

As an old Social Democrat, I was considered unreliable ever since the Communist takeover. I was not eligible to work in a key position even as a laborer and thus they did not let me work in the foundry. A friend of mine was the party secretary and he showed me the instructions relating to my job restrictions. So, instead, for years I ~~digged~~^{dug} and shoveled, working on the construction of the new foundry which was expected to produce 80 percent of all automotive castings used for ~~equipment~~^{vehicles} produced in Hungary. This foundry was also part of the Győr Waggon Plant, which was later renamed the Wilhelm Pieck Works. They hoped to construct ten electro-ovens in this foundry, but to begin with we built two. There were also four ovens making grey castings.

Once this foundry started operating, I was made an emptier: the man who breaks the moulds around the castings once ~~it~~^{they} had cooled. I was also made a foreman of the construction gang once, but as soon as the party bigwigs found out, I was fired, even though I myself was wielding a shovel along with the men I supervised.

That was when I got my first job in the foundry thanks to the MEO chief, who stood up for me. So the personnel director got me into the foundry and though he was jailed in 1955, they let me stay after that. At first I was asked to become payroll section manager, a job which sounded very much like ~~KN~~ a political deal. So I declined it and finally got the job -- a physical activity, yet with a technical role.

In February 1954, I became an examiner of automotive castings. Since each piece was tagged with a ticket X and a number, I had to inspect them by sight just as it left the hands of the emptier. From the foundry it was sent to the warehouse, from where it was being shipped to all factories manufacturing vehicles. Our customers included Szigethalom and Csepel, the Győr automobile factory, which used to produce the Rába trucks, but now produces Diesels. We also shipped to Icarus and the Mátyásföld autoparts plant. We also shipped to the Optical Works, Ganz, the Jobbágy mass goods plant. This last means ammunition, The official name for which is mass goods.

After a second more exhaustive X inspection at the warehouse, we made sure that only good pieces left the plant. However, if later during the finishing process at other plants unsatisfactory pieces were found, someone was sent out from our plant to investigate the claims for replacement and to determine whether the damage occurred before or after the casting was received by the finishing plant. If the fault of the foundry was legally established, the finishing plant had to be compensated in full. Of course, each such litigation would have ~~XXXX~~^{caused} several years' waiting time in the courts. So my job was first to eliminate defective pieces from getting shipped, and second, investigate all claims of supposedly defective shipments received. This work was done for MEO, as noted above, the Munkaellenőrzési Osztály, (Work Control Division).

The percentage of defective products was amazingly high: 23 to 25 percent of our total production was refused on the first inspection (meanwhile I have found out that the same comparable percentage in the United States is 0.5 percent and in Western Germany 3 to 5 percent). In Hungary the officially authorized percentage of defective castings was to be 5 to ten percent. Of the 75 percent then shipped, perhaps 35 to 45 percent was rejected by the manufacturer of the end product. I was then sent out regularly to investigate and determine for our own purposes just how much of the liability was with us and how much of the damage was caused during finishing the casting in the finishing plant. As a rule of thumb, I usually accepted half of their claim and rejected the other half, which kept both them and us quite satisfied and avoided legal litigation. Frequently the rejects were used by the manufacturer in producing trucks for domestic use, in which case we gave them a price allowance. Other times we took the ~~XXXX~~ defective casting back and resold them to a truck maintenance company, called Autóbontó, which kept the domestic truck fleets in operational ~~XXX~~ condition, the so-called TEFU company trucks.

In fact, there was a string of companies working with raw materials or half finished products which were refused by manufacturers of export equipment. At times one could resell rejected products a couple of times.

I recall that in one instance I suggested the ordering of a difficult-to-produce ~~XXXX~~ steel part of ~~XXX~~ a motor, to be

ordered in East Germany. The price charged was \$10 per 100 if we guaranteed ten thousand units. Subsequently the plant figured it out that by producing the item at home on the basis of 70 percent rejects, they would still manufacture the item cheaper domestically.

To indicate the volume of our production and the refused castings, I should think that we received from the Csepel auto plant alone about 140 to 150,000 forints claim every other week.

Since about 1952, we started receiving the new crop of Soviet-trained engineers in Hungary. Their main duty, as it turned out to be, was not primarily technical competence, but they were used as political controllers in the plants. The interesting proof of this is that the names of such engineers were listed not in the heavy industry's ministry like all other engineers', but they were listed in the Ministry of Interior, where security control was of course the major project. These engineers were used as confidential representatives and if any mishap or possibility of sabotage occurred, it was them the AVH got in touch with. And if further investigation was to be followed up by the secret police, it was on the basis of these people that they were carried out.

Security, of course, was the major problem of the Hungarian regime. During my many visits to plants using our castings, I had occasion to see the Jobbágy Mass Products works. As noted above, mass products is the official Hungarian word for ammunitions. At this plant, located near Hatvan, ~~where~~ I had considerable

difficulties in getting inside. In this plant there were three gates. The regular plants police took me from the first gate, and after checking my identity, let me in through the second gate. From the second gate they called the office of the plant to ascertain that I was expected and at the third gate I received a final scrutiny before I was let in, but even once inside, two armed guards followed me five steps away, wherever I went. By 1954, great changes have ~~been~~ taken place in some of these absurd regulations and in Csepel munitions plant no one stopped me at all when I went making my calls.

The thing the government was mainly afraid of was sabotage, but actually the sabotage did not take place in the factories so much as voluntarily or involuntarily in the ministries. During 1953 or '54, they decided that in order to increase our export production, a new steel ~~plant~~ ^{hearth} would have to be built for our foundry. The project received top priority to the extent that they imported labor from Stalintown, the pride and joy of the ~~the~~ Hungarian regime, and its greatest propoganda card. All materials were supplied and the ~~plant~~ ^{hearth} was to be dedicated on April 4, 1955. The work progressed rapidly and they also built the gas plant which was necessary to feed the ~~plant~~ ^{hearth}. At the trial it turned out that the ~~plant~~ ^{hearth} could not produce a high enough temperature to make steel. They blamed that on the poor quality of coal and said that when regular shipments of Polish coal will arrive, the ~~plant~~ ^{hearth} will work properly. So on April 4, at the official dedication, the ~~plant~~ ^{hearth} was set to work

with the right kind of coal and during the ceremonies the entire *hearth* exploded. A major investigation was started immediately, the *hearth* was then repaired, but after two further trials ~~the~~ *it* was abandoned and we never got any steel out of it.

At times it is possible that sabotage is caused involuntarily by party-appointed idiots who may be reliable communists, but are incompetent engineers. However, in this instance we were faced with sabotage by skill and knowledge. I think this was planned intelligently.

²As noted above, our own operations at the foundry worked with about 23 percent ~~of~~ defective castings and this was considered adequate. Once for some reason we brought this percentage down to 11 percent, which is one percent above the authorized maximum of defective castings. On the other hand, we had so many export orders that we could cover our other mistakes or have the domestic economy absorb it. We shipped cranes, fork lifts, bridges, passenger railroad cars to Russia, Rumania, and Egypt. We shipped excellent cranes to the USSR and I know for certain that they were produced at the initially calculated loss of 160,000 forints per crane. Engineer friends of mine in charge of estimating production costs assured me that this was the fact. I know we lost 187,000 forints per railroad passenger car. On the passenger cars we had a calculated loss of 187,000 forints per car and ~~we~~ we produced about 100 to ~~XX~~ 112 cars per month. In order to match these

demands and the low prices, they had to tighten our work norms and in addition they hiked the prices on the sales to the West. We were competitive with Western Europe because of the low wages in Eastern Europe. An air conditioning technician had to be imported from Western Europe to provide for air conditioning installations on some of the railroad cars, but we never found out his wages. It was, however, enough to see ~~it~~ that they cooked meals separately for him in the plant cafeteria and he ate in a separated area. The plant paid for part of our meals in the plant cafeteria and I could buy a meal for 60 fillers in the plant restaurant, but I would have had to pay a forint and a half in a restaurant in town. As a laborer I made 2800 forints, which was quite high pay, but this included 35 percent premium and this ^{had} ~~was~~ a ~~the~~ peculiarity of its own: if I accepted fewer rejects, I got a higher premium. So the stimulant was to make me accept as few rejects and insist on most material being acceptable. Of course, on my field trips inspecting rejects I also collected 31 forints per diem plus the hotel plus the road fare expenses. We never thought that life under the Russians would be very good, though from 1945 to 1948 we had a good life. It was only Rakosi's attempt "to put the country on its feet" that they started the work contests in 1949, which they used to introduce and to establish work norms. Once the work contest winners' quotas were used as norms, the entire production apparatus was keyed to such norms. These norms

represented a handful of people who overfulfilled their quota to 150 to 300 percent, and this norm was established as the average of 100 percent. Thus if the worker worked more, he still made only the same money he earned before.

A typical Stakhanovite created by the new work contests and work norm systems was Odon Ferenci. He was a newly retrained caster who came to the foundry only in 1949 and as a new man who also wanted to get ahead, he was the one who could be recruited to become a Stakhanovite. Actually, Stakhanovites were the results of publicity campaigns carefully laid out and not spontaneous overfulfillment of quotas by enthusiastic workers. Ferenci was a drunkard, he was stupid, and he had a weak character. Since none of the older foundry men could be had to cooperate, they pushed Ferenci ahead "to set the example." By devious means he was made to produce 600 percent of his quota, became a Stakhanovite, and even received the Kossuth Prize, which meant the tidy sum of 30,000 forints.

Characterization of Respondent.

Respondent is an outstanding representative of the small class of people in Hungary, the highly skilled technical specialist worker endowed with good common sense and sound judgment, and devoted to a liberal philosophy of Social Democratic trade unionism. A printer by training, he seems to have been intelligent enough not only to have been a highly successful member of the Social Democratic Party in Győr, but, more important yet, "to get away with it" under the Communist regimes after 1949. He was intelligent enough to stay clear of trouble, which his political affiliations in the past presaged for him under the Communists. Obviously, the line between compromising oneself and defending one's principles in the hostile society is a very very thin one, but presumably respondent succeeded in staying on it. To have been an active Social Democrat in Hungary throughout the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, without selling out or else going to jail or getting into trouble, seems like a well-nigh impossible task. Apparently respondent succeeded in this task, for even now he sounds very sensible, intelligent, measured, and reliable.

A thumbnail sketch of the respondent's background should facilitate understanding why he was selected president of the Győr Revolutionary Council and what kind of a person he is.

My mother was a widow at 28 years of age and I was only 16 months old. She had lost her husband and my two brothers within a 3 months period. My older brother and I grew up therefore under some poverty and when I was in school my mother took sick and I had to go to work as a laborer. I was in my early teens when I left school. My brother became a merchant and when an opening at a print shop occurred I started out as a printer's apprentice to follow in my father's trade. I can say I belonged to the labor class and in my youth I have seen both hatred and love. In 1935 I was drafted to the army and during my first week in the army my new company commander, a captain, pointed me out to the rest of the company "look at this man, this is what a Communist looks like". His definition was based on the fact that I was a Social-Democrat and I refused to participate in the pre-military training called leventá^E. In spite of this occurrence he got to know me by and by and finally he gave me a desk job. We grew to be good friends and he had a bad conscience about our initial meeting. In order to compensate me somehow for the injustice done, ^hHe kept me out of soldiering and I became company clerk.

Ever since then I never had to attend drill. One day he informed me that I was going to be transferred and I begged him not to let me go. However, it turned out that a Lieutenant Colonel needed a printer and then I was glad to get back in my trade. This Colonel liked me very well also and wanted me to stay in and make the army my career. I had no taste for it and I threatened with suicide if he insisted. So he gave in and let me go. He got me out of several tight spots I managed to get myself into and I always valued his friendship. I was recalled to duty in 1939 for six weeks but through a Lieutenant I knew I bought my way out for 200 pengös and I was discharged. I expected to be called up in 1941 but somehow they missed me and I was not recalled till 1944. Until that year I worked as a printer in Györ, my home town. In 1944 I was called up, but instead of being sent to the Russian front I was assigned to the replacements unit from where I was transferred to the military command of the Györ wagon plant. To be honest I got there with some ~~money~~ ^{pull} and once we were threatened to be sent into combat my commander got me off war service and had me transferred into the airplane plant as a clerk. I stayed there till the end of the war. I had trouble with the arrow-cross people while in the airplane plant and in February 1945 they arrested me and held me till March 28th in jail when the Russians

liberated us at last. In 1945 as an old Social-Democrat I was asked to help to restore the political balance against the Communists and thus I worked at the police force. At the same time I was secretary of the Győr section of the Social-Democratic Party. I was among the first to be excluded from the Party on March 2nd, 1948, when the merger of the two parties got on the way. I was in a bad shape then without a job and without any future. Somehow I got a job as a salesman and for a time I really cleaned up. By 1949 I was back to the wagon plant as a laborer and the Communists didn't even let me become a laborer gang foreman until February 1954. After 1948 I was accused by the AVO of many things and they tried to force an admission that I was spying for the West. For a year they kept after me trying to gain me as an informer since they knew that people trusted me. They wanted me in two ways: At first to spy on fellow Social-Democrats and later at the wagon plant the local ~~and~~ police asked me to keep an eye on the workers. While harassing me they used threats, beatings, promises, ~~alternatingly~~, alternatingly. Even since then I had a good opportunity to find out about the true and the double-dealing Social-Democrats - my old friends. They ^{re} were spied ^s even in our smallest meetings and tightest circles. We averaged one spy out of every four ex-Social-Democrats. After February 1954 I worked as an analyst of rejects

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in the division of automotive castings of the wagon plant. This fascinating job taught me a lot of our production inefficiencies and gave me an insight into the operations of a dozen major Hungarian factories. I should like to return to this later in the interview.

Till the 25th of October the old regime continued without any changes or upheavals in Győr. Nobody was replaced. On the 25th the mob of Győr demonstrated, marched around somewhat aimlessly first to Party headquarters and later to the jail. The AVH fired into the mob on both occasions and two people got killed on each place. At the jail they tried to free political prisoners and when some AVH reinforcements arrived on a truck the mob got hold some of the hand grenades left on the truck and quickly smoked the AVH out. By then the AVH had fired at the unarmed mass when the green and the blue AVH still wanted to protect the jail and Party headquarters from the mass. When they saw the helplessness of the situation against the great numbers they gave up. On the 25th it was mainly the riffraff which demonstrated and the workers didn't get into the act until the following day.

In the morning of the 26th I was called by the railroad people to organize a strike in the wagon plant. They urged us since they striked that we should join them. Immediately I got in touch with the textile plant and the machine tool plant and other industries in town and we

accepted the 16 points of Budapest and called for a demonstration in the sense of those demands at city hall for 10 a.m. the same morning. The demonstrations were quickly organized on the basis of the May Day parade celebrations: Just like then so now the workers assembled in front of our plant and marched to city hall in one huge column. Once there a man named [REDACTED] and an engineer named [REDACTED] asked me to go with them into the building. Three of us went up and we discussed the next steps we should take. I was determined to accept any position only if I could pick my associates. We discuss the 16 demands and accepted them one by one. To beat us to the punch the Communist city administration under the leadership of the county secretary already formed a revolutionary council in the morning of the same day. We informed them that their presence was not desired and that their task was through until they would have a chance of getting re-elected at the next free elections. We formed a new revolutionary council and I proposed its title, the Győr City Revolutionary and Workers Council. On the balcony of city hall we all appeared and were elected by the people milling in the square. I was elected president of the council. With the agreement of a committee I picked my assistants to run the city. The council was composed of 80 percent worker and roughly 20 percent intelligentsia members. The 20,000 people in the square

were informed on loudspeaker of the various choices and we all introduced ourselves personally on the balcony so anyone could comment or oppose the selections. Indeed two were actually rejected, one of them for he was believed to have been an ex-Arrowcross member. ^{TT}Aszila ^{AA}Szigeti who joined us later was also accepted in the same manner as well as a Benedictine teacher. Still on the same day we dissolved the personnel division, the trade unions, and the Party organizations and the section chiefs were dismissed and several were beaten up.

I right away gave instructions to the various plants in the city to form their workers' councils and we continually received messages of these being formed in all other towns. The councils had no program since they weren't planned, but since the Party organizations were destroyed they had to be substituted for by necessity to maintain order and to provide supplies, while their final aim was to develop an industrial democracy in Hungary, something on the pattern of 1945/47 as we knew it then. We were hoping that ultimately we would have our say through the workers' councils in both economic and technical matters in factory management. We talked a great deal about the Polish workers' councils and we talked day after day of this new invention. We kept getting inquiries from every part of the country as ^{to} what a workers' council is supposed to do? I told them that they are to take over

the functions of the trade union and the CP. In Győr the workers' council tried to protect the various Communist leaders and taking them in protective custody in a bunker. The man who was in charge of guarding them and who actually protected their lives on several occasions from mob violence has now been sentenced for nine years in jail. Aside from us in the city's political leadership, new plant managers were elected in the factories by the workers' councils; actually in my plant in the wagon works the old manager called Sandor Nani was re-elected. He was considered a strict man but a just one. I personally was on good terms with him but this didn't matter in his re-election.

On the 27th we contacted the government and kept in touch with the rest of the country for everyone was tremendously interested of what was going on in Győr. The various councils kept in inquiring at the city government to help them out with their problems. Since we became such a center and there was too much to do I proposed to find a man to share the burdens of my office. Soon ~~App~~^{TT}ila Szigeti was brought over by a group from the county house and I met the man for the first time in my life. He was suggested as head of the county council and we met on the 27th. I saw he was intelligent and he personally knew Imre Nagy and Erdei. He was to help me by sharing my work load and he promised to be a useful

man. He was a peasant party deput^y~~ee~~ and in the coalition days and later he became county chief of the Győr patriotic people's front and throughout these years he kept his place as a deputy in parliament. I kept the city council presidency and he was made county council president. After this I was frequently asked about him and to be quite honest I did not trust him completely. I had a reliable post office official tap his K-line telephone. Some think of him as a patriotic Hungarian and some have their doubts whether he sold out to the Moskovites. My suspicions were perhaps strongest when I surprised him at having telephone conversations with Erdei in Budapest; the conversations were so mixed up and strange that I thought something must be wrong. Also, of course, his friends were Communists or pro-Communists. As a result of my doubts and strange impressions I left the office at night with worry and on occasion spent the night right there afraid of a . As the Revolt seemed to succeed he gave the impression of being more and more reliable.

We sent several appeals to Imre Nagy particularly concerning various phone messages we received about Russian troops entering from the East into Hungary. We called the Budapest government's attention to these news but we were told every time that this is untrue propaganda. Szigeti called Imre Nagy and Erdei personally on

several occasions and in a way he represented more the young people while I stood mainly for the workers. Once I refused to let five truckloads of boys ~~go~~ go to Budapest in order to get butchered there. They were very angry with me but near the Pilis area AVH units were shooting at trucks and killing one truck load full of youths after another. One truck did go without permission and it came back bloody and empty. I also tried to defend the Revolution against the Arrowcross tendencies and whichever appeared I had them arrested. I felt my main mission to be to protect the unity and the purity of the Revolution. As a Social-Democrat my aim was somehow to work out a separate but neutral program with the Christian parties.

On the 27th I was informed that under the old economic system in the city the city provided 50 liters of milk a day for the children of the Russian families stationed in our area. I was informed that since the Revolution the milk shipments have been discontinued and I was asked to decide as to what to do. I immediately ordered the continuation of the milk shipments in the previous amount of 50 liters a day and in addition I sent some potatoes for the troops because I heard that they were short on food. This went on for three days and on the 29th the Soviet commander, a Lieutenant Colonel, Dr. Schwarz, inquired from the Hungarian army commander of the city, Major Geza Kresz, who was responsible for the

milk shipments. He said, he wanted to meet the person and talk to him.

We were expected at 7 o'clock in the evening of the 29th as my interpreter came, major Kress, and in addition I took along a journalist and a friend of mine who also spoke Russian to check Kress's interpreting. We got to the kaserne where the Soviet troops were stationed and we were received by an honour guard. Inside, in the court-yard, stood another guard and a Soviet band was playing. We met Colonel Swarz who was called by everyone Dr. Swarz and had an hour and a half conversation with him. We first talked of the MILK shipments and he expressed his gratitude. Then I told him of the Revolution and of its not being anti-Russian, but directed solely against the Communist suppression of the workers. I assured him that we wanted a democratic socialism in Hungary, and I urged him to realize that the Stalinist developments created an impossible situation. We then talked of the economic problems facing us. I inquired about the task of the tank units stationed in the Szántivány forests. He assured me that they were awaiting orders to leave but that they had no aggressive intentions against Győr. He also assured me that aside from the tank crews of the thirty tanks there were only four foot guards, guarding these and there

were no ground troops beside them. He urged us to keep the purity of the Revolution and he asked me to make sure that the Soviet memorials should not be offended anymore. He volunteered that the offensive acts against Soviet memorials hurt him personally also. I explained that the Revolution was so spontaneous and was so much without a plan that the mob lost control over itself and let go its emotions, but I assured him that we will rebuild these statues and monuments later. The gist of our conversation was that I tried to convince him of our honest and democratic intentions and in the end he warned me that in the future and independent Hungary should be truly independent and she should not depend on either East or West. In conclusion he promised to fully support the Revolution and not to interfere with it with the military power at his disposal. After the interview I asked him and got his permission to use this in conversation as interview material over the radio. Aside from this instance I did not interview any journalists or give any declarations; Szigeti who is a much better speaker made the various interviews instead of me. Dr. Schwarz also noted that on the first day of the Revolution, on the 25th, when he walked through town with two sub-machine gunned guards he saw people spit in his direction. He made it plain that he did not appreciate this. As a practical request

he asked me to protect the apartments deserted by the Russian families who had since moved into the kaserne and the following day we indeed inspected them together with a Russian officer sent by Schwarz. Surprisingly little damage was found and all apartments but one was locked up. In the one, that was broken open, ^A~~the~~ family had already [^]MOVED [^]IN but we promised to find them quarters elsewhere and they were to move out when the Russian families returned. Aside from this, there were no Russian soldiers in town at all on no occasions during the Revolution that I could recall. No Russian tanks were stationed any place in the city, at any time. On the 28th we had the funeral for the four people killed by the AVH in Győr. Either on that day or the next major Kresz asked me to go with him through the AVH barracks in town. A group of us toured the building and saw the sinister scene of AVH operation. I noticed some remarkable things there. Most impressive perhaps was the American constructed telephone control centre, as I was informed, purchased for 34 million forints. Apparently every telephone conversation from a Western nation with a Hungarian party was channelled through this central where the conversation was automatically recorded on tape. An engineer friend of mine, who came along with us, easily found the American markings on the equipment covered up or painted over. We also discovered a short-wave radio

station which was out of order but which, due to my insistence, was put in operational order the same afternoon. Downstairs in the basement we found a strange construction. Built snugly against the boiler was an oven that looked like a crematorium. It was just the size where a person could have been pushed in and it was apparently gasfired from below. Actually we were told it wasn't really used for that purpose but perhaps primarily to scare people with it. By being right next against the boiler it was immensely hot as it was. According to one of the men, who seemed to know his way about, if a woman was brought into the AVH building for sexual pleasures she was afterward cremated to avoid embarrassments and the spreading of unfavorable news.

Also on the 29th we scheduled a meeting for the 30th to which every revolutionary city council from Transdanubia was going to send representatives. They all looked to Győr as a second capital because it was the largest city in Western Hungary, where, due to the absence of fighting, a Revolutionary program seemed to develop more rapidly. To the various city delegations we offered truck transportation and to far away representatives from Eastern Hungary we even offered air transportation. This was possible because two training planes with their pilots were willing to pick up people and they actually did from Szeged and Miskolc.

Also by the 29th we have already prepared hand bells to keep the population posted on developments in the city and the country. I had a messenger who steadily brought news from Budapest and the Nagy government. In the evening he returned with news of an armistia^{ce} and on the basis of this, on the 30th, I asked ~~XXXXX~~ all plants to return to work. The workers and the worker's councils were suspicious both of me and the news of the armistia^{ce} so I urged ~~XXXXX~~ the worker's councils to send observers to Budapest to see whether the fighting had stopped. I felt that the situation was consolidated enough to start to return to work. At noon on the 30th the director of the radio, a man named Palis called me, at my office, he said, he was being forced by some AVH type people to get my permission to make a statement over the Radio. They said they came from Budapest and that the country was in trouble and it is high time that Györ took the lead and establish a counter-government independent of the Imre Nagy one in Budapest. Palis told them that he could not broadcast such a message without my personal approval, and he also said that they would have to get my approval. In lieu of broadcasting their message he volunteered to take their statement on a tape and get my agreement later. Meanwhile these characters left his office and were on their way to me, when Palis called me, letting me hear the tape. He also advised

me that I too would probably be forced to consent. We agreed then that if I consented over the telephone, over our private line, which connected the radio station with City Hall in spite of my agreement he would not send the message. Soon the trio showed up. It consisted of a man, presumably called Somogyvari, and two men who followed him. They were all three of them dressed in white laboratory coats splashed with blood. The blood however, looked like as it had been ~~with~~ splashed on with a spoon or some instrument and had not been part of some bleeding. The three were followed by a crowd of at least a thousand people shouting and being quite beyond themselves. The interruption was most inopportune because we were just preparing for the meeting of the Transdanubian delegation. As we were waiting for them the mob started to shout "we cannot trust this City Council either". By this time the three characters were forcing me at pistol point to approve the broadcast of their message. After some arguing I finally agreed, went to the phone and gave the message to Palis and the trio was satisfied. Downstairs Somogyvari started harranging the mob and by this time I had called out the Army units in town to protect City Hall with a tank unit. When they appeared, the mob gradually dissolved. Looking back at the event I am more and more convinced that this occurrence was a planned A H provocation to try to disturb the consolidation of the Revolution.

Besides that now it seems to me that an opposition government in Hungary would have played into the hands of those wanting Russian intervention. When the mob cleared out I took a car to the wagon plant and met there with the worker's council who were just in session. I told them of the events of the afternoon and with their urging I then called the army tanks to protect City Hall and to clear it for the meeting of the Transdanubian delegations scheduled for 4. Actually we rescheduled the meeting for 8 P.M. and now I think that the disturbance may have been aimed at partly at least to prevent our meeting. Around 8 o'clock I received a call from the Army that one of the trio was captured and available for interviewing if I wanted to see him. I talked to the man and investigated him: Instead of coming from the West as a would be "Western Imperialist Agent" he turned out to be a native of the city of Vac. He was a young man, aged 23 and he very much gave me the impression of an AVH bully. We immediately sent a messenger to Budapest and Vac to check on his data and found that he was truly from Vac where his family still lived. He was definitely not someone from a Western country or a refugee from there and this fact we have established beyond any doubt. I think the young man was let go the next day. That Somogyvari is not a reactionary from the West is clear, and later I heard that he is a resident of the town of Pököl who

in the first days of the Revolution went to Budapest and came from there to Győr. Already that afternoon at the wagon plant I announced that I considered this occurrence as a Communist provocation and this conviction has only grown in me since. The cheap trick of the Communists was that they insinuated that this Somogyvari was an emigree writer by the name of Vite~~n~~^{SE SE} Somogyvari who lived in the West.

By 8 or so the meeting of the Transdanubian representatives got under way. The meeting itself has grown in size and we had many representatives even from Eastern Hungarian cities. I opened the meeting with a short statement pointing out the purpose of our get-together and I was followed by Szigeti who gave the victory speech of the Revolution. We discussed plans or proposals for a West Hungarian government but in the end we agreed on five points in addition to the 16 of the Budapest students which we were going to submit to the Imre Nagy government as the basis of our political stand. The basic purpose of our get-together was to integrate our overall position and demands on the Nagy government so as to present a united front and so that we do not splinter or pester the government with individual requests and proposals. In the end it was decided that five of us were to go to Budapest on the following day, the very first, to see Imre Nagy. On the organization of the Transdanubian meeting I should note

that we asked for four representatives from each county and two each from each city. The city of Győr as the major center of these Revolutionary activities had four representatives. This Transdanubian Council then elected Szigeti as its president and myself as its vice-president. Next morning major Krec^{SZ}~~sa~~ came with me and the other four people went in another car to Budapest. I also took the opportunity to contact Miss Kethly in order to find out about the developments in the Social Democratic Party. I talked to her and later we went together to Imre Nagy. She was apparently repeatedly urged to found the Social Democratic Party but she refused unless and until the Party was permitted to join the international Social Democratic Organization in ~~the~~ the West. On this day the agreement was made and she announced the founding of the new Social Democratic Party. As it turned out, Imre Nagy refused to see other Social Democrats besides her. We had a most pleasant and enlightening meeting with Nagy and by this time the four representatives, namely one each from Veszprem, Miskolc, Pecs, and Mr. Szigeti and myself. I took a girl with me also from Győr who took shorthand notes of our conference. On this day, I felt, that Imre Nagy was a free man and he could accept our demands freely. He himself admitted to us that this was the first day that he had no AVH man around him. We told him that we worried about the messages pouring

in daily from the Eastern borders of Hungary concerning a Russian troop unit crossing. Nagy did not take it lightly but he was not very impressed. After our meetings we agreed that Kethly would pick me up the following day in Győr and we would go to Vienna to the meeting of the Social Democratic Parties underway there.

The Revolution brought out a number of very curious facts about a number of people. The most shocking and the most disheartening was that many of the AVH informers were not^w identified. I mentioned earlier that as an old Social Democrat they tried to force me into informing on other Social Democrats in Győr. I was successful in resisting these attempts but now I found out not all the Social Democrats did the same. A gymnasium teacher, by the name of Janos Gyimesi was the president of the Social Democratic Party organization of Győr from 1945 to 1948. Under the pseudonym of Gyarmati he has been an AVH agent throughout the past decade and received a 1,500 frts fee a month, just a bit in excess of his monthly salary as teacher. Unfortunately Gyimesi was my very best friend in the early fifties. Since last November I really learned to hate people and Gyimesi is responsible for this to a large degree. Udvaros, an old Social Democrat who was mayor of Győr in the late forties once towards the end of his career told me of all the party information and confidential material in order that as a younger man I may be

able to pass it on for future interest. I kept the information to myself except in 1952 I told Gyimesi because I felt that he as the top man of the Social-Democratic Party should have the information as well as myself. I didn't see Udvaros until the Revolution when he was let out of jail. He then considered me an informer and a spy because the information which he said he never told anyone but me was handed to him by the AVH during his investigations. There was no doubt in him that I must have betrayed him. After some thinking I cleared the situation with Udvaros and told him that Gyimesi was the man I confided the party information and secrets in. Another informer of the Social-Democratic camp was Geza Gardonyi. He was once for a short time editor of the Györi Munkas, the Györ Social-Democratic weekly. He, too, prepared memorandums on me under the pseudonym of Gabor. He was quite an able man, a great-grandson of the famous author. A third informer was a man called Kotormany. He was a printer by trade and also a Social-Democrat. His cover name at the AVH was Kucsera. According to good AVH practice several people reported on those under observation and one filed the report every three months and thus the AVH could check the accuracy of the reports by comparing them with each other. One man who was put on my track to spy on me came to me and told me about it. He was in a horrible position but he had the decency to tell

me. Several years ago a teacher came to our house in the evening beaten to a pulp who told us that he is being forced to spy on a neighbouring priest. He and I went to the priest that same night and talked over the entire problem giving both a chance to work out from this difficult position. Sometimes these informers overplayed their hand: Once we organized a card party and one of the four must have informed the AVH about it because a fifth showed up who never frequented our parties and who was not informed about it by any of us. It was quite plain that he was there sent out by the AVH and he felt most uncomfortable the rest of the evening. Three of us then were put to guard knowing that the fourth is somehow not quite reliable. Of course, we did not know who of these four was the informer. Now during the Revolution I had most of these people locked up in the army barracks; partly to protect them from the mob and partly to keep them for a later court judgement.

During chaotic times like in a revolution one cannot really trust anybody. Throughout my career in the Revolutionary Council I was suspicious of practically everyone and Szigeti was no exception. I am still not certain whether he was or whether he was not a reliable Revolutionary last fall. If he, too, betrayed the Revolution it would be a great blow to my remaining faith in men. I am not quite sure about him because as late as February

or March of this year, 1957, he led a peasant delegation to Bulgaria on a political trip although after his return he was arrested by the Kadar regime. While in prison he poisoned himself but he didn't succeed in killing himself and he was taken to the prison hospital. I understand on one occasion he jumped out of the second story window but again failed to die. Only a few weeks ago my wife informed me that Mrs. [REDACTED] informed her that her husband was killed. This is quite understandable because I think he would have been a very embarrassing witness in a possible trial of Imre Nagy.

Another interesting member of the Revolutionary City Council was Gabor Földes. He was a director at the Győr theater and in the past he had been known to be an enthusiastic Communist who never failed to come to Rákosi's defence. About a week before the Revolution a writer group in town invited Geza Hay, the Communist writer and Földes spoke at this meeting. On this occasion he insisted on the opposite on whatever he had been saying for years. He said he wanted to help in the development of a new ideology, something that Imre Nagy could develop. He noted that he was aware of the economic and political immorality of the regime in spite of the fact that he emphasized his being a Bolshevic[^] and a Communist. At this meeting he declared he saw the need for reform. Once the Revolution broke out he joined it the first day. On the 25th when

the mob was just a mob he joined it and led them first to Party headquarters and then to the jail while claiming to be a Communist who wanted a reformed Party. Frankly it was little unusual for a young man of Jewish descent like Földes to take such an active part in the Revolutionary developments. In fact I think he was the only one who was active in this manner. To go a little back I must say that after 1948 the people felt betrayed systematically by the Jews who joined the AVH in *Hungary* and accepted leading positions under the regime. Yet on this day Földes was elected to the Revolutionary Council of the City and the mass applauded him. He was the only Jew and the only known Communist on the Revolutionary Council. On the 28th a worker and student group came to me about Földes. They demanded to have him relieved from the Revolutionary Council and they claimed that not because of his Jewish descent or his political activities in the present but because of his past political life and his activities at the theater. I informed them that if Földes went I would, too, resign. They ^{agreed} ~~applauded~~ to this and saw me marching out the door. But just then they buttonholed me and held me back. They wanted to talk to me but they still didn't want Földes. In the end Földes came to me and he informed that to keep the peace he would prefer to get out of the picture and resign. This he did and I later heard that on his way out the mob wanted to lynch him as a double-dealing Communist

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who tried to infiltrate the Revolution. Földes was not very political, of course, in continually emphasizing that he was an ardent Communist even in front of the masses. He was on the other hand, responsible partly for the expedition to Magyarovar. He and some of the other actors prepared some Revolutionary plays and broadcasts on the radio. At the theater itself there were several personal changes and policy changes and they started playing again during the last days of October.

The impact of the Revolution on the various organizations varied greatly. On the 26th the army units in Győr elected their own Revolutionary Councils: Soldiers picked members of different ranks to represent them and these in turn kept in close touch with the workers' councils in the various cities. The army came over to the Revolutionary side on the 26th without even having been asked. The commander of the Győr troops who was military commander of the city of Győr, a Major Kress, was quickly reinstated as military commander under the Revolution. He was extremely helpful, a sane and sensible man who believed in the Revolution and its democratic socialistic goal and helped us in every way he could. His name appeared throughout this interview and although he was in close touch with the Soviet units he has now been executed for treason.

The police was an entirely different kettle of fish,

and aside from Major Elias all officers were released from duty and even to him we assigned a civilian shadow to check on his activities. His main task now became during the Revolution to form the citizen's guard. The police did not serve in any capacity until the 28th and after the 28th when we already had civilian guards who were armed by the army we instituted three men patrols, one civilian, one policeman and one soldier. These kept order and peace in the city. On the whole the police was considered less reliable than the army and this was due to several causes: For one the police was a voluntary organization while the soldiers were mainly drafted. The police had a different political education in which the main emphasis was placed on believing more and more demagogery. By and large the police was unpopular. Even if the AVH was a separate organization from the regular police between AVH and police leadership there was very close official and unofficial cooperation. In contrast with the army who joined the Revolution without being asked, the police was urged to join the Revolt on the 25th but they waited till late on the 26th till they finally joined it.

At the city administration all Party secretaries disappeared although the administrative section itself remained. Marko who was chairman of the executive committee of the city administration *before* came and offered his services. We gently advised him to look for other employ-

ment. We were also, however, provided with a full ^{list} of Party officials who were now unemployed ^{and} who sat in the city hall lobby, ~~and~~ begging for pensions or some compensation or a job. Finally we paid them off with a month's wages. I simply wanted to get rid of them because it was very inconvenient that they sat in the city hall lobby continually watching everything that was going on. The Party officers themselves were handed over to the new political parties now being formed. At the various plants the entire management remained in their jobs aside from the personnel chief and the committee chairman. The formation of the workers' councils followed approximately this pattern: A candidating committee was established to which each plant division sent its representatives. This then became the temporary workers' council in which all members had equal rank. At the wagon plant where there were many workers and many divisions we had over a hundred people in the workers' council who then among themselves elected representatives to deal and keep contact with the various management branches of the plant; these included the directorship, the chief engineer's office, and the chief accountants. The rest of the workers' council members kept contact with the people below them; the actual workers of the plant. Our basic aim was to establish autonomy within the plant. The new trade union which was formed left the Soviets' Trade Union Congress on the 27th

or 28th and at the same time it joined the international congress; the Trade Union Council. As I noted above on the 26th when we first formed these workers' councils we had no idea what they will become or how they should function.

The political tone developing throughout the country pointed in the first few days toward the aims and views of the 1945 to 1948 period. Later, aside from the major parties little fly-by-night groups tried to organize which at times included various extremist elements but these disappeared as fast as they were being organized when they noticed that the old major parties were reborn. All these little splinter groups with whatever views they represented were quickly dissolved as the Revolution became consolidated. What directions we were following becomes perhaps clear from the points that we added to the 16 original ones. These points were agreed upon by representatives from all Hungarian cities who came to our meeting and as such they can be considered a representative attitude of the entire country. One very important demand was that the Russians should stop the fighting and leave the country. Another one was that Rkosi, Gerö, and Farkas, that whole clique should be tried in open public trials. Another one was that the AVH must be dissolved. Another one was for the discarding of the old production norms and the introduction of new ones. Frankly I cannot think of what the last

demand was that we added. However, we had a meeting with all the workers' council chairmen to work out the future plans both economic and political and I asked Sebök, one of our trusted men to draw up some proposals for the 1st of November. Unfortunately by that day I was in Vienna and we never came to discuss further developments.