

Please note: This is an "A" type interview with a person who left Budapest on June 27th, 1957. Section "R" of the regular questionnaire was dropped in this case as the respondent was asked to give a short summary of what happened in Hungary from the Revolution up to the end of <sup>June</sup> 1957. This is the content of the first section, ~~of~~ Section "B":

At the time of the Revolution, I was the purchasing agent of the state hospital at Angyalföld. The workers of the hospital did not strike. I was regularly working during the time of the Revolution spending most of my time within the hospital. The Russians <sup>arrived</sup> ~~survived~~ in Budapest with 160 brigades on the 4th of November and in the following four days the great destruction of the city took place. The Russian mines were indiscriminately shooting at different buildings of the city, not only the Kilián barracks and the Hotel Royal, but even many apartment buildings used ~~for~~ <sup>by</sup> the civilian population only. The population responded with a passive resistance. Nobody wanted to work. There was a general strike in which all the workers participated except for the bakers, for certain parts of the food industry, and sanitation. The Kádár government summoned the working class several times to take up work. It ~~resorted~~ <sup>resorted</sup> to menaces, but with-

out any results. Finally the government had to permit the function of the workers councils. In those days the workers councils were still made up of revolutionaries. The central workers council had its seat in the Akácfa street, in the central building of the city railway system. It was directed by Dudás himself who was on free foot and was captured only on November 23rd. The workers councils finally resisted the pressure of the Kádár government. The workers councils clearly stated that they will not take up work as long as the Russians are in the country. This is why Kádár established the militia, in Hungarian the karhatalmi század which were recruited from the AVO people and from the reliable Communists who suddenly emerged from their hiding places. I met one member of the militia who was living near to our place. Originally he was a janitor in a city school. In 1949 he attended a Party school and became the chairman of an agricultural cooperative. I met him again in November 1956 as a uniformed militia man. Then again the Greek Communists who were in Hungary became the members of the militia. Similarly the reliable elements of the army and the police were recruited in the militia. The militia men were worse than the old AVO. Once a militia organization was just marching at the fence of our hospital. A mental patient seeing him called out: "Kádár Brigáda". The militia men immediately took their rifles and shot into the courtyard. Then they ran into the

hospital, caught the patient, beat him up, and wanted to arrest him. After long haggling the doctors could prove that he was a mental patient and he was left in the hospital. Then he was bed-ridden for two weeks as a consequence of the beating he had suffered. During that time there were many anti-Communist demonstrations. On November 23rd illegal leaflets appeared on the street summoning the population for a silent demonstration between December 2nd and 4th. The population was advised by the leaflets not to go on the streets on those days. The demonstration was effective indeed. For three days the streets of Budapest looked like a graveyard. On December 4th I saw a great demonstration of the women. They marched to the War Memorial which was guarded by three rings of Soviet panzers. The women broke the three rings of Soviet panzers and buried with flowers the War Memorial. Then they marched to the American Legation in Budapest and demonstrated for Cardinal Mindszenty. This was the last of the demonstrations. After that the terror became so strong that any demonstration became impossible. The restoration of normal life took a long time. No work was taken up before the end of November. It was only about December 15th that the first streetcar lines began to run in Budapest. In the first days there were demonstrations against the streetcars. People simply put the streetcar conductor down on the street. So finally a

militia man accompanied every streetcar conductor. About the end of December all streetcar lines were running. At about the same time the workers councils were liquidated. The new Hungarian Socialist Workers Party took over the factories and work started actually on January 1st. In February all members of the former workers councils were fired from their job and the police persecution against them started. This was the time when most people escaped from the country. At Christmas time we, I mean me and my family, tried to escape. We were captured on the border and taken to the AVO office at Győr. I must admit that the AVO people handled our case with a great goodwill. They just sent us back to Budapest and warned us not to try to escape again. So we returned to Budapest where we were fortunate enough to find our apartment as we had left it. I think that the AVO people in Győr did not even report on our capture since in June 1957 I got a legal passport and the permission to leave the country. Of course, in both times thousand and thousand people were captured during their escape. The curfew lasted till the end of February. After six o' clock p.m. civilian persons could not walk on the street. The streets were ~~controlled~~ patrolled by Soviet soldiers, and even by Soviet tanks. Before the municipal buildings Soviet tanks were stationed which were gradually withdrawn as the Hungarian police became <sup>more</sup> stubborn. On May 7th the militia was dissolved or perhaps united with the police force. The Russians slowly

disappeared from the streets, although the barracks of Budapest were full of Russian troops even at the end of June 1957. However, by that time one could not see the activity of the Soviet troops. In March 1957 the so-called MUK propaganda started which was the abbreviation of the free Hungarian words meaning "we <sup>shall</sup> ~~will~~ start again in March". Nobody knew who started this propaganda but people were talking about it very much. Everybody was expecting a great change. On March 10th reinforced Hungarian police patrols began to patrol the streets day and night and tanks appeared on the street again. Finally March 15th was declared as the "Day of the Workers". The Petöfi circle was surrounded by tanks so that nobody could approach it. Then Kádár appeared there later at the feet of the statue and delivered a speech. Nobody was present during the ceremony except for a few Communist functionaries. After March 15th the processes against the revolutionaries began. Dudás was executed after a secret trial. Some other trials were public and were written up in the newspapers. This was the time of the greatest terror. If anybody had an enemy who denounced him he was taken by the police and beaten up. If after a few days of beating he turned out to be innocent in the Revolution he was released. On the level of the shops many changes came. The old personnel referents and kader secretaries of the shops were dismissed by the Revolution. Then, after

the Revolution the kader system was restored, however, at most places new kader secretaries appeared. I don't think that the new kader secretaries were better than the old ones. However, they saw the Revolution and were afraid of the consequences. Anyhow the workers were no more so afraid of the Party and kader secretaries. The workers councils issued an order in December 1956 saying that the workers may purchase the products of the factories at their cost price. For example, shirts, clothing items, and so on. This was a very popular order and the workers purchased a great amount. Then in April 1957 the Kádár government changed this order and every worker who had purchased for such lower prices was billed for the difference. One acquaintance of mine purchased clothing items in the value of 1,200 frts. Now he was supposed to pay another 800 frts for them. This and a few similar orders made the new system very unpopular and the workers were talking about their grievances quite freely. The free talk, the open airing of one's sentiments is something new. In this respect the situation in 1957 was quite different from that, let's say, in 1955. In June 1957 the purchasing power of the forint was good and the prices cheap but there were no commodities. If the mother of a family wanted to buy a pan for her kitchen or a pair of shoes for her children it took her a shopping trip of three or four days till she could find them. There is a

great corruption in the stores. If somebody has an acquaintance there, he will be served. If somebody pays 50 frts to the clerk, he will get the commodity he wants from under the counter. The Communists explained this shortage of commodities by the loss of work caused by the Revolution. The actual situation is that there has been a general slowdown after the Revolution. The productivity of the different factories is much below their old level. The scarcity of raw materials blocks the renovation of the buildings damaged during the Revolution. The government raised the prices of building materials by 70 to 120 percent. Right after the Revolution it was possible to get a state loan for the renovation of one's own apartment or home. Then later on the state loans were stopped, in many cases even recalled. The apartment houses owned by the KIK are being renovated at the expense of the government. The whole rebuilding activity is characterized by the usual shop window policy of the Communists. Around June 20th all the buildings of the Körút of Budapest were scaffolded, however, no work was going on and it may take several months before their renovation will be finished. The help received from foreign countries could evidently not ease the shortage of commodities. We received aid from the Western countries through the Red Cross which was distributed without any payment, particularly in the eighth and ninth districts of Budapest

where the damage was the greatest. In the month of December a great amount of goods arrived from the Soviet Union, food, gas, and so on. But this material was sold to the population for money. Moreover everybody needed a special permission to buy from those goods. For example, our hospital needed 10 tons of cement. With the official order of the state firm *Faert*, I went to the railway station to pick it up. I got the cement from a Russian box car and I paid for it *by money*. In January 1957 the government issued an order concerning the rationalization of the working force. It meant that many people were dismissed. Many functions were concentrated and many workers were fired, particularly white collar workers. They were fired with a *severance pay* of six weeks which was still a good innovation since in old times everybody had been fired without any *severance pay*. The dismissed white collar workers found new jobs as unskilled workers. Later on, however, new Party members were hired for the old jobs. The good cadres found many good positions. This *rotation* circle was going on all the time since January. People were dismissed from the offices and factories and new ones hired. Generally there is an unemployment for white collar workers. The educated people have to take jobs in manual work. The poor educational policy of the system accounts for that. More people finished their schools every year than were necessary



for the economy of the country. The city is full of youngsters just <sup>...f...</sup> left their schools who cannot find a job appropriate to their education. At the present time only youngsters with a Baccalaureate are excepted in the so-called industrial schools where they are educated to become skilled workers. In June 1957 the clothing situation was pretty bad. Generally speaking the people of Budapest were more ~~...~~ than before the Revolution. One can buy only Hungarian and East German textile materials. But the garment industry is unable to keep up with the demand. The garment industry accepts orders only for a three or four months delivery. Before I left the country and wanted to spend my money I bought three pairs of perlon socks. I could get them only through personal connections at a certain store. There are constant rumors circulating about devaluation of the money. Consequently people try to buy everything whether it is necessary or unnecessary for them. It is true that after a pay-day the mother of the family comes home loaded with many commodities. Many of them are unnecessary for the family. At the present time there is no instalment buying in Budapest. It is true that those items of higher price such as TV sets, motor bikes which in old times had been sold in instalment are now not for sale. In some lines the shortage of commodities is catastrophic. Our hospital could obtain X-ray films and papers with great delays and

after many difficulties. The Forte factory in Vác, the old Kodak factory still produce<sup>s</sup> films but the *films* are exported with a perfect disregard of the home demand. Since the Revolution oranges, lemons, and so on disappeared since there was no currency to buy them. The food situation is in other respect<sup>s</sup> good, except for some luxury items. My little daughter was 8 years old when she saw a banana for the first time in her life. The candies and the fruit juices are produced in a *collective* ~~sympathic~~ way. As an other example, I want to mention that <sup>at</sup> our hospital we had 1,000 beds, however, the hospital had only one *pick-up* truck which we had purchased in 1945 as a used one. We had no personal car for the use of the doctors up to the Revolution. In the revolutionary days we expropriated at the railway station an old German four-seat car which is now used by the doctors for official business. I must mention that our hospital has an obstetrical ward. Since we had no car the doctors had to come in by foot walking at night. The doctors know of the foreign medicines, but they cannot use them because its impossible to obtain them. The foreign medicines except for the Streptomycin come in only as gifts. The Streptomycin is produced at the medical factory in Debrecen. However, the production is not enough. In every hospital there is a special commission made up of doctors which decides about the use of the Streptomycin. In case of every patient there is a special permission

necessary before Streptomycin can be administered. In 1956 the doctors of our hospital tried to arrange a study trip to Vienna. But finally they were not permitted to leave the country. In June 1957 a general hopelessness, a general apathy ruled over the country. Almost every family was effected by the Revolution because some members were dead, arrested or escaped from the country. People still hoped that a demilitarized neutral zone will be established in Europe and it will include Hungary. But I do not think they would try another revolution again.

- (1) In old times I was in business either as an employee or as an independent business man. Before and during the war I was a partner in an export-import business. In 1945 I tried to continue the old business, however, trade became impossible. Then in 1947 I became the manager of a cooperative in small trade. Our main business was to provide the small country stores with goods. At the beginning of 1949 the general secretary of the cooperative, myself, and two other employees were arrested. The general secretary of the cooperative was a member of the Communist Party and he became involved in the Rajk case. The main aim was to liquidate him. In the meantime, however, I was charged with embezzling one and a half million forints. After 20 months in prison and after nine trials I could prove that we had never embezzled one and a half million forints. By that time the secretary of the cooperative disappeared and I don't know of his fate. I suppose he died or was deported. At the final trial I was only charged with selling 70 meters of flannel to a private merchant and promoting in such a way the black market. I was given 2 months of prison for that but set free right after the trial by the Supreme Court. It was in February 1951 that I regained my freedom and I had to look around for a job. I knew that with my prison record it would be impossible for me to find any white collar occupation. The state hospital of Angyalföld was near to my apartment and

by sheer chance I was employed there as laborer. After 2 months I was promoted to switchboard operator and after 6 months I became the purchasing agent of the hospital. When I was promoted to purchasing agent I had to prepare a long autobiography and submit it to the kader department. In that autobiography I described my prison and everything connected with the charge. I was a little bit surprised when after all, my appointment to purchasing agent came through. This was mainly so because the hospitals were still managed by the doctors who were just experts without any affiliation with the Communist Party. At the end of 1951 up to my departure from the country in June 1957 I was the purchasing agent of that hospital.

- (2) This was a hospital with 1,000 beds and we had a staff of 370 people. My job was to provide the hospital with the necessary food, medicines, cleaning materials, textile materials or anything else needed by the medical or the maintenance department. I want to mention that the job of purchasing agent was something new. Nothing like that had existed before 1950. After that it became so difficult to provide the hospital with all the necessary materials that a special job had to be created for that.
- (a) I had to spend a great part of the day out of the hospital running after different necessities. In many cases I had to go out with the truck to pick up some important purchase

There were days when I did not spend more than half an hour in my office.

- (e) The hospital was originally a mental hospital. Then in 1949 it was transformed into a general hospital. The mental ward was still the largest one, but we had to accept many other kinds of patients. We had a large ward for gynaecology and obstetrics, but we did not accept any patients with infectious diseases.
- (3) The main advantage of this job was that actually I had no boss and was pretty independent. As long as I did an honest job in providing the hospital with all the necessities, nobody bothered me. My boss was the director of the hospital and a commission of the doctors. All of them being doctors they did not care very much about the Communist principles.
- (b) The doctors were characterized by a general conservatism. It was rather nice to work with them.
- (f) Officially my working hours consisted of eight hours a day, from 8 in the morning till 4.30 p.m. Practically I had to work much longer hours. I had to go into my office on Saturdays and Sundays. On the other hand I could make free time for me pretty often and I was free to move around in the city. The meetings of the trade union or of the civil defense were held from 2 to 4 p.m. In most cases I could avoid them since I could pretend of having some other

important job out of the hospital.

- (g) The usual working week was 44 hours or 5 1/2 days. Practically I had to work more.
- (o) I had a special benefit in my job and this was a really good medical care given to my whole family. I really appreciated it since with my two kids we had to see the doctors of the hospital pretty often. The doctors gave a special treatment to our family.
- (4)
- (a) I spoke of the doctors above. The white collar jobs of the hospital administration were rather poorly paid. Consequently our white collar employees belonged to the older age group and many of them were women. It was rather easy to get along with them. The real difficulties in work were always caused by the young people.
- (b) See above.
- (c) No.
- (d) Yes. Particularly it was possible to discuss politics with doctors. The doctors had a certain kind of freedom and could talk more than ordinary people.
- (e) No.
- (f) The workers were members of the trade union <sup>of</sup> medical workers. It was a rather feeble organization in our hospital. It had a meeting once every month as prescribed. The attendance of the meeting was not compulsory. The

trade union had about 300 members and only 20 or 30 of them attended one meeting.

- (i) No.
- (j) The doctors made up an exceptional class. They could get ahead even if they were not Party members. On the other hand, Party membership was always good for them.
- (l) There were only three Communists in the whole hospital. Everybody else despised the Communist system and did not even make a secret out of it. Because of the political officials there was no discipline of work. The different departments were antagonistic to one another. Everybody was filled with fear. The head of a department did not dare to make a decision. If I asked anybody he gave an ambiguous answer. Nobody dared to take the responsibility for anything. There was no cooperation between the different departments.
- (m) I have not experienced any changes during the five years I worked there.
- (n) Nobody.
- (p) Up to 1955 we had no spy in our office. In that year we got a new personnel referant and pretty soon she became regarded as the police spy. Even her predecessor was a Communist but she did not try to harm people. The new one reported many people to the police, particularly after the Revolution. She master-minded the revenge after the Revolution. As far as I know five people from the



hospital were arrested after the Revolution. However, this number might be higher since I did not know a great part of the personnel, for example, the ~~service and~~ *state workers.*

- (5) If somebody wanted to leave his job he could practically leave it. Pretty much depended on the good will of the boss. If the boss gave a poor kader report on somebody, it became difficult for him to change his job. But if somebody found a more or less suitable job he tried to stay there. It was safer in an old job than in a new one.
- (b) In the period of free trade I was always in the business world. In the Communist system I liked my job as a purchasing agent pretty much.
- (e) I would have spent money to achieve a much higher standard of living than ours.
- (g) The children should have a free choice in picking up an occupation. For a girl the best job is to get married and not to work. For a boy a good job is something like being a doctor or an engineer.
- (6) I made more money as long as business was free. In the Communist system a man could never earn enough money. In 1951 when I was hired by the hospital I got 780 forints a month. At that time even my wife was working. She began working in 1949 shortly after my arrest. She was working at the payroll department of a textile mill and all the

time she was making more money than I did. In 1951 she was making 900 forints. In 1956 I got 1,080 forints in the hospital and my wife made 1,260. It was necessary that both of us should work because we had two children. She made more money but her job was poor in another respect. She was always bothered with Party activities. On every second day there was a Party meeting at her place of work. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon the gates of the textile mill were closed and the Party meeting began. Up to 7 o'clock p.m. there was some program going on. Nobody could leave the premises. Everybody had to stay there and listen to the program. After 7 o'clock p.m. she had to do the shopping and some other duties. It was 8 o'clock when she returned home and prepared the meal for the two kids. Altogether we could maintain our small modern apartment which consisted of one room and all the comforts. It had a central heating and we paid 500 forints a month for rent, heating, and electricity. Both children went in their day care home. This was one of the advantages of my wife's job. Her textile mill really established a very good day care home. She took them there at 7 a.m. and in the evening when she came home she brought them home, too. Then she prepared the evening meal. Since 1952 or 1953 I had a part time job, too. I was the salesman of the state book distributing company, in Hungarian Állami Könyvterjesztő. In our hospital I

had to sell the books to the employees or to the patients of our hospital and got a certain percentage. In 1955 and 1956 I made another 500 to 600 forints a month in such a way. Actually everybody was puzzled how the people of Budapest managed to make a living. Nobody could live on his legal salary. The people tried to help themselves in every possible way. Many people became translators in order to get some extra money. My younger brother, for example, who had an excellent knowledge of English accepted the translation of English technical texts. After the usual office work of ten or twelve hours he would go home, sit down before his typewriter, and work on the translation up to 1 o'clock a.m. The business of selling books took me 2 or 3 extra hours every day. The state book shop gave me the books and I had to deliver them to the hospital. The doctors, the white collar workers, and the patients bought them and I got the money on the two pay days.

(7) See the special statement.

(8) See the statement.

(9) See the statement.

(10) The salaries and wages are generally very low. Everybody

spent his salary on food and rent. Nobody had money to get dressed or to get some entertainment.

- (c) It is very difficult to talk about the economic situation in Hungary. Up to 1938 we had the depression. After 1938 we had the anti-Jewish laws and the war boom. In 1945 we had the great destruction caused by the war. Then the Communists came.
- (d) The changes after 1944 were bad, but I do not want to say that the economic conditions of the country were good before 1944.
- (e) I do not think that economic questions were too important in Hungary. The terror itself was more important for everybody than a few hundred forints more in every month.
- (f) The private sector was reinstated in 1953, however, only small shops were permitted by the state. For example, small shoemakers, small food stores or plumbers who did not have any employees. The private sector did a much better job than the state sector of the economy but nobody had any illusions concerning the future of the private sector. Though a MASZEK person tried to get as much money as possible out of his business without investing one cent, he did not know whether his shop will be <sup>closed</sup> by the state on the next day.
- (g) 1956 was the year of the hopes. The economic situation perhaps did not change but people were full of hopes, and this alone meant an economic boom.

I think the material conditions had no rule whatsoever in the Revolution. The Revolution was entirely ideological. People were not so much interested in any possible economic change. What they wanted was to put an end to the Communist system which had lasted for 12 years. They wanted to be free Hungarians again.

- (1) Under the Communist system one cannot speak of family life. The parents were working and the children were in the day care homes of the state or of a plant. In some cases the husband came home earlier and he found the apartment uncleaned, the evening meal unprepared and the dirty laundry all over the place. When the wife came home she had to do the many household duties and she was dog-tired when finally she could go to bed. There was neither time nor energy left for a real family life. The situation was better in those few families where a grand-mother could live with the families. She could give a real help in the household jobs. In a family with children, husband and wife could never go out together. One of them had to stay at home with the kids. When my wife's firm arranged some social evening she went out and I stayed at home, when our hospital had something, I had to go and she stayed at home. Real friendship did not exist anymore. Even the married couples did not meet very often. We were on friendly relationship with the families living in the same apartment house, however, we never invited them for any formal parties. I do not think we gave any formal parties over the last 4 years we spent in Hungary.
- (e) I finished my schooling in 1927 when I received the diploma ~~the~~ of the Academy for <sup>Work</sup> Trade at Vienna, Austria.

(2) None applicable.

(3) None applicable.

(4) We had two daughters at the age of 8 and 12. Both of them attended the general school Pannonia Street because it was near to our apartment. There were no ideological subjects there except Russian language which was discontinued in October 1956. There was no religious education. At least practically there was nothing like that. My children did not attend any religious classes after 1951. The Jewish bourgeoisie with which I identify myself believes in God but does not believe in bigotry. The school, however, taught atheism and the children did not know if they should believe their parents or their teachers. The whole educational system as it existed did everything to destroy the authority of the parents. One day my daughter brought home the newspaper Pajtas which is the official paper of the Pioneer Movement. I read one of the short stories of the paper. It was about the life of a Russian pioneer who overheard his father's conversation with a German spy. The little Russian pioneer went right away to the police and reported his father who was caught with the German spy. I was horrified to read such a scrippling since it was an <sup>7</sup> destruction of parental authority. It was an effort to create distrust between

children and parents. Our two daughters and most of their school-mates were members of the Pioneer Movement. Kids received many benefits out of the Pioneer Movement, for example, summer recreation without any pay, special circus performances, and many awards, often even money. My older daughter was an excellent student all the time. She got a special diploma and an award of 100 forints from the Pioneers. On three successive summers she was sent to the Summer camp of the Pioneers where she got a very good care. We couldn't have afforded the same kind of Summer vacation for her. Such benefits were one of the reasons why the par-nts did not dare to keep their children away <sup>from</sup> ~~of~~ the Pioneer Movement. It is interesting to note that at the same time none of the kids became a Communist or became an enthusiastic Pioneer. Their attitude was well shown during the Revolution. When the Revolution broke out the kids stayed away from the school. On October 30th a radio announcement came that all the kids should show up in the school. When the class of my older daughter ~~met~~, the kids were unwilling to study, but they burned their Russian text-books. My daughter was pretty well informed about the political situation in the Revolution ~~of the~~ ~~events~~. She and all her class-mates hated Communism just the same way as the grown-ups did. The Communist system undoubtedly *affected* their minds from a moral point of view. They wanted to get all the benefits of the Pioneer



Movement without believing one of the [ ] of the Pioneers.

- (b) Education for Communism was ineffective on all levels. It was ineffective among the grade school children and among the students of the university.
  - (c) See above. The Communist system had many misconceptions about human nature. One of its misconceptions was that the children, if educated from an early age in Communism, will turn real Communists.
  - (f) There hasn't been any change in this respect.
  - (h) Education did not change the attitude of children.
  - (i) At no age whatsoever.
- (5) There was no family life. My wife and me worked five days and on Saturdays till 1 o'clock p.m. The two kids went to the same school which worked on the basis of the so-called divided class system. It meant that classes were held both in the morning and in the afternoon. One class went into the school in the morning for one week. The next week the kids went in the afternoon. The result was that the two kids were in the school always at different times. They could not meet there. The old one could never accompany the younger one into the school. Because of the same reason they couldn't spend time together in the day care school either. The system of divided classes was introduced by the Communists because

of the scarcity of class rooms and teachers. Anyhow, it disrupted family life. For example, a typical week-end of our family was as follows: Saturday afternoon I did the shopping while my wife cleaned up the apartment. The evening was taken up by bathing. We had central heating and hot water was given only on Saturdays. So this became the day of our cleaning, <sup>then</sup> ~~then~~ the two kids and we, too, had to take our weekly bath. Saturday night all of us were so tired that we couldn't do anything. Sunday was the only day of the week when the whole family could have breakfast together. This Sunday breakfast became a formal affair in our family life and we did everything to provide a good breakfast with butter and jam and perhaps even rolls for the kids. After breakfast we went over to visit my mother. After that we had a walk. On a nice day we went out to the island or to the Városliget which was a special entertainment for the kids, particularly if they could get an icecream cone there. Then we sat down to our Sunday dinner, the whole family together. My only amusement was to go out to the soccer games Sunday afternoon since I was a fan of the MTK club. The other part of Sunday was taken up by a visit at some of our relatives and the whole week-end was over. It never happened that the whole family went away for summer vacation together. My wife and me spent the summer usually at home, even our vacation. Since 1949 I could go away

for a Summer vacation only once. Thanks to my boss at the hospital I could get a week at one of the resort places of the trade union.

- (a) My father, a former storekeeper, died before the war.
- (f) My family was neither better nor worse off than the other ones. It was the average.
- (g) I had a brother.
- (h) He is married and still living in Budapest.
- (i) My wife and the two kids.
- (k) My social origin did not hurt me too much.
- (6) I got married in 1941.
- (7) We got along pretty well with our children. Perhaps much better than most of the families. The children generally had a big mouth. They talked back to their parents and it's very difficult to educate them. The system did everything to distract the children and to take them out of the family home. However, it did not succeed in making a split between parents and children. I think as long as the parents stay together the family life goes on quite all right, However, there were many divorces in the last few years and the children were effected by the disraption of the marriage.
- (8) Knowing our children we talked before them about politics

freely. The older one knew pretty well what was our opinion of politics.

(9)

(b)

The parents could not elect the friends for their children. We did not even know who became their friends in the school or in the day care home. My 8 year old daughter one night began to swear and cuss. Her mother asked her: "From whom did you learn those words?" She said: "From this and this boy in the day care home!"

(c)

I did not want to direct the political opinions of my older daughter. It would have been too dangerous. Being a good student she was selected by the teacher to recite a poem entitled "Owed to Rákosi" on the birthday of Rákosi. We had to help her to learn the poem and we couldn't tell her that she should not recite it. I think the kids and the parents were animated by the same spirit of passive resistance.

(10)

There was a so-called work community of parents, in Hungarian Szülői Munkaközösség, established in the school. Its leaders were Communists. The District Party Council and the National Association of Hungarian Women had their representatives on that board. It arranged meetings for the parents, however, I did not attend any of them. At the same time it controlled the teachers, that the teachers

should stay on the Party line. By the way, the work of the teachers was anyhow very difficult. In every year they received new text-books and even during the year the teachers got new and special instructions about their duties. They had to change their schedule and the teaching material several times during one scholastic year. The students sensed that <sup>the tenacity of the</sup> situation and did not like their schools. The kids sensed that they were learning nothing but lies. When we were coming out of the country, my older daughter exclaimed: "Finally I am learning geography as it is. It is not as it is in our text-book".

(11) See above.

(12) See above.

(13) See above.

(14) There was a general loosening in the links of the family. It was impossible to keep the family members together. The old frame-work of the family still existed, but it became more and more difficult to fill it in with a real warm family life. Family life needs leisure time and we didn't have anything like that. My wife did not read more than two books over the last ten years.

(b) This was typical.

- (c) I did not have any leisure time.
- (g) My free leisure time amounted to two or three hours a week.
- (15) Yes.
- (e) There was only one way of rearing the children <sup>let</sup> for us. We, the parents, talked about our own childhood to our kids. We made long stories out of our childhood, how was life with father and mother. Our two daughters listened to those stories eagerly. They understood what we wanted to tell them. This was the only possibility to explain them the way of life of the so-called bourgeoisie which was so dear to us.
- (16) The relationships between boys and girls have changed very much. Now they are characterized by a complete freedom of both sexes. In the 1950th many peasants' and workers' sons were brought up to Budapest by the system. The youngsters were placed in the different colleges without the necessary supervision. These kids studied over a certain hours every day. In the afternoon and in the evenings they were strolling on the main streets, in the parks, and at the green places of the city. You could see those country girls with the representatives of the armed forces under the first bush. For a few years abortion was punished. In the hospital wards you could

large signs saying that it is an honor for unmarried girls to bear children. When seeing a 14 year old unmarried girl in our hospital I was thinking of her honor. Now abortion is free again.

- (b) Courtship became much shorter. If youngsters met they began to dance right away and they changed their partners till everybody found his real partner. That was the beginning of a courtship which after two or three days led to an intimate relationship. The so-called street balls contributed to the same system. One apartment house, or several of them, particularly in the working class districts, arranged for a dance and everybody could come. The radio gave the music and everybody danced. The youngsters got married at a very early age. The girls were 17, 18 years old, the boys 18 or 19. Of course, few <sup>of these</sup> such marriages became stable. There were many difficulties in the way of a marital happiness, their young age, their immaturity, and the financial and economic difficulties. It was pretty common that after the marriage the boy went to live with his mother and the girl with her mother. Of course, the divorce came pretty soon.
- (e) Yes. You could find prostitutes everywhere. One night I was sitting in one of the espressos on the Szent István körút. A good-looking girl sat down to my table. We began to talk and after a few moments she told me that for 50 forints I can come up to her place. Then she told me

that she was a country girl working now as a clerk in one of the state stores. Her monthly salary was 720 forints which was insufficient for subsistence. This situation was very general.

- (f) One has to distinguish here, as in every other field, between the practice and the theory of the Communists. In theory the Communists emphasize the <sup>normal</sup> green marital life but they do not do anything to create a real basis for a happy marital life.
- (g) Birth control must be widely spread.
- (h) A few years ago the Communists carried out a very ambitious propaganda campaign to ensure the proper place of the illegitimate children. As long as abortion was not permitted there were many illegitimate children. Since abortion was again permitted their number decreased.
- (i) The women are more exploited now than in old times. In old times she could be approached by her boss. But nowadays she is a free game for everybody, for her boss, for the Party secretary, for anybody around her. If she wants a better job she has to pay for it and pay for it in <sup>material goods</sup>.
- (17) In spite of the draconic laws of the Communists, the criminal rates have never been so high in Hungary as they are now. According to an old saying, everything was stolen from the factory which was not nailed down. Now-



adays everything is stolen whether it is or whether it is not nailed down. Concerning our own hospital not only small items such as table lamps were stolen but even whole beds. I think everybody participated in stealing, the patients just as well as the staff.

- (d) I can tell you one idea only. Angyalföld is much better than its reputation. I worked there for six years, but I don't know of any case of hooliganism there.
- (18) People have no time for social life. The average person has no more friends except for what I would call friends out of interest. For example, the head of a department in the hospital tried to maintain social relationships with the director. It was not based on a true friendship. It came just out of his own interest. The average families do not come together anymore.
- (c) In old times my main hobby was to play bridge. After marriage we had our regular bridge party for many years. It was discontinued perhaps in 1953. In the last four years I went a few times to the Gresham coffee house which was the only coffee house where bridge playing was permitted.
- (g) Under regular circumstances I would have my own friends whom I would know for many, many years. The real friends are always the old friends.
- (i) In the last few years I had no more a circle of friends

except my relatives.

- (k) One has to make an important distinction. The Communists ~~to~~ maintain social relationship with the other members of the ~~the~~. They have to take care, they cannot come together with the so-called reactionary elements. The average people, however, mix disregarding the fact whether somebody is a member of the Party or not. One doctor was a Party member. The other one was not. They were good friends. On the other hand, there is no social intercourse between the small Party members and the big shot of the Party.

- (19) The official attitude of the Communists is against any kind of religion, however, people go to church like a demonstration. You could never see so many people in the church as in the last ten years. In our apartment house one Party functionary was living. He was a Party secretary in Csepel who had a rather troubled life. He left his wife with two kids and remarried a girl from a clerical family. Now he is going with his new family to the church every Sunday. It is true that he took another way to the church than his family. Then he met his wife and in-laws before the church and all of them went in together. On the other hand, the religious life of the Jews does not exist anymore. The temples in the Dohány street or in the Csáky street are empty even at the times

of the greatest feasts. It is the counter-demonstration of the Jews. They do not want to show a religiosity in the present system. Communism was never popular with the Jews. In the present system everybody knows who is a Jew among the Communist officials. The average Jew consequently wants to deny his religion.

(b) I did not attend the temple for several years.

(20)

(b) The main aim of Communism is to stamp out religion. However, they are willing to use the churches temporarily as a means to achieve the state of atheism.

(c) No information.

(f) In Budapest everybody could freely attend church services. The Communist doctor I just mentioned went to church regularly.

(i) No information.

(j) I mentioned the adjustment of the Jews just above. Their adjustment meant that they gave up religious life. The state authority does not make any discrimination concerning religion but the Christian is conspicuously displaying his own Christianity. The Jew on the other hand wants to escape from his Jewishness.

(k) Religion is more important for the Christians than it was because at the present circumstances it means a political demonstration against which the system cannot do anything.

- (m) The church did not play any important part in fostering political opposition. A great part of the Catholic priests joined the peace priest movement. The other part of them ~~was~~ are against the system but do not do anything. Their attitude is that of passive resistance.
- (21) The occupation of ~~the~~ a young man nowadays depends on his class origin. If he is of worker or peasant origin he may achieve leading positions. He might be admitted to a university. The youngsters of other classes need exceptional good connections to be admitted ~~at~~ the university. Abilities alone are not important. The kader card is more important.
- (b) The only advice one could give is: *if you have to, i.e. if you want,* attend a red academy. Do a good Party work and then you will get your reward. The opportunists or people without a conscience still can make success in Hungary.
- (22) The political and economic leaders are in a good position. Our neighbour in the apartment house was a Lieutenant Colonel of the AVO. He had a monthly salary of 6,000 frts and a car for his personal use. His wife was a manager of a textile factory having the same salary and another car for her use. Out of the three children two were in the military academy studying there at the expenses of the state. The smallest one was in a boarding school. This

is how a Communist lived. On the other hand, in the next block a shoemaker was living in what was originally a store. He lived there with his wife who worked in a spinning mill, and with two kids. All the four of them were infected with TB. However, they were unable to get a healthy apartment. Their store functioned both as their dwelling place and the shop of the shoemaker's. It had a stone floor and the walls were wet but it was impossible for him to get a good dwelling place.

- (a) The people best off were the Party functionaries. Then a group of certain professionals came. For example, the doctors. Everybody else was in a very poor position.
- (23) The Communists claimed that there are no more social classes. They say that the working class is the leading class of the system, staying in an alliance with the peasants. The third group in this alliance is <sup>that is</sup> the progressive intellectual. This whole Communist hypothesis is a big baloney. The peasant does not believe that he is in a big alliance with the workers. They dislike each other pretty much. It is true that the Communists make a distinction between progressive, that's, ~~all~~ Communist intellectuals and the intellectuals who are against the system. The former business man or the former manager is persecuted in the same way as the kulak is persecuted in the countryside.

- (b) There were undoubtedly very important social changes since the war. Nowadays the real have-not and the former count work side by side. On the other hand, people with abilities have no chance of a social advancement.
- (d) The class barriers can be well observed in the policy of education. The children of the kulaks, of the bourgeoisie, of petty bourgeoisie, of the non-progressive intellectuals are barred from the universities. If the Party is against anybody, he becomes a declassé element, the former soldier and the former merchant just the same way. According to the Communist ideology both people sabotaged the system simply because of their class position.
- (e) Nowadays the social <sup>in</sup>equalities are greater and more conspicuous than in old times. In old times there was a smaller ~~elite~~. The upper tenthousand and everybody else belonged to the ~~populace~~. Nowadays we have a leading kader which is standing high above the people. One could distinguish several layers even within the leading kader. There are very conspicuous differences within the working class, too. There are select<sup>ed</sup> groups among the skilled workers who still make a good amount of money, for example, a plumber. On the other hand, there are many unskilled workers who cannot make a living out of their wages.
- (g) People are nervous and use insulting words at any possible occasion. You can see the situation on the street cars of

Budapest where the words ass, cattle, and so on can be heard in every minute. Politeness simply died out. If a pregnant woman boards the street car, she never gets a seat. There are constant quarrels between the street car conductor and one of the passengers. <sup>at</sup> In those times the public is divided into two parties. One of them is for the conductor, the other one for the passengers. So everybody is cussing everybody else. The old forms of politeness such as *Kezét csókolom* or the address of *úr* are not approved by the Communist Party. A clever fellow tries to avoid them. He usually addresses the other people as comrade or colleague, in Hungarian *kartárs*. The two words are hated by everybody. During the Revolution on October 24th I was on the Southern railway station to pick up some material for the hospital. I addressed the railway man there as comrade, whereupon he retorted: "I am no more a comrade. That word ceased to exist."

- (24) The peasantry suffered more than any other groups of the country. The Communist Party simply sent a Party secretary into one of the sub-counties and he became the ruling potentate there. He could do with the peasants what he wanted. He could exploit them with taxes and *levies*, and nobody could do anything <sup>about</sup> him. I am acquainted with the situation in the villages near to the Yugoslav border, in the county of Somogy. There all the well-to-do peasants

were deported and they have to live in and around Sopron. The Germans who were living there were deported in 1945 and nowadays everybody envies them. Their relatives are constantly petitioning the Ministry of Interior since they want to leave the country and join their deported relatives in Germany. German words cannot be heard anymore in both villages. One can hear German words very seldom in the former German villages around Budapest. The young generation of the Germans became finally assimilated. The situation is different with the Rumanian and Slovak minorities. They have their own schools and the government tries to court them and favour them.

- (25) In 1945 the younger generation of the Jews came home from the labor service and voluntarily joined the Communist Party. This was the time when the Communist Party did not show its real face but ~~promised~~ everything good, for example, free trade and commerce. The young Jewish people found a job with the armed forces, with the police, with the ministries. In those kind of occupations which had been barred for them in old times. As the Party became stronger, the Jewish members were purged. They were accused of being the petty bourgeoisie. The public opinion did not take notice of this great change in the membership. The public opinion still believes that the ~~Party~~ Communist Party is the same as the Jewry and blames the Jews for everything that is



Communism. About 1949 the Jewish business men and storekeepers were economically liquidated. They were squeezed out from business. So the Jews became twice disappointed in Communism. They rebuilt their store after the war. But a few years later the store was taken away by the Communist Party. At the present time, that is in 1956 and 1957 there are few Jews in the Party. The mobile part of the Jewry has left the country or intends to leave it. Such large cities as Kaposvár, Debrecen, and Nagykanizsa have very few Jews in them. Even the Christian people tried to get Jewish papers because they think in such a way it will be easier for them to emigrate.

- (c) I am a Jew.
- (g) In every-day life one could not observe any anti-Semitism, but when two or three friends come together they immediately blame the Jew for everything that's bad. There was no anti-Semitism during the Revolution. During those days it did not make any difference whether somebody was a Jew or a Christian. Then when Kádár took over the government and a wave of new atrocity started, anti-Semitism became stronger. If you walk on the streets of Budapest at night, you can see irresponsible people, particularly drunk people, who openly say that there won't be any Auschwitz again because the Jewish problem of Hungary will be solved within 30 minutes. I remember one drunk fellow walking around midnight on the Körút. He was

shouting all the time: "Stinky Jew, I show you what I mean".  
One of the policemen arrested him.

- (h) I do not think that the Jews have any future in Hungary.  
The Jews still remember what happened between 1919 and  
1945. The best advice for a Jewish person is to leave  
Hungary. Many of them do so and the number of the Jews  
is <sup>being</sup> reduced in the country very rapidly.

- (1) As a young man I was not interested in politics. But since 1943 it became impossible to stay out of politics. The average person's life and happiness depended on the political events. He had to take part, he had to form an opinion whether he liked it or not. In the Communist system nobody has a freedom to stay out of politics. If he wants to do so, he will be declared an enemy of the system.
- (a) Myself like everybody else followed the political events with a great interest. Our future depended on them.
- (b) The political interest of the people varied according to the political events.
- (c) Everybody had to participate in the different courses and schools arranged by the Party. My wife had to attend three different courses. I was luckier since I was permitted to get away with two Party seminars only.
- (2)
- (a) In 1945 I joined the Communist Party. That was the time when I returned from labor service and after my experiences I had the feeling that my place is within the Party. Slowly I began to realize that I was mistaken. However, I did not try to leave the Party. Then in the Summer of 1948 the first great purge of the members came. My kader card was taken up by the Party secretaries. It was examined and I was called before the disciplinary committee

of the Party district and was told that I denied before the Party that my father had been a wholesaler in business. They charged me lying and deception and I was expelled from the Party. In the depth of my heart I was glad that I could get rid of the Party.

- (c) I became disillusioned from the Communist Party as stated above.
- (d) My animosity against the Party grew into a hostility. Needless to say that it was an inner hostility only about which I did not speak except in family circle.
- (e) My initial attitude toward Communism was determined by my experiences in the time of Nazism. In 1945 many people of good will joined the Party. Most of them were purged in the years of 1948 and 49. That was the time when membership decreased very much. Then in 1952 and 53 the Party was carrying out a large scale recruiting campaign and many people joined it. According to the official statistics of the Party they had in 1956 1,100,000 members. Now one could ask where were those members in the days of the Revolution and why did they not stand up against the Revolution.
- (f) After 1949 my attitude was basically against the Communism.
- (h) The terror was so strong that it was impossible to do anything against the system. The Communists occupied the key positions of the country right after the war.

(3)

(a)

The fear of arrest and the terror, the overwork, and the inadequate opportunity to get ahead. Perhaps I could mention a fourth one, the boredom and drabness of life.

(b)

Inadequate food and, in my case, inadequate housing was of no great importance, since we got our present apartment in 1942. I would say that we experienced all the grievances except the interference with religious life. Nobody was in our family particularly religious.

(c)

Interference with civil rights. The distortion of facts by the regime. We had to read from day to day the stupid distortion made by the Communists.

(d)

Overwork.

(e)

Interference with civil rights. The low salary.

(f)

As the only compensation I could mention the cheap seasonal subscription to the opera performances. We liked music very much. I do not think that we have received anything else in compensation.

(4)

The real power in Hungary rested with the Soviet. The Soviet people made all the decisions.

(f)

I can tell you many stories out of my experiences as a purchasing agent about the red bureaucracy. Our hospital needed bedsheets regularly. We had to order them through the so-called framework contracts annually. The framework contract had to be made with the K ozuleti Ruh azati Veillelet,

a special business firm created for providing the hospitals and similar institutions with such items. Our office at the hospital had to draw up the contract on the basis of our actual need and of our financial possibilities. Then the draft of the contract had to be sent over to the health department of the ward of Budapest. There our demand of bedsheets was curtailed. Then this health department forwarded it to the health department of the city of Budapest where our demand was curtailed again. Then this contract was sent to the Ministry of Health whereon the contracts were collected and placed as a block with the Kézlelet Ruházati <sup>Veillelet</sup> Veillelet. Now this Kézlelet Ruházati <sup>Veillelet</sup> Veillelet was not a manufacturing firm but placed its orders with the different manufacturing firms. For example, I made a draft contract in September 1955. The Kézlelet Ruházati <sup>Veillelet</sup> Veillelet got the order only in February 1956. Then I had to urge through phone calls the Kézlelet Ruházati <sup>Veillelet</sup> Veillelet in order to get the bedsheets. I received only partial deliveries as they were manufactured by the firms. For example, I received 25 or 50 bedsheets. In June 1957 when I left the hospital the whole order was not yet delivered. The other trouble with the orders was that we did not get what we wanted but what the firms could manufacture. For example, the bedsheets were of different sizes and different qualities which meant an awful trouble in hospital administration. This whole bureaucracy explains why we had so

many difficulties in supplying the hospital with all the necessities. The Communist five year plan functioned on the basis of what is called in Hungarian profilirozás. It means that each manufacturing firm has <sup>a</sup> profile and manufactures only such commodities which are within its own profile. For example, I needed some plumbing material for the maintenance department of our hospital. Then I had to find out which one of the manufacturing firms is profiled for manufacturing that item of plumbing material. Sometimes it took me months to find out the necessary information. When I found the firm I was told that there ~~is~~ no framework contract between the firm and the Ministry of Health. In May 1957 I was unable to buy common brooms because they were not manufactured. I had to go ~~on~~ to the market places where I could buy 1, 2, and sometimes 20 brooms from the farmers who manufactured them at home. These were the consequences of an overbureaucratized production method.

- (h) In the first years after the war particularly the Jewish people from the labor service went into government service. Later on the people of proletarian origin, For example, the former cleaning woman of my mother attended a six months Party school and then she became the chief referant at the economic department of the city of Budapest. When I was arrested in 1949, my job was given to a former machine operator of a textile factory, a girl of about 25 years.

The Communist policy overlooks the mistakes committed by the good kaders. The Communists say it's better if a good kader commits a mistake, than if a class enemy has the occasion to commit one mistake. The result is that in Spring time one cannot buy children socks in the stores because they come out on the market in September only. Since there is no competition, it does not make any difference. Nobody cares about the customer.

- (5) No information.
- (6) There were people in high positions who were not Party members. For example, intellectuals, experts, engineers, doctors whose knowledge was indispensable. However, in their case there was somebody around them who was a reliable Party member and could control them. Lunnitzer was the head of the surgical department of our hospital. If he would have joined the Party, he easily could have become a professor of university.
- (e) In my opinion it was opportunism rather than Party membership that changed people.
- (f) Before the Revolution of October 1956 nobody could leave the Party voluntarily. He might have been purged with good reason or bad but he could not turn in his membership card. When the Revolution came about 800,000 people left the Party voluntarily. This shows how the member-



ship was recruited and how they were filled with the principles of Communism.

- (h) Yes, I was a member. From 1945 to 1948. See above.
- (n) In my time the Party was rather loosely organized. It did not take up more time and it did not entail more duties than membership in the Social-Democratic Party.
- (r) The Party has been run by the ~~people~~ all the time. There was a leading ~~role~~ signified by the two names of Rákosi and Gerő. But it was not sure that the real leading role belongs to them. Révai might have been just as powerful as the two other ones. At the present time Marosan and Kádár are the two largest members of the Party. But it doesn't mean that they are the real leaders.
- (s) Some of the Party leaders gained popularity. For example, Vas Zoltán. He can be credited with many good things, for example, with the food supply of Budapest in a hard time. He tried to maintain connections with the Western countries. He wanted to build up normal trade relations with the Western countries and he was anxious to obtain the approval of the bourgeoisie for the Party.
- (t) The Party policy changed as the interest of the Party requires a change. It has no sense to look for a consistency in Communist policy.
- (7) The mass organizations were called the transmission belts of the Communism. Everybody had <sup>to</sup> joined ~~to~~ them. There was

no free choice in this respect. Moreover membership in certain mass organizations went along with certain advantages which one could not deny to his family. Both my wife and me had to join the trade union when we began to work. I had to pay 20 frts a month. My wife had to pay 30 frts because she had a higher salary. I mentioned the work of the trade union above. In our hospital we had a trade union meeting every month as stated by the charter of the trade union. Attendance, however, was very poor. For the average person it was enough to attend one meeting in a year. The head of a department had to attend it more often. The director of the hospital and the Party functionaries had to attend ~~ex~~ meeting. The main program of the meeting was the so-called pep talk delivered usually by the secretary of the trade union or by a functionary of the Party organization. Some complaints of the workers could be heard but nothing was done to remedy those complaints. In a similar way almost everybody became a member of the Hungarian-Soviet friendship society. It had a membership of 4 1/2 to 5 millions, since not only the workers but even the students had to join it. Membership was on the books only. I had to pay 2 frts. a month and for that sum I received the weekly of the society Uj Világ. The weekly was printed in several million copies. It was delivered to us in our office. The people usually left it there in the waste

basket without reading it. The paper was collected next morning by the cleaning woman and we could see them in the toilets of the office. The toilet was the only place where people read the Uj Világ. I do not remember of having attended any meeting or any language course of the Hungarian-Soviet Society. The National Association of the Hungarian Women was the mass organization established in order to catch the women for Communism. It was the least efficient of all the mass organizations because it proved to be impossible to organize women. Women had always a good excuse to stay away from meetings and to fulfil their duties. My wife had to pay membership dues for a while, but later on she succeeded to drop out. As far as I know, she never attended any meeting or any demonstration organized by the National Association of Hungarian Women. As far as I know the only work done by this organization was in support of the mass demonstrations of the Party. For example, the demonstration of May 1st. The National Association of Hungarian Women had to recruit a special group where the women marched along in dresses which was regarded as a Hungarian national dress. The most efficient of the mass organizations was the Peace Council. It was played up by the Communists as being a completely unpolitical organization which was led by non-Party members. Moreover the idea of peace was pretty popular with the masses. The Peace Council had a

local organization in every plant and office. It had weekly meetings where we received a lecture on foreign policy. The lecture was, of course, according to the Communist line, and the lecturer wanted to convince us that only the Soviet Union is for the peace. The practical aim of the Peace Council was to collect the subscription for the Stockholm Free Peace Partition of any similar manifesto. The Peace Council connected more than one million subscriptions to the Stockholm peace appeal. Of course, it was not difficult to do so since we had to sign it in our office. Everybody signed it without any hesitation. The Peace Council was dissolved in the Revolution. In June 1957 when I left the country it was not yet revived.

(cde)

See above.

(g)

People loved the mass organizations the same way as they loved the Communist Party.

(i)

I know only of the local leaders of the mass organizations whom I saw in our office. They were recruited from the Communist rank and file and from people who wanted to be important in their office.

(k)

Membership in a mass organization did not mean that somebody was a Communist.

(l)

See above.

(m)

Everybody disliked the trade unions. It was rather funny to see a fellow just coming home from the Summer resort

place of the trade union and complaining bitterly about the trade union.

- (8) Let's say, 40,000 members of the Party are real Communists. Everybody else is only an opportunist. I have a story about the real Communists. A neighbouring couple where the woman was working at the Central Headquarters of the Communist Party, in the Akadémia utca for eight years and her husband was a referent in the Ministry for Heavy Industry. One would think that such real Communists stood up for the Party in the time of Revolution. These people, however, did not leave the apartment house in the Revolutionary days. They visited us every day and explained that they had been misled by the Communist Party and they were sorry for what they had done. After November 4th they slowly withdrew from our family and took up their old position. This is a good example how strong the conviction of a Communist is.

- (9) It was a very interesting feature of the Revolution that the youth educated by Communism <sup>turned</sup> against the system. It was so because Communism is a bad and ..... system. It does not correspond with the requirements of the Hungarian people. The case in point is the family of the Party secretary of the hospital. This Party secretary, a former cleaning woman had to thank everything to the Communist

Party. Her only son was admitted to the Technical University and then he became a revolutionary who took part in overturning the statue of Stalin, then in the siege of the Radio Building, in every revolutionary movement. On November 5th he left Hungary. According to his mother he turned against the system because he was married and couldn't get an apartment. He had to share the poor and small apartment of his mother in the darkest Angyalöld.

(10)

(b) The policemen were first recruited from the former members of the labor service who had seen so many individuals suffering. Then the policemen were recruited out of the sons of the workers and peasants who imitated the system of gendarms of Horthy. The AVH was made up of sadistic scoundrels. There was no law which they would keep. Every kind of torture was used by them.

(a) No information.

(f) See above.

(g) Financial privileges such as higher pay, special stores, and so on.

(h) No. Many of them were arrested, purged, even executed.

(j) The Party was above every organization including the AVH. The Party gave the orders and the AVH carried them out. When my case blew up in 1949, the general secretary of the cooperative was a Party member. One Wednesday night he

was expelled from the Party and he did not know the reason for that. On the same night at one o'clock a.m. the police came for him and arrested him in his apartment. This is one case out of the many cases where the Party had a full knowledge what the police will do to a certain person.

(k) Generally speaking, there has been a great antagonism between the police and the AVO. The jealousy existing between the two organizations was well known to everybody. If somebody was arrested by the AVO and later turned over to the police, he felt himself like a fellow who came from the hell into the heaven. I know one case when a police officer told to the arrested fellow: "We will not treat you in the same way as the AVO did". At the present time there is no special AVO because it was merged with the police. The story of my arrest and trials is as follows: As I mention<sup>ed</sup>, after the war I was working with a cooperative which was liquidated in December 1947. Then I had a job as a purchasing agent with the state department stores. In June 1949, one and a half year<sup>s</sup> after the liquidation of the cooperative I was just attending a business meeting of the state department stores when I was called out into the anti-room. There I found a plain<sup>ly</sup> from the economic police who told me that they want some information from me. He assured me that it will be a mere formality, not more than half an hour. So we went over to the economic police which was near to

the following day. We arrived there at ten o'clock a.m. I was seated in one of the office rooms and up to 1.30 p.m. nobody talked to me. Then I was called in one of the rooms where a young man was standing before his desk and without any introductory words told to me: "You have been doing a dirty, big embezzlement there in your cooperative." I was amazed to hear that and asked for some details. It turned out immediately that they had no specific charges and actually there had not been any embezzlement. After a talk of about an hour I was led into one of the cells. I tried to protest saying that I was called over for half an hour and neither my office nor the family knows where I am. They told me that they will phone to the office and I will stay here for a while. This happened on a Friday. Then on Monday morning the regular hearing began. It consisted actually of a persuasion. The police officer wanted to persuade me that I should confess an embezzlement. It became pretty clear to me that they wanted to liquidate the former general secretary of the cooperative who was a Party member and who was involved in the Rajk case. I refused to make a fake confession. Then they started to beat me. I took all the beatings but in the meantime I was thinking of a certain person known <sup>to me</sup> who jumped out of the window during the beating and died on the pavement. I was treated in such a way for eight days and I did not confess any embezzlement. After eight days I was taken



over into the prison in the Markó street and a few days later into the central prison called Gyújtőfogház where I spent twenty months. During the whole time there I was working in the office of the prison. This was an advantageous position. I had the privilege of writing a letter once every week. Moreover I had a so-called double cell shared by two persons only whereas the regular cells contained ten to twenty people. I could spend a great part of the day in the offices where we were sometimes permitted to smoke. Our lot was much better than that of the rest. Altogether 5,000 people were crowded into the Gyújtőfogház. During the twenty months we had to appear for nine trials. At each case we were led into the court building in the Markó utca with chains. Nevertheless I liked the trials since my wife could appear there and bring along the kids. On the corridor it was possible to exchange a few words with them. In those times everybody could freely select his lawyer but the lawyer could not do very much. For example, we could see the lawyers only before the trials and not for a longer time than ten minutes. He gave me the message from my wife but we really couldn't talk over the trial. At the end of the ninth trial five of us got away with such small sentences as one week or three weeks in prison plus a fine of 50 or 100 frts. Actually all of us were set free immediately. The main person involved in the trials was the general

secretary mentioned above. His case, however, was separated from ours and he disappeared. I don't know anything of his ~~future~~ <sup>present</sup> fate. I think he disappeared somehow or died. His wife with the children moved away from Budapest and lived in one of the cities of Hungary.

(b) Anybody who was disliked by the Communists got arrested.

(g) No further information except for the rumors.

(12) See above.

(13) It is impossible to give any advice in this respect.

(c) Nobody dares and wants to do anything. An AVO officer was living in the same apartment house where we lived. Once he saw me in the prison. He was so surprised to see me there that he almost fainted. But he didn't tell to my wife that he saw me. A brother was not willing to do anything for his brother. The only exception was if somebody had an extraordinarily great amount of money.

(d) Class origin is usually an ~~important~~ <sup>important</sup> circumstance. If somebody comes from the former bourgeoisie class he is always regarded as a class alien or as a class enemy by the court. On the other hand, people of the proletarian class get away with a smaller delict rather easily.

(f) It is a very clever policy to keep one's mouth shut.

(14) The terror was greatly eased by the end of 1955. In May

1956 the Irodalmi Ujság began to criticize the terror system. As a consequence the Irodalmi Ujság became so popular that people stood in queues in order to buy a copy. The policemen of the street corners were joking about it asking the people: "Is the Irodalmi Ujság still not here? Haven't you got yet your daily vitamin?"

- (15) In the first movements after the war the Soviet established its domination over Hungary. From this time on the leading role was played by the Communist Party and the Communist Party referred to the head of the Soviet Union all the time. The key positions were occupied by the Communists. When Hungarian Fascists were arrested in 1945, it was done by Russian patrols. I remember the camp in Gődöllő in 1945. It was maintained by the Russians. And the Russians decided over the fate of the prisoners there. The writer Illés Béla appeared in Russian uniform in the camp and he selected the Hungarian prisoners who should be sent to Siberia and who should be set free.

(d) No.

- (e) The headquarters of the Hungarian state railways are directed by the Russians. They have a special department there occupying the whole floor of the central building. Similarly the Russians direct the heavy industry. They are managing Sztalinváros, Dunapentele, the bauxit mines, the uranium, and so on. The case of the Hungarian uranium

mines was handled under the greatest secrecy by the Ministry of Heavy Industry. There the whole project was called with the cover name ALU and it was kept in such a secrecy that the public did not learn about the discovery of the uranium just a short time before the Revolution. Then, of course, it became one of the main programs of the Revolution that the uranium mines should be turned over to the Hungarians.

- (16) Before the Summer of 1956 nobody dared to manifest <sup>his</sup> their feelings. After that time everybody could criticize the system rather freely and this criticism did not die out in November 1956. The general tone was rather free up to the Spring of 1957.
- (c) You could be frank with your family and with your friends.
- (d) Nobody was frank about political matters.
- (17) It was a part of the system that everybody tried to circumvent the official orders all the time.
- (b) The peasants' attitude depended on the local ruler of his district. If the local ruler, let's say, the Party secretary or the chairman of the council of the sub-county was a good fellow, the peasants could do pretty much. On the other hand, a bad local ruler did much damage. For example, there was comrade Kovács in the county of Szabolcs, who got the idea that the county was no good for growing apples.

The famous apple trees of the county had to be cut out because he ordered so. By the way, the excellent sandy soil of county Szabolcs is very good for apple archards. The trouble of the apple growers was that they could not get the boxes for delivering the apples. The problem was solved in a real Communist way. They did not produce more boxes but ordered the apple trees to be cut out.

(c) There were many persons working illegally at different places. Even the orders concerning the so-called work books and other personal documents were circumvented. People had false documents or took up jobs under a *falsc* name. The newspapers wrote up such cases pretty often and there were even more cases which were not detected by the authorities.

(18) The system had one strong point only: the terror. The spies and the police system controlled everything. The bitterness of the people was not enough to overthrow the government. Everybody was afraid. He complained in words, but nobody dared to do anything. Since the time of the Revolution the Kádár government is constantly emphasizing its strength. The people know that they are right. The government is strong and one cannot do anything against it.

(19) From time to time one could learn from the newspapers that

a group of reactionaries were arrested who plotted against the government. I met a few people who were declared as enemies of the system and were jailed. However, there was no organized counter-revolution. Those plots which were propagandized by the system were no real plots. What happened was that <sup>a</sup>the few people were rounded up by the police and beaten up. Then they were willing to sign any confession given into their mouths. I know the story of a student of medicine with whom I shared my cell in the prison of Markó utca. This student was living in one of the colleges where he would talk about politics with his fellow students. They would criticize the system and they would point out the bad points in it. As a result 70 kids were arrested and received prison sentences ranging from 15 to 20 years. This student spent 6 months at the military political department. He was tortured as long as finally he confessed that he wanted to derail the Party train to Szeged. He never had any idea of this kind. All he did was, he was complaining as many other people did. After four or five years in jail such people received amnesty, but by that time they were broken and they did not dare to open their mouths.

- (b) All the groups were equally hostile to the system. Each group had its own complaints. The workers were just as much dissatisfied as the members of the former bourgeoisie. Except of the tenthousand ruling people everybody was

against the system.

(c) See above.

(1) This was the consequence of the 20th Congress of the Party. The Party tried to make a sudden turn. Rákosi was dismissed. It was impossible to keep the criticism within the limits as prescribed by the Party. The Petöfi kör and the Irodalmi Ujsag were great surprise for everybody. Nobody believed that something like that is possible under Communism. The first great surprise was the famous series of articles called "I do not like Kucsera". After that many other critical articles appeared in the newspapers.





one day only. The people were quite amazed to see how many things can be bought in America.

- (a) The political parts of the Hungarian newspapers were read only when it was necessary. In every office there was a weekly Szabad Nép meeting. One day a week we had to appear at 7.30. The meeting lasted for 30 minutes and one or two persons had to report on the main events of the foreign and domestic policy on the basis of the Szabad Nép. The two reporters had to read the Szabad Nép over a week in order to prepare their report. Other times nobody read the political parts of the papers. The Népsport, a daily paper about sports was very popular. The weeklies dealing with theater and movies were popular, too. In a friendly circle the Szabad Nép was called only Pravda. Between 1950 and 1956 the newspapers did not carry any advertisements. The classified advertisements of the newspapers were replaced by hand bills which were pasted at the important street corners, for example, before the Western railway station, at the street car stop. Also street signs and walls were pasted on with those hand bills telling about perambulator or a bed for sale or about a room to let. After the Revolution advertisements and particularly classified advertisements were reinstated in the Hungarian papers. However, the system of hand bills still exists. When we wanted to liquidate our apartment in the Spring of 1957, we wrote quite a number of hand bills and pasted them at different parts. People came to our apart-

ment and we were able to sell our belongings.

(g) See above.

(3) In 1948 the Western films were suppressed in Hungary. They were declared imperialistic films. From this time on we could see only the movie production of the Communist block. The public was filled with a general apathy toward the Soviet films. It is true that those films were incredibly stupid. The system tried different schemes to get people ~~for~~ frequenting the Russian films. For example, one could buy a book of tickets for two forints. So one movie would have cost you only 20 forints. Then the Party organized collective movie attendance. For example, the wool plant was supposed to attend the Russian film "The Hero with a Thousand Faces". In such a case the Party secretary collected two forints from everybody and everybody received his ticket. But only five or six persons were ~~out~~ in the movie house. Because of the failure of the Russian movie industry after 1956 quite a few other films were imported in the country. We have seen Polish, Czech, Bulgarian films, but none of them was a success except for one or two Czech films. Later on even movies produced in other countries than people's democracy were permitted to enter the country. Quite a number of Italian and French films and a few English movies were performed. The Italian film drew the biggest audience. The students were standing

in queue before the movie houses from 8 a.m. in order to get tickets for 4.30 in the afternoon. The Italian film dealing with the life of the composer Verdi is being played for years and the public is still enthusiastic about it. Several people saw it five and six times. As far as I know only one American film was played since 1949 but I haven't seen it.

- (d) The average fellow in Budapest could go into the movies only with great difficulties. When he wanted to go, he couldn't get tickets. For my part I had no time to stand in queue as the youngsters did. A famous Italian film entitled "O.K. Nero" was played in the movie in our neighbourhood. I tried to get tickets five times. I was standing in queue for hours but finally I couldn't see it. Some fellows made a good living by speculating in movie tickets. They bought up a great number of tickets and sold them before the performance for higher prices.
- (e) To understand the situation about stage theaters and the tickets I have to tell that there was a so-called organizer of the public at every place of work. In our hospital I was the organizer of the public and it was my duty to provide the workers of the hospital with theater tickets. This was done within the framework of a large organization. I had to buy tickets for the workers one month ahead. For example, in the month of August I had to buy tickets for September. The situation became more complicated because

you could never get tickets for a popular play unless you bought some tickets for an unpopular play. For example, the operetta "Csárdáskirálynő" is very popular and is being played for three years at the great distress of the Party ideologists. Being the organizer of the public in the hospital, I went into the theater between the 1st and the 10th of August and ordered tickets for September. I got 20 tickets for the "Csárdáskirálynő". But then I had to buy another 20 tickets for ideological plays which were disliked for the ... For example, I had to buy another 20 tickets for the performance of the play called "Szelistyei Asszonyok". Then I went back to the hospital and told to the selected employees there that I can give you two tickets to the "Csárdáskirálynő" provided you take two tickets to the "Szelistyei Asszonyok". He had to take them as I offered him since it was impossible to get tickets for the popular plays. The Fővárosi Operettszínház which played the "Csárdáskirálynő" sold a hundred tickets free to anybody on Friday. A person who couldn't get tickets through his organizer in the office had to stand in queue at 4 or 5 o'clock a.m. At 12 o'clock the ticket office was opened and if he had luck he could get tickets. So our employees had to buy the tickets as I offered it to them. The result was that they went to the "Csárdáskirálynő" and threw out the two tickets to the "Szelistyei Asszonyok". The situation was even worse

concerning the tickets to the operas. Budapest had two theaters for the operas, the main opera house and the so-called Erkel Színház, the former Városi Színház for the lighter operas. The seasonal tickets giving one performance each month were sold in July for the season beginning in the next September. The seasonal tickets were handed over to the trade unions who in turn organized the organizers of the public to sell them. Everybody was glad who could get a seasonal ticket. He could not specify his choice concerning date or price. He had to take what was given to him. It happened that I gave a seasonal ticket to two persons so each of them could go every second month. At certain times I could get regular tickets, too. The main trouble was that the opera house changed its program very often. So somebody obtained a ticket for the opera of Wagner and when he appeared there, he got a Russian opera called "The Young God". The doctors of our hospital liked music and they were eager to get opera tickets. Here again I had to apply the trick I mentioned above. I gave a doctor two tickets for the opera "Lohengrin", but at the same time he had to buy two tickets for the Russian opera called "Bakcsi Szeráy. Of course, he bought them and went to listen to "Lohengrin" and gave the two tickets of "Bakcsi Szeráy to his medical <sup>friend</sup>acknowledgist. The next day the medical <sup>friend</sup>acknowledgist came to me and complained that I gave her a very poor performance. Similar was the

situation concerning the concerts. In the last year ~~we~~ though we got some good concerts in Budapest. For example, Lucienne Boyer and Wiener Sangerknaben came to Budapest. In this case I received the tickets for the employees of the hospital from the Philharmonia. For example, I got 20 tickets to the Wiener Sangerknaben which made an exceptional performance with exceptionally raised prices. But at the same time I had to buy tickets to the Folk-dance Unit or to the concert given by the army orchestra or even to a concert given by an orchestra of the trade unions. This was the situation and if an average person went to the opera or to a concert he got some pleasure, but at the same time a lot of annoyance, too. For the big bosses of the Communist Party special performances, the so-called protocol performances, were given. The first night of a new play or the guest performance of a famous foreign artist was declared a protocol performance wherefrom the ordinary people were barred and entrance were permitted only to the functionaries of the Party, to the <sup>shop</sup> workers, to people with the Kossuth Medal, and so on. My work as a purchasing agent was well-supported by my other work about the theater tickets. I could obtain many materials for the hospital if I gave to somebody in charge a few theater tickets. For two tickets to the "Csardas-kiralyno" operetta I got the permission to buy 200 meters of linen for the use of the hospital.

- (f) I had a seasonal ticket to the opera house. Furthermore I got tickets pretty often to the National Theater. I saw even the famous "Tragedy of Man". There was such a demand of tickets then that you could get a girl for giving her two tickets to the "Tragedy of Man". It was played only five times then Rákosi ordered it off the stage because of its pessimistic tendency. After the Revolution it was played again. I like the classical works of Shakespeare and Bernard Shaw as well as the plays of Molnár Ferenc. The Party ideology is always militating against Molnár. However, he is very popular. The Petöfi theater played for a whole season his play "Olympia". Bernard Shaw's "Pygmalion" was ~~an upper-~~box-office success again in spite of the Party. Another popular playwright was Goldoni. On the other hand, the modern playwrights couldn't make a success. They had to write according to the Party line and were refused by the public. The generation of the Communists produced only one playwright in Hungary, Háry Gyula. )
- (4) The Party line books were forced upon the public and the public tried to resist such a force. About 1954 there was a definite change in the policy of the Communists. From this time on they published the works of the classical authors in Hungary and in other literatures. Such authors were now published as Jókai, Móricz Zsigmond, Arany, Petöfi, Vörösmarty. They published the foreign classical authors in

of bibliophil editions, for example, the complete works of Shakespeare. The "Decameron" of Boccaccio was published in a bibliophil edition in June 1957. It was translated and edited by Révay József. The so-called bibliophil edition is actually a very cheap thing. The selection of the "Decameron" is a very frivolous and is ~~not~~ to pure sexualism. Some of those classical authors made a big success in sales, for example, the translation of the plays of Molière or the books written by Gál György Sándor on music such as his Book of the Operas or his book of the life of Verdi. Another success was a book on Africa written by two Czech authors. At that time even Thomas Mann was rediscovered by the Communists. His novel "Felix Krull" was published and became a great success. Similarly the Hungarian P. Howard was rediscovered and his novel "The Unseen Legion" was sold in a hundred thousand copies. The so-called Olcsó Könyvtár was very popular since it published good works for cheap prices. It published, for example, the novels of Dumas, of Steinbeck, the "Men and Mice" by Steinbeck, the novels by Stendhal, the Hungarian Jókai, and so on. It was my duty as a purchasing agent to try to obtain medical books published abroad. The books published in Eastern Germany were permitted to enter Hungary. Even a few medical books from Western Germany could be obtained for the hospital. We could not get hold of any medical books published in the



United States. Selling of books was another function of the Party. It had to be done on a local level. In our office, for example, the personnel secretary was in charge of selling books. She tried to force the Party-line books on the employees. She met with a great resistance. Finally she got fed up and asked me to take over her job of selling the books. This is how I became the book salesman of our hospital in 1953. The Bjelcannisz book store, a branch office of the state book publishing company, provided the ~~30th~~<sup>10th</sup> District of Budapest with books. I had to go there every month with a list of the books I wanted to get. I explained them right at the beginning of our cooperation that I was not a Party member and I cannot force Party-line books upon the employees. From this time on we did not purchase any ideological books, but those books which were requested by the employees. My best customers were the doctors who had to hold inspection at night and had plenty of time to read. They wanted light novels and other popular books. They purchased books in the value of 100 frts and more a month and paid me when they received their salary. The medical books were sold by the Semmelweiss book store in the Baross utca. ~~There~~ we could get /Hungarian and Russian medical books, however, none of our doctors was interested in the Russian books. I think none of them knew Russian. The few foreign medical books I could obtain for our doctors

came from the same store~~f~~. Medical books were very expensive. One of them cost as much as 120 frts. The doctors could buy them on an instalment plan.

(e) See above.

(5) Most families in Hungary had a radio set. In the Summer of 1956 there were about one and a half million subscribers to the Hungarian Radio. After 1953 the radio sets were sold on an instalment plan. Most of the sets were good to receive foreign stations but the propaganda broadcasts of the foreign stations were jammed. The Revolution put an end to the jamming. But jamming was resumed again about the middle of December 1956. The program of the Hungarian Radio Station is very boring. The average daily program consists of an half an hour program of foreign policy, another half an hour about agriculture, the Russian language course, at least two hours of program about the home of the socialism, that is the Soviet Union. People liked the sport programs, then the plays, operas, and finally the news broadcast at 10 p.m. which is somewhat more objective than the other newscasts. My taste in radio programs coincided with that of so many other people. I liked the sport programs and music.

(6) Everybody listened to the foreign radio stations. Party members just as well as people who were not in the Party.

In the countryside many people were persecuted because they listened to the program of the Voice of America or Radio Free Europe. In Budapest one could do it freely but, of course, the radio had to be turned down. As far as I know, the Kádár government has not yet interned anybody for listening to the foreign stations.

- (c) Radio Free Europe, the Voice of America, and BBC were the most popular foreign stations. Particularly the news broadcast of the BBC in the early morning hours.
- (d) Generally speaking, the foreign radio stations left a bitter after-taste in everybody who listened to them. Radio Free Europe promised help to the Hungarians but in an ambiguous way. They thought of help in material goods such as gifts, we were thinking of something else. The BBC was the most reliable, Radio Free Europe the least reliable out of the foreign stations. I belonged to those few people who did not listen to foreign radio stations. It was ~~rather~~ a rather futile pastime. It was the same thing as old men looking at a good-looking young girl.
- (7) Budapest is the classical home of rumors. Everybody knows something, talks about it, and the next fellow <sup>with it</sup> tells the original story. I remember the last rumor I heard in June 1957 just before leaving the country. According to this rumor Marosán and Münnich had escaped

from the country and were in Yugoslavia. It is not necessary to say anything more about such rumors.

- (g) I haven't met any well-informed people in Budapest.
- (h) People met in the espressos and exchanged their information. Wherever reliable friends met they exchanged their information. Such a big talk reminded me always of the same futility which characterized the listening to the foreign stations.
- (8) People were generally doubtful about every news item they found in the newspaper.
- (d) Nobody believed in those news items which appeared on the first page. The news items in the last page were usually believed. The first page for example had a big headline, saying the Soviet Union decreased our war debts again. Then on the seventh page of the same paper you could see a smaller item telling that the number 75 boat was constructed at the ship works of Obuda and the Soviet authorities took it over as a part of our debt payment.
- (e) The sport newspapers were trustworthy. However, the people did not trust even them. If a Russian soccer team defeated the Hungarian one, all the people said that Moscow ordered the Hungarians to lay down. Nobody was willing to believe that the Russian team was indeed better.
- (f) Yes, see above.

- (9) People tried to be well-informed and listened to the radio stations. Nothing else could be done. In 1955 it was impossible to visit foreign countries. Those few privileged persons who could visit Austria could pick up some first hand information there.
- (10)
- (a) I don't know. At that time I was still in the labor service.
- (b) Nobody believed the Communist propaganda about the Americans attacking North Korea.
- (c) Nobody believed the germ warfare either.
- (d) For my part I do not like the whole idea of rearming West Germany. I must still remember the Nazi times.
- (e) There were many rumors about the Free Europe balloons. I did not see any of them. I did not see the leaflets either.
- (f) It was a great disappointment in Hungary. People hoped for a change. Many people hoped in a war.
- (g) It was an even greater disappointment.
- (h) Those few people who knew Nagy Ferenc and Sulyok Dezső personally talked about them in the expressos whenever a foreign radio mentioned their names. The majority, however, was very sceptical about the emigres.

- (1) The whole system must be changed. A *partial change* would not mean any good.
- (a) The only good thing in the present system is the presently existing check system which makes the payment very easy for the state owned companies. It was very useful in my work as a purchasing agent. It could be used in any kind of system.
- (2) Many parties are necessary, but not in the way as they existed in 1945 when the Smallholder Party was not the party of the smallholders. I would like to see a real democracy, a real freedom in every field of life.
- (3) Free speech is an important part of the basic human freedom. It should be the same way as it is in the Hyde Park of London.
- (c) No.
- (d) No.
- (4) Nobody should be forced to attend political meetings or to join a party. If somebody had an interest in politics he should be free to select his own party.
- (5) The principle of free enterprise has to be restored. Anybody should be permitted to go into business and establish his independent business if he wants to do so.

At the present time there is no freedom whatsoever in this line. The students of the school are selected by the Party and directed toward certain occupations. I know of a girl who wanted to become a commercial artist. She had to become a sales clerk with the *stat* *trava* because that was the order of the Party kader.

- (6) Nobody is sorry because the Weiss Manfréd factory or the large estates of the church were nationalized. Such undertakings should be kept in the hands of the state. But of course their administration should be a much better one than the presently existing one.
- (b) After twelve years of Communist rule it would be practically impossible to restore many factories to their former owners. The present system rearranged the old factories in so many ways that the *e - 2* of the old ownership cannot be recognized anymore. The best policy would be to acknowledge the *nationalization* as it exists nowadays and not to pay any indemnity to the old owners. This plan might look as a rather unjust one. But it seems to be the only feasible plan. For the future, however, everybody should be permitted to build up his own factory.
- (c) Private profit is the most important *incentive* ~~encouragement~~ for a working man.
- (e) There are no state monopolies in America. Since we have them in Hungary for such a long time they must be main-

tained.

- (g) State trading monopolies are very bad.
- (7) The medium and small size industry and commerce should be entirely in the private sector. It is definitely not a function of the state to go into grocery business.
- (8) State planning leads always to an anarchy in the economic life. The individual plants have to prepare a plan according to their own interest but no *central* plan can be dictated by the government and imposed upon the different plants.
- (9) The state must not interfere with the private affairs of the individual and his family. A colleague of mine was 48 years old when she became pregnant and she had to give life to her fourth child because abortion was just prohibited by the state. Her husband left her and escaped from the country. She is still there with four kids. If the state interferes with the family life, the result will be a great amount of personal tragedies.
- (10) The citizen has to obey the laws to avoid an anarchy. The laws on the other hand have to ensure the individual freedom.
- (a) Every state has a taxation and military <sup>service</sup> surreys.  
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- (e) The main duty of the state is to ensure the freedom of its citizen, but this freedom must be really ensured, not in letters, as it is done by the Communist system. In 1954 the private sector was permitted in Hungary and many people received <sup>the</sup> ~~an~~ admission of opening their shops. A few months later they received such high taxes ~~that~~ from the part of the state that they had to go out of business.
- (11) In one field there has been a great improvement under the Communist system. This is the field of the health insurance. At the present time almost every employee is covered by the health insurance plan. Not only the industrial workers but the employees of the cooperatives, too. The framework of this health insurance system is good. Its realization, however, was done according to the shopwindow policy of the Communists. They did not do anything to build new hospitals. Over the last twelve years no new hospital was built in Budapest. The only thing that happened was that the so-called city sanatorium in Vas utca was enlarged and became an obstetrical ward with 200 beds. After the war a few premises <sup>held</sup> ~~had~~ by the military authorities were transformed into temporary hospitals mainly with the aid received from the foreign Red Cross missions. Altogether the number of beds available for sick persons is the same as it was twelve years ago. The Communists did a very poor job concerning

the employment of the doctors. The doctors of the health insurance system are poorly paid and have very much to do. From 8 a.m. to ~~5~~<sup>five</sup> p.m. they are supposed to have office hours in the out-~~station~~<sup>patient</sup> clinics of the ward, which means that generally they have one or two minutes for one sick person. In the afternoon they have to visit the sick people who are at home. In the meantime they have to do a lot of paperwork. If somebody is sick with a high fever he may call the doctor of the health insurance system who will visit him at home. But then he must show up at the out-~~station~~<sup>patient</sup> clinics and has to be seen by a so-called special doctor. At the out-~~station~~<sup>patient</sup> clinics the patient has to wait for hours. He gets a number at 8 a.m. and it will be 12 o'clock or even later when he finally sees a doctor. If the out-~~station~~<sup>patient</sup> clinic approves it, he gets a written permission, ~~and~~ entitling him for a hospital bed. Then he has to wander from one place to another till he can find an empty bed in a hospital. There is a registration office for hospital beds in the Markó utca which is supposed to direct the patients to those hospitals which have room. Practically, however, its work is rather poor and it says to the patients that in two weeks from now there will be an empty bed in this and this hospital. In an acute case of ~~the~~ the ambulance car is driving from hospital to hospital till finally it can get rid of the patient. The hospitals are full of ~~the~~ replacement

beds. In the mental wards of our hospitals we had lay down mattresses on the corridors to make room for the patients. The main aim for the hospital doctors is to get rid of the patient as soon as possible. In case of a delivery the mothers have to leave the hospital after three days.

- (a) There is a very small group of people who can afford private doctors and private medical cares.
- (c) The private physicians give a much better service. A person with a great amount of money can always obtain the foreign medicines.
  
- (12) See above in Section G.
  
- (13) There has been a certain improvement in this field . Let's not forget that at the present time all the food items are sold in every part of the country for the same prices. They are available for everybody. As a consequence there are no more trade differences in the food and nourishment of the different social classes. Let's not forget the many poor peasants can now buy oranges which they could never have done before.
- (a) The situation is better in 1957 than it was in 1945. At that time the working people had to carry the burden of inflation.
- (b) The food situation is better in 1957 than in 1950. At

present there is more sugar, more vegetables and meat on the market than in 1950.

- (14) Clothing is one of the points where Communism failed entirely. The citizen of Budapest was famous of being well-dressed. This was mainly due to the many stores which sold on an instalment plan both men's and women's wear. This system has never been restored by Communism, not even in 1955 and 1956 when instalment buying was introduced by the state. At the present time only a top-layer of the population is well-dressed because they are served by special stores maintained for the elite of the Party. One of those special stores is the so-called diplomat store which is in the former premises of the Tailor Szita in the inner district of the city. Here one can get real English materials, nylon shirts, silk underwear, and so on. But only those functionaries of the Party are served here who have a special permission. If any official representative of the Hungarian state is sent abroad he must first visit the special store where he gets his complete outfit including a set of formal wear or tuxedo. The other special store was the so-called "Rákosi kitchen", a store on the Apponyi tér which sold luxury food and drink to those few who were permitted to enter. This "Rákosi kitchen" was closed though after the Revolution. But the diplomat store still exists. The

clothing of the average people has become uniformized. At the present time only the so-called type material and type garment is produced and sold. A ready-made suit for men costs 1,400 frts which is about a monthly salary of a skilled worker. If somebody wants a made-to-measure suit he has to pay at least 3,000 frts. It is somewhat easier for the women to keep up with fashion. However, a women's pullover costs 800 to 900 frts. Children's clothing represents another difficulty. For reasons unknown to me clothing items for children were not available all the time. For example, it was impossible to buy a pair of shoes for our older daughter.

(a) Worse.

(b) Perhaps the same.

(15) Regarding quantity, the industrial production of Hungary has greatly increased. The Communists established many, many new plants and enlarged many old ones. From the point of view of quality, however, there has been a great deterioration. Here is the case of the bicycle manufactured by the Csepel works. In old times such a bicycle could<sup>not</sup> be worn out. It was inherited from father to son. Nowadays it falls apart in a few weeks. First the tube is ruined. Then in a few days the driving chain comes apart and it is impossible to obtain any parts. Parts are not manufactured and sold because its not profitable for the factories

under the five year plan system. The factories receive a premium if they fulfil the five year plan in a way. If the plant manufactures a certain number of bicycles it gets more good points before the planning commission than for manufacturing the necessary number of bicycle parts. The pot and pan factory manufactured only pots and pans for 40 to 50 liters because in <sup>that</sup> way it made ~~out~~ more <sup>points</sup> in the planning. For the average housewife it was impossible to get the regular sizes in pots and pans. As a purchasing agent of the hospital I was unable to buy any *potties* for our department of pediatrics. Finally in one of the stores I discovered 50 punch <sup>bowls</sup> ~~bowls~~ which were of the regular size. I bought them and ordered our maintenance department to put a handle on them. So we could use it in the department of pediatrics. I was regarded as an innovator and received a diploma and 100 frts for transforming the punch <sup>bowls</sup> ~~bowls~~ into children's *potties*.

- (c) The situation is simply tragical.
- (16) The system for the workers' councils as set up during the Revolution seems to be very good if the workers' ~~councils~~ have the freedom to elect the members of the councils.
- (d) The factories should be run by the workers' councils and by the experts.

- (17) There are many plans in this respect but being no expert in agriculture I am rather poorly informed. I think that free cooperatives would be good and would promote the necessary mechanization of Hungarian agriculture. I think that the example of Denmark could be imitated. The present system of forced collectivization is no good. The peasants simply hate it and it resulted in a tragical decline in the agricultural output of the country. The old large estates cannot be restored. Let's not forget, in old times we had three million landless proletariats in Hungary. In certain counties such as Somogy, Veszprém, Zala it would be possible to maintain large state estates provided they are run by a democratic state. Such state farms could carry out those agricultural works which are not suitable for the small farms. The other part of the agricultural area of the country should be in the hands of the peasants.
- (c) The present collective farms should be dissolved. Every member should have a freedom to join a cooperative on a voluntary basis.
- (h) Yes, the kulaks are peasants, too.
- (i) No, see above.
- (l) A certain kind of help would be necessary. Even the United States gives a help to the farmers.
- (m) The voluntary cooperatives could take over the machine and tractor stations.

- (18) In my opinion every church should be free to work according to its own faith and every person should be free to select his own religion. We shouldn't have the church system as it existed in Hungary before 1944 but we shouldn't have the anti-religious policy of the Communists either.
- (f) I would send my children to the public schools.
- (19) The same problem emerged in October 1956. There shouldn't be any lynching. Every Party member should be carefully investigated. If he committed crimes, he should get his reward. If he did not commit any crimes he should be permitted to participate in the life of the society.
- (b) The leaders are leaders only as long as they are supported by Moscow.
- (e) The members of the former DISZ or the members of the present KISZ are quite all right kids. Nobody should persecute them. They have never been Communists. They have never accepted the teachings of the Communism.
- (f) The drafted personnel of the AVO cannot do anything for his present job. The real leaders of the AVO should be sent into a concentration camp for a few years. They really deserve it.
- (g) The old police sided pretty much with the Revolution. They gave weapons to the revolutionary youngsters. At the present time the police is merged with the old AVO. It could not be maintained in the future. It should be



reorganized.

- (h) The youth league members and the police sided with the Revolution. The AVO people disappeared from sight and re-emerged after the Revolution. I think they were working all the time.
- (20) Hungary was the defending bastion of the West and the country has many merits in this respect.
- (21) In spite of the fact that Hungary is a part of the Western civilization there is a special Hungarian character.
- (a) The Hungarian character differs from the German, the Russian, or the American. No American would deny that there are great differences between the national characters of the United States and, for example, Brazil.
- (e) At the present time there are no differences in the character among Hungary's social classes. But there were such differences in the past and antagonized the social classes of Hungary. The aristocracy as well as the plutocracy were a special caste in Hungary. The middle class with its hold of social success was quite different from the plutocracy. Then the peasant and the worker class was characterized by a great backwardness. It would be impossible to restore those social classes in the future. At the present time there is such a great

equalization in Hungarian society that the old social classes could never re-emerge.

(f) See above.

(22) Hungary had the best government up to <sup>1914</sup>~~1918~~ which was the long area of peace and economic boom. After the war the 1920th were relatively peaceful. Then in 1932 the economic crisis started which was followed by the Nazis.

(f) Yes, see above.

(23) I am not a partisan of the idea of revising the national borders of Hungary. At the present time it is an ir-realistic dream. It seems to be entirely impossible that Hungary should get back those territories which are now ruled by Yugoslavia. Concerning Ruzinszko the Russians exchanged the whole population. The people living there at present do not want anything to do with Hungary.

(d) There is no natural conflict.

(e) I belong to those few people who personally like the Slovaks.

(24) At the present time we have the example of the Common European Market which should be extended and many other countries should be included in that common market. This would be an ideal solution for Hungary, too. It would be

expanded into something like Pan-Europe. I would include even Russia into such a common market provided Russia denounces her old imperialism.

- (25) I can tell you nothing but the best about the Russian peasant. I spent 34 months in Russia in the labor service. I saw there how the Russian was exploited and tortured by both the Germans and the Hungarians. Everybody took away everything from the Russian peasant. He had nothing but a few potatoes left for him and when we arrived in his home and he saw how hungry we were he offered us those few potatoes. Of course, one had to make a distinction between the simple Russian and the Communist Party functionary. The Russians who entered Hungary in 1945 and looted everything created such an antagonism that for the next hundred years all Hungarians will hate all Russians.
- (26) One could discuss for hours and hours the problem of Marxism. To sum it up in a few sentences I agree with the nationalization of the large industrial enterprise and of the large estates. On the other hand I disagree with the principle of liquidating the medium and small size enterprises.
- (g) I don't know.
- (h) Democracy means a freedom of the individual.

- (i) There has never been a democracy in Hungary.
- (j) Tito is a Marxist but I don't know anything about his democracy.
- (27) Tito's appearance always reminds me of Field Marshal Göring and this is one of the reasons why I do not like him. I know that many Hungarians like him simply because they regarded him as an opposition to the Russians.
- (e) I cannot answer the question.
- (28) Nagy Imre tried to reconcile the Western democracy with Communism. What he wanted was that the Communist Party should make an honest ~~commission~~ <sup>arrangement</sup> with the other political parties.
- (a) He would have stayed on for a while. His name was well-known by the masses and he was liked.
- (b) See above.
- (29)
- (a) No good, at least in that form as we got it.
- (b) No opinion. I don't know it.
- (c) Bad.
- (d) The whole idea of national front is a nonsense.
- (e) At the present time I do not know imperialism but within a few weeks I will land in a country in the imperialistic world.

- (f) Good.
- (g) Good.
- (i) Kulak is a forced word by the Communists. It has no meaning.
- (h) He is no good corrupt fake.
- (j) The history of the Bolshevik Party teaches about him that he was a traitor of the Party. I don't have any better opinion of him either.
- (k) He was no good for the Hungarians but good for the Czechoslovaks.
- (l) No opinion.
- (m) She is a woman of great character but could not play a great role in history.
- (n) He was the symbol of opposition. As a politician he was no good. He dealt always more with politics than with church affairs. After his liberation in November he should have done more about religion than about politics.
- (30) The Social-Democratic and the Smallholders Party would win in a free election.
- (a) Kethly Anna.
- (31)
- (a) Less.
- (b) Don't know.
- (c) Less.

- (d) Less.
  - (e) More.
  - (f) Less.
  - (g) More
  - (h) No opinion.
  - (i) No opinion.
- (32) Most people were better off.
- (33)
- (a) The is the slogan of the Communists. Their interests conflict.
  - (b) The same as above.
  - (e) Their interests conflict
  - (f) No conflict.
  - (g) The old aristocracy ruled the country. The intelligentsia had to obey.
  - (i) The same as above.
- (34) I did not hear from anybody that the United States would be dangerous. I think everybody would be glad to receive those dangers coming from the United States. Everybody would be glad to take over the form of life of the United States.
- (35) In case of war the high Party functionaries and those

parts of the army who could not escape would fight for the present system. I am very much willing to believe that in case of war the Russians would deport the population of Hungary and the Russians would defend the present Hungarian borders. Such a plan can be carried out pretty easily.

- (36) I left Hungary 16 days ago. My opinions have not changed in the meantime.

(1)

(a) I hope I could give you some information about the present situation in Hungary.

(2)

(a) No. On the contrary I would like to get out of the country those relatives whom I have there.

(3)

No special suggestions.