

International Trade

Bogner on East-West Trade: In a 'Magyar Hírszem' article on East-West trade, Jozsef Bogner said that Hungarian goods were faced with ever stiffer competition in the world markets. This competition would grow even fiercer. The products of Hungarian industry would be able to hold their own in world markets only if they were of excellent quality and were supported by an elastic sales organisation capable of adjusting itself to changes in the economic climate. (Budapest 11.00, 20.10.57)

Departure of Czechoslovak Trade Delegation: A Czechoslovak trade delegation, headed by Svrcka, Deputy Minister of Internal Trade, which had talks in Budapest on 14th and 18th October in Budapest with Hungarian trade representatives, left Budapest on 19th October. The Czechoslovak delegates discussed methods of goods exchange between the two countries and co-operation between their internal trade organisations. (MTI 19.10.57)

Technical assistance
The Helwan Bridge: 'Nepokarat' reports that the longest bridge in Africa, that across the Nile at Helwan, which is being built by Hungarian engineers, should be ready by 23rd June 1958. The 23rd of June is Egypt's national day. (MTI 18.10.57)

Other Economic Points

Miners' Labour Contest Directives: Directives on labour contests in the mines, published by the Ministry of Heavy Industry and the Miners' Union, say that contests must promote higher output and productivity. Costs and safety must be kept in mind. Results must be achieved not by greater physical effort but by good organisation and modern technique. Miners who do outstanding work for six months will receive a diploma and a bonus equal to a week's wage. If they keep up their performance for another six months, they will receive a badge and a fortnight's wages extra. Eighteen months' outstanding effort will earn a medal and a month's extra wages. The names of prizewinners must be submitted to their fellow-workers for approval. (MTI 18.10.57)

Use of State Reserve Lands: A Government decree on the utilisation of State reserve lands lists the conditions under which State reserve lands are to be used, fixes rents for them and defines the legal relationship between lessors and lessees. The decree says that producer co-operatives and tenants must work the State reserve lands themselves. Sub-letting and share-cropping are forbidden. (Budapest 09.00, 20.10.57)

Rents and the Housing Shortage: In a talk based on information supplied by the Statistics Office, Gabi Timer said that many rents were too low to allow repairs to be made. Before the liberation, the average rent had been 20-25 per cent of wages. Now, it was less than five per cent. In mining areas rents were as low as 12-24 forints a month - about an hour's wages. The rent of a two-room flat with kitchen and bathroom, central heating and electricity included, was some 120 forints a month for a miner - less than two days' pay. In the rest of the country, rents were higher but still averaged under 100 forints. Most families paid 50-60 forints a month, with the average wage at 1,400 a month. Most families had to live in one and two-room flats, due to the legacy of the Horthy regime. The housing shortage was still "aggravating" despite the 172,000 new flats built between 1949 and 1956 and the estimated 80,000 put up between 1945 and 1949. The Government's scheme of loans to private builders had now greatly boosted house-building. (Budapest in English 20.00, 18.10.57)

Building Materials Industry Exceeds Plan: The building materials industry has exceeded its plan for the third quarter and approached the 1956 level. In the third quarter, 465,000,000 raw bricks and 340,000,000 fired bricks - i.e. 27 and 54 million more than in the second quarter respectively - were made. The output of ceramic tiles was 40,800,000. The cement factories exceeded their plan by 12 per cent and the concrete component producing factories by 11.2 per cent. The 'Eternit' works exceeded the plan for slate by 18.2 per cent, for corrugated sheets 5.7 per cent, for covering sheets 46.4 per cent and for drain pipes 1.7 per cent. (Hungarian Information Service 19.10.57)

Stalinszovars Furnace Tapped for First Time: The new No. 2 smelting furnace at the Danube Iron Works was tapped for the first time on 18th October. (Budapest 21.00, 18.10.57)