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ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE PROBLEM OF HUNGARY

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTY-FIRST MEETING (CLOSED)

Held at 10, Carlton House Terrace, London,
on Saturday, 30 March 1957, at 10.00 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. Alsing ANDERSEN

(Denmark)

- KKK. Withdrawal of Soviets 9400 24 Oct
Troops from Rajka close border 2 Nov
- LLL. Ruman, seize 50 persons at random 4 Nov
- Hadik - Econ. Significance Uranium, Mine blown up
Soviet Commander threatens miners
- Hodi. Collectors fall 60% of production. - workers
Council split on strike.
- Pal - Howath, Kirsaly and Maléter meeting 29 Oct of Rev Comm
of Army. - Szabo a fascist - detail arrest of Maléter
Kada told Rajka to make confession, Activities
of writers Assoc. 14 Nov, 7 Dec 28 Dec.
Econ. data.

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

The CHAIRMAN: I bid you welcome on behalf of the Committee. I understand that you want to remain anonymous and your wish will of course be respected. Please make your statement and after that we may want to ask you some questions.

WITNESS KKK (interpretation from Hungarian): After the downfall of Rakosi and the rehabilitation of Rajk there was a freer atmosphere in the country and the people felt the time had come when the terror which had been forced upon them for twelve years should be thrown off. In this tense atmosphere, on 23 October, the people of Budapest rose. I am from Gyöer. We knew about the rising in Budapest because we heard Geroe's speech on the radio. That night few people in Gyöer were sleeping. Everybody was out in the street waiting to see what the Communist party newspaper Gyöer Sopronmegyei Hirlap would say about the revolution. The paper appeared during the night and a few enthusiastic newspapermen who were members of the Writers' Union distributed free copies in the streets. In this paper the rising in Budapest was described as an armed clash. The fact that this paper was distributed came to the knowledge of the AVH who ordered that it should not appear again, but nevertheless many copies were distributed.

On 24 October one could see that nobody was working even though they were at their places of work, and after working hours all the Gyöer factory workers went to the front of the city council building although no meeting had been organized. There an enthusiastic young student recited the Hungarian national poem Talpra Magyar and the representatives spoke to the crowd. The workers took down the Communist insignia and also the Red Star from the top of the war memorial, and destroyed the monument. From there the crowd went to the provincial party headquarters which was guarded by armoured cars. They demanded that the national flag be replaced by the new flag with the Hungarian insignia. This was done and at the same time the crowd asked that the Soviet soldiers should leave the provincial headquarters. The Russians left the headquarters without a word of protest and withdrew to the forest of Gyöerszentivány. Then the crowd went to the front of the prison and demanded the release of political prisoners. These prisoners

were released but meanwhile the Hungarian police had gone to the prison and they opened fire on the crowd taking part in this peaceful demonstration. Four people were killed and many wounded.

On 25 October all the industrial workers gathered in front of the city council building. They organized delegations and formed the Gyöer national council, which later became the Sopron national council and subsequently the Trans-Danubian national council.

The workers and the students played a leading part in the revolution. It was these two classes of society that suffered most. The Hungarian worker had never been so tried; the speed-up was such that he worked until he died. As for the students, they knew they were not being taught the truth. They would have liked to study Hungarian history but instead had to study Soviet history. They wanted to learn the military history of Hungary and science but instead they had to learn Soviet military history and Soviet Marxist and Leninist ideology. Proof of the fact that it was the workers and the students who started the revolution was given when the workers removed the Red insignia from buildings and the students openly burned Soviet books.

On the 28th the victorious revolutionaries and the Soviet forces declared a cease-fire. Between 28 October and 1 November demands were made for the formation of a Hungarian Government and finally the last Government of Imre Nagy was formed through the coalition of four parties.

There were no clashes at Gyöer apart from the one I have just described. The day before the revolution the Hungarian military units at Gyöer left their barracks and went to a forest near the city. In view of the fact that there was danger of a food shortage, the national council asked the Russian units to withdraw to their barracks and stay there. The Soviet military commander at Gyöer understood that it was a question of a people's revolution and he did withdraw to the barracks, so there was no clash between the revolutionary forces and the Russians until 1 November.

When Nagy formed his new coalition government, at Gyöer too the democratic parties were reorganized — the Smallholders' Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Party. I myself was a member of the Workers' Council of Gyöer and

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on the morning of 1 November I was asked to go to the Council meeting with a request that the Magyarovar-Hegyeshalom line be guarded because AVH people were leaving Hungary by that route. It was that morning that I heard that Soviet troops were entering Hungary. The opinion of the national council was that Hungary was a member of the United Nations and if the Soviet Union attacked Hungary this would be armed intervention, against which the United Nations would give aid. We therefore thought this attack would not take place. On 1 November I went to Hegyeshalom, at the border between Hungary and Austria, and controlled the movement of people into Austria. At about midday Anna Kethly and her party arrived and I let them pass. There were also two members of the Workers' Council accompanying Anna Kethly to the international meeting of trade unions in Vienna.

The CHAIRMAN: It was the Socialist International that was meeting in Vienna?

WITNESS KKK (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, that is quite right, it was the Socialist International. As these two men were going through they asked me if I wanted to go with them. I thought it would be very interesting and I went with these two Social Democrats from Győr to Vienna, intending to return to Hungary. We started back on 2 November but we were stopped at Hegyeshalom because Russian armoured units were already guarding the border. The Austrian border guards told us to wait until the next morning when we would be able to go through but by then there were even more armoured units and we had to return to Vienna. On 4 November we again tried to go back through Sopron, together with Anna Kethly and her party. She made a speech to the university students but we could not pass Sopron because it was already closed by Russian armoured guards. So Anna Kethly and I returned to Vienna.

On 26 October I was personally at the AVH building which was destroyed by the revolutionaries. With my own eyes I saw the telephone monitoring service which must have cost millions of forints.

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I myself saw the crematorium that was in that building, so arranged as to be able to burn one person at a time.

I saw with my own eyes the files of all the inhabitants of Sorpon in the records held by the AVH. We were able to open the safe and destroy these records.

This was not a revolution of one particular class but of a whole people, though the main role was carried out by workers and students. The workers hated the existing order because they felt it was they who had been deceived most.

Unfortunately I cannot say anything about the second Russian attack because I left the country on 1 November. I have finished my statement and I shall be pleased to answer questions.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. I should like to ask you a question with regard to the closure of the border of Hungary. I understand that on 2 November the border between Hungary and Austria was barred by Soviet troops so that you and Anna Kethly could not return to Hungary.

WITNESS KKK (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, that is what I meant to say. It was in the afternoon of 2 November that I found myself unable to go back because Soviet troops barred the road. I had been able to get out on 1 November. Subsequently I learned that it was Soviet troops from Slovakia who barred the road. Madame Kethly could not go back to Sorpon on the 4th, and I was with her at the time.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you know anything about Soviet troops coming from Czechoslovakia into Hungary?

WITNESS KKK (interpretation from Hungarian): The people living along the border said that at about that time Soviet troops arrived from Rajka which is on the Slovak-Hungarian border, but I did not see them myself.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions? We thank you for having attended here and for the information you have given us.

WITNESS KKK (interpretation from Hungarian): I should like to thank you too.

Witness KKK withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman Witness LLL took a seat at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I bid you welcome. I understand you and your husband were eye-witnesses of the events which occurred in front of the Radio Building, amongst other things, and we should like to hear your statement about that.

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): I was born in Budapest; my parents were of aristocratic origin, a fact which caused us a great deal of trouble later on. I was in a Scottish boarding school maintained by the Scottish Mission, and later I went to an English school in Hungary. In 1938, during the siege, I had to interrupt my studies, and continued them only in 1945. My father was a wholesale dealer in textiles, and in 1948 his plant was nationalized and everything he had was taken away except our apartment.

In 1951 because we came of a noble family we were deported to a village where I remained until August 1953 when there was an amnesty. In that year I married, and my husband and I lived in a house next to the radio broadcasting studio until we left Hungary to go to the West recently.

On the night of 23 October at eight o'clock there was a good deal of indignation amongst the people following Geroe's speech. The students, the workers, and the intellectuals had prepared a twelve-point memorandum which they wanted to have read over the radio. They appointed a committee of eight who attempted to go into the studio to arrange for this to be done. The studio was in the hands of the AVH who had held it ever since the Russians came to Budapest. The AVH would not discuss this broadcast and would not even let the eight people come out of the studio.

At 8.45 or 9 p.m. I was going home with my husband and we stoppes at the corner of Szentkiralyi Street and Brodi Sandor Street where the radio studio was located. Here there was a crowd of 2,000 to 2,500 people who were demonstrating in a peaceful manner, and from the radio building about six or seven AVH (I do not remember exactly

how many) came out, stopped on the corner, and began to throw tear gas bombs among the crowd. Later they started machine-gunning into the crowd. Naturally panic broke out and people tried to flee in all directions, running for shelter into doorways. Noone could come out for about twenty minutes because the AVH kept the square under continuous fire. After another twenty minutes or so the firing stopped, but by that time the AVH had completely surrounded the radio building and one could only go towards Rakoczi Street. My husband and I were only about one hundred steps from our house but it took us an hour and a half to get there by a circuitous route, ducking for cover and running from one door to another.

By this time the Stalin statue was being pulled down, and people were trying to get it off its pedestal. In front of the radio building were three or four men with motorcycles who went off to the Stalin Square to inform the people there that the crowd was being fired upon outside the Studio. The crowd then came towards the Studio and commandeered all the trucks and cars on the street and proceeded to Csepel to the weapons and ammunition factory. The Kilian barracks were there and also a so-called lamp factory which was really manufacturing weapons.

At about ten o'clock the people had got hold of weapons and it was then that the actual fighting began. The people had not been prepared, they had no weapons and did not even want to fight, but since unarmed people were being fired upon, they became so indignant that a battle broke out. They also made use of the police, who practically to a man handed over their weapons to the freedom fighters, as did also the regular army soldiers. The latter had been assigned to keep order but handed over to the freedom fighters their hand grenades, cars, munitions and equipment, and they themselves helped.

The real battle in front of the radio building began about 10.30 p.m. when the people, now in some kind of orderly groups, started towards the studio to try to force the AVH out of the radio building and to stop them firing on the people, a good many of whom had already been killed. The most terrible thing was that the AVH did not even allow people to take away the dead and wounded from the street, because as soon as someone in a white dress or coat or with a white flag appeared to do so, they were shot down like everyone else; so many of the wounded died because they could not get first aid in time.

By this time, towards twelve midnight, there were already armoured cars in front of the radio building, and shots were being fired from them and from the garden of the studio, which was just behind our house. This firing was directed into the windows of houses where people and children were living. Naturally some of the revolutionaries went into houses and tried to cover their fighters from there, but the AVH were firing recklessly into the houses and into a school nearby where there were only a few students and teachers, girls, women and little children.

Although no firing had issued from that house the Russians turned their guns on it and fired. We were already in our apartment by that time and could see all that happened; my husband went down into the street and later talked and fought with the revolutionaries. We could see how utterly senseless were the attacks made by the Russians, and by the AVH who later came to help them. They were not shooting in self defence but just with the object of completely destroying the city and of causing as much damage as possible. That went on all day. The next morning there was fighting in front of the radio building which continued for about two days before the students succeeded in taking over the building. They took the AVH into custody; they did not harm them but led them away to barracks where they were locked up. Subsequently the fighting spread to all parts of the city and became especially fierce in the vicinity of the Kilian barracks, where the AVH and Russians concentrated their troops. Trolley tracks were torn up, overhead wiring was pulled down, telegraph wires and poles were destroyed; in fact, there was a great deal of wilful destruction. If the Russians suspected that one occupant of a house was a revolutionary they did not bother to search the house but destroyed it entirely. The sum total of all that was that Budapest was almost in ruins. The fighting was particularly heavy in the vicinity of the Kilian barracks, Buda and the outskirts of the town on that Sunday when the Russians attacked at dawn. The attack was completely unexpected and was all the more terrible because those who had been fighting had laid down their arms. There had been an appeal on the radio that people should return to work, surrender their arms and resume normal routine. The Imre Nagy Government had promised to re-establish law and order. The freedom fighters responded to that appeal and did not revenge themselves upon their erstwhile enemies. In spite of all that, once the Russians had started their attack people were mown down in the streets, among them fifteen and sixteen-year old youths. The population was in a dilemma; the attack was unexpected and stocks of weapons were exhausted. The Hungarian regular army tried to equip people with arms. The battle lasted for a few days until eventually quiet reigned. It was then that terrorism started. People were afraid to go out on the streets for fear of arrest. My father and I saw two incidents during which the Russians herded people together, loaded them on to trucks and drove them off to an unknown destination. Generally, nothing more

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was ever heard of those people. I was also an eye-witness of an incident where fifty people were liberated from prison by five Hungarian soldiers. When the Russians realized the prisoners had disappeared they immediately went out and arrested fifty more people at random. They did not arrest people because they thought they were guilty of some crime; they just made arbitrary arrests. My husband had taken part in the freedom fight and consequently we found ourselves in danger. We were forced to flee the country and to try and start a new life in the west. We have gathered from letters we have received from home that the AVH had started to search for us.

I have finished my statement and I am willing to answer any questions the Committee may wish to put to me.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I should like to ask the interpreter if he would read to you four short paragraphs from a document in our possession and to ask you whether there is any correction, as to details, which you feel should be made to this statement of events which took place outside the radio building. While the interpreter is doing that I shall inform the Committee which is the document to which I refer.

The document was read to the witness by the interpreter.

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): I should like to make some comments, if I may. I refer to the first part in which the people who were in front of the radio building are mentioned. They could not have known of the shooting of one of the men who went into the building to read the twelve points because the building was completely padded and sound-proofed; neither from inside nor outside could it have been seen. When the delegation entered a gate was closed behind them -- I saw it myself. We did not hear any sound; we only knew that the men did not return. As regards the AVH opening fire on the people: they did throw tear gas bombs but no stones were thrown, no attack was made, no incident of that kind occurred. The only thing that happened was that the crowd cheered when the occupants of a truck let off some fireworks which were completely harmless and

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caused no damage to people or property. There was some kind of ceremony when, after one or two minutes, people came out. A man, armed with a machine gun, was standing guard outside the door -- there was always an armed guard at that spot. Apart from that I saw no other AVH people. A few came out and threw tear gas bombs amongst the crowd, and afterwards there was a volley of shots. Then the tanks -- as I mentioned -- surrounded the students; there were not only three but many more Russian and AVH tanks. They also held in strength the garden, and all four sides were surrounded.

The whole radio building was surrounded with tanks but there were one or two private apartment houses in that block which did not belong to the radio building. The next morning on the 24th at dawn that part was liberated so that the revolutionaries could get two tanks in there to defend themselves with tank fire against the firing by the AVH and the Russians. Later the whole radio building was surrounded and during the fighting which started, one side or the other had the upper hand and for a short time the revolutionaries held the building.

Is there anything else the Committee would like me to say?

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Thank you.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You stated that there was a crowd of about 2,500 people demonstrating, what were they actually doing before the firing started?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): We thought at that time there were about 2,500 people and apart from demanding the reading of their twelve points and reiterating their twelve points they demanded the resignation of the Geroe Government; that it should be replaced by Imre Nagy; the withdrawal of the Russians and the termination of the siege. They wanted the Russians to give Hungary back to the Hungarian Government and the Hungarian people. Similar slogans and demands were voiced and these cries were the means by which they were brought to the attention of those in the radio building. It was in this way generally that the wishes of the crowd were demonstrated. They did not use stones at all because for one thing we were seeking cover in the doorways for twenty minutes. Later we moved to where some building was going on and ten minutes after that the people started to come back but by that time more and more people were coming in from the Stalin Place and other streets to join us.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I should be very grateful if you would answer my questions as briefly as possible. What were the slogans?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): "Down with Geroe". "We want Imre Nagy in the Government". "The Russians should leave Hungary". I cannot remember exactly but that was the type of slogan that was heard.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I take it there was a tremendous noise, all these people shouting and screaming slogans.

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): No, the crowd was rather disciplined and behaved quite well. Someone would perhaps start a sentence, for instance, "The Russians should leave Hungary", and this would be repeated a few times. There was no confusion and there were no loud cries from the crowd.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you see the communist flag torn down at any stage.

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I did not. We were too occupied with the events since my husband and I started to go home in that crowd which was fired upon and I must say at that point I was not feeling very happy. We both ran into a doorway to take cover and it was only those things I saw with my own eyes that I can tell you about. I did not see the flag being torn down.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you hear the AVH or anybody else ask the crowd to disperse?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): No, No one said a word. The first movement on the part of the AVH was when they came out of the building and threw the tear-gas bombs. Until then there had been no sign of a single member of the AVH except, of course, for the usual guards at the door. No one did anything to the crowd or asked them to stop.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did the tear-gas have the effect of dispersing the crowd?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): The tear-gas bombs perhaps would have been effective by themselves because they were so strong that many people were blinded and could not see where they were going but only about two minutes passed between the time when the tear-gas bombs were thrown and the firing started, consequently the people did not have time to recover and disperse.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you see the Soviet armoured cars being set on fire?

WITNESS LIL (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, I saw them burning but that was the next day. At night of course, we could not see what kind of armoured cars were in the fighting but the next day I saw Soviet armoured cars and military vehicles. I must say here quite frankly that quite a number joined the revolutionaries and helped them with their weapons and in other ways but, at the same time, most of them were helping the AVH and fighting with a great deal of cruelty -- firing upon women and children.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Were there women and children among the demonstrators?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): There were women and children among the demonstrators. Later there were many schoolchildren among the freedom fighters.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How many dead did you find outside the radio building that night?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): I saw three dead when the crowd dispersed and others were wounded. I saw the wounded because there is a hospital not far from us and they took them there and they stayed there. During the next day and night I was not on the street and I do not know how many people were killed, only my husband was there. The day after that, in the morning, I was on the street giving first aid to the wounded but quite frankly I did not count them, however, according

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to my calculations at that point in one street there were about ten or twelve dead. Of course there were a good many more wounded.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you see arms brought from the lamp factory? You gave evidence on that and I want to know whether you saw the arms actually being brought from the lamp factory.

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): I saw the arms and I know that they had been brought from there because a very good friend of my husband's started out to get arms and he went there with a truck and he was an eye-witness. He brought arms from the lamp factory.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): At what time, roughly, were the arms in the possession of the crowd?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): I think it was about 9.30 or ten o'clock when the first weapons were put into the hands of the crowd. I think it was the people from Csepel who had them first. I think it likely that they received news by telephone because they got there earlier, even before a truck could have gone out and returned. I think they must have had some previous information.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): At any stage did you see bricks being used?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): I did not see bricks used but when we were trying to leave the radio building by another route we passed people going in the opposite direction and we saw them with pieces of brick in their hands. I did not see them used and frankly I would not have thought there was any point in using them to oppose weapons. I do not think that really happened.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You did not see any bricks being thrown at all?

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I did not see that.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further questions and we thank you for your statement and for your answers.

WITNESS LLL (interpretation from Hungarian): Thank you very much for having heard me.

Witness LLL withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman Mr. Janos Hadik took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I bid you welcome. I understand that your name is Janos Hadik and that you do not wish to remain anonymous.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Janos Hadik is my pen name.

The CHAIRMAN: We have a brief written note of who you are and we ask you to give now the statement you wish to make about the events of which you were an eye-witness.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Before I begin I would like to thank the British authorities and those gentlemen who have made it possible for me to appear before the Committee. I, like many thousands of my compatriots, was left homeless because we demanded freedom for our people, and I am confident that you, because of your position, will not feel lightly about the events which have occurred in Hungary and will support our lawful demands. We want justice and freedom for Hungary and judgment upon the oppressors.

I was in the fortunate or unfortunate position of being able to look into the official secrets of the country, and I knew personally those who are the causes of Hungary's present fate.

On the basis of my personal experiences from 1950 to 24 November 1956 I can give you information on the following points:

1. Hungary's position politically and economically, including the situation as regards the uranium ore mines which are of supreme importance in the economic life of Hungary.

2. From 23 October until 4 November the aims of the revolution, the brutalities which occurred, the situation of the Hungarian mines during that time, and the demands of the people upon the Government.

3. The planning of the Soviet intervention as well as the consequences, and the interest of the Soviet command in the uranium mines as well as in the workers there.

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4. The relationship of the Kadar Government to the Workers' Councils. This I should like to explain from my own point of view because this represents the attitude of the Kadar Government towards other institutions as well.

5. Finally, the organized aspect of the Russian intervention.

I will first deal with point one.

The CHAIRMAN: As regards the general development in Hungary we have already had the evidence of many witnesses and so I would ask you to concentrate upon the specific points about which you are an expert, namely the uranium mines and the position there.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I agree with what you have said, Mr. Chairman, but perhaps it would be possible to give slightly more specific guidance to the witness. I think we now have all that we need about the relations between the Hungarian Government and the Workers' Councils, and I think the Committee would be very interested to know about the arrangements which existed between the Hungarian and the Soviet Governments for the exploitation of Hungary's uranium.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Secondly, I suggest the Committee might like to have a description of the way in which the Hungarian mines were, as I believe they were, put out of action to a large extent during the revolution by the Hungarian workers in them. If the witness could confine himself to those specific matters I think he would be helping us.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Hungarian geologists discovered uranium at Pecs at the beginning of 1955; and it is noteworthy that very few people in Hungarian public life knew about this even in September 1956. After the exploration of this ore Soviet action began, they isolated the mine, surrounded it with barbed wire, and posted the AVH around it. Hungarian technicians

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were allowed in only with special permission beginning in May 1956. Those who fought in the Soviet Union were selected rather than others. Work was started with Hungarian money and Soviet organization, which involved the Government of Hungary in a loss of twenty-five million forints. A commercial agreement was concluded between the Hungarian Government and the Russian Government, and to the outside world it appeared that seventy per cent of the investment necessary for the exploration and exploitation would be advanced by the Soviet Union, thirty per cent being provided by Hungary. For the machines advanced by the Soviet Union, half of the Soviet seventy per cent, namely thirty-five per cent, had to be repaid by Hungary in uranium. The price of the uranium would be determined by the Soviet Union. This meant that so long as the advances towards the investment by the Soviet Union were not repaid by Hungary, that is for an indefinite period, all the ore would be sent to the Soviet Union. Ten per cent of the ore taken to the Soviet Union would be brought back after processing to Hungary. The cost of processing would be paid by the Government of Hungary at a price determined by the Soviet Union. Hungary could not conclude without the agreement of the Soviet Union any commercial agreement concerning either the exploration, exploitation or utilization of the uranium ore. This agreement also applied to any new mines discovered on the territory of Hungary. This commercial treaty was to be a military secret.

The demands of the Hungarian people, including the miners, were for the return of the mines to Hungary and their exploitation at a commercial price. This represented seventy per cent of the national income in Hungary.

During the fight for freedom the workers at the uranium mines took into their own hands the direction of the mines. They dismissed the Russian technicians as well as others in the employment of the Soviet Union, and all the plant was put into security which was ensured by a guard of miners. The motto was "We are willing to work only under Hungarian management, otherwise we will blow up the mines." This happened on 5 December 1956.

From 4 November 1956 persecution began of those Hungarian patriots who did not accept Soviet supremacy and did not wish to collaborate with the Russians. At Pecs, for example, ten per cent of the miners were taken from their homes during the night and the majority of the intelligentsia were arrested and taken to an unknown place. They came for me by night three times, on the 19th, 20th and 21st, and I am grateful to those patriots who saved me.

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If you have any questions about uranium I will be delighted to answer them. The remainder of my statement refers to my dealings with the Kadar Government and Russian command.

The CHAIRMAN: At the moment we will confine ourselves to the question of the uranium mines, and I thank you for the statement you have made.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Were the uranium mines actually put out of action? Were they flooded by the workers in the area during the period of the revolution?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): The immobilization of the mine was done mostly under my direction between 15 and 18 November. The three shafts are separate, and we said that unless our demands were met we would blow up the mine. On 15 November we blew it up and it was flooded. One ton of a kind of dynamite was placed at the mouth of each shaft in readiness and as the Soviet authorities and the Kadar Government were not prepared to accept our demands we blew up the entrance to the shafts and flooded them.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): How long do you, as an engineer, think it would take to get the mines into working order again?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): At least six months.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): You said that seventy per cent of Hungary's national income was derived from the uranium, but I am sure you cannot mean national income in the sense in which that term is used by economists. Do you mean that seventy per cent of Hungary's foreign exchange receipts came from the uranium sources?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Valuing the uranium ore in foreign exchange, in quality and quantity it represents seventy per cent of the economic potential of Hungary.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): You spoke of the discovery of uranium ore in Hungary. Who made the necessary explorations -- Hungarian experts or Russian experts?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): In February, March and April 1955 Hungarian geologists were exploring for bauxite and for oil. Instead they found uranium ore, so that the discovery was Hungarian.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): What percentage of world uranium deposits do the deposits in Hungary represent, in your opinion? Or perhaps I should say, what percentage of Europe's deposits do the Hungarian uranium deposits represent? This is interesting because Soviet politicians, according to you, want to keep control of these mines in Hungary and I would therefore like to know their relative importance.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): The Hungarian deposits take first place in Europe in both quantity and quality. As regards world deposits, the Hungarian deposits take second place after Canada. Hungary is ahead of the Soviet Union, which has relatively little uranium. We were planning on a ten-year exploitation at the rate of 40,000 tons a month.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): Would you please repeat those figures.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): As regards the quantity of uranium ore, I do not know the position in world terms but I do know it in terms of Europe. The quantity and quality of uranium deposits in Hungary are unique in Europe. Soviet and Hungarian experts and here I include the Hungarian scientists

(Mr. Hadik)

Janossi and Szalai, are of the opinion that the quality is second in the world. Quantitatively, ten years' exploitation could be carried out and was planned at the rate of 40,000 tons a month. There are two newly discovered deposits around Balatonfured and Pilisvoeroesvar and I dare say that in world terms we come after Canada and Australia, and that is why the Soviet Union is so anxious to hang on to Hungary. If there were no uranium ore in Hungary the attitude of the Soviet Union towards us would be different.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): Were the geologists and the experts in Hungary always on the side of the revolution -- were they a part of the revolutionary movement? I imagine they were and the decision to flood the mines was indeed a very important one. Do you believe that the Russians in Hungary can re-establish rapidly the output of the mines so as to arrive at a production level of 40,000 tons a month?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): All the geologists and scientists, with the exception of the administrators who were of course very pro-Soviet, were supporters of the revolution. There were perhaps ten per cent who supported the Russians. As to the second question, the Soviet Union has already re-established its former organization and personnel at the mine and the position is that in three or four months about thirty per cent production will be reached and the mines may be working at full capacity by 1 January if present conditions continue.

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

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): You discovered the uranium deposits in about April 1955, I think. Is that correct?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, the ore was discovered in March/April 1955.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): The exploitation of these deposits would have required a tremendous amount of financing?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): A huge investment would be necessary for the mine to work at full capacity. It cost Hungary two and a half milliards of forints in two years -- that is, about £60 million sterling.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Hungary at that time had neither the required finance nor the machinery?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): That is what I meant when I said that the Soviet Union helped Hungary disinterestedly and thus took over the whole direction of the country. If you wish I will repeat details of the Soviet assistance we received in connexion with the exploitation of the mine. For the exploitation of uranium deposits seventy per cent of the necessary investment was advanced by the Soviet Union in machinery, the remaining thirty per cent being covered by Hungary. Half of the machinery advance as investment by the Soviet Union -- that is, thirty-five per cent of the total investment -- had to be paid back by Hungary. The price at which the Soviet Union bought uranium ore from Hungary would be determined by the Soviet Union.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Yes, you have already told us that and I would be grateful if you would just answer my questions. This was an agreement entered into by the Hungarian Government and the Soviet Union because the Hungarian Government had neither the finance nor the equipment?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Hungary had the financial resources, or could have obtained them if the Government had not turned to the Soviet Union and had not aimed at making the mine function at full capacity in the shortest possible time. The uranium requirements of Hungary could have been filled using one shaft, especially if we could have sold this ore to the West at world prices. Had we received honest prices for our ore we could have worked with Hungarian money after three years.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Do you know when this agreement was entered into by the Hungarian Government?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): This was a formal agreement of May to June 1956, but it was a military secret and the public did not know about it.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Who was it who entered into the agreement? Was it the then Prime Minister of May to June 1956?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): I do not know which minister it was, but it would be within the competence of the Council of Ministers. This was done by Rakosi's men and I believe the Hungarian public statesmen were not even included in the negotiations.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Were the mines working from 23 October to 15 December when you blew them up?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): No, they stopped on 23 October and are not working even today because repairs are being carried out.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): The mines had completely ceased to work at the beginning of the revolution?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, they stopped completely, and are useless at present.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Who was administering the mines concerned, Hungarians or Russians?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): The management was entirely Russian. There were Hungarian technicians there, of whom I was one, but that was only to mislead the outside world.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How many Soviet people were in the administration?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): There were three hundred Soviet citizens, management and experts, administering the mine, as compared with one hundred and twenty Hungarians.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How many Hungarian mine workers were there?

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): There were two thousand people in the mines and in the buildings.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions? You mentioned you had participated in the negotiations with Mr. Kadar and I think it would be of interest to the Committee to hear something about that.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): Even before the revolution the workers at the mine knew all about my fight against Russian exploitation so during the revolution I became a sort of director and the fate of the mine was entrusted to me. In order to prevent the Soviets taking over the mine we went to the Imre Nagy Government. Later Kadar came to the fore and we called on him in Parliament to prevent the deportation of workers and to safeguard the future of the mine. I came back on 18 November from Pecs and we went to see Kadar on 19 November 1956. He knew we were coming, but was not ready to receive us saying he had no time and had more important things to see to; this was at 11 a.m. At 12 noon we went to the house of the Russian commander, Bernikov, who was also expecting us, but who gave us similar answers and we did not even have to tell him our demands. He said there were already ten armoured corps in Hungary and the Russians were ready to bring in ten more so therefore we should get to work with the Soviet army as had happened before October. We left without a word.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no need to ask questions about this statement which was clear enough. We thank you for your very interesting and important information.

Mr. HADIK (interpretation from Hungarian): I should also like to thank the Committee.

Mr. Janos Hadik withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman Mr. Sandor Hodi took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I bid you welcome and I understand you do not wish to remain anonymous in our records.

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): It is a matter of indifference to me whether my name is mentioned to the public or not.

The CHAIRMAN: The verbatim records are not public but we will mention your name in them. Now I ask you to give a short statement.

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): Thank you. My name is Sandor Hodi, I am thirty-three years of age and come from intellectual circles. I studied at the Institute of Philosophy and at present I am a newspaperman. Since 1943 I have worked for twelve papers, two in Budapest (one of them illegal), some provincial papers, and one London newspaper. I have a wife and two children. On the last day of December 1956 I was forced to leave my country. I should like to let you know the position of the Hungarian press and Hungarian newspapermen. In order to understand the role of the press during the revolution I will outline the previous situation. Until 1949 the different parties had several newspapers and there was a certain kind of freedom of the press. The papers were controlled by the heads of the various organizations and it was only through information to the central Government by people who might be called traitors that there was a censorship. This happened in the case of Dobi in the Smallholders' Party.

In 1950 the Communist Party, with only twenty per cent of the vote, took over the power of the press. At that time I was working on one of the biggest newspapers

(Mr. Hodi)

in the provinces called Viharsarok. We received a communiqué every week from the Budapest central party organ telling us what we should print and even suggestions for titles. There were sometimes even ready-made articles which we had to use. The Party did not trust the newspapermen and by 1952 ninety per cent of the former intelligentsia and newspapermen had been told to go, and the Party was trying to make newspapermen out of workers and peasants. On the paper Viharsarok we had two intellectuals, six workers and six peasants.

En 1956 I worked on the journal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Gepallomas, where there were two intellectuals and eight other people. I had had to leave Viharsarok in 1951 because of my friendship with the intellectual circles.

Following the events in Berlin in 1953 the Nagy Government was formed and there was a certain relaxation of control of the press. I was still on Gepallomas, the agricultural paper, at that time.

In the country there were several hundred collective farms, but only about fifteen were working at a profit, the others were subsidized by the government. Those at Tokaj, Badacsony, Mezőhegyes and Babolna, which were well-known throughout the world before the war, were in such a state that production fell to only sixty or eighty per cent of the previous production; despite the fact that there were hundred machine shops, they were all working with a deficit.

In the building industry millions of forints were lost quite irresponsibly. The subway of Budapest was also administered by that ministry.

We journalists tried to obtain pertinent data but it was difficult to include it in our articles because later on Rakosi ousted Imre Nagy who was becoming too popular. In order to illustrate how the censorship worked, and under what directives we were supposed to work, I should like to tell you of two incidents which happened just before the revolution.

I was in Mesoebereny and in Bekescsaba where new hydraulic stations were being built in which had been invested 2,000,000 forints. The walls of both these buildings were falling down because the electric current was of the wrong type. I reported this in an article but the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Matyas Szoeki, who was the chief editor, sent my article to two other members of the Ministry who deleted the essential details and passed it to the Ministry of Buildings. There Minister Lux deleted further details and thus no truth whatever appeared in the final article. That type of embezzlement of public funds was general.

The second incident is as follows. When rehabilitation became good news value I wrote up the case of a man who had been rehabilitated because he was a kulak. He had been brutally treated by the AVH and as a result stuttered for the rest of his life. The Attorney-General of Hungary, Gyorgy Nagy, granted him an amnesty which was not recognized by the rest of Hungary. When I reported that, the Deputy Minister, Szoeki, forbade me to publish it in the newspaper Napszava, one of the largest newspapers in Hungary. The editor did not dare to publish my article and sent me to the Attorney-General to get it approved. He deleted the essential details, returned it Nepszava, where even more details were deleted; finally only thirty of forty lines remained. During the following days the Deputy Minister held me personally responsible because independently I had had the temerity to publish my article.

From what I have said it can be seen that the task of a journalist was not an easy one, and gradually more journalists were prevented from doing worthwhile work. Tibor Meray and two of his friends were excluded from the party, but nevertheless the trend of events could not be stopped. Members of the Petoefi Circles, and the writers, started preparing for the revolution. I myself participated in the meetings of the Petoefi Circles which have now become famous. Tibor Kardos and Tibor Dery, both well known writers, were expelled from the Party.

(Mr. Hodi)

You already know the events which took place during the revolution and I shall therefore only refer to certain incidents.

On 25 October 1956 I founded, with Gyula Obersovszky and Jozsef Galy, the paper called Igazsag. Those two men are at present appearing before a tribunal in Budapest. Igazsag was the only free newspaper in Hungary during those days, and we used to take copies of it surreptitiously into the Kilian barracks. We were only able to take about three or four copies at a time but they were extensively read by the wounded inmates; those, who because of their wounds, could not read asked others to read it to them. The commander of the Kilian barracks asked me personally to send more copies and told me that Igazsag was worth more than arms. About this time the two newspapers Szabad Nep and Szabad Ifjusag, official organs of the party, were publicly burned by the population. On 20 October two other newspapers appeared; they also published the truth. On 5 November, when the Communist Party established the newspaper Nepszava, not one newspaperman could be found to work on its staff. Therefore, journalists had to be brought from Szeged and it was decided to put Istvan Fris at the head of that newspaper; he was not a journalist but a party employee.

Many of my colleagues were arrested; among them was Ivan Boldizsar, but I understand he is to be freed. During those days pressure was brought to bear on me to join the Soviet Secret Service. I was questioned by a Russian captain who was particularly interested in ascertaining who, amongst the writers, had helped to prepare the revolution and what was the mood of the journalists after the Russian intervention. I was then given a pen-name, and the Russian captain said that the Soviets wanted to save Hungary from imperialists and that I should help them by reporting to him all that I saw and heard in journalistic circles. I was forced to accept that state of affairs, if only superficially, because I knew that at that time transports of deportees were being organized among the prisoners. My cell-mate Denes Morvay and his wife, who are both here in London, were to be included in one of these groups. However, they succeeded in escaping.

The railroad workers at Debrecen tore up the railroad tracks in order to impede the deportation trains. As I said, I accepted those orders knowing that I would never obey them. I returned to my home, said goodbye to my family, and went into hiding.

(Mr. Hodi)

On 24 November we produced a clandestine paper called Eluenk as the Government had forbidden the publication of any newspapers. We produced that paper in the hospital at Peterfi Sandor Street where the staff helped us.

During that time I went to the Ministry of Agriculture and spoke to the Deputy Minister who had assumed the role of liaison officer between the Russians and the Kadar Government, at the time of the Russian occupation. He held me responsible for much of what had taken place and said that my ultra-courageous articles had contributed to the anti-Russian feelings of the population. He also accused me of preparing and participating in the revolution. It is interesting to note that even a Communist leader attributed considerable importance to the role played by the press during the revolution. Kadar said to those who went to see him in order to get his approval for the production of a newspaper: "Literature is not on my agenda", thus avoiding any responsibility for dealing with the subject.

On 24 November the Workers' Council and the delegates of the intellectual group (in which I was included) met in the Feszek coffee-house and opened negotiations with representatives of the Government with a view to starting a newspaper called Eluenk. That approval was not forthcoming; in fact the Workers' Council of greater Budapest was unable to achieve any results at all at that meeting. The behaviour of Kadar was really quite incredible. I once went to the Workers' Councils headquarters at Akaczfa Street and read many stenographic records of complaints which had been made by the families of the deportees. A certain man was designated to discuss these things with the Government but he was unable to achieve any results. Therefore the Workers' Councils, with this man, had to deal with the Russians themselves because experience had shown that the Russians used the velvet glove when dealing with the workers, but not with the Hungarian Government.

(Mr. Hodi)

I took out about twenty typewritten pages from these stenographic records together with names and addresses and gave them to one of the English foreign correspondents, whose name I do not really want to mention, so that he would be able to inform the world of what was happening in Hungary and who were the people who were being deported. Since then I have not had the opportunity to ask him what he did with these notes.

On 20 November I was at the newspaper guild where the correspondents of a newspaper called Nephadsereg were meeting and they decided to become unskilled printing workers rather than take part in the future work of the press. Only two signed a statement which was required to become collaborators of that newspaper. I have spoken to many newspaper people and many of them tried to find other jobs because it became clear that the real news could no longer be written in Hungary.

On 29 November, Obsersovszki and Gali, two of my colleagues who were the founders of the paper Igazsag, were arrested. At the same time we were forced to stop our illegal magazine called Eluenk. It would be a rather touching story to tell you how much the newspaper people were on the side of the revolution. The wife of Obsersovszki came to the newspaper guild the day after he was arrested and we made a collection amongst ourselves to try to help her and there was not one newspaperman regardless of his political beliefs who would not have contributed to this.

On 30 November we started the news sheet of the Greater Budapest Workers' Council entitled Nagy-Budapesti Munkastanacs Hiradoja. This was to replace the forbidden newspaper Igazsag and this is the one that replaced also the newspaper of the Workers' Council that had been forbidden earlier by the Government.

This was a multigraphed news sheet and through my relationship with the Workers' Council I know that there were two tendencies in the Workers' Council and, of course, we had to take these into account. The representatives of the Government wanted to limit the appeal to strike by the Workers' Council president, Sandor Rac, and their secretary, Miklos Sebestyen. My conviction is that those people who were at that time opposed to the strike were really the officials or in the pay of the Government and did this purposely. The Government also wanted to discredit the Workers' Council so as to be able to finally make them completely impotent.

(Mr. Hodi)

During the two weeks that preceded 29 November the organization of the committee for the maintenance of law and order was really a preparation for this too. In order to frighten the members of the Workers' Council, Sebestyen and Racz, who were respectively the secretary and the chairman of the writers' group, were interrogated several times by the police. In the meantime the Government established an order to forbid the gathering of people. Those who contravened this order found themselves immediately arrested by the militia. The Government was therefore not ready to just sit by quietly but were prepared to organize terror.

By 10 December the Greater Budapest Workers' Council was forbidden to continue their activities and the last vestiges of a free press disappeared. The excuse for prohibiting the news sheet of the Greater Budapest Workers' Council was that four days earlier the Council held an illegal meeting where two resolutions were taken. In essence both resolutions were the same; both were aimed at the Government but one was much stronger than the other. The idea was that if Kadar did not accept the milder one then the second and stronger one would be used which asked for a warning strike against the Government and possibly even a strike lasting for several days. The people put into the Workers' Council by the Government informed the Government of this illegal meeting and it is on this basis that the publication of the Workers' Council news sheet was forbidden.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had a great deal of information about the Workers' Councils so your statement need not include that.

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): I left Hungary on 31 December and my conviction is that at the moment the people who are serving the present order are complete opportunists. What will happen in my country is the secret of the future and, of course, it does not only depend on me but on the whole world.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you for your valuable statement. Although I suppose that none of the members of the Committee have been surprised at hearing the difficulties of the free press and the newspapermen in a people's democracy there may be some questions to be asked.

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Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I would like to ask you to give us some details in connexion with the political events before the revolution. You said that Rakosi dismissed Nagy because he was too popular, was his popularity the only reason why he was dismissed?

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): The popularity of Imre Nagy taken by itself would not have meant anything but it was perhaps the reason for his popularity that was the important factor. At that time the Hungarian people would probably have been satisfied with a compromise, with some concessions -- land reform, and so on. My opinion is that Rakosi and Geroe made matters worse when they did not make any concessions and this led to the tragedy of Hungary. They were not willing to make any concessions at that time but in October when the patience of the people was exhausted the time had passed for even the possibility of effecting a compromise. By that time the people felt that even the slightly Communist elements should be completely liquidated.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Have you heard of a document prepared by leading public men in Hungary suggesting certain reforms, which was given to the Government and a copy handed to the Soviet Government in December 1956?

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): I am not sure what document you are referring to.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): I have information that some of the leading men of all walks of life who took part in the revolution had prepared a programme for the country which they submitted to the Kadar Government and of which a copy was sent to the Soviet Union.

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): The first programme was not the result of a joint effort by various individuals in different classes of society, but a product of the student youth.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the delegate of Ceylon is speaking of a programme of December, after the crushing of the revolution. Do you know anything about that?

Mr. HODI (interpretation from Hungarian): I left Budapest on the 31st. No, I do not know anything about any one particular unified programme.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further questions, and so we thank you for your statement.

Mr. Hodi withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman Mr. Gyorgy Paloczi-Horvath took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I bid you welcome on behalf of the Committee, who will be interested in the statement which I ask you to make.

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de-camp brought him to the Budapest security police headquarters. During my thirteen and a half months of interrogation I was examined several times by the Soviet officers attached to General Bielkin. He himself did not interrogate me but he often came into the room during the interrogation and gave directions. My cell-mates with whom I was in the same trial were heard by General Bielkin personally.

The Soviet NVD had in Budapest three houses, two in the so-called Svabhegy District where they occupied the former villas of the German Gestapo. In the cellars of those two villas most of the Rajk case people, and all the other people who were victims or witnesses in the rigged trials, were heard by General Bielkin and his associates. The third house they had was 2 Gorkij Faszor, in Budapest, where in the cellars they generally kept twenty to twenty-five people. To the best of my knowledge many people who were heard by General Bielkin and his associates are now on free soil. Their method was to prepare a general script in Moscow. They then discussed with the various Party leaders in the satellite countries those who should fit into the so-called confession trials, and the Party leaders and the local security police chiefs had freedom of choice and power to suggest people for the rigged trials, but everything was decided by Moscow. I was once in the Budapest security police interrogation chambers when in the same room a Hungarian officer speaking Russian dictated a Russian translation of my hearing for General Bielkin's use.

I think those data are sufficient to show that the security police were under Soviet direction.

After the rigged trials were over one NVD man was permanently stationed in each department of the Hungarian security police, with the exception of the investigation department in which an NVD lieutenant colonel and major worked all the time. To the best of my knowledge the same persons were there during the revolution.

These are the data which I wanted to offer first to the Committee.

I would like to come now to a few aspects of the revolution, the first being the impromptu nature of the revolution, the fact that it was not planned by anyone. I met General Maleter during the revolution, and on 29 October, when we met, he told me and some others that at noon on 23 October he had disapproved of the idea of a

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): My name is Gyoergy Paloczi-Horvath. I am a writer and historian. I was educated in Hungary, Austria and the United States, and was an anti-Nazi writer in Hungary in 1941 when our Premier, Count Teleky, committed suicide. I escaped from Hungary and was attached to G.H.Q., Middle East, as a free Hungarian. In 1947 I returned to Hungary and without any compulsion and in all sincerity joined the Communist Party. I became General Secretary of the Hungarian United Nations Association. In 1949 I was arrested and after thirteen months of interrogation confessed that I spied on behalf of the World Federation of United Nations Associations. After two years in gaol I became cured of that dangerous obsession, communist convictions. I spent another three years in gaol. When I was released in 1954 I was offered so-called party rehabilitation, but on grounds of conscience I refused. I worked in an historical institute. During the summer of 1956 I wrote for our Literary Gazette, which was one of the leading organs of the revolution, and had some part in the revolution and escaped with my wife and child on 28 November 1956.

If I may be excused for being incoherent I would like to talk of subjects about which I have a suspicion the Committee has not had details. Having been in a confession trial I have detailed facts about how the trials have been conducted, and mainly about all the security police in the satellite States being under direct Soviet control and direction.

The Rajk trial, which was one of the main rigged trials in the satellite trials, was run by General Bielkin of the Soviet NVD of the Moscow headquarters, who was third man after General Abakumov, chief of the Soviet NVD. He was stationed in Baden-Baden near Vienna, and was satellite police chief for all the satellites from Albania to Poland. He came to Hungary and the other countries with prepared scripts of the so-called Titoist conspiracy, and he and his men did the preparatory work in various countries. The main witnesses of the Rajk case and the Slansky case and other cases were arrested partly by General Bielkin's organization. For instance, among the witnesses in the Rajk trial, Steven Stolte was kidnapped by General Bielkin's officers at Wasserburg near Munich, taken to Baden-Baden, and General Bielkin personally took him by motorcar to the security police headquarters at Budapest. General Bielkin's officers arrested Noel Field in Poland, and his aide-

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demonstration because he believed that a procession from the Petoefi Statue in Budapest to the statue of the Polish General Bem in Budapest would create a political platform, the platform of 1848, and revive the liberal, democratic, revolutionary ideas and aims of 1848, and he was of the opinion that those ideas, aims and slogans would be dangerous in the then situation by provoking Soviet intervention.

In the Writers' Union we were still thinking, at 11.00 p.m. on 23 October, of trying to avoid further bloodshed. The secretariat and the President of the Writers' Union were in session, and the Secretary-General, Alexander Erdei, asked me to word an appeal to the Government and Party leadership asking them to do certain things in order to avoid bloodshed. That appeal was sent to Party headquarters at 11.30 p.m. on 23 October, and I have here and offer to the Committee the original document.

The second fact which I would like to mention is that the building of the Writers' Union was in the so-called Russian quarter of Budapest.

My wife and I were trying to get to our home. Shooting had already begun and we saw small tanks and armoured cars of the Soviet NVD. They were not firing because it was a quiet street but I thought that the fact of NVD armoured cars and other vehicles being on the streets amounted to intervention because the general atmosphere was strongly anti-Russian.

The third point I would like to mention concerns the revolutionary armed forces committee -- or it might be translated as the revolutionary police committee. It was founded in the famous Kilian barracks on 29 October and I was there with other representatives of the Writers' Union. General Kiraly was in the chair and General Maleter moved that the revolutionary armed forces council should ensure public order until the elections and that the armed police and freedom fighters should not permit any lynching or agitation for the return of factories and land to their former owners. Next to me sat Lieutenant-Colonel Szabo who was one of the leaders of the freedom fighters and he immediately raised his hand when this was proposed. He was a Fascist who was hanged by the Kadar Government. A few minutes later, after that resolution had been adopted, news came that in the Budahid district a large crowd was besieging an area where security police officers lived. General Maleter asked for a volunteer to defend them and Lieutenant-Colonel Szabo went out to do this. He came back one and a half hours later and reported that one of his men had been wounded. They had defended the security police officers and he brought seven of them in. General Maleter announced that they would be imprisoned until they could be tried openly and with all legal protection, that they had to be tried but must not be lynched.

My fourth point relates to the arrest of General Maleter and the military committee which was negotiating with the Russians. In December a Hungarian writer brought me a message from one of the officers attached to General Maleter, and that is the source of my information. The members of the Hungarian military mission negotiating the technical details of evacuation were Minister of State Erdei, General Maleter, General Kovacs and Colonel Szuecs. On 3 November they went to the headquarters of the Russian High Command at Fot, a village near Budapest. There they were welcomed very courteously by the four Russian generals who had negotiated with them on the previous day and discussed the technical details in quite friendly terms. The impression of all four Hungarian negotiators was that the Russian generals wanted

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to evacuate Budapest and even to evacuate Hungary generally. At about 10.30 the door opened and in came General Serov, the chief of the Soviet NVD, with some officers. He announced in Russian -- Maleter and Erdei speak Russian -- that they wanted to arrest the Hungarians. The Russian commanding general protested against this, whereupon General Serov took him by the arm and led him to the window where they had a fairly long whispered conversation. After that the Russian Army general remained standing looking out of the window and General Serov took away Maleter and the other Hungarian negotiators. They were first taken to a military prison, then to the headquarters of the Soviet NVD in Budapest and later to security police headquarters. Minister of State Erdei was released at the end of November; the other three, to the best of our knowledge, are still in prison.

The sixth item I want to mention is the speech of Cardinal Mindszenty which I think has been misrepresented by many people. We have the text, all the radio stations monitored it, and there is no disagreement about that. Cardinal Mindszenty took great care to point out twice that he did not demand the return of land. He mentioned first in his speech that he still approved of the 1945 pastoral letter, which was a letter approving of land reform in Hungary, and he mentioned the same thing a second time, so I think it is misleading when some writers and publicists try to create the impression that Cardinal Mindszenty demanded the return of the land and thereby caused trouble.

My seventh point concerns Janos Kadar. I have written profiles of him which have been published in many countries but I would like to mention here that Kadar, who was Home Secretary during the Rajk trial and who spent four years in gaol, visited Mrs Rajk when he came out of gaol and [confessed to her that on Rakosi's instructions he had asked Rajk to make a false statement against himself and had promised Rajk that he would be permitted to live under a different name. That conversation was recorded by magnetophone and in May 1956 Dictator Rakosi, in the central committee of the party, had that tape record played back to prove that Kadar had persuaded Rajk to make a false statement.] That magnetophone recording was listened to by some forty people who later made statements to many others, and it proved that Janos Kadar, in the name of Stalin, Rakosi and General Bielkin, asked Rajk to do everything that General Bielkin and the Hungarian security police asked him to do.

(Mr. Paloczi-Horvath)

I have here a few documents which may be of interest to the Committee. One is the declaration of 14 November by Hungarian intellectuals -- writers, members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and of other intellectual bodies from architects to film actors. In that document they said that the revolution was really a progressive revolution and demanded that Hungary should be a loyal member of the United Nations and should do everything to implement that decision. The implications are obvious.

The second document is the first circular letter of the revolutionary committee of Hungarian intellectuals dated 7 December. In this they stated categorically that the Hungarian revolution was a progressive one. Although there were naturally Fascist elements taking part in some places in the revolution, generally speaking it was a democratic revolution and had it been successful there would not have been a return to Fascism. There is also a letter from the Hungarian writers' association to the Budapest Workers' Council stating the same. I think the most important document, if the Committee does not have it yet, is the declaration of 28 December of the Hungarian writers' association which states again that it was an unplanned revolution, it was a democratic revolution and there was no Fascist danger, and brands the Soviet Union as an aggressor. That resolution of the Hungarian writers' Association was published by us in the literary gazette of 20 December and again on 15 March, when two thousand copies of it reached Budapest. This I think proves that it is a bona fide text. There are the main items and documents I wanted to mention.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I thank you very much for your valuable and interesting statement. I think it will give rise to some questions and I would just intimate that we have only about fifteen minutes left today but that it would be possible, if there are many questions, to continue the questioning of the witness on Monday. I understand that he is prepared to be here again on Monday afternoon if necessary.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I too would like to thank the witness for what I regard as a most valuable general picture of conditions in Hungary. I think the Committee may have one or two of the documents to which he has referred but we are

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(Mr. Shann)

grateful to him for bringing these to our attention. I have only three questions to ask at this time but I think it might be a good thing for us to see this witness again on Monday afternoon after we have had the opportunity for a little more thought.

My first question relates to General Maleter. I am interested to know whether the witness has any idea from the information which he has received by letter, apparently, from Hungary whether General Maleter is still in Budapest, whether the members of his party are still in Budapest and whether there is any indication from any source he may have that General Maleter may at some stage have been taken to Russia.

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): I had a report, both by letter and verbally from people who came out, that in the middle of December General Maleter was in the security police gaol in Foe Street. According to another report, however, the security police has been split again into military and ordinary political departments and the military department comes under stricter Soviet control.

As far as I can tell no one has seen him in gaol since the middle of December. It may seem a bit strange to say this, but so many people are taken to the secret police headquarters in Budapest and released in a few days, who bring news of others they have seen, and it is on that basis, and on the evidence of the latest report of this kind on 10 March, that I say no one has seen Maleter. I am not sure whom you meant by the group with Maleter.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I meant the officers attached to him when he went to negotiate with the Russians.

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): They were arrested with him but some of them were released.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): You stated that General Maleter had told you himself that he did not approve of the demonstrations of 23 October because he felt it might mean that the Russians would intervene. I take it that, the demonstrations having taken place, General Maleter decided he would support the demands that were made because the fighting had started. Is that so?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): Yes.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Can you tell us who else were members of the revolutionary armed forces' council which you say was set up under the chairmanship of General Kiraly at the Kilian barracks. Could you give us a list of the names?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): Unfortunately, no. I knew some of them by sight but I had to leave before the elections took place so I do not know the names.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Several times in your statement you referred to the handing back of land to former owners, I am asking for your opinion now, this is not a question of evidence. In your opinion, if the revolution had succeeded and the Russians had not intervened for the second time, would Hungary have been likely

to return to the system which existed in the country before 1945, or did the people of Hungary generally approve of the reform of the land system and of the State ownership of the main and substantial means of production?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): I think the people of Hungary were on the whole unanimous about these questions. The land reform had been demanded by most of the anti-Hitler parties in Hungary before the Second World War. I have been in gaol with Catholic Church dignitaries and great landowners. I happen to know that the greatest of the former landowners in Hungary, Prince Eszterhazy, was of the opinion (in spite of the fact that he spent ten years in gaol) that the land reforms should be retained and the peasants should get the land. The Church dignitaries, including Cardinal Mindszenty, were of the opinion that they should not antagonize the peasants, sixty or seventy per cent of whom were Catholic, by demanding the return of the Church lands. The Catholic newspapers also said repeatedly that they did not want the land back.

As to the factories and heavy industries in Hungary, part of these were State-owned and had been so since the turn of the century, including locomotives, railways, and many of the factories. During the Second World War there had been great destruction of industry, and now new industrial plants came into being. According to a rough estimate prepared by the Economic Institute of Hungary about sixty per cent of these had no owner, but were started by the State, so it would have been unrealistic to try to find owners for them. Most of the people who inspired and led the revolution wished to return to a modified socialism meaning that there should be free enterprise in light industry, banking, commerce and so on. What the people wanted generally was to go as far as the Soviet Union would stand for in the direction of freedom, what we call the Gomulka way.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): You referred to three documents of 14 November, 14 December and 28 December. Were these resolutions conveyed to the Kadar Government?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): Yes, they were.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you have any kind of acknowledgement?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): Yes, there were press notices about it. To my knowledge the 28 December resolution had been attacked five or six times in leading articles in the official party daily, so there is no doubt as to its authenticity.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did the authors of the resolutions get replies from the Government as to whether it was prepared to accept them?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): The 14 November resolution resulted in general promises which were not kept. The Government refused to consider the others.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Was the Russian commander aware of these resolutions?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): Yes, the writers' association was in the habit of sending every resolution to the Soviet command.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You referred to the system of a Soviet police chief in charge. Does that mean that the Hungarian police would take directions from this Soviet chief?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): Yes, certainly.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): In all matters or only in political matters?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): There were variations in detail. The Rajk trial was done by Moscow. The more important trials had to be approved

by General Bielkin's staff. I will quote the case of a trial: in the Rajk case the Szeged Security Police had to produce 120 conspirators. They had a certain freedom of action in naming candidates for the conspirators. The list had to be approved in Budapest and was counter-signed by one of General Bielkin's Soviet aides. To illustrate their methods, as the security police in Szeged had very little time to prepare a list of conspirators, they simply looked up the city directory of people's addresses. They found a house where a lieutenant-colonel of the army lived, and in the same house there was a private enterprise builder, so they decided these two should be the chief conspirators in the Rajk case. The selection was made in this haphazard way.

The officer moved in 1945, and the builder had a curious accident in which he hurt his head and became insane. He was in the Szeged asylum from 1943, but as the document had already been signed by General Bielkin in 1949 when the trial came on he was taken from the asylum and was duly tried. We all met him in the Vac security police gaol, where he was kept in the hospital. He was quite childish, he wanted to get a little horse and become a hussar. Once he signed a confession document because he was promised a nice horse in return for doing so. All this happened because General Bielkin had signed the document naming the conspirators.

There were also several cases among so-called conspirators where people who had studied abroad had to name the people for whom they were alleged to have been spying, and had to find spy-chiefs for themselves. The Hungarian poet Gyoerg Faludi confessed that his two spy-chiefs were Walt Whitman and Edgar Allan Poe. Geza Rubleczky the director of the radio, was sentenced to life imprisonment for having spied for Gay-Lussac and Boyle-Mariott. He had to give French names, but as he did not know the exact address of his spy-chiefs, he said they lived in the Père Lachaise district of Paris.

As some of the military and other judges were also in gaol with us we asked them how they could possibly stand for such comical charges. They replied that of course the prosecuting council and judges were well aware of the situation but if they had called attention to the humour of it they would have been executed because one of the Russian experts had signed the charges. I think this serves as a good illustration of the fact that they were really somewhat primitive people.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): The Soviet theory was that there had been a conspiracy which they had succeeded in detecting? Am I right in assuming this concerned only political crimes, or other crimes as well?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): The other crimes were of an economic nature. For instance, they wanted to build a hydro-electric plant at Tiszaloeke for which it was necessary to find different types of workers. There was then an economic sabotage conspiracy to find the experts. That arose partly among the Hungarian leaders and partly among the Soviet leaders.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Was that system still in existence during the autumn of last year?

Mr. PALOCZI-HORVATH (spoke in English): To the best of our knowledge, yes. A publicity campaign always preceded each trial in which the same expressions and slogans were always used. We also knew that the same procedure would be followed in every trial. The same police officers were always present.

The CHAIRMAN: We have no time to question you further today, but we invite you to return on Monday afternoon, 1 April, at 3.15 p.m.

Mr. Paloczi-Horvath withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: Before we adjourn the Secretary of the Committee wishes to make one or two remarks.

Mr. JORDAN (Secretary): I shall be very brief. I understand that the verbatim reports of yesterday's meeting has been distributed to members of the Committee at their hotels, with the exception of the representative of Tunisia. I just say this in order to make sure that none of the copies of the reports goes astray.

I also have some documents to pass to members of the Committee which are of some importance and to which I shall attach a covering note indicating which documents those are.

The CHAIRMAN: The meeting stands adjourned until Monday afternoon at 3.15 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.