



## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE PROBLEM OF HUNGARY

## VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTIETH MEETING (CLOSED)

Held at 10, Carlton House Terrace, London,  
on Friday, 29 March 1957, at 10.00 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. Alsing ANDERSEN

(Denmark)

- HHH. No anti Russian feeling Kadar unable to fill cabinet  
The 1 hour stay at home demonstration called by Kadar  
mourning for dead. Activities of Writers Union  
Report of Nagy. final breach of faith Kadar phones  
Nagy at Yugo embassy. Econ. Causes of revolt.  
 III. Mongolian troops. Report. caused difference  
of Policy between Soviet. Council W. Council  
meet Soviet Councils. Kadar recognizes  
inability to force workers back to work.  
Arrest of Gyorgy W. Council 12 Nov.  
 In Debrecen only 4 killed 24 Oct.  
 JJ. No counter-rev. in Transdanubia though attempt  
one politician was in favour.



At the invitation of the Chairman Witness HHH took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that you wish to remain anonymous and of course that wish will be respected and your name will not be mentioned in the verbatim record. You have certainly been informed of what the Committee is particularly interested in hearing. We want to hear about events to which you were an eye-witness and about negotiations in which you participated personally. Will you please make your statement.

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Perhaps it would be as well first to say something about myself. I am a Hungarian writer and journalist, fifty-six years of age. I was running a literary periodical in Hungary, was engaged in fighting against the Fascists and became a refugee in 1939. I came to England and worked on the staff of the BBC. After the war I became Hungarian press attaché and was in touch especially with the Social Democratic Party in Hungary for a while, and I was a correspondent of the Social Democratic Party paper Nepszava. In 1949 I returned to Hungary to report to my Government and after some months I was arrested and tried at a faked trial held in camera. I was sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude with other Social Democrats and former Social Democrats. There I was tortured, as were practically all the political prisoners, and I was imprisoned until one year ago -- today is the anniversary of my release. I was released, as far as I know, under Russian pressure because Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev came to London and wanted, I presume, to make an impression on British labour and literary people and therefore made efforts to secure the release of Social Democrats in the satellite countries. So from one day to the next I learned of my release.

From the time of my release until the revolution I really had no complaints. I felt that people, including the Communists, felt a certain remorse because of what was going on and after a re-trial in which the charges against me were all refuted and I was vindicated I was given an opportunity of working and was re-admitted to the writers' union. I mention this because this body, as you may know, played a fairly big part in Hungarian events. Some time at the end of the summer, I do not know the exact date, it held a congress and there was what was often referred to in Hungary as the only instance of a free election in our country for many years. There really



(Witness HHH)

was a free election of our presidential council and I was elected a member, which was a fairly demonstrative step against the Government, of which the leader was still Matyas Rakosi. At the same time other people were elected who until then had been very favourably viewed by the regime.

I have told you this as an introduction to what I think might be my contribution to this testimony. First I would like to tell you something about what the Writers' Union presidential council did in the months preceding the revolution. We were in permanent touch with all sorts of people -- with the poorer people, with workers and peasants, who always came and complained to us.



It was a somewhat strange phenomenon, I must say, that writers, and even high-brow writers, meaning the highly educated intelligentsia became so much in touch with those whom one would have supposed never read a book. But the writers, Hungarians, and including certain Communists who turned against the regime, became very popular with the masses as their spokesmen and the interpreters of their wishes. The simple workers came to us and complained about their difficulties at work. Peasants came to Budapest at the time of the re-distribution of land and property and complained to us of how they had been cheated. The presidential council of the Writers' Union became a forum to which they could always appeal, and tried to get something done in their favour. It became a conviction amongst all of us, people of very different views originally, and very different outlooks -- Communists and non-Communists, right-wing people and left-wing people -- that there were certain elementary rights and demands that we must try to satisfy. They were very simple things; we wanted national independence or at least a greater amount of that than we enjoyed at the time, we wanted freedom of speech, freedom of literature, freedom of opinion, freedom of religion, a better standard of living for the common people whom we felt were very much exploited. This I would say was our general trend, and we were far from wanting revolutionary or subversive ways of achieving it. Really, the events which followed took us as much by surprise as anyone.

I remember the day of the revolution, 23 October, I received a telephone message asking me to go at once to the Writers' Union to discuss our reaction to the events in Poland. These events certainly made a great impression on everyone in Hungary, and particularly the youth. I heard the complaint everywhere that it was too bad that the Government would not allow a demonstration in favour of Gomulka and the Polish labour people which the youth of Hungary wished to arrange. A delegation was sent to the Government asking them to permit such a demonstration. At first they would not receive the delegation; then came the news that they were willing to negotiate with them, but they said they could not allow the demonstration to take place. After five more minutes came a rumour that they would allow it. Apparently the Government at that moment was itself undecided what to do about the whole matter.

It was a matter of general knowledge that something in the nature of liberalizing Hungarian conditions and making the regime more nationally representative must be



(Witness HHH)

done, and that the Rakosi regime must be liquidated. Still, the Government was very hesitant what to do, and how to go about it. We went into the street to take part in the demonstration and proceeded to the Petoefi statue. You will have heard about the declaration which our President read to the people. It was a very moderate one, which stated we only wanted greater personal freedom, greater national freedom, and the termination of the economic exploitation of the country by the Russians.

I think that is broadly all I should say here about the popular revolution and its background, but if the Committee would like some further details about which I could be helpful I should be pleased to answer questions. There may be some points concerning the days of the revolution and of our short-lived independence which would be worth making.

First of all I will speak of some of the things I witnessed. I do not deny that I felt it might come to a terroristic outbreak, and full of concern, I walked to Vaga Street and joined the crowds discussing and shouting. I wanted to see what they were shouting about, and what they were after. I did not see any crowd or group using what one would describe as Fascist or terrorist slogans, and I never came across any anti-semitism on the part of these crowds. Unfortunately I know that in Hungary anti-semitism had a past, and perhaps even a present, but during the revolution I never came across it on the part of the crowds. I never heard a word against Communists as Communists. It is true there was a tremendous hatred, which showed in inhuman acts against the men of the AVH or AVO. I know this, because I myself appealed to people to stop that sort of hunting down the AVH people; I felt more entitled to do this because I myself had suffered at their hands, and I felt it was for me to protest against the way in which they were prosecuting. But apart from this anti-AVH campaign I never saw anything with my own eyes which seemed based on revenge.

I want to speak objectively and keep everything in proportion. I heard people described as heroes of the anti-Jewish riots. When I tried to check these facts I was unable to find the places, except one, which was a village called Rajka where it was alleged that Jews as Jews were murdered. I spoke to people who were there but who knew nothing of it, but I also spoke to one woman who said she had seen it with her own eyes, all the Jews had been killed, and it had nothing to do with politics.

I knew certain terrorist organizations were supposed to have been re-created, and Nazis were streaming across the frontier from Austria to Hungary, but I could



not find evidence of it. I learned also that in the town of Pecs in south-western Hungary a former Horthyite general had appeared, but I have no idea whether it was true and I did not meet anyone who had spoken to him. We knew, of course, of things that had been done by an officer called Dudas in the Foreign Office at Budapest. I do not think it is right to call him Fascist; he was a type of condottieri who wanted to use the opportunity of getting himself arrested by the Imre Nagy Government, as was well known.

I should say that the masses, of whatever party, but particularly of the right-wing, held views of the character of a catholic religious conservatism embodying democratic ideas. Everyone wanted free elections, including the Communists, who came to the conclusion that whether they wanted a proletariat or not, the working classes certainly did want to unite.

The Russians were spoken of without hatred for them as Russians. The hatred was rather against those who served the Russians and their interests while calling themselves Hungarian. Even later on, when the Russians had marched in in a military way I still could not find any hostility against them as persons. I heard many a freedom fighter who might be expected to be embittered against them say he was sorry for these poor chaps who did not know against whom they were being used.

As I mentioned the Russian soldiers I must say I came into touch with them after the re-occupation of Hungary, after 3 or 4 November in Budapest. I happened to stay in a flat at Da Moj near the bank of the Danube which was specifically guarded so that no one could enter the street except by showing credentials to prove they were living there or had business there. I do not know Russian, but had picked up a little in prison, and making use of it I began talking with the Russian soldiers, and explain that I lived there. I never found those particular Russians people of bad faith or revengeful. They were indeed very embarrassed and panic-stricken because they did not know what had happened and against whom they were fighting. One of them asked me if I wanted a cigarette and he pointed to the Danube and said "Suez, Suez". I heard that others at the same time had the same experience, and many of the Russian soldiers asked about Suez. One of my friends, a private citizen -- I will not mention his name but he is not in London -- told me the Russians came into his flat



searching for Germans. They were looking everywhere for Germans, and seemed as astonished not to find them. One had the feeling that they simply did not know what to do, whom to fear, and why they were there, but I would not say they were cruel. They sometimes did cruel things in a panic-stricken way, they machine-gunned houses and innocent people, but really they did not show any bad will towards the population at large.



(Witness HHH)

I do not wish to dwell on the facts concerning the reoccupation of Budapest which are already well known, but perhaps I could say that it took us by surprise because we knew that the Russians were negotiating with Imre Nagy and, although I am not a very optimistic person by nature, I was optimistic as to the outcome of those negotiations. I could not imagine that the Russians would attack the capital without warning while negotiations were still in progress. It was a very disagreeable experience to be awoken by the sound of gun-fire and to hear on the wireless what had happened. The people of Budapest were extremely shocked and nobody knew what might happen next. It became apparent very soon that the Russian attack had caused an astonishing unity among the people.

I could give more details but I should like to refrain from mentioning names. I did know, for instance, that the Kadar Government were experiencing great difficulty in filling government posts and simply could not find candidates among reputable people; they even had difficulty in filling cabinet posts. There were Social Democrats available who had previously belonged to the party of that name; after 1948, when the merger took place, it was called "United Workers' Party". Among them were people whom, I knew, had been imprisoned by Rakosi for years and several of them were offered posts as cabinet ministers or posts of comparable rank; they all refused to accept them.

Another surprising thing was the absolute disregard for personal safety which the people showed when making hostile and anti-Russian remarks in public; one could hear such remarks, for instance, in queues. Such behaviour was somewhat unwise in Budapest and could result in people being taken to the AVO. In fact, the whole population could suffer reprisals, but people did not seem to care. That national spirit of unity was also felt by Communists and by those who were in favour of maintaining friendly relations with the Russians. To illustrate that I should like to tell you about a demonstration which took place during November. The facts concerning it can be verified because they are well known but perhaps not in sufficient detail. That demonstration simply consisted of people staying at home for one hour. I do not know whose idea it was but suddenly a campaign was launched against the Government and people showed their hostility by remaining at home, on strike. At first the Government took no notice but the strike became so general



(Witness HHH)

that finally the Government pretended to agree with the demonstrators. Over the wireless they announced that it was a demonstration in commemoration of those who had died during the revolution including, they said, both revolutionaries and Russians who had been killed.

There is one last point which it might be worthwhile making. A great deal has been said already about deportations in general. I knew several people who were deported, most of whom were personal acquaintances. Their deportation came as a great surprise because they were members of the Petoefi Circle, or club, or of the intelligentsia, and had not, as far as I knew, played a very great part in the resistance fighting. Only after intervention by the Writers' Union were they released by the Russians.

The position taken by our Writers' Union was interesting. At first it was not willing even to negotiate with the Russians on the basis that some of the demands being made by the Hungarian people would be denied. There is no secret about the fact that certain subtle differences of opinion occurred among us, but fundamentally we were in agreement. We made a declaration -- which can be found among the documents in the possession of the Committee, I think -- stressing our support of the resolution which had been passed, although it was dependent on the creation of a type of parliamentary government in Hungary somewhat similar to the Polish form of Government. That is to say, it would be based on self-determination, to be achieved through the councils of the workers, peasants, youth and intelligentsia. We were hoping that, in spite of the shock of the Russian re-occupation, we could come to terms with the Soviets who would see that it did not pay to oppress Hungary in such a brutal way and would be willing to reach a compromise. Then the deportations started. Our union sent delegations to both the Hungarian Government and the Russian Command. I cannot tell you exactly who it was who received us at the Russian Command; the Minister of the Interior was in Munich at that time, but we spoke to the man who was generally in charge of the armed forces. During our discussions he did admit that one train-load of deportees had been sent to Russia and promised that it would not happen again; the deportees would be returned and he would do his very best to see that if people were deported they would be quickly released or else handed over to the appropriate Hungarian authorities. The talks



with the Government were unsatisfactory also; the Hungarian cabinet minister was also very dissatisfied. No promises were made and no guarantees were given. Our delegation consisted of the president of the association, Peter Veres, the vice-president who was the playwright Gyula Hay and is, as far as I know, in prison in Hungary, the poet and writer Gyula Illyes, and the editor, Hamos, of Irodalmi Ujsag, a literary weekly magazine, who acted as interpreter. When our delegation tried to negotiate the release of the deportees the Russians endeavoured to persuade the Writers' Union to intervene with the workers with a view to their recommencing work. We were in a very difficult position indeed. Any request by us to the workers would have seemed like a betrayal of the revolutionary cause. On the other hand any help we could give to the deportees was dependent upon the agreement of the Russians. In fact, the deportees were hostages. There is no secret about what I am going to tell you. We decided -- even before the deportations started -- to bargain with the Russians; if they would admit the United Nations Committee to Hungary we would ask the workers to return to their work. Finally, we reached an agreement whereby if we were able to obtain information concerning deportees from people who knew about them, we would transmit such information to the Russians who would try to make repatriation arrangements; we, on our part, would then attempt to act as intermediaries between the Russians and the workers with the object of persuading the latter to return to work, it being understood that we would not interfere with the strike. Thus, we surrendered to blackmailing tactics. It could have been worse; after all, we owed it to the young people who were being deported that we should do everything in our power to help them. We were in a position of being able to save hundreds of thousands of people who might have been picked out for deportation.



(Witness HHH)

To wind up perhaps I ought to say that the great shock to me and others came after the deportation of Imre Nagy. Until he was deported speculation still went on amongst my friends that a compromise was possible and this was strengthened by the fact that Prime Minister Kadar made a public statement in which he said that he was willing to negotiate with Imre Nagy if he left the Yugoslav Embassy. I need not explain what happened when he did leave the Yugoslav Embassy together with his associates but as far as I am concerned I must also say that it was really this step which made me decide to leave Hungary because up to that time I still hoped for a possibility of carrying on with my work. It was then I felt that whatever the Hungarian Government promised us, and whether they did it in good faith or not, we could not trust them.

I think that is all I have to tell you of what I think would interest you. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you for your statement. I would like to ask you one question in connexion with the last remarks you made. Do you know anything further about Kadar's intentions after having appointed himself Prime Minister -- if I may use that expression -- whether he had intentions of forming a coalition government but his intentions or negotiations were prevented by the interference of the Russians.

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes. As far as I know that was the case. I knew that he had negotiated about that. I knew that he was in touch with people from the Smallholders' Party and from the Social Democrats' Party, and also with other personalities, and was negotiating about such a possibility, and everywhere this was expected to happen. Of course, in this coalition Imre Nagy would still have figured as a Communist and it would have been on this basis that he negotiated because they were both Communists.

At the same time as these coalition negotiations were taking place with the non-Communist leaders and with the important people in the Workers' Councils, as far as I know, Kadar had telephone conversations with Imre Nagy and even during the time when Imre Nagy was in the Yugoslav Embassy. At least, that was told to me by people who I cannot believe would tell me lies -- I do not know why they should -- but I have no definite proof.



(Witness HHH)

In any case, he was sending and receiving messages from him and from statements he made in which he said he was willing to negotiate with him it certainly seemed as if tentative negotiations were taking place. At one point he admitted to someone in the Workers' Council -- I am afraid I have forgotten the name, I did know it -- that the deportation of Imre Nagy had taken him by surprise.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): Your statement has been most useful to the work of the Committee. At one point you spoke about the tasks of the writers, you told us that the workers and the farmers came to tell their troubles and to make their demands to the Writers' Union, and I understand that this happened on the occasion of the redistribution of the land. I understand that the peasants were dissatisfied with that redistribution. Could you please tell us exactly why they were dissatisfied with the redistribution?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): In general, the complaints from the workers and peasants were because of their misery, penury, greater taxes and the whole system. The one that I referred to particularly was about the redistribution of land because that gave rise to many complaints. I will explain how this happened. When Imre Nagy became Prime Minister in 1953 he made a famous speech in which he declared that those farmers who wanted to leave the co-operatives would be allowed to do so and would get their land back. If it was not possible for them to get exactly the same piece of land which they had previously then they would get something of the same value, and after this the co-operatives started to break up. Later, when Rakosi, through his Prime Minister Hegedues, came back with absolute power he tried to stop this disintegration and made it more difficult for the farmers to leave these co-operatives but, nevertheless, this process went on. Many farmers left it and it could not be completely stopped. What gave rise to so many complaints was that when they could not get back their own plots and other land was given to them instead they received either very bad land or a very much smaller piece of land. The word for it in Hungarian was "Tagositas". That was where they redistributed this land to make it possible for the peasants who wanted to leave the collectives



((Witness HHH))

to do so but gave them something which had half the value of the land they had previously owned when they were compelled to join under Rakosi's regime during the time of Stalin.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABRIGAT (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to ask for further clarification from you. The peasants who participated in these collectives were peasants who formerly were landowners; was this the case with all of them?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): No, not all of them, as far as I know. I am not absolutely sure about it. I think that all sorts of peasants were included in these producers' co-operatives, although at one time the so-called Kulaks were not even admitted, or only in exceptional cases. It is true it was never made quite clear who was a Kulak and who was not, and there were even complaints about mistaking a so-called middle-class peasant for a Kulak and a so-called working peasant -- the owner of a small piece of land -- for a larger land-owning peasant, and so on, but as far as I know it consisted of all sorts of peasants including, of course, those who had received the land they owned, their little plots, from the land reform of 1945, so they had it for some years and then were compelled to give it up and join these producers' co-operatives.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): Will you allow me to explain my thoughts to see whether I understand this correctly? Apart from the situation of the peasants and the agricultural workers -- all those who had land at the time of the redistribution -- I would like to speak now of those who did not have land. What did they want? Did they want privately-owned land, or did they want better land? Did they only want their conditions improved? We must really separate these two categories of peasants -- those who had land formerly and those who had not. Other witnesses have said that the peasants did not want to return to the former system of land-ownership. What they really wanted was a democratic redistribution and exploitation of the land. Can you describe precisely the situation?



WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): As there was no opportunity of really finding out the wishes of the majority of the peasantry because the revolution did not last long enough to have free elections I do not think one can give a clear-cut and firm answer to what they wanted. My impression was that there was no great difference between the wishes of those peasants who were already farmers at the time of the land reform and those who became land-owners only after 1945. The great majority on both sides wanted to return to private land-owning although I think they realized that a form of co-operation must survive. I am not very good at giving you the technical terms in a language other than my own but I think they wanted very much a co-operative marketing system. But producers' co-operatives as such were fairly unpopular, although it was also realized that in some cases one should not be dogmatic about it and that perhaps in the very good wheat growing districts, for instance, these producers' co-operatives might be maintained, but, as you said, on more democratic lines — they should run them and they should not be exploited so much by the State as had happened before.

Broadly speaking, I think the peasantry wanted to own their land and I think all the efforts of the Government to represent these new owners as different in kind, so to speak, from the old owners, in so far as both classes were peasants, were very artificial. In fact, those who got land in 1945 perhaps clung to it even more than those who had it previously because it was a greater gift and reward for them so to speak. I do not think in this respect there was any real difference between the issues of these two categories of small land-owners.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): You said that you had never really noticed anti-semitism or religious conflict and persecution against Jews during the revolution but you and I have read in the papers that there was a kind of anti-semitic manifestation among Hungarian refugees outside. Do you know anything about this? To what do you attribute this if it exists? To what do you attribute the fact that there were anti-semitic manifestations among refugees, if there were such manifestations? Can they be attributed to the Nazi elements who were there provoking the people, or is it due to other causes?



WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes. I think it is due to the influence of some Nazi elements, for instance, in this country from amongst those who came here about 1947. I know that they ran a sort of news sheet but I am not sure whether it is printed, I think it is only stencilled, but it certainly professed anti-semitism and I presume that some of the new refugees came under its influence.



(Witness HHH)

I do not say that everybody who came in 1947 was necessarily a Nazi, but certainly there may have been some amongst them and as far as I can see it was that element which encouraged these new refugees, or some amongst them, especially the very uneducated ones, to turn again in this direction. I must add that in Hungary there has been since 1919 an inclination to anti-semitism which was strengthened later by Nazi influence, but I must repeat that certainly during the revolution I never came across it in Hungary. I rarely heard of concrete cases. You asked whether I thought it was true, I knew of certain cases in some refugee camps, where some people said things which amounted to anti-semitic incitement.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I am most grateful to you for your statement.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): What is the percentage of illiteracy in Hungary?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I could not say. I do not think it is very high now, though I have forgotten the figure. I have looked it up several times. By now illiteracy proper, by which I mean inability to write one's name or to read the headings in a newspaper, is very small, and one only comes across it amongst old people.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Most people can now read and write?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): What is the extent of unemployment?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I presume you mean in the last few months. It is a very difficult matter to check because the Government would never admit that there could be unemployment under its administration. In fact, at the peak of the Rakosi-Stalin dictatorship there certainly was not unemployment, rather the contrary



(Witness HHH)

was the case on account of enforced industrialization. Whatever bad there was, there was certainly a good side in using labour so much. Before Stalin's death it was noticeable to some extent that -- I know this only from others because at that time I was still in prison -- they began dismissing people and there were a very great number for whom proper work could not be found. Even when we were in prison we knew a good deal about conditions, and the information went round amongst us. Later on, in 1954, there were those who said that at least under Communism there was no unemployment, and they were always proud of it. There was a fairly large number then, but I do not think anyone could give you a percentage.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Is it your impression that despite repression the Hungarians were still interested in art and culture?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Very much so, and in fact it increased. Here I must say that at first the Hungarian Government, whatever one's feelings otherwise about it, tried to increase it in a way. They made available to the masses very cheap and good books, but the increased interest turned out to be very different from what they expected. The regime were very strict about what they put at the disposal of the people. In those Stalinist years, in 1953 for instance, one could see hardly anything else but Soviet literature or an imitation of it; there was hardly any other modern literature, but they were fairly liberal with the classics. These were always given with a certain what they called Marxist-Lenin commentary, but they were given to the public who were the more interested in them because no other reading matter was available which they liked. This went on, but in the years of the so-called thaw after Stalin's death there was a tremendous demand for most Hungarian and Western literature; this was continually increasing, and the fact that the writers, for instance -- and also the artists, scientists and scholars -- played such a great part in the national resistance, increased first their authority and popularity and then the general interest in their work that I must say that owing partly to the Communist regime and partly to the reaction against it the cultural interest of the population went on increasing in Hungary during the last few years.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I am glad to have that information. It rather coincides with what I thought, and I wanted confirmation from you.

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I am glad.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Was the attachment of the Hungarians to the Church decreasing?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): No. I must say again it rather increased; and amongst elements who did not very much like the Church for political reasons or because they were atheists or indifferent to religious matters, the standing of the Church in their eyes increased. There may have been of course arguments about the politics of certain leading Churchmen, which were approved of by one and approved less by another, but that is a different matter.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): We of course know what the Fascist regime did in Hungary. What was the idea of the revolution? I know there was national unity, but at the same time did some of the former land-owning families attempt to make use of the revolution for their own purposes?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): There was rather a fear of that happening. It was in the air and we discussed it as a possibility but I did not come across any concrete efforts in that direction.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you experience any attempt on the part of the Church to regain its properties?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): The speech which Cardinal Mindszenty made on the eve of the last attack on Budapest would have been at your disposal. In my view -- this may be open to different interpretations, perhaps -- he certainly gave some hints in favour of the restoration of Church property, but he spoke clearly in



favour not of — how shall I put it? — the restoration of all the big estates of the Church but only of all its institutions and foundations. One may have had the feeling that if that was the beginning, what would follow?

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Are you satisfied that the people as a whole did not want the restoration of land on a large scale to the former land-owners?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I am absolutely sure of that. It could be only a quite negligible section of the population who would want that. I would say that a very negligible section of the former land-owners thought of that. I do not think that the sounder ones, Prince Eszterhazy for instance, would have thought of it. I do not know Prince Eszterhazy personally but we were fellow prisoners and I spoke several times to several people who had spoken to him, and I do not think he would have thought of it. The most one heard -- and I must say that this also was an attitude not shared by others -- was that a certain number of the so-called middle estates should be restored or that the forests which are now State-owned should belong to the Church. These, however, are only speculations. Amongst the workers and peasants who took part in the revolution, and amongst the intelligentsia and not least the writers, it was made quite clear that the principle of distribution must be maintained.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Has a persistent effort been made by refugees, former land-owners who fled to western Germany, England or elsewhere, to win the country over as far as possible with subtle propaganda to the old system of land-owning?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I never heard anything of that kind. Again it is only a matter of speculation. One sometimes had the feeling that in the chaotic situation and with the trend towards anti-semitism and so on, there might be an attempt to do something of that sort, but that is really speculation. I myself never came across any writings in favour of restoration.



Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Did you follow Radio Free Europe?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Can you tell me candidly whether Radio Free Europe had any influence on the younger generation -- not only on writers and intellectuals but on young people generally?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): It certainly had but it would be a great exaggeration to think that it played any part in the outbreak of the revolution. People were thirsty for everything they could get from the western countries and Radio Free Europe had the best wavelength and the longest programmes among western broadcasters. Also it used a tone which appealed to the masses, although it did not appeal very much to the socialist workers. Broadly speaking however, from Radio Free Europe one seemed to get an air of refreshment and it was listened to for years. During the revolution people went on listening to it but there were some complaints against it. I must stress that this is my personal opinion because I did not make notes of what I heard and I was not perhaps a sufficiently careful listener, but I thought the accusations against Radio Free Europe were rather sweeping and exaggerated although certainly there were some speakers who used a tone which reminded me of a Viennese joke -- "Dem kibitz is nichts teuer", which means "The man who is looking at the card players has nothing to lose." One sometimes had the impression from some of the speakers that they agreed that Hungarians should shed their blood but it was not for those outside Hungary to be so eager to do so. One felt they did not put this tactfully enough and the fact that they attacked Imre Nagy as a Communist at a moment when, Communist or not, everybody felt they had to rally to him in order to gain independence for the country, shocked everyone. So there were some complaints against Radio Free Europe but I think that in the second part of the revolution, under the influence of certain messages which they got from Hungary, they changed their tone.



Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): We have a certain amount of evidence that the Russians who took part in the first Soviet intervention hardly fought at all and were a different type from the men who formed the second intervention, who were very ignorant and did not seem to know where they were or what they were doing. Was that so? Do you agree that there were two distinct types?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes, that is correct. Nobody could say exactly what it was but I can speak of the impression made at the time on the population. When this attack against the Russians started the slogan "Ruskik haza" -- "Russians go home" -- appeared suddenly all over the city. The Russian tanks arrived and I was afraid the whole population would be exterminated, but strangely enough the opposite happened because the tanks were to some extent helpless against bottles of petrol thrown at them. I think the numbers were exaggerated but certainly some of the Russians joined the Hungarians. I cannot give you any figures and many people spoke of more than there really were, but there were such cases and in the end the Russians withdrew. Then apparently new troops arrived and many were not Russian but from Asia Minor, for instance, and one felt they did not know where they were. I cannot give you the exact date and figure but some friends I can really rely upon found out from some of the Soviet commanders in the second onslaught that they had already had orders to go to Budapest before 23 October. How this happened and why is a matter of speculation, but it is a fact that some of these units were already prepared so there must have been a foreboding of something happening for which new forces would be required.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): I suppose it was sufficiently clear that there was a mass movement going on long before the 23rd. The Government of the day would have been aware of that. I want to know your views because I attach a great deal of importance to the impressions and opinions of an intellectual such as yourself. What really was the object of the deportations?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I have no evidence but my impression is two-fold. First, they really thought that by capturing so many of the young people of categories suspected of having taken part in the rising they would break the



(Witness HHH)

backbone of the resistance. Secondly, they thought that although they denied it the rumour would spread and frighten the rest of the people, and they could use those they took as hostages — which they did in some cases as I told you in the story of the Writers' Union. I feel too that there must have been some disagreement between the Russian Ministers or the Russian commanders themselves because if they wanted to deport people why did they not take them soon after the disarmament? The fact is that after 4 November and for some weeks following those who were disarmed in battle or who surrendered were given a blanket and perhaps some wine and told in quite a friendly manner to go home. A week or two later in some districts where former freedom fighters were suspected of being, they started a raid on people who either had or had not taken part. I can only imagine therefore that at first this was in the hands of someone who did not want to do such things and later somebody else took over or got the upper hand.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I asked you that question because there is an almost irresistible volume of evidence that most of the people who were taken to Russian territory feel that they had much better treatment in Russia than in Hungary.

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I am pretty sure of that. I spoke to some people who had been in Russian prisons and internment camps and also to people who, in the first years of the Rakosi regime from 1949 to 1953, were in buildings run by the Russians and by the NVD. All of them told me that altogether their treatment had been better under the Russians than under the AVH. In Russian camps there may have been starvation because people forgot about them and the food did not arrive at the right time, but once past the stage of interrogation they were no longer tortured or treated brutally. Conditions were very bad but they did not get the same sort of treatment as they got from the AVH — or at least from ninety per cent of the AVH.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): President Dobi is still in office I think — strangely enough?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes.



Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): How many members of the praesidium who functioned before the revolution still continue?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I cannot tell you. So little importance is attributed to the presidential council that I cannot even tell you who the members are aside from Dobi.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Is it correct that under the Communist system the Party dominates everything?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Yes, the Politburo and the Party dominate the rest but even among these some people were arrested so there must be something even greater than them. Compared to the Government or the Parliament or the presidential council, however, the Party bureaucracy has much more power.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): In connexion with a question asked by my colleague from Ceylon, I would like to know if the Church in Hungary was a great landowner.

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): You mean before 1945? Yes, it most certainly was. I cannot give you exact figures but it was one of the great landowners. Next to the aristocracy it was the Church that was most prominent in the ownership of big estates.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): In the information that had been published the Catholic Church is described as a great landowner and is therefore supposed to have had great economic power. Is that right?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): Before 1945 that was so. More exactly it was before 1944 because in their own way the Nazis also attacked the Church and Church property although they did not distribute it. Certainly before this regime of absolute dictatorship the Church was a very great political and economic power largely owing to its great property.



Mr. DESCHAMPS (Australia): Can you tell us the date of the intervention by the Writers' Union on behalf of the deportees?

WITNESS HHH (spoke in English): I am afraid I do not know it. It was certainly in November, three or four days before the Imre Nagy deportation became known.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further questions. We thank you once more for your valuable information.

Witness HHH withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman Witness III took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I bid you welcome on behalf of the Committee and I ask you to give us your information on the events in Hungary, particularly those of which you were an eye-witness or in which you personally took part. We are interested in Russian interference in Hungary in a military or any other way.

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): I had been in the mathematics department of the Budapest University, but because of my politics I was expelled from the University. At the beginning of 1956 I was taken into the Debrecen University where I was at the outbreak of the revolution. The events at Debrecen started on the morning of 23 October with a students' demonstration. The cause of the demonstration was that the twenty point demands of the students had not been printed at the students' request, and therefore the demonstration was in front of the printing office, and was carried out with the permission of the local authorities. Together with the workers we were making our demands known.

The city of Debrecen has about 100,000 inhabitants, and at this time the market place was filled with about 10,000 people. The demonstrators were still waiting



in front of the printing office for the newspaper to be printed, when the police intervened, killing four and wounding six people.

The next day Russian tanks occupied the city, martial law was declared, and a curfew imposed. On the 24th and the following day in the morning the university youth was able to organize the workers and to establish contact with the militia. By Friday the 26th a new committee formed for the purpose, assumed power. Negotiations with the Russian commander were started the same afternoon. He agreed to withdraw the Russian troops from the city, and lifted the curfew to enable people to visit their families. On the Saturday the Russians began their withdrawal. I went to Budapest as a member of the students' council to establish contact with the university youth of Budapest, and to find the best way to solve our common problems.

Things in Budapest at that time were far behind those of Debrecen. We tried to organize a national students' parliament, but this was stopped by the second Russian attack. After that we produced our own leaflets and our own newspaper and decided to continue the resistance as far as possible from Budapest and to form a central Budapest Workers' Council. The individual Workers' Councils already existed and had their central body, but the Budapest Workers' Council was now formed on our initiative.

Its only task at that time was to draft the demands on which all Hungarians were agreed and to put those demands in the hands of the Russians and of the Hungarian Government. The first meeting of the Workers' Council with the Russian commander took place at Csepel on 23 November when a Russian general and a few of his assistants were present. The workers demanded that the Russian army be withdrawn from Csepel, but the commander would not give an answer and said the Russians had come in answer to an appeal by the Hungarian Government to establish law and order. The workers then resumed their demands in the form of six points, which were later reproduced in the press, and they informed the Government of these demands. The most important was that the Government should resign and hand over to the only lawful Hungarian Prime Minister of that time, Imre Nagy. A further point was that negotiations should be started immediately for the withdrawal of Russian troops, first from Budapest, and by 1 January from the whole of Hungary, and they should ensure the fundamental rights and freedom of the workers.



(Witness III)

Kadar was unable to give an answer to these demands. His speech was very confused, and when he was asked how it was possible that his Government should call in the Russians, and the Russians should be already there four days earlier than the formation of his Government, he ignored the question and said that already on the Wednesday there had been counter-revolutionary demonstrations. On being pressed, he was unable to mention more than two or three of such counter-revolutionary acts, which seemed insignificant. It appeared that Kadar and his Government had no competence in dealing with the Russian authorities.

In his answer he said briefly that even though it was true one could see Russian troops around factories, until order was re-established he would be unable to do anything about their withdrawal. Even if he asked this of the Russians, they would not withdraw, and he had no right to ask it. In order to quieten the workers he said he recognized the lawfulness of the demand for free elections in the country with participation by the old democratic parties. He would not indicate the timing of such elections, which would be simply sometime in the future. He was most pessimistic about the possible victory of the Communist Party in such elections. This point was debated between the newspapers Pravda and the Manchester Guardian. Pravda said Kadar thought the Communist Party would have an overwhelming victory, but this was untrue, for he was most pessimistic about it. There was another interesting point in his speech: there was at that time a general strike in the country. Kadar recognized the fact that the workers could not be forced to go back to work, and he said that as a matter of fact he did not want to do that. He added that 30,000 workers could only be put back to work by 30,000 policemen.



(Witness III)

The attitude of the Government towards the Workers' Council was not exceptionally antagonistic at that time. At the meeting which took place on 9 or 10 November Kadar did not appear to be antagonistic towards the Council but towards the students. He and his ministers proposed that the intellectuals should be arrested.

On 16 November, at Akaczfa Street, the workers held a mass meeting to discuss possible modifications to their demands, because they had been refused by the Government in their original form. About 200 people were participating in this meeting when Russian soldiers, armed with machine-guns, entered the room and threatened its occupants. About an hour later the Russians were ordered to leave the room and a representative of Kadar arrived who informed the meeting that the Kadar Government had been provoked into adopting that attitude and now wished to be more conciliatory. They wished to mislead the workers in every possible way and really intended to pursue their arrests. For instance, on 12 November thirty people of the Workers' Council of Ujpest were arrested.

On 8 November the Russians set fire to a large warehouse which was used by the Government to store clothing. I was there and was able to ascertain that none of the fire-fighters engaged in any looting. Two weeks later an article appeared in the newspaper Nepszabadsag declaring that the crowd had looted the warehouse and that the Russians had been unable to prevent them from doing so.

I have finished my statement and am ready to answer any questions.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): You said that because of your political beliefs you were expelled from the university. Did I understand you correctly?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, that is correct. When Imre Nagy became Prime Minister in 1953 and announced his new Government, there was a slight diminution of terrorism and people began to express their opinions more freely. In March 1955 a new order was established and people who protested against it were removed from their employment, and from the universities. I was one of those. After the twentieth meeting of the Communist Party things changed again and in the autumn of 1956 I was allowed to return to the university. Many political prisoners were also released about that time.



Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): How were you informed that you had been expelled from the university? What procedure was adopted?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): A very strong attack was made on me in the university newspaper in which reference was made to the fortune of my father, who had been a small shopkeeper and had died twelve years before. My opinions were held to be destructive and a disciplinary committee was formed which had already received orders that I was to be expelled. After the committee met I was formally told of my expulsion. Later on, I learnt that a decision had been taken by the Party committee ordering all universities and research institutes to produce a certain number of cases similar to my own in order to serve as an example to the rest.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I refer to the attack you mentioned in the newspaper. What sort of newspaper was this? Was it a small paper, who published it, did it come under the supervision of the director of the university or some other authority? Would you please answer me as precisely as possible.

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): The newspaper was issued by the DISZ organization which is an organization of Communist university students. It had no news service, as such, but was a custom in Hungary for every school to have a newspaper dealing with internal matters. Any change in politics was reflected in the paper and thus brought to the attention of the students. It was edited under the supervision of the Communist Party secretary assigned to the university.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): On your faculty who was the authority, other than the rector, dean or president? Who was responsible for the internal administration of the university?



WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): The rector of the university and the dean of the faculty were supposed to be the highest authorities but their opinions did not carry much weight. For instance, the dean of my faculty, who was a mathematician, told a friend of mine that he did not want to expel me but his wishes were disregarded.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): Naturally, that must be the explanation, but I have one other question. Is it correct that you were readmitted to the university in 1956 and, if so, how was this arranged?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): I was not permitted to return to the same university but to a provincial one. I appealed against my expulsion and my appeal was to be heard but because of political changes, the trends of which were not then apparent, I was able, with the support of the mathematics professor, to continue my studies.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): Are you continuing your studies now?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, at Oxford.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): At which college?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): At Balliol.

Mr. SLIM (Tunisia)(interpretation from French): You said a committee decided to expel you. What was the composition of that committee?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): The committee was composed of five members among whom was a representative of the administration of the university, a representative of the Party, a representative of another Party organ, a representative of the Party faculty for higher education and a representative of the Ministry of Education.



Mr. SLIM (Tunisia)(interpretation from French): What was the voting?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): Three votes against two.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): When you spoke of the negotiations with the Kadar Government you said that Kadar mentioned two or three insignificant revolutionary acts. Tell me, if you remember, what those were?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): I was not permitted to

return to the same university but to a provincial one. I appeared against my

expulsion and my appeal was to be heard but because of political changes, the friends

of which were not then apparent, I was able, with the support of the national

professor, to continue my studies.

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a representative of the Party faculty for higher education and a representative of

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WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): One of the events which they continually mentioned referred to the killing of the chairman of the Csepel Revolutionary Council. I was not there when it happened. I think it is likely that the man in question was firing from the roof top of a house at people who were armed and they fired back at him and he was killed. When there was shooting of this kind there were naturally people killed on both sides. They also mentioned that at Sopron, the border station of Austria, twenty people were killed. I left the country by way of Sopron and when I was there I enquired about this, but no one knew anything about it. In one of the Gyöer newspapers, -- Gyöer is about half-way between Budapest and the border -- there appeared on 20 November a denial about this purported event.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): In what province is Debrecen?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): It is in Hajdu-Bihar province, in the eastern part of the country near the Rumanian border.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Do you know the population of Hajdu-Bihar province?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): I think about five hundred thousand people comprise the population, but I am not quite sure.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): You mentioned an incident at Debrecen where four people were killed and six wounded, do you know of any other incident of fighting in the Province?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): No. I do not know of any other incident in Debrecen since I could not go back later. This was not a fight or battle, it was a massacre as the people had no weapons. I do not know of any other battles in the province of Hajdu-Bihar.



The CHAIRMAN: As there are no further questions we thank you for your information.

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): I would like to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that I am very grateful for having had the opportunity of addressing them and I thank them very much.

Witness III withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Witness JJJ took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I bid you welcome. I ask you to give us your statement of the facts or of such other events to which you can testify as an eye-witness.

WITNESS JJJ (interpretation from Hungarian): I am twenty-four years old. I finished my economic studies at the University in 1955. I was personally acquainted with Imre Nagy. I also knew Attila Szigeti extremely well, as during the revolution he was the Chairman of the Trans-Danubian Revolutionary Council.

In the first place, I would like to tell you what I saw as an eye-witness of the events at Gyoer. I arrived at Gyoer on 29 October as the delegate of the University Revolutionary Council. This was on the first day of the second week of the revolution. At that time there was still mistrust of the Imre Nagy Government throughout the country.

At about the same time as I arrived, Lajos Somogyvary arrived also. He wanted to form a counter-government repudiating the authority of the Budapest Government. Somogyvary, with three or four of his men, caused the arrest of some members of the national Revolutionary Council at Gyoer. He made a speech to a few hundred people who were assembled in the main square. His speech lasted for more than an hour and he insisted on his speech being tape-recorded as he wanted



(Witness JJJ)

it to be broadcast by the Gyöer radio. In this speech he wanted to declare the formation of a new government and to ask for military help from the western Powers to carry on a war against Russia. This was at the time when negotiations were being carried on between the existing Government and the Soviet command as to the withdrawal of Russian troops.

At first, the people listened to him as they still did not quite trust the Imre Nagy Government because the attitude of that Government in those days was not clear. However, the situation was clarified when the former leading Communists were dismissed from the Government and when Geroe left on Friday.

Somogyváry wanted to use this situation to advance his plans but he did not succeed in forming his counter-government. As a matter of fact, the Gyöer workers did not support him because they did not believe that the complete defeat of the Imre Nagy Government was necessary as was proposed by Somogyváry.

The so-called Trans-Danubian Parliament met in the afternoon but it did not vote for forming a counter-government. It did, however, decide that it would vote to support Imre Nagy provisionally. They decided to call upon Imre Nagy to declare neutrality. to announce the carrying out of free elections and in so far as he fulfilled these conditions and immediately began negotiations with the Russians for the withdrawal of their troops, then in that case, the Trans-Danubian Parliament would support him.

It elected a five-member committee with Szigeti as chairman and on Tuesday morning they went to Budapest and held discussions with Imre Nagy. Imre Nagy accepted the Gyöer conditions and the result of this was that on Wednesday night he did make his declaration for neutrality. Of course, this was not only due to pressure from Gyöer, but I do think that the pressure exercised by Gyöer did have a direct influence. Prior to this it had been decided that the Trans-Danubian Parliament would meet again in Gyöer and if by that time Imre Nagy had not announced his support for neutrality they would form a counter-government.

In fact they did meet on Wednesday night. They hear the statement which Imre Nagy made on the radio that night. At that meeting there appeared a delegate from József Dudas who also wanted to form a counter-government but the Parliament called József Dudas a traitor and said they were not willing to support him. In the following days at Gyöer the situation became quite orderly and on Saturday a resolution was adopted to return to work on Monday. The population thus proved



(Witness JJJ)

its ability to deal with trouble-makers and in Gyoer, as elsewhere, there was no "counter-revolution". The people themselves could maintain order as soon as it became clear that Imre Nagy supported the aims of the revolution.

That is what I wanted to say about the events at Gyoer but there is one other important thing I would like to say which does not pertain to Gyoer. This happened on the second day of the revolution — on a Wednesday, in the evening. I was present when Sandor Erdei, the secretary of the Writers' Union, spoke on the telephone to Hegedues, the former Prime Minister, who still had some influence at that time. In this telephone conversation lasting about half an hour Sandor Erdei wanted to convince Hegedues that it was necessary to recall the Russian troops immediately as their presence could only lead to further massacres. The answer given by Hegedues was very interesting and he said "We are believers in peaceful negotiation. We do not think that you can exert pressure with force". Hegedues was an optimist and he had faith in the fact that the Russian tanks would crush the Hungarian revolution.



(Witness JJJ)

He said "The comrades are too nervous". Then naturally, in the days following, Hegedues as well as Geroe had to flee because the first Soviet intervention did not produce the results hoped for. It is characteristic that on the second day of the revolution the true size of things was not appreciated by them. For example Ferenc Erdei was a Minister previously and was still in the first Imre Nagy Government. Ferenc Erdei did not want to believe that the revolutionaries did not loot the Corvin department store. The editorial offices of the party newspaper Szabad Nep were next to the Corvin store; it was occupied by the people the next night and he did not want to believe that the department store next door received no harm at all. These people did not go out on to the streets. The position and unity of the so-called government were maintained by the spreading of false rumours about the true events which were occurring in the country. They did not even know what was happening during the first days of the revolution.

That is a general picture of what I wanted to tell you. If the Committee wish and have the time I can give details, and I shall also be glad to answer questions.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I would like to ask you, in your capacity as a student and a member of the revolutionary students' council of Budapest, a question which I have put to other witnesses. You have said that in certain students' movements or outside of students' groups there were anti-semitic attitudes. Did you yourself see any kind of discrimination on the grounds of race or religion?

WITNESS JJJ (interpretation from Hungarian): It was common knowledge that even previously in Hungary amongst certain sections of the people there was a certain degree of fairly strong anti-semitism, and it still exists to some extent, but I did not experience any manifestation of it at all during the revolution. There were stories of someone calling out anti-semitic slogans, but



(Witness JJJ)

I did not hear any myself and I think it was just a rumour. I know of no anti-Semitic manifestations during the revolution, and I do know that a great many Jewish people all over the country took part in the revolution.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I know that is so, but did you read in magazines or newspapers of any incidents perhaps prompted by anti-semitic feelings amongst refugees after the revolution? We have heard of such things, and I wonder what you would attribute them to.

WITNESS JJJ (interpretation from Hungarian): That is a complicated question. I said that anti-Semitism has certain historical roots in Hungary, but it was not a historical question, and it is not such a question here. The fact is that many of the prominent Communist leaders during the last twelve years were Jewish, so that it would be ridiculous to say that they were anti-Semitic. During the revolution there was no anti-Semitism, and I know of no case where anyone would have been harmed during the revolution because of being Jewish. I know of no such instance and I can say quite definitely that there was no anti-Semitic tendency in the revolution. As to the refugees, we heard -- and this appeared in the Hungarian language paper Magyar Szó -- that anti-Semitic leaflets had been found in certain Austrian camps, and it was supposed that these had been printed in Budapest and distributed by the Kadar Government. It is also conceivable that such anti-Semitic propaganda was published by Hungarians who had left before the revolution. It is common knowledge that in the Hungarian emigration of 1944 many people were members of the so-called Arrow Cross, which had an anti-Semitic programme. These were pseudo-Nazis. I would like to repeat and emphasize, however, that you cannot connect this in any way with the revolution. In the same way it can be said that the Kadar Government talked about a counter-revolution, but there was no counter-revolution. The whole thing originated from force. The Communist Party is based on force. You cannot use as an argument the fact that there was some anti-Semitic feeling previously in Hungary; and there was none during the revolution. Even if there had been some anti-Semitism in the revolution it would still have been a national revolution; just as you cannot say that because 30,000 people were guillotined during the French Revolution, that also was not a national revolution.



Mr. RODRIGUEZ--FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I would like to thank you very much for your statement.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You referred in your evidence to Dudas being branded a traitor by the Trans-Danubian Parliament. Is that correct?

WITNESS JJJ (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes. I do not think the Trans-Danubian Parliament ever adopted a resolution on that, but a delegate proposed on the Wednesday of the second week of the revolution that a separate counter-government at Gyöer be formed and Dudas invited to be a member. Meanwhile people called out from the floor "Traitor", and this was generally approved.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you know Dudas personally?

WITNESS JJJ (interpretation from Hungarian): No.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): What was his reputation in the country?

WITNESS III (interpretation from Hungarian): He enjoyed a certain popularity but during the revolution the Imre Nagy Government, even before the Russian intervention, arrested Dudas because he tried to do what he could to impede the revolution. I think he was liberated later. I believe he was arrested on 2 November and liberated on the following day.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions we thank you for the information you have given.

WITNESS JJJ (interpretation from Hungarian): Thank you very much for hearing me.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.