

radio and commentary
against 23.

Story of Siege Retold

An anonymous home service commentator said that few people knew exactly what had occurred in Republic Square on 30th October 1956, and gave the following version of events:

Nagy's Treason: Superior Strength of Attackers

"On 29th October Imre Nagy proclaimed a unilateral cease-fire. This was a dreadful betrayal of the people, who were ready to fight the counter-revolutionary gangs with arms. Next day, on the 30th, the forces of the counter-revolution, into whose hands Imre Nagy played by proclaiming the cease-fire, concentrated a force armed with about 800 rifles, sub-machine guns, hand grenades, guns and armoured vehicles and besieged the premises of the Budapest Party Committee from Republic Square and the neighbouring streets.

"The Party House was defended by some 50 regular other ranks of the State Security forces, led by their officers, a few Army officers and a handful of civilians - men and women Party workers.

"The firing, which went on from 10 in the morning until two in the afternoon, was accompanied by incitement throughout the city. The provocateurs told the inhabitants of the capital the lie that AVH regiments were guarding underground prisons in Republic Square, and that hundreds of innocent prisoners had been pining away for years.

"The defenders of the building, their ammunition having run out, and being unable to withstand the fire of the tanks, wanted to negotiate with the attackers. Imre Meroe, the Party Secretary, and Col. Janos Asztalos of the Army went out into the street carrying a white flag. The attacking bandits, however - just like the German fascists outside Budapest when the capital was surrounded in 1944 - shot the emissaries in a dastardly manner.

Bloodbath by Criminals.

"A horrible blood bath ensued in Republic Square. The attackers beat up and kicked the men and women they seized. Twenty-year-old soldiers were beaten to death and then hanged on trees in the square. The sadist murderers fired bursts into the bodies of these young men. Pictures taken by foreign journalists and photographers recorded these scenes of unparalleled torture. No bloodshed comparable in its bestiality has ever occurred in the history of Budapest. This is why 30th October remains a memorable date in the life of our capital city.

"Who were the torturers and murderers? Photographs have preserved their features and criminal investigators have identified them; burglars with criminal records, dangerous vagabonds and prostitutes. Who were the victims? All honest and dutiful people, pure of heart. They were known as such by their comrades-in-arms and friends. Their graves now stand in line in Kerepesi Cemetery. These shameful crimes were committed not by the people of Budapest but by select representatives of the capital's underworld who had been surrounded with the aura of freedom fighters by Western investigators and their accomplices at home.

Plan to Launch Wholesale Persecution of Communists

"Today the truth stands clearly before us. The bloodbath of 30th October was an expertly-organised counter-revolutionary provocation. Lies and slanders were used to denigrate people with unblemished records and bloodthirsty assassins were declared heroes in the course of it. The purpose of the whole affair was to destroy the Party and launch the persecution of Communists throughout the country. The Party workers Imre Meroe and Eva Kallai; Maj. Gens. Lakatos, Papp and Szabo; Lt. Varkonyi and the many soldiers from the ranks who died under torture in Republic Square are martyrs of socialism, martyrs of the Party. Their loss is a great sorrow not only for their relatives but the entire Hungarian people. They died like heroes. Their martyrdom

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has opened the eyes of many misled people and made them realise that the cruel White Terror of the counter-revolution knew no mercy. The counter-revolution must be destroyed: that is the lesson of 30th October, imprinted for ever in the memory of every Hungarian Communist, every partisan of socialism", the commentator concluded. (Budapest 17.00, 30.10.57)

Other Reports on the Anniversary

'Nepszabadsag': Nagy's Crimes

'Nepszabadsag', as quoted, alleged that the counter-revolutionaries had murdered the Communists in the Party HQ "to give events a Right-wing trend and thus help to make the atmosphere more fascist". Neither Imre Nagy, who then professed to be a Communist, nor his followers had done anything whatever to defend either the Party HQ, or the Party, or the Communist idea. The Imre Nagy Government had egged the murderers on. Good Communists in those days had realised that if the socialist regime was to be defended, a return to fascism prevented, and the counter-revolution defeated, a hundred bullets had to be returned for every shot fired and that it was necessary "to apply to Hungary's loyal and powerful friend for aid". The excesses of the White Terror must never be forgiven. (MTI and Hungarian information service 30.10.57)

Meetings of Party Resisters

"An intimate comrades' meeting" took place on 29th October at the 7th District Party headquarters, attended by Communists of the district who had "stood their ground during the events of last October" and had done well in organising the Socialist Workers' Party. "Memorial certificates" were presented to some 400 Party workers. (Budapest 21.00, 29.10.57)

"The heroic Communist defenders of the Party HQ at Republic Square" met in their rebuilt premises the same evening to be addressed by Marosan, who presented them with "For the Worker-Peasant Power" medals. (Hungarian information service 30.10.57)