

My father was a ministerial secretary, in the Ministry of Finance. I am of Spanish origin. My great-grandfather, who was a railroad expert, was invited to participate in the building of the North Hungarian Railway, and afterwards he settled in Hungary. I was attending the gymnasium when the world war broke out; subsequently I was admitted to the Ludovika Academy, the Officers' Training School, and fought on the front, before the First World War ended.

After the war I entered the movie industry. I studied with Reinhardt ~~Reinhardt~~ in Berlin. Actually though, nothing was taught in the movie industry; everything had to be learned from scratch, by experimentation. For 17 years I worked in Vienna and Germany, making movies. In 1928, the Hungarian movie industry did not exist; I was one of the people who helped to create it. I proved in newspaper articles, etc., that the system of movie imports was not good and established a ~~lekka~~ 'boletta' system according to which ^{every} imported film had to buy a 'boletta' to support Hungarian movies. I helped to create the Hungarian movie industry which had a tremendous growth after 1939. I made 35 movies, some of very great value, for example, I made Sentenced to Life from the Eötvös novel, and Madonna of Kalotaszeg. I am made of ⁷ Kund K material, not of ersatz stuff. I made movies until December 1943, when the Germans kicked me out of the movie studio as a

"Socialist", because I told the producers, that I would not continue until the workers received over-time pay. I was sent to the Russian front as a ~~war~~^{newsreel} war-correspondent. At the end of 1944, I was ordered to Germany with my unit but I escaped, and stayed in Budapest.

Hungarian movie makers had a very great influence on the American movie industry; in fact the American movie industry was built on Hungarians. Korda, Kertész, Lukács, Zukor, etc. This shows that a little country like Hungary was able to contribute a great deal to the world. It is all the more sad that such a talented little country was not helped in her need.

I think the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a big mistake. The monarchy was a defending bastion of the West and should have been strengthened. America is responsible for Moscow's actions. It was the United States which brought the Soviet Union to power by not allowing Hitler to destroy Bolshevism first. Every sensible man in Hungary thinks this way. During the Revolution we thought that now the time had come when the West's mistakes regarding Hungary could be corrected. If the English had not attacked Suez, then today there would be no Russian soldiers in Hungary. Why couldn't the English wait? Radio Free Europe and the Voice of America acted very irresponsibly; they threw up people as leaders whom nobody had trusted before. The Hungarian people expected help in their struggle with almost religious fervor.

From 1945₂ to 1949₂ I wrote Hungarian sub-titles for American movies. During that period the Hungarian movie industry made only three movies, Radányi's- Somewhere in Europe, a movie made from a Tomási novel, which was immediately suppressed by the authorities and has not been seen since, and a comedy which was also found politically unsatisfactory by the regime. In 1948₂ the movie industry was nationalized and this ruined me, because those who made sub-titles for American movies were not ^{considered} ~~suitable~~ ^{suitable} for the creation of socialist-realist films. I didn't want to leave Hungary, feeling this would be cowardice; I thought the regime should be fought at home. I didn't get a job until 1949₂. Until then I made leather articles, and plastic holders, made of washed off old film. My wife, my mother and others helped me in this. I sold our products and made six to seven hundred forints monthly. In the past I had lived in a hotel but now I moved to a vacant store, where I lived until my escape from Hungary.

In 1949, I was summoned to the movie studio and asked whether I would be interested in making a comedy about the labor competition; they said that some of my old movies were shown at ~~the~~ ^{the} Party headquarters and that some people took ^{an} interest in my work. I said it was a beautiful task to make a movie, a musical comedy whose central theme is the labor competition. I said that I would undertake this task if they promised not to interfere in my work. I asked who the scriptwriters were. I was introduced to a young

Titan with flowing hair and told that the scriptwriter now didn't write the script, but had to make sure that the movie had satisfactory ideological content. These people kept calling me "Comrade Rodrigues" and after a while I said: "Don't call me Comrade because they will throw you out of the Party if they discover that Rodrigues is one of your Comrades." They looked rather astounded at this but merely said that I was quite a character. The young titan script-writer told me that his job was to watch the left side. (In a movie the left side means the actions, and the right side means the dialogue.) I asked him how he knew about this, and he told me that he had been reading old scripts. It turned out that he had been a tailor before he got his job at the movie studio. The country was ~~so~~ almost ~~so~~ without trained, experienced scriptwriters; of the old staff Szatmári was killed by the AVO and the others had been taken by the Arrow Crossists and the Germans.

Well, I agreed to do this movie and received 10,000 forints ~~in~~ advance. I was my own script writer, director and cutter. I wrote a very amusing script about the formation of a cultural group in a factory which decided to put on a play. There were some wonderful details in it; for instance, Kamill Feleky tried to learn dancing in it, by putting a musical score on the floor and following it. My movie was criticized because the Party secretary had no role in it. I said: "There would be something wrong with this movie if I embroidered "Party secretary" on the back of the actor's

pants and made him lean over so that the audience could see that he was the Party secretary."

You can't make a happy movie about the labor competition! I was told that my movie had no ideological content. I said that I was showing happy smiling youth in the factory. What more could one ask? I was told that I should place a sign above the young peoples' heads saying that they were happy about the 117 percent production in the factory. I said this is not what these young people are happy about; they are happy about spreading culture. I explained to them that the movie was full of all the things which they wanted. ~~However~~ ^{however}, the movie was never shown to the public. Later the same idea was stolen and made into "Life is Beautiful When You Sing". After this I was transferred to the newsreel and documentary film factory, to make educational movies.

The director of the nationalized Hungarian movie industry was Dezső Révai, a former passport photographer, who was a brother of Joseph Révai. His assistant was someone, not a lady but a female, who had been a toilet attendant in a movie, and rose to a district Party ~~agitator~~ agitator. She made her career by doing ^vvoluntary Party work, which simply means that she was an informer on the people in her district.

The work was done by trained technicians who got very ~~lx~~ little pay, while the leading positions went to Communists.

Some members of the pre-war staff sold out to the Communists.

Among them Marton Keleti whose father was a Social-Democratic leader, who was made the head of the Orient Film Factory which he sold to the Communists in 1948, or 1949. He received a five year contract with a salary of 70,000 forints per year. He was made a director. However, all his movies failed. There was Frigyes Bán, one of the older directors, whom I held in contempt because he made revolting KolKhoz movies. He received the Kossuth Prize 3 times. Félix Máriássy was worse yet. His brother had been Hungarian ambassador in Rome. Máriássy, also a director, was the Party's chief ideologist in the studio. The documentary factory was headed by a man called Révész, a former dental technician. The head of the popular science department, where I worked for a while, was a man named Gárdos, ~~xxxxxx~~ formerly [redacted], an AVO major. He is today assistant director of Hunnia. The head of the school instruction department, where I was later transferred, was György Deák, a former accountant. Through his intrigues, he got rid of a teacher who had worked in that department, doing an excellent job. The technical group was headed by another AVO agent, a certain Greg. Molnár, a former trainee in the factory, who had worked under me before the war, was the head of the newsreel department. He became a fanatic Communist in 1948, a truly convinced and intelligent Communist. He behaved very well during and after the Revolution. He lost all his illusions about Communism. He stated that the Hungarian newsreels will never

again lie. In 1957, he lost his job. As a rule the managers, the department heads and their deputies were not movie technicians but factory workers, shop keepers and what have you, who were loyal Party members.

The regime's new technical intelligentsia is incompetent and unsatisfactory because only a good káder counts in its selection. Approximately 70 percent of the young people to be trained must be of working class origin. Furthermore, the new training requires very minute specialization and therefore produces people who are limited in their interests and knowledge. The regime established a so-called Academy of Motion Picture Arts with a three or four-year course. Most of the teachers got their jobs through pull. They wanted me to teach there also, and I asked them: "Do you want me to teach the teachers or the students?"

I never became a Party, or even a Trade Union member, because the Trade Union was the motor of the labor competition. I simply refused, and that was that. I was needed to make documentaries, and so they didn't pester me too much. I ~~also~~ refused to attend the political seminars.

I used to have lengthy arguments with Gárdos who was the head of my department. At one meeting he said that he had been looking at the movies turned out by the factory and found them bad because some comrades here do not have the correct socialist-materialist views. I got up and stated that in one respect at least I followed

the teachings of materialist science. I said: "You, Gárdos, are descended from monkeys. In fact, they are showing your cousin in the zoo."

They wanted me to make a movie about the creation of the world. According to Soviet scholars this started with a sphere, a ball, before which there was a fog. Thus; primordial fog into ball. I asked Gárdos: "but who made the primordial fog?" Gárdos answered: "That simply was." I told him that the Catholic religion was against this. He answered that whoever tried to criticize this theory would be convinced of its truth at the AVO. Before Gárdos became the head of the popular science department, he was a furrier in Király Street. He realized that being a shop keeper, a furrier, had no intellectual and scholarly content, and therefore he changed jobs. ^{HP} According to the regime, Soviet science discovered everything. It was not enough to make a good, clear, precise educational movie about electricity. We also had to figure out how to add ~~xxx~~ the fact that the electric ~~xxx~~ bell was invented by Csengónov ~~x~~ (Bellof) who was Lenin's colleague and friend. I always insisted that I would ~~not~~ ^{not} put such ridiculous ~~x~~ things in an educational movie; youth was learning to build Socialism and should not be confused with such nonsense. My movies were called good but were criticised for their lack of political content.

I made a great many short movies, among them a movie about aluminum, and "Our Most Precious Treasure, The Child," an

a-political movie, which won a prize at the *Karlovy Vary* Film Festival. I was both a director and a script ~~nk~~ writer. ~~̄~~ In some months I earned as much as six to seven thousand forints. I received an average of 5,000 forints for writing a script; a script writer was paid 3,000 to 10,000 for a script but the department head of course gave the ~~best~~ ^{better-paid} scripts to his favorites. I also receive^d a monthly salary of 2,400 forints as well as premia for my movies. The premia came to 8,000-9,000 forints per movie.

Our factory often made educational movies for factories. For ~~instance~~ instance, we would ~~nk~~ receive a request from a factory or ministry to make a ~~nk~~ movie teaching the workers how to make cog wheels with less rejects. (The process of making cog wheels ~~nk~~ out of pressed steel was stolen from the English. I found this out from a book.) They called me in as director; I was ~~nk~~ very useful on this sort of thing because I ^{had} attended the Polytechnic Institute for two years, studying engineering. I was given technical books and materials in order to write the script. I wrote the script in one night and Gárdos argued with me about this. He said that I should not receive 5,000 forints for a script if I could write it so fast. My answer was that, on the contrary, I should get a premium for being first in the labor competition. I could build a whole ~~column~~ ^{column} in one night while other script writers could only make a brick. Then when the script was ready, we went out to the factory

to make the movie. The making of the movie was supervised by a committee. If I showed a worker who was ^{sw}sweating while working, I was told that he shouldn't sweat, because ~~if~~ the machine has eliminated all such effort from human labor. It was perfectly stupid. The Russian factory movies used to show workers in clean white shirts next to their machines.

The Party was constantly sending people over to fill jobs. Once an overdressed lady with crimson nails and lips, sent by Rákosi's ~~sex~~ secretariat, arrived in order to study film cutting. She walked into the room without a greeting and arrogantly demanded to be given a job. I said to her: "When you enter a room, you must say hello and introduce yourself." She said that these were bourgeois remnants and she couldn't bother with them. I asked her: "what do you know about movie making?" She said: "I came to get a leading position here." We put her to work, tried to teach her to cut and paste movies. She refused to paste movies, and insisted that she merely wanted to do cutting. She was the daughter of a rich Lipótváros jeweler. She was not a convinced Communist; she did it because it was good business. A fairly typical case. Today she is a department head in the studio.

Each movie was supervised, and had to be approved, by a factory committee. You can imagine the intellectual level of this committee; but what could you expect, when one of the assistant department heads was a baker's apprentice? Before the committee meeting, the

director or department head called together the committee members to a meeting which was attended only by Party members. I found out what took place at ~~the~~^{these} preliminary meetings through the grape-vine. The department head would say: "Remember, the person who made this movie cried when Stalin died. The movie is not so good, but ... You will get up spontaneously, and say 'I was enthralled by the thought that...'" Then the roles were divided, and the members rehearsed until they had it all letter perfect. Sometimes, however, they forgot their roles and then there was a scandal at the committee meetings. Sometimes the critic couldn't even say what the movie was about. I was present at these committee meetings; at one of them, when the members behaved more stupidly than usual, I said: "I believe these people belong to the Fifth Column serving the West; they are members of an un-intelligence service, sent to us to harm the building of Socialism."

At one of the Committee meetings which was evaluating Homoki-Nagy's latest nature movie, I got up and said that I thought it was a very good movie but it would be a good idea to add a scene in which a worm crawls out from underground, looks around and seeing nothing crawls back. The next day it comes out again and when it looks across the Danube it sees that overnight Stálinváros had been built^t. It turns to a squirrel and says: "My goodness, yesterday there was nothing here. Isn't the regime wonderful?"

After the Committee meeting the movie was shown at the Ministry

of Culture, under which the movie studios belonged. Here they invited experts in the field, to decide the fate of a movie. Then it went to Party headquarters where it was judged on ideological grounds. Furthermore, after the movie was criticized at the studio, we also invited 50 comrades to see it and judge it. For instance, 50 soldiers would be invited to judge a children's movie. When it was a movie for school children, then they would invite children two grades below the grade for which the movie was made. Naturally, they didn't understand it, and I had defend it, pointing out that kids of the right grade would understand.

There were all sorts of barbaric rituals at the studio. There was a red corner with a Stalin statue. The lady comrades would ~~xxx~~ bring a rose in the morning and discreetly, so that only everyone would see it, they would place the flower under the statue. "I brought a little flower to Him," they would simper to each other. There was a toilet in a very convenient location on the second floor. One morning when I arrived I found that the toilet door was hidden by a curtain and in front there was an altar with a bronzed plaster of ~~xxx~~ Paris statue of Lenin, and a sanctuary lamp. I resented not being able to use this toilet since it was in a very convenient place, so I made a scandal. I pointed out to the devoted lady comrades that it was a disrespectful act to place Comrade Lenin's statue next to such a place. The statue ~~xxxxxxxx~~ immediately disappeared. The whole regime was the maximum

of ~~the~~ idiocy. The regime was built on the Venetian pattern; the braves threw a name in the lion's mouth, and the person ended his life in a lead chamber.

In 1954, I was fired from the documentary film factory, chiefly because I held a very outspoken speech at a meeting in the town hall at which there were 300 people present. I got a job at the Ministry of Interior making educational movies about traffic for the police. I also made 13 educational movies for the state railroad. I received 8,000-9,000 forints for each movie and made one in about three months. I wrote the script in two days, and it took about three weeks to have it approved. I rented the needed equipment from the documentary film factory. At the police there was a Communist major who said that he was interested only in the quality of the movies I made, and not in the background of the movie maker. He stood up for me for a year and a half, but then Gárdos succeeded in having me dismissed.

At the beginning of 1956, I started making musical movies for television. Meanwhile the rehabilitation committee decided that I had been dismissed illegally from the documentary film factory, and granted me 90,000 forints in back pay. This was in the summer of 1956, after Rákosi's fall.

After my rehabilitation, I returned to the factory on October 13th. Many people were glad to see me saying: "Finally an old expert! Dilettantism has ended!" I became a member of the board

of directors, and was supposed to teach the young managers as well. All the old Communists were still there, and tried to smile at the new events. My biggest enemies greeted me with open arms. They practised self-criticism at open meetings, so that it was I, who had to defend Rákosi, saying: "Don't spit on the poor dead!" I reminded them that after all they had served Stalin and Rákosi, and so they should not spit ~~on~~ on them now. When I went home, I told my wife: "You know, if Gárdos is praising me, then there must be something wrong with this country. ~~is~~ Something is not kosher."

Just before the Revolution, Molnár came to me and asked for advice. I told him that the making of newsreels was equivalent to making modern history. We stopped all production in the factory, brought all the camera-men together and decided that for the time being our studio would make only newsreels and no other kind of movies. At this time I was head director of the documentary and newsreel factory, as well as a member of the board of directors with full power regarding artistic questions. Other members of the board of directors were Mm Homoki-Nagy, Révész, Gyórfy, the chief of production, and Ferenc Lőr, a sound engineer. Thus, already before the Revolution we were the bosses in the factory. Thus, we decided to put everything aside and produce only newsreels. I had a safe in which the films were to be kept, to which I had a key so that I could destroy the material to prevent it

from compromising people. Thus it happened that on the 23rd and afterwards we had cameramen covering every important event. On the afternoon of the 23rd we had four cameramen at the ~~Rák~~ Bem statue with sound equipment. Our movies proved that this was a spontaneous revolution. It was the Petöfi Circle and the writers who prepared the Revolution but the intelligentsia had a secondary role during the Revolution. I was not at the demonstration but when I heard of it, I ordered all ^{camera} ~~men~~ to stay at the studio overnight. At first I thought it would only be a strong demonstration with a torch light parade, etc., and it probably would have been no more if Gerö had not made that hideous speech. I sent five cameramen to the radio station and it is due to this that the entire fighting ^{station} around the radio ^{exists} on documentary film. The next day I gave ~~my~~ orders that all cameramen were to be on their own and do things independently since events were going too fast for special assignments. Everyone was to photograph what he could. That is why we have the entire Revolution to the 4th of November on film. When the cease-fire came on the 30th, I had the entire material developed and copied. Some instinct told me to make an extra negative. The original negative was given to the Fox newsreel people to take abroad and is now ^{being} ~~shown~~ shown under the title: Ungarn in Flammen. The second negative remained in Hungary. Unfortunately I gave the tired cameramen the day off on Sunday, without their cameras, and therefore they didn't take

pictures of the entrance of the Russians. There is very little material on this.

On the 30th of October, the majority of the Hungarian movie people got together, almost spontaneously, in Fészek, the movie artists' club. The spontaneity of this meeting was fantastic. Almost all good movie people were there although nobody had called the meeting together. Ivan Darvas, a good actor, who has now been sentenced to three years in prison, was the first speaker. He said that the Association of Theater Artists would be dissolved because some of its ~~members~~ members and leaders like Kelety, ~~a~~ Fábry, Felix Máriássy and Béla Illés were left-wing Communists. He declared that we would form a new organization. It was typical of Zoltan Várkonyi, that he, ~~was~~ who had been the biggest bootlicker of the regime, now stood up and approved the formation of the new organization, in the name of the old leadership. In other words, he implied that they, the old leaders, would continue in power. This would have meant that people like Tomás Major would have remained the leaders of the new organization as well. Várkonyi also abused Rákosi and Stalin and ~~performed~~ ^{performed} self-criticism. I thought the ~~was~~ speech the maximum of impertinence, and ~~was~~ ^{and it} took people by surprise, so that they almost voted for his proposal. I stood up therefore and said: "This Revolution is so pure and beautiful that even the thieves have gone on strike. People are contributing money for the victims of

the Revolution; the money ^{is} in boxes on the street, without anyone stealing it. This is a noble Revolution. Therefore, a Revolution which is so pure should not be besmirched at this meeting. Everyone should look in a mirror. We have ^{turned} a new, clean leaf and we will not turn it into filthy hands. Varkonyi and Tomás Major as well as the others who sold the country like Judas sold Christ, should try to follow us and work with us and that way perhaps all those things they committed against the Hungarian people will be forgiven and forgotten."

There was a frantic, stormy reaction to this speech of mine. Then the officers of the new organization were elected. A twelve-member revolutionary council was established with Istvan Szöcs and myself representing the movie industry. Some of the other members were Bessenyei, Sinkovits, Ivan Dörvas, Ajtay, Timár, Miklos Szakács and some people from the provinces. Szakács, Darvas and I became members of the executive committee. After the vote there was a feeling of liberation; there were many speeches about the sins of Tomás Major, etc. It was a tense moment. I had a saving idea. I wanted to save the meeting from deteriorating into cheap bickering and so I said that the meeting should have been started with two minutes of silence. This two minutes of silence calmed people down somewhat and also gave me an opportunity for psychological analysis. I watched some of the people, saw Major standing in a corner shrunken and unhappy, etc. Then we

sang the National Anthem, freely, spontaneously; it was an unforgettably beautiful moment. Major and the former leaders ~~was~~ stood in a corner and were forced to sing the National Anthem with us. After the National Anthem, everybody embraced everybody else: it was a wonderful liberated moment - a ~~mirac~~ miracle!

Meanwhile, Imre Nagy had appointed me director of HDF, the documentary film factory. I called the employees together and said to them: "I have a list, and I know everything. I won't read any names out loud, because the reading would soil this Revolution. Everyone knows whom I mean. Party members and AVH agents should not return to the factory tomorrow."

Not one of them came in. The rebels came and asked for the list of AVH agents in the factory, but I refused to give it to them, feeling that in an independent Hungary a court should decide about the fate of these people. Now I am sorry that I did not give out the list. Today I would give it out; I would rather apologize to the corpse, then let so many guilty people go free.

I told Révész: "I know that you are a Party member, but not an AVH agent. I offer you the job of head of the newsreel department with the condition that you serve the ~~sz~~ Revolution and the Imre Nagy government honorably. You are no longer allowed to falsify the news." He almost ~~fell~~ fell down on his knees before me, he was so grateful. I told Révész ^{that I was doing this} because it was he who

had me fired from the factory, and I didn't want it to seem as though I was revenging myself on him by firing him. He worked hard and enthusiastically until the 4th. He is a very good administrator, and was responsible for the collection of some excellent newsreel material.

The documentary film factory was completely independent because the Ministry of Culture, to which it had belonged in the past, was not functioning. We had contact with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, and the Prime Minister's office, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture. During the Revolution the leadership of the ministries was elected by the Revolutionary Councils and the civil servants, except for the x minister, who was chosen by Imre Nagy. As a rule people were allowed to keep their jobs if they were Party members; they lost their jobs only if they belonged to the AVH.

I found my own káder sheet ^{during the revolution.} ~~which said that I was an indispensable craftsman and technician, a veritable magician who could do anything.~~ It said that I was an indispensable craftsman and technician, a veritable magician who could do anything. It added that I should not be trusted because even if I made a movie which appeared to be in line with the principles of the Party, I am sure to have smuggled something into the movie which was exactly the opposite. The káder sheet also stated that I was sharp-witted and ~~was~~ dangerous, a ~~be-~~ cause I was able to fight ^{with} Marxist ~~and~~ Leninist ^t arguments.

The Prime Minister's office instructed me to turn to Maléter

for armed help if I needed it. I refused this help. I had the occasion to talk to Maléter at the Corvin ~~square~~^{Köz}. He had a winning and a impressive personality, in spite of his former Communist connections. He used ~~his~~ his own tank, his own body, to stop up the hole in the Kilian Barracks,^{a hole} which he himself had made. Thus he defended the barracks against the Russians with his own body. This was a beautiful symbol; no wonder he is today Hungary's greatest hero. We had no relations with the writers' association. It prepared the Revolution but was passive during the Revolution. Inter arma silent musae. Of course, the old Hungarian disease broke out again; parties grew up like mushrooms, instead of standing together to support Imre Nagy. And Imre Nagy was always two steps behind.

I lived on Madách Place, in a store ~~which~~^{with} a gallery which we used for the bedroom. Thus, only a big plate glass window separated us from the street. It was a hazardous place. Sometimes it was the rebels who took a position in front of the window, and at other times the Russians. Watching Madách Place during this period was like viewing a war through one's window. On the 5th or 6th of November, there were four anti-tank guns standing right opposite the store; the soldiers^{had} handed it over to the rebels who turned it on the Russians. We spent the night in the cellar. From the 4th to the 14th of November, I was cut off from the factory by the fighting, and maintained only telephone contact. We set up a phone in the basement by tapping^e the telephone cable which ran through

the basement. I received news via phone from a friend who lived on Rózsadomb. During the day I walked the streets. The heroism of the children was overwhelming.

It was after the 14th, probably on the 15th, that Homoki phoned and asked me what my stand was. He said he was returning to the factory but didn't want to force anyone else to do so. We returned to the factory. A Russian patrol came and demanded to see the newsreel movies of the Revolution. We had cut and destroyed those parts which showed the AVO's being hanged in order to protect people. He took the film and on my demand gave me a receipt for it. After this some members of the emergency police, which was actually the AVO, arrived, demanding the film. An assistant cameraman, the filthy ~~louse~~^{louse}, a Party member but not an AVO agent, told them that we had the film. I denied it. After a few days they came to my apartment at night and searched for the films. I told them that the Russians took the films and that the emergency police had taken the receipt which I had received from the Russians. I was afraid for my wife, an actress. She was outraged by what was going on and told them: "Look at my bed, it's full of hand-grenades. I can only sleep on hand-grenades." They arrested me.

I was taken to the AVO prison in Fótca. Next morning I received a battered spittoon^o full of coffee. I told the man to take it back and get me a decent cup because I was a valuable prisoner. I actually got a new aluminum cup. At this time some AVO's

were still in jail and the situation wasn't clarified yet. So they treated me quite well. I was there for eight days, in a sausage-shaped cell ten meters long. I wrote a comedy in my head, and imagined that I would walk to the Rosemary for breakfast, and have lunch at Gundel's. My prison^{serial} number was 110-1. Finally they interrogated me. The interrogating officer was very insolent, and I told ^{him} ~~him~~ "You better used a gentlemanly tone with me!"

He asked me: "Why are you here?"

I answered: "Well, if neither of us knows, then there is not much point in this interrogation."

He said that I had committed treason and asked ~~for~~ me for which country. He claimed that I had committed a crime by giving the newsreels of the Revolution to the Western movie man. I took the responsibility for everything but stated that I, we film people, did not make the Revolution, we merely fixed it on film. Then I told this AVH agent, a man named Szalma, "I just heard your tape run down. You better put on a new one."

He asked: "How do you know?"

I told him that I could see the wire leading to the mike. I said that I didn't mind my cell, since I was in very good company. He answered: "But, you are alone."

I retorted: "Well?"

I only found out later that they had told my wife that I had defected and escaped to the West. My wife refused to believe this. On Friday, at the end of December, the guard came to my cell and said: "110-1, take your package, you are going home."

I refused to go home in the dark, but he told me that the bus was running until 7:00 and since it was only 6:30 now, I could easily reach it. I went to the ~~big~~ bus station with some other fellow prisoners who were also freed. When the bus stopped, the bus driver said: "Convict, stop, get on here."

I wanted to buy tickets for all my fellow convicts, and the people on the bus offered to buy us tickets, too. But the bus driver said: "No tickets necessary from the ~~the~~ convict stop."

Interviewer's Comments on Respondent:

An elegant, silk-shirted, elderly gentleman of the old-school, Respondent quite obviously belongs to the world of pre-war Budapest boulevards and cafés. He is not very perceptive and probably not too intelligent. He is, however, a well known and talented movie director, as well as a good raconteur with a wonderful eye for dramatic situations. He would probably sell his grandmother for a good pun or amusing story. He obviously could not have survived, even with his necessary skills and talents, if he had been as blatantly arrogant and insulting to the Party men in the studio, as he claims.