

and spending a little less than a year in Grenoble for study, respondent attended <sup>the Law Faculty of the</sup> University of Budapest, and was articled as a law clerk in the law office of a Socialist city councillor of Budapest. This law office had, among its clients, the Budapest Transport, Food Industry and Public Hygiene Workers' Union; respondent made wide and numerous contacts in the labor movement in this period. After the death of the principal of this law office, he opened his own private practice and while he maintained his trade union ties, the bulk of his clientele consisted of German commercial firms having trade contacts in Hungary. After the Nuremberg laws, these clients were forced out of business, and respondent concentrated his practice in criminal law, with divorces being the bread and butter standby. In 1943 he was ~~XXXXX~~ called up for service in a Jewish labor battalion and taken to the Ukraine.

In his company served János Bér (the original name is Beer). This man has since had a brilliant political career, his most recent post being that of Chief State Prosecutor

He secured a privileged position for himself by his complete subservience to a brutal staff sergeant, by informing on his Jewish comrades and by volunteering for guard duties in the camp. He is a man of great ability, who would always rise to the top in any regime. Respondent was demobilized and returned to ~~XXXXX~~ Hungary in 1944, rebuilt his law practice early in 1945, dealing ~~XXXXX~~ mainly with civil litigation, and applied for

candidate membership of the Communist Party. He did so partly from genuine enthusiasm and partly from ~~his~~ gratitude for his liberation from the Nazi menace. Needing seconders for his application, he approached a former client of his, who was then a prominent Communist and who owed him gratitude, but he refused to second his application because he was a member of the Social Democratic Party in the Horthy era. Eventually, in early 1946, he was admitted to candidate membership, and continued as such for some months. At a party cell meeting<sup>e</sup>, the speaker was explaining the party's view that manual workers have, in the current conditions, to be content with a relatively low wage level in order to facilitate the great task of stabilizing the currency. Respondent got up and objected that each and every regime in the past used the same line in resisting workers' demands for a higher standard of living, and that it ill behoves the Communist Party to adopt the same dishonest line. He was severely taken to task by the district secretary, being told that his main fault was to have voiced this otherwise arguable view in public. To his surprise, the secretary then offered him an assignment to a training course and, after completion of the training, a post as professional agitator. He respectfully refused, because his law practice fully occupied him. Later in 1946, he attended a conference of Communist jurists, and upon hearing a speech by János Bér, he indulged in a public outburst of some violence.

He was arrested for a few hours, but released, and immediately tendered his resignation from the party, so as to forestall expulsion.

In the course of his practice, he had occasion to come across Gábor Péter, then head of the AVO. He has known his deputy, Colonel József Timár (Tuchmann) from before the war. Timár was a well-bred and smooth, intelligent young man, the son of a fairly well-to-do Jewish bourgeois family, who married the daughter of the managing director of the Hungarian Telephone Works, a very rich girl. Respondent saw him again soon after the end of the war in 1945. Timár told him that the Russian liberation found him in Eastern Hungary, and he intended to drift westwards ~~and~~ to reach Budapest and rejoin his wife. However, he boarded the wrong train, and found himself in Debrecen, at the seat of the provisional government. At the invitation of old acquaintances, he joined the police force that was being organized. He explained to respondent that he had no intention of remaining a police officer, but would return to law practice, but for the time being, until conditions became more normal, if it is worth while to remain in the police because of the extra food rations and traveling facilities which this involved.

His next encounter with Timár occurred a few years later, in connection with a libel action brought by his client against an old Communist journalist, Andor Gábor. His client, Andor Weisz,<sup>2</sup>

was the  
^ sole representative in Hungary of a Swiss or Swedish ball bearing  
factory. Somebody <sup>else</sup> eyes had his eye on this extremely profitable  
agency, and in order to make Weisz politically impossible, or  
to secure his arrest, he allied himself with ~~MS~~ Andor Gábor,  
who opened up a violent press campaign against Weisz. After  
respondent filed the suit, Colonel Timár sent him a message,  
advising him to withdraw it immediately. At the same time, an  
agent provocateur, posing as a prospective client, planted a  
twenty-dollar bill in his apartment, which was immediately found  
by the police who miraculously arrived a few hours later to  
search his premises. The same night he sent a reproachful and  
very strong letter to Timár, refusing to withdraw his client's  
suit. Next day he was summoned to Gábor Péter at Andrásy Street 60  
Péter expressed his astonishment at his unwillingness to withdraw  
the suit, and then produced the letter respondent had sent to  
Timár. Péter asked whether he would have had the courage to  
send a letter in a similar tone to the Deputy Chief of the Political  
Police in the Horthy era. Respondent immediately referred ~~h~~  
him to József Szilágyi, then General Manager of the Hungarian  
Broadcasting System, whom he defended before the war for illegal  
Communist activities. After Szilágyi's arrest, he called on  
the then head of the Hungarian Political Police, Sombor-Schweinitzer,  
asking him not to have Szilágyi beaten up on  
account of his ill health. Sombor-Schweinitzer threatened him

with criminal proceedings for implying that pre-trial prisoners were beaten by the political police, but Szilagyi was duly spared. Peter made no attempt to verify this story, but told respondent that "he may go home this time," and his client Weisz was promptly deported. The deportation order specified Czechoslovakia, but Weisz bribed the detective escorting him and escaped to Austria.

The President of the Hungarian Bar Association, István Kovács, was a semi-literate idiot. He must have had the backing of the very highest quarters. Respondent once got hold of a handwritten draft submission of his and took it to the Ministry of Justice to show it to friends there. The draft was richly punctuated by the most elementary spelling and grammatical mistakes. A number of high Ministry of Justice officials, including several chiefs of division, gathered in the room and gleefully inspected the manuscript, carefully refraining, however, from any comment. Despite their own strong party standing, they were plainly afraid of Kovács. There was a presumption that <sup>he was a</sup> clandestine member of the AVO.

After the formation of lawyers' cooperatives or communes, the relation of trust between lawyer and client has been severed, the more so as the relationship was no longer one between client and individual lawyer, but between client and a lawyers' commune. These communes were housed in very cramped premises, usually in abandoned shops, where there may have been as many as 25 desks

in one hall , often two lawyers sharing the same desk, one receiving in the morning and one in the afternoon. It became the habit to receive clients outside, walking up and down the street. Rather more than half of the Hungarian lawyers remained outside the communes. They did not enjoy much greater privacy either. The Lawyers' Chamber was empowered to send controllers to inspect the files at the law offices of K lawyers in private practice. These controllers were supposed to check the accuracy of lawyers' financial returns, but their real function was to ensure that lawyers conformed to the function laid out for them by Communist ideology, which was not to win the client's case, but to ensure that Social justice is done. As a result, any Hungarian lawyer worth his salt developed the habit of carrying all relevant and confidential details of cases in his head.

As of 1956, roughly 50 percent of the Hungarian judiciary consisted of judges with a pre-war training. In accordance with the principle of independence of the judiciary, the judges were liable to be dismissed at two weeks' notice. These people nevertheless behaved in the most decent fashion, handing down unfair or unlawful verdicts and sentences only when specifically put under pressure. Pressure was applied by the Ministry of Justice, and not by party headquarters directly. In order to offset the judge's tendency to acquit people on technical points of law,

the system of people's assessors or associate judges (népi ülnök) was introduced. Two workers, deemed to be reliable Communists, were assigned to each judge and given equal voting rights with him in trying certain classes of cases. The two lay assessors would, of course, always outvote the judge. The system, however, sometimes backfired, as it was easier to intimidate the judge, who was a Ministry of Justice employee, than when the workers seconded to him, whose employer was some industrial firm and who were in any case more immune to political persecution.

In a story in connection with a former girl client who appears to have turned agent provocateur, respondent appeared accidentally to confirm the existence of a special and secret department of the police, where prisoners were undergoing psychiatric experiments

This department seems to be akin to that described in a forthcoming autobiographical novel by a young Hungarian journalist called Ruff. Respondent was invited by an officer of this department to call on this former client and carry out various small commissions for her. The premises he went to occupied the last two houses of Conti Street on the right hand side coming from Népszínház Street. Instead of cells, it had nicely furnished bed-sitting rooms. There was no sign or plate whatever on the gates.