

"I was working at the Pecs University Clinic as a biochemist. I was of bad koder background, for my father was a high-ranking officer, although he strongly opposed the Nazis. I myself was an officer during the war and had extensive military experiences.

On the 23rd I got a telephone call from Budapest, in the evening, informing me of the revolutionary developments there. On the following morning I was arrested by the AVO at my home, with a lot of others whom they considered as potentially dangerous elements. They collected us on trucks and drove us to jail, where they kept us till the morning of the 26th. By then the Revolution was victorious and we were freed. The AVO was still controlling the jail, but they were scared and let all political people go. This was in keeping ^{with} / the sensitive game played by the AVO commanding major, called Bradacs. A meeting took place that same morning, to elect NEPESZ officers, and I was elected and made military commander of the NEPESZ group, as a result of my military experience. The same day a mass meeting was organized by the NEPESZ, but workers and miners also attended in those. Mimeographed demands of the Revolution were distributed, (a copy of which is inclosed with the interview.) We asked all plants to send representatives to this mass meeting and they immediately cooperated.

We took note of their demands and thus made up our mimeographed list. It is undeniable that university leadership in the revolutionary activity was assured. The previous evening, on the 25th, the Communist university personnel was strongly denounced by the students, in the presence of AVG police and Party secretarial personnel. I should mention that there was a meeting at the university already on the 22nd. On the evening of the 26th, as the representative of the university's military council, I met with the representatives of the Peas military units and we discussed what to do. A man called Csikor, an ex-Horthy officer who was now professor of military science at the university, had now been made military commander of the city. I was made his military assistant and in turn a young Communist was made chief of the military unit of the university. The university was at the time led by the assistant dean Cecelnoki, because the dean was in Paris. The police-chief was in Budapest and the assistant chief was in charge. He came over to join our conversation, but the people demanded that the police be disbanded and so they were sent home, leaving their arms at headquarters. There were also 1,200 Blue AVG men in Pecs, in a brand new building.

The following morning we called Bradacs over, in order to have him arrested. The Revolutionary Council was meeting at City Hall at the time and some people were hot-headedly demanding quick, popular justice.

This would have of course meant tyaching and we had to quiet the excitement. By this time also the Red Stars were hauled down all over town. The university youth brigade meanwhile occupied the AVO Headquarters, while Bradacs, at the opportune moment was swearing in join- in the Revolution. He then quickly disappeared, before we could have nabbed him. The commanding officer of the Green Border AVO also swore in, accepting Galko and the revolutionary gov't. By this time the youth hostel became the center of the Revolution, from where the university brigade operated, controlling the city.

The next thing we knew, Bradacs went to the radio station and gave a diplomatic talk, describing the events and urging people to remain calm. He declared that no one was to be harmed and that the guilty would later be judged.

By the 27th we had three companies of university students, our most reliable men, and we had the police, the AVO and the military units allied with the Revolution. So I went to sleep for the first time in several days. In the afternoon I woke up and I realized that no one had searched the Party Headquarters for arms and that we didn't know where the Party chiefs disappeared. We went to look for them and we brought the secretary of the Party County Executive Committee and 15 other leading Communists to the Town Hall in protective custody.

Already on the 25th two supervising radio engineers, who came down to the station the previous week from Budapest, urged us to take over the radio. Once this was done, they explained that besides the studio we would also have to take over the relay station, else our broadcasts could be sabotaged. We sent out a group of soldiers under some university students, to relieve the AVO men protecting the relay station and they immediately agreed and went home. From then on the radio relayed the Győr program and we also re-broadcast some BBC and RFE programs.

Generally things went extremely quietly, without disturbance. The last anti-revolutionary move was the 6 p.m. curfew imposed on the 23rd by the police and after that the Revolution was in complete control."

"On the 3rd of November we called back the policemen to do duty, who then served without arms and without the Red Star, thus liberating our students for more important work. We also had two minor companies who were not armed, and we had the Green AVO who, though fully armed, seemed completely devoted to the Revolution. By the 3rd we had also released all the police chiefs and Party chiefs from jail and a peaceful, jovial, and happy atmosphere ruled in Pecs.

The only sign of the Revolution was that there were no trains, only food shipments were sent on to Budapest or received in town. Some hooligans wanted to get hold of the money in the bank, but we set a guard there to protect it. Where were we to go from here?

About 7 p.m. that evening, the chief accountant of the railroad station wanted to see me. He told me of the service-radio which connected the various railroad centers with each other. He also told me that the Csap railroad radio informed them, that many Russian troops are entering Hungary by rail. At 8 p.m. I was on my way to the MAV railroad revolutionary council. They were just meeting and the party secretary was talking, ^{and} in fact the whole, old management was on the revolutionary council. I went over to the manager and quietly asked him whether he had any news. On his negative reply I inquired whether he had a two-way radio set. He admitted to have a small, insignificant one and after much pressure they finally understood that I meant to take it over. They had a tremendous, big installation with two people at the controls. I left them there and put a university student there to check and notify me immediately of any new developments."

"Fourteen long trains loaded with tanks were a serious matter. Similar news were heard from Rumania. I immediately alerted the Revolutionary Council and we relieved the university students, substituting army troops for guard duty.

We decided the city was to be protected militarily, especially since it was easily defended. I asked the commanding officer of the Green AVO for anti-tank weapons, but he denied having any. Since on good rumor I suspected he was lying, I sent a group of students to investigate without causing offense. I should have mentioned earlier, that the university dean returned from his trip and approved all the changes.

On the 4th Caikor had lunch at the hospital with me and we debated what to do. We called in representatives of the Workers Council, when the Russians sent word that they wanted to talk. They came up to the edge of the city and there our troops and students stopped them. We sent a negotiator and alerted the town to the approaching Russians. Between 5 - 7 p.m. we had no news at all and at 8 p.m. General Kosnezkov, the Russian commander, sent word that all arms are to be deposited at party headquarters, the soldiers are to go home and party headquarters should be locked up and should be guarded by the party secretary in person. Before we had a chance, the Russians already marched in. The students decided to go to the mountains. As we found out, Bradaes was already in the Russian commander's company. I didn't stay at the hospital, but slept in the student's center. The Russians came in to keep order and the city was full of them.

Csikor too went to the Mecsek mountains, and I too joined them, once we found out that the Green AVO betrayed us. 200 miners and 140 students went down to the Green AVO and asked the men who wanted to fight against the Russians. About 70% decided to join us and the rest went home. As we found out, the anti-tank weapons were hidden a couple of days before, so that we could not locate them. We brought some guns along from the AVO, but forgot the ammunition. All this, ammunition and material, was dragged up into the Mecsek mountains.

Meanwhile, back in the town, the city once more became what it was before the revolt. Posters appeared to turn in all arms. Throughout town officers stood their own guard, for no enlisted men were to be found. This armed truce between the Russians and the people in the mountains was broken when a suspicious Russian shot and killed a six-year old boy who was running home with a jug of beer in his hands. This spread very fast and the first three Russian soldiers whom we spotted, were shot and killed. By now the Russians realized that the Mecsek was full of enemies. They came up to the hotel but found no one there. Then they went to the mine, finding only that the miners had blasted the roads and they couldn't approach the villages.

Our next problem was to get the food supply organized. For this we relied on the villages.

We then heard that the Baja artillery unit was on its way to join us with 14 guns. This was one rumor that proved true. Now we could start the war. Unfortunately the guns were not anti-tank weapons, but heavy pieces. We now started sleeping during the day and we knocked off four armored cars during the night. We also managed to get hold of two trucks full of gasoline, which we drove up into the mountains, and several thousand milk bottles to prepare Molotov Cocktails. By the 7th they took notice of us officially and the Pecs radio sent a message by the Russian general. He knew, he said, that there were only students up there, but "they and the miners should go home to prevent bloodshed." The Russians had no idea, that all of us were in town during the day, retiring to the mountains at night. They threatened us with an offensive and fired in the air in the valleys. But they didn't dare to attack at night, which was the only time that we were there and active. They announced that they would attack us the following day again. For some foolish reason they did send in four tanks, but as soon as they reached the trees, our men dropped gasoline bottles on them. They did not have a chance. The same day two boys, aged 13, stopped two Russian tanks by waving their handkerchiefs and telling the Russians in Russian, that they were kidnapped by the mountain guerillas and they were now trying to escape. The tanks stopped and within minutes we surrounded them with our people.

The Russians surrendered and now we had two tanks without drivers. At last the Russian drivers volunteered to drive the tanks anywhere we wanted them to, even against their comrades. We were very pleased when the radio announced the loss of six Russian tanks. I think it was the following day that various Russians started shooting at a Russian tank. They must have thought that they were firing at one of the captured ones. Unfortunately it was one of their own. During these skirmishes the Baja artillery was protecting the roads going into the mountains. The following day the Russians threatened over the radio to shoot up the place with their rockets. We were quite afraid of these, for they could have burned the forests down, until we realized that they would have to fire over the city, endangering their own men and the population, if any of the rockets had fizzled before they reached us. The next day we had another threat and ultimatum, this time we were warned of bombs. This was a serious matter, but the miners threatened that all mines would be blasted, if any planes as much as got near the Mecsek area. Until now we regularly went down the sideroads and through the woods to town. In fact, I once looked up the dean of the university clinic and he requisitioned bandages for our wounded. The Russians got wise to us and sealed off all the roads leading to the city. This left us no alternative except the long way home around the mountain.

The Russians did start to fire rockets at us and atlast infantry arrived from the North. They attacked the whole mountain, but as they came up we quietly sneaked through and they looked for us in vain. For two days we kept inflicting casualties by attacking them from the trees. By now our position was getting precarious and for the two following days we were involved in hard fighting. We had 42 deaths and atleast 100 wounded. I sneaked to the city once again and talked to the dean to ask the Russian commander for a 10-hour armistice to bring out our wounded. I was just going to join the dean and his conference, when through the crack I noticed Bradaes in the room. I quietly backed away and sneaked out casually from the building. I knew that Bradaes was hounding me everywhere. At the gate an AVO man stood guard. He point blank looked at me and said "Well, I thought you/^{Mr.}doctor were up in the mountains!" He looked quite disappointed when I assured him I was not.

After some waiting the dean came out and told me that the Russians agreed to the armistice, but if one shot is fired by anyone, the dean should be shot as a hostage. We decided this was madness, since any Russian could have fired a shot and we could not trust the Russians in this deal. We wer: just going back to call off the deal with the Russians, when we received word that the general's assistant, a lieutenant colonel, and four other officers, were captured by our men in the mountains.

Once the Russians found out this new development, they okayed the armistice deal without^a/hostage. We told them that their men will be shot instantly, if anyone fired a shot. The hardest part of the deal started now. How to persuade our wounded to surrender? They were ~~convinced~~ that we are sacrificing them to the Russians. They wanted to stay on to fight. We had, however, 11 with stomach wounds, who had six hours to live without treatment, and 70 more heavy wounded. We agreed that we shall take these down to a large cave, where the ambulances and trucks would pick them up. I was in the first ambulance going out to the location. When we approached we heard some suspicious firing in the distance and on the way got word from a gipsy that the Russians attacked someone in the valley. Apparently three Hungarian Army tanks were watching as two Russian tanks came out of the cave. We were prepared for the worst and when we got there we saw that all 81 wounded were killed by the Russians who simply fired into the cave. I went up to our headquarters, where the men were ready to kill me for having cooked up this arrangement. After a while they realized that I didn't mean to betray them. At the time they still hesitated as to what to do with the five Russians. I gave orders to shoot them. The fight was still on and on the 13th I went down to town. I saw the dean when I found out that he looked for me.

He warned me from Bradacs who apparently was ready to get even with me. The dean himself was a ruthless opportunist, but now he saved my life. He gave me an order to take two trucks belonging to the university, to Sopron to pick up medicines and bandages, which he had gotten from the International Red Cross. There were no more students in the mountains after the 12th, though a boy told me, who came out later, that the miners and soldiers still carried on some guerilla warfare for several days. I even saw a Nepszava article of December still talking of the fights in the Mecsek.

On the 14th, in the morning, I met the two trucks outside of town and we headed for Budapest, where I wanted to find my fiancée. They didn't let us into town and they gave us the alternative to go back to Pecs or else stay where we were as prisoners. So we headed South again and out across Transdanubia at Dunafoldvar and drove through Veszprem to the vicinity of Sopron. When we got to the border zone, the Hungarian border guard stopped us. We showed them our certificates and for some reason I had 600 ft. folded in my identification card. Surprisingly enough the guards passed us on after removing the cash. By the time we reached the next guard, we were alerted, except I had no more money. The driver who had 200 ft., volunteered to handle the situation this time. The trick worked again, but the man insisted to accompany us to the Russians a few miles away.

There a Russian officer tried to read the Russian translation of our travel orders upside down and refused to let us on. After much talking he agreed, but he insisted that a Russian car will go in front of us and one behind us. We didn't quite understand this precaution until we realized that the border ran a kilometer away from the road. Once in Sopron, we were taken to the Russian commander. He was properly suspicious, but finally, after taking away our identification papers, permitted us to go on our business. He suggested, when we were ready to return, we could get our papers back. This was his method of putting pressure on us, which would make very little sense, except to a Russian who 1) always needed to have a certificate of identity, and 2) whose family could be blackmailed if he himself escaped.

I went to the hospital where I informed the doctor that I meant to go across the border. Within minutes everybody knew about it and was trying to help me. As it turned out, the business manager of our Pecs clinic, who came with us, was the only one ready to go back to Pecs. The two drivers and the two helpers who came along, were all ready to leave with me. We had great trouble persuading them to stay, because the medicines were really needed in Pecs.

My trip across the border was a story in itself, for in the end a Green AVG sergeant took me by the hand and led me over.

The entire area was honored to do favors for those on their way West."

INTERVIEWER'S RATINGS: He is a man with a bright and active mind. His story sounds believable, though it would be preferable if several facts could be authenticated by other sources.