a Communist infiltration and conquest and this kind of party would have no place in Hungary. However, a Communist

Party, especially of a national communist orientation would be welcome and could be permitted to operate.

- (3) Yes, of course. Everybody must have the right to express himself freely and it would not be necessary to prohibit anti-state or rather anti-government statements and expressions. It is difficult to say whether one can permit expressions that undermine the interests of the state itself, of the society itself. There has to be some kind of a limit beyond which one cannot go. I believe that this is the case in all democracies, even in England and the United States. You cannot say everything to damage the interests of the state without punishment.
- (4) Yes, of course. One must have the right to participate in public meetings, the right of association and with respect to your question as to whether one can permit a kind of meeting which would attack the government are My own feeling is that there are certain things that one can permit and others that one cannot. In my opinion an armed revolution aimed at the overthrow of the government is permissible if the majority of the nation supports it. This was the case in 1956, too, and if a government, no matter what type of government, permits the situation to develop in which the majority of the people spontaneously support an armed rebellion against it then it is perfectly all right to have it.

that the bureaucracy tends to grow to tremendous extent and it would be better to have this run by private enterprises.

- (7) Yes, I think to some extent even light industry might be socialized.
- (8) I do think that planning must be reduced and decentralized. After all even the Russians are doing that now for whatever reason. The idea of planning is not bad but in practice it leads to a tremendous degree of centralization and bureaucratic procedure. Plans and planning ought to be done only to the extent to which the national welfare, national economic welfare, demands it. For example, certain factories ought not to be permitted to produce an item for which there is no market, which is economically not viable, and which would in fact perhaps damage the living standard of the people in general.
- (9) Yes, of course, the state must not interfere in all types of human activity, in daily life, and I would say that the family life, the freedom of movement of people belong to these categories.
- (10) Yes, the citizen has certain duties toward the state. I would say that in general any legislation that is passed by a duly elected parliament which is supported by the

majority of the people, that is any measure that is taken on the basis of a majority consent must be obeyed by the citizen. It is his duty to act in accordance with this legislation. As to the duties of the state toward the citizen I would say that it is important to assure that he is in safety and by this I mean essentially his physical safety, the safety of his person and his property. Law must be protected and people must be certain that ^{they} will not wantonly be exposed to some kind of transgressions on the part of anti-social elements.

- (11) I do think that ~~was~~ the medical attention received by the people in Hungary improved considerably during the past ten years and many more people were able to afford medical services although it was not exactly pleasant to go to the clinics run by the trade unions and when one could afford it one would still go to a private doctor. Nevertheless a large medical service did improve. There were ~~large~~ a large number of doctors in many more places than before and socialized medicine is on the whole a good thing. It would probably be good to retain it.

- (12) Yes, definitely more people had a chance to go to the movies, to theater, to concert than before. More people could afford to go. That was very important, and more people went because as I told you before this form of entertainment was a welcome relief from the drudgery of

daily life and from the incessant torrent of political indoctrination and lectures that the Communist Party tried to force upon the people. So I repeat that more people used to go to the movies, the theater, to concert than ever before.

(13) It is difficult to answer this question. It depended on people, on social groups. On the whole 1956 was a better year with respect to food supply than previous years. In 1946 the country had not yet recovered, in 1950 the country lived under terrible pressure.

(14) It is also difficult to say whether people dressed better than ~~before the war~~ prior to the war. Some people did and others didn't. On the whole clothes were very expensive. A suit cost 2,000 Forints and people didn't earn on the average more than from 800 to 1,000 Forints. In 1946 it was still possible to do a great deal, especially in the cities, on the black market. In 1950 the situation was very grim ~~and~~ and it remained grim to the very end.

(15) Undoubtedly industrial production increased considerably in Hungary since 1945. The country was exploited. A great deal of the natural wealth and of the industrial product was taken abroad ~~and~~ at ridiculous prices but industrial production increased and the industrial base

was expanded as against the pre-war situation.

- (16) I do think that the workers councils must be retained or have to be retained. They play a very important role. The trade unions must be independent of the state and as I said the factories that are not returned to their private owners ought to be led by workers councils of some form elected from below.
- (17) The kolchoses would have to be dissolved. There is no basis for them. But one would have to revise the land reform quite thoroughly in accordance with the situation ~~existing~~ prevailing in various regions. The land reform would have to be reviewed as I said, because the last time a proper count of the land was taken was in the 19th century. Property should be returned to their former owners but there should not be real large holdings and the upper ~~existing~~ limit of the holding should be determined in accordance with the quality of the land and the type of crop in accordance with the situation in different regions. There should not be one overall norm throughout the country. Yes, of course, agriculture should receive state support whenever and in whatever form that is needed. The machinery that should be available for agriculture might either be sold to private owners if their property is big enough or might be held in joint ownership by freely formed cooperatives.

- (18) The relationship between state and church should be based about the same way as it existed in the past. What this means in fact is the church should be independent of the state. Naturally the church should abstain from all types of political activity and interference ~~in~~ in political affairs. / I really don't know whether the state used to support churches by subventions. So I could not answer whether this should be continued or not. / As far as I am concerned, well, I am not particularly religious and don't go to church very often. I feel that religious instructions in ~~church~~ schools should be continued, that ~~there~~ there should be church-run schools and / I myself would send my children to denominational schools if possible.
- (19) I don't believe in the idea of collective guilt. My feeling is that party members should be judged on their own merits or demerits. The members of the DISZ were of course all on compulsory basis so that nothing should be done to them except to the very top leadership possibly. The AVH should also be judged on its own merits. There should be no clear-cut collective preceeding against them. As to what happened to the members of these groups during the revolution I can only say what you have already heard, that some excesses against members of the AVH were committed. I personally don't know any case where a party member or a DISZ member or official would have been manhandled by the crowd.

(20) The events in Hungarian history that have had world-wide significance include, of course, the revolution of 1948. I think one should say that the struggles of the Hungarians against Eastern invaders especially the Turks, are also of tremendous importance because they saved the Western world against the intrusions of Eastern forces. The battle of Mohacs is perhaps an outstanding monument in this respect. Finally looking further back in the past, I think the adoption of Christianity in itself is an event of world-wide importance because it was through that that Hungary became an Eastern outpost of Western Christianity. I think that Hungary has contributed to Western culture in very many ways. In the first place in literary matters, in the second place in technical matters. I think that the poet Petöfi was among the first five poets of all times I believe the British consider him as such and as I have said in the intellectual sphere also in music the Hungarian contribution has been a very, very great.

(21) My feeling is that it is possible to speak of a distinct Hungarian national character. I think the very world view of the Hungarians is somewhat distinct. He tends to be a light-hearted guy, he is likely to be full of enthusiasm and he lacks a certain deliberateness in his thinking and demeanour that may characterize some other peoples. He certainly differs from the German, the Russian, and the

American. I would say that he lacks the tidiness, orderliness, regimentation, and willingness to submit to authority that characterizes the German. He also lacks the German sense of economic values and the incredible insistence of the German to accumulate wealth and sit on his pile of material goods. I would say that he differs from the Russian, because the Russian has an entirely different mentality. One might say that the Russian is an imponderable human being. By this I don't mean that he is shrewd and deliberate and calculating but there is a depth to his character which is unfathomable. They can be dark, mysterious, and menacing. They can be very different, too. It is impossible to say what they think, what they feel. This creates a somewhat unpleasant situation. I would say that the Hungarian differs from the American in terms of the practical pragmat^{ism} that characterizes the thinking of the American. With respect to differences in character between or among Hungarian social classes I would say only that every region has its own particular characteristic and in very many rural areas you find quite distinct ~~xxxx~~ character traits as from others. Differences between social classes certainly existed before 1945, in fact they were quite a great deal more pronounced than at the present time.

(22) There has been no democratic or actually good government

in Hungary at any time in the 20th century with the exception of the government that was in power during the last stage of the revolution. Perhaps if one had to find a ~~more~~ "best" government I would say that the government of Paul Teleki of 1940 was the most popular and best. Before 1945 the social and economic differences in Hungary were very great and after all this gave the Communists a talking point which they exploited quite skilfully after 1945. The period between 1945 and 1948 was naturally a great deal better than the period following. There was no outright dictatorship, no political oppression of the sort that existed after 1948 and while it was obvious to some people what was in store many people saw the rosier side of life at that time and in general it was an incomparably freer and better period than what followed.

(23)

It seems to me that the political ^{frontiers} ~~markings~~ do have ~~an~~ ^{an} ~~importance~~ ^{importance} just as well as the economic frontiers do. It would be important to work out some kind of solution in the Danube valley. In my opinion, however, to work out a really peaceful^{ly} and ^{utopian.} generally satisfactory solution in this area is ~~impossible~~. The national antagonisms are quite considerable. They exist perhaps under the Communists to a lesser extent than before but they are so sharp that they would make real peaceful cooperation in this area very difficult.

- (24) Of course, Hungary has peculiar problems because of its size. I really don't know what to say about the possibilities of solving them. Every small country that neighbours on a big country must take the larger one in account in its calculations. Much as one would wish one cannot disregard the disposition and the very existence of the bigger country. I could not tell you what a plan for the solution of Hungary's specific problems might be. The revolution brought forth the slogan of independence, neutrality, and freedom from Soviet interference. In internal affairs this did not necessarily mean that there would not be some sort of friendship with the Soviet Union. Perhaps that is the basis for Hungary's future.
- (25) I believe I have answered that in a previous question when I characterized the Russians, as opposed to the Hungarians.
- (26) Marxism was in many respects an outgrowth in Capitalistic developments in the 19th century. In many ways it seems to me that Marxism, Marxist ideas, and Marxist movement have brought about the development in capitalism much for the better. By this I mean an appreciation of social problems. There was also much in Marxism that was false. What I have in mind is especially the labor theory of value. Stalin changed or falsified a great deal in Marxism and even Lenin had changed a great deal in it by adding

revolutionary components that did not exist in that form before. What is objectionable in modern Marxism as changed by Lenin and Stalin is not only the labor theory of value but the notion of class struggle and all that follows. I find it very difficult to say whether it is possible to be Marxist and democrat at the same time. I suppose that it is possible to mix the two. As to the meaning of democracy or being a democrat I guess that to live and let live and to respect the other persons' opinions are the most important traits. Hungary never experienced real democracy. As to Tito I would say he is a Marxist rather than a democrat, but a special type of Marxist who wants to be independent of the Soviet Union.

- (27) This of course relates to Tito ~~himself~~ himself. I would say that a national Communist is someone who wants to be independent of the international Communist organization, of the centralized system of controls exercised by Moscow. I would also say that a national Communist is one who does not wish to exercise proletarian dictatorship as it exists in the Communist controlled countries but is willing to accept a multi-party system. This, of course, puts a particular light on Gomulka who happens to have some of the characteristics I mentioned but not some of the others. I have not seen national Communism in practice so that I could not really pass on its merits. I do think that there were some Communists who were good Hungarian patriots.

(28) It is very difficult to say what would have happened after the revolution. I think that Nagy Imre would have remained at the head of the government until election time. I do think that the political situation would have changed radically. It is merely possible that the elections would have confirmed Nagy as Prime Minister despite the fact that the Communist Party itself would have received only a very small percentage of the votes.

(29)

(a) Good.

(b) Bad.

(c) Bad.

(d) Bad.

(e) Bad.

(f) It is difficult to categorize.

(g) Bad.

(h) Bad.

(i) Bad.

(j) Bad.

(k) Bad.

(l) Bad.

(m) Bad.

(n) Bad.

(30) I think that in an election a christian party of some sort would probably come out victorious. As I have said

this does not rule out the possibility that Nagy would remain a very popular personality.

(31)

- (a) More.
- (b) More.
- (c) Less.
- (d) Less.
- (e) Less.
- (f) Difficult to say.
- (g) More.
- (h) Less.
- (i) Less.

(32) Of the above listed social groups all had a better deal before 1948 than after 1948.

(33)

- (a) Interests are opposed to one another.
- (b) Possibly their interests are in harmony.
- (c) Interests are opposed.
- (d) Interests are opposed.
- (e) Interests are opposed.
- (f) This is a difficult proposition. I suppose their interests are opposed.
- (g) Interests are in harmony.
- (h) Interests are opposed.

- (1) Interests are opposed.
- (j) Interests are opposed.

- (34) My only fears about the US policy prior to my leaving Hungary were that the United States did not help us sufficiently.

- (35) It is unimaginable that anybody would fight on the side of the present regime in a war.

- (36) The answer is no.

- (1) The respondent engaged interviewer in a discussion about the basis and correctness of American policy. Respondent's opinion of these discussions was that they were exhaustive and covered a lot of territory.
- (2) Respondent had no definite ideas as to what might have been left out in our discussions. He was uncertain as to his desire to go back to Hungary.
- (3) Respondent suggested a number of names, of people who might serve as useful interview material. Names are in card file.