

Brief biographical note on Muennich

He was fighting in the Spanish Civil War together with Rajk in the "Rakosi Brigade". After the defeat of the Spanish Civil War, he went to Moscow and returned to Hungary in 1945-46. He became Head of the Police Department in Budapest (during the Coalition era). He later joined the Foreign Service and became Hungary's Ambassador to Moscow after Gyula Szegfue (the first Hungarian Ambassador to the USSR after the war) and perhaps after the second Ambassador Imre Horvath was recalled.

He returned from Moscow in 1956 and was sent as Minister to Belgrade with the main task of improving relationship between Hungary and Yugoslavia which ~~was~~ very poor during the Rakosi era. Beginning October 1956, he was in Budapest on official business and was the main speaker on October 6, 1956, at Rajk's re-burial. He went to Belgrade with the Hungarian Delegation under Hegedus and Gero and returned home with them. From that day he took part, together with Hegedus and Gero, in all discussions at the Party house on Akademia Street. It is known that Mikoyan participated to those discussions on Wednesday, 24 October at noon; Imre Nagy was not admitted to those discussions and waited in the anti-chamber. Unlike Rakosi, Gero, etc., Muennich had not left the country because he was not hated as the others and the fact that he spoke at Rajk's burial proves that the Rajkists tolerated him. Muennich's name was not mentioned among the hated ones probably because of the fact that he spent several years outside Hungary and was not held directly responsible for Rakosi's misdeeds. From 23 to 27 October he was active with Hegedus and Gero in fighting the Revolution. On 28 October, Muennich became Minister of Interior in the Imre Nagy Government and became Head of the Police force. In his capacity of Minister of the Interior the newly established Party leaders (Small-holders) discussed with him various current problems.

He is an attorney, an intellectual with a Western culture. He was in a position to work out plans for Kadar's future. He behaved as if he were on the side of the Revolution but he was all the time in close contact with Kadar and accompanied the latter first to the Soviet Embassy in Budapest and then to Szolnok. A chauffeur drove them on 2 November about noon time to the Soviet Embassy building. They told the chauffeur not to wait for them. The chauffeur left but stopped two blocks down and waited to see what would happen. After about 30 to 45 minutes, the chauffeur saw Kadar and Muennich come out from the Embassy building in the company of 2-3 Russian officers and drive eastwards in the Embassy car.

(Information from Prof. Sandor Kiss, 25 Jan. 1957)