

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



CONFIDENTIAL

A/AC.88/PV.37  
15 March 1957

ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE PROBLEM OF HUNGARY  
VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING (CLOSED)

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Friday, 15 March 1957, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. Alsing ANDERSEN

(Denmark)

Dr Sjarke - On 24 oct in Province news was that Kadar  
was heading the Rev.-  
vesprem



The CHAIRMAN: The meeting is called to order and we continue the hearing of our yesterday's witness, whom we all now know so well.

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

The CHAIRMAN: For the third time I bid you welcome to the Committee. The delegate of Uruguay would like to put some questions to you.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I have read very carefully your statement to this Committee. I have not had an opportunity of commenting on your first statement because I was en route to Geneva and my journey was somewhat difficult. I have, however, read with great attention your statement and listened to the answers you gave to the questions asked by the delegates of Ceylon and Tunisia. In turn I would like to ask a few questions on the general problem and then on certain special points. I am aware that I shall be listening to a professor, and I have of course the greatest respect for professors. I would like to ask you some questions about political events that might have happened within the framework of the Hungarian revolution. It has been stated in certain publications that events of a racial character occurred during the revolution, and that in the case of the refugees more especially certain manifestations of a racial character -- by which I mean of an anti-Semitic character -- could be noticed. Some days ago an article published in a South African newspaper stated that certain things of an ominous nature had happened amongst refugees going to Australia by sea, and that such things had taken place among the refugees in Austria. Have you any knowledge on that matter, and whether to the best of your knowledge there is anything to prove the existence of anti-Semitic elements surviving from former political periods in the Hungarian revolutionary movement? Most of the newspapers of the world have alluded to this.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): There is no doubt that anti-Semitism existed in Hungary, partly as a consequence of the German occupation. Parenthetically I may mention that it was unknown among the Hungarian people at the end of the 1930's to have any anti-Semitic events. There were some minor or scattered events but generally speaking the great majority of the people of Hungary are not a



cultured people, and they did not discriminate in any way against Jewish people. Under German influence there was at the end of the 1930's some feeling in the cities, mostly among people of German origin, but at the end of the war, when peace came, this feeling subsided. Later on, however, it revived a little, due perhaps to there being many Jewish people amongst the Hungarian communist leaders. Frankly, it was a surprise to me that in the days of the revolution there was absolutely no anti-Semitism -- not only no demonstrations but no slogans -- at any time, even amongst the extreme right element of the revolution. I did hear of one event -- I did not see it, I was told of it -- that somewhere in the suburbs a barricade was put across a street and an inscription in chalk written on it, "What will happen to the Jews?". On the other hand there were a great many events and manifestations which showed the exact opposite, that now resistance could be carried out against the regime, and we could see that this would not have any racial effect at all.

There are in various parts of Budapest a great many Hebrew people, and in days when it was difficult to get food peasants appeared and distributed food free of charge. It happened in parts of the city, and I think it is not characteristic of Hungarian peasants to give away the produce of their labour and the basis of their livelihood free of charge -- particularly not in this city; so that no racial question existed in the revolution. I must add that this surprised even me, and it proved that this anti-Semitism was completely superficial and not deeply rooted. When it was possible for us to free ourselves from a great injury, smaller matters were pushed into the background.

In the refugee camp, and partly at home after the revolution, I went around various camps in later weeks in Austria and visited several of them. There is no doubt about it, I think, that there is now anti-Semitism among the refugees. This is not only my own feeling, Austrian friends of mind have also expressed the same belief. This feeling is spread by the men of the Kadar régime in the camp. Some of those people are amongst the most violently anti-Semitic and this mood at home in Hungary is again coming to the fore. It is being used as propaganda by the Kadar régime; they are making use of it to say that Hungarian Jews are living better in the camps, they can live better and emigrate more quickly, that the Jewish organizations are handling their people better than the others; and it cannot be denied that there is some such influence. There are many Jews amongst those who came out, but fewer Jews came out than Catholics and Protestants and therefore the work



of the Jewish organization is naturally easier; so that there is some basis for the propaganda.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I am most happy about the explanation you have been able to give us of the situation. You do seem to recognize that a current of anti-Semitism is being fomented by the present Government, the Kadar Government, in favour of, it may be, increasing confusion in the minds of the rest of those in the refugee camps.



(Mr. Rodriguez-Fabregat)

Therefore, I consider your last statement -- will you please say if this is not so -- has to be interpreted as saying that the existence of an anti-semitic tendency can be confirmed and that this tendency is being exploited in favour of the present Government, which Government is trying to fan confusion in the refugee camps. This is what I understand from your statement. On the other hand, I have in front of me an extract from the New York Times in which they speak of the Hungarian refugees, and of two thousand of them who are between the ages of 15 to 18 years of age. These are not what I would call exactly political refugees, they are more a group of young people, and I should like to ask you a question in this connexion. To your knowledge, amongst the big crowds of refugees which have been in Austria, is it possible that a category of refugee that is not political has been mixed with the political refugees, and that therefore the problem is getting somewhat confused?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I would like to thank the delegate of Uruguay for putting this question to me. I would have liked very much to talk about this whole problem but I did not want to try the patience of the Committee. Unfortunately, I have become an expert on this question -- against my own will -- because I have spent several weeks in Austrian camps, and have done work with children particularly.

We wanted to take about eighty or one hundred children, between the ages of 15 to 18, to Belgium, so I will start at the beginning. The anti-semitic mood, as any other restlessness, which has now cropped up among the Hungarian refugees has a basic component, and this is the situation of the refugees in Austria. I would like it very much if the Committee could visit one or two camps. I would be glad to tell you where you could get the most accurate information because then you could see immediately the situation in which most of the Hungarian refugees are kept in Austria today. You cannot expect anything other than that they should become quite wild and unruly, whether they are young people or older people. Most of the refugees have been in camps for months. They have no chance to work, to study, to read. They are not allowed to go into the city or into the towns. The way the Austrian authorities are treating them is criminal, today. I have seen Austrian authorities kicking people and treating them very badly. Their excuse was that



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they went out of the camp in the afternoon and got hold of money somewhere, and came home drunk. Undoubtedly, there were some who got drunk, but beating is not the way to take care of this situation.

The mood in these towns is becoming more and more anti-refugee. People say that they do not want to work. People are complaining, at the same time, that they are not allowed to work. If Hungarians are offered jobs the Austrian authorities will not let them work because they say that Austrians should be employed. Even though it is ridiculous, one of these Austrian leaders who did not know I was Hungarian complained to me and said "It is unheard of how immoral these Hungarian youths are. They climb through windows at night to visit Austrian girls."

There is no doubt that the moral character of these Hungarian refugees is going down. Doing nothing is corrupting them. Inactivity is a very bad force. There are sixty to seventy thousand people who sit all day on the edge of their beds. I did not see such camps but in some the situation was such that there were 8 or 10 families in a room -- a family did not have a separate room to themselves. I saw places where there were three tiers of bunks, one on top of the other. The whole thing is similar to the worst kind of internment camp.

What is also happening in Austria today is that they are complaining about the food. In one of the camps, for example, they have had nothing but canned goods for three months. There are many people who have nervous diseases. The Neurological Section which had to be set up was full. A great many people became mentally sick.

The basic problem and the basic situation is so bad that they are seeking some way of breaking out. Against whom are they going to break out? Here are Kadar's men among these two hundred thousand people, certainly there are many agents -- they are provoking them. This is good propaganda for them among the Hungarian refugees and there are anti-semitic demonstrations. The western Communist press is making use of this. I have seen articles of such a nature in the western Communist press. This is the general situation and it is very bad. It must break out somewhere, and they have to find an outlet against somebody.

The other question which was put to me by the delegate for Uruguay concerns children. This is perhaps the saddest. Although it may seem strange these children are not only refugees, they are truly political refugees. I do not say all of them, but our experience is that 30-40 per cent of the children actually



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fought, and they actually left because they were looking for them. The police were going round investigating them. I talked to many hundreds of such children. Some of them were braggarts, but very few, and I myself saw in those days that twelve-year old children were blowing up tanks, so these are really and truly political refugees.

Everyone knows that they are waiting there, waiting for something to do, and some direction to be given to them. It is conceivable that if these young people from twelve to seventeen are couped up in a small place sometimes they do mischief -- there is no question of that, no doubt about it. I think that the main problem merely is that they are there, that they cannot be taken somewhere else. We took eighty children to Belgium and in two weeks you could not recognize them. They are in boarding schools and other places and they have assumed the manners of normal children. Where they are treated as normal human beings they become human beings. We must realize that language difficulties are there -- the very great problem they have -- but even in that field they have made tremendous progress in a very short time.

Basically, I would say there are practically no bad children, or very, very few. It is not the children who are bad but the adults who treat them badly, or who bring them up badly.

The other problem -- naturally, the greatest one -- is that the greatest part of this group is actually not a group of political refugees, that is to say, they did not flee because they took part in a political movement in this sense but, nevertheless, there was a political reason for their fleeing, not only the economic reasons, although that did play a part. But it is a political thing that they wanted to show before taking flight that they could no longer bear what they were being forced to go through in Hungary. The greatest majority of the refugees are workers. It is mostly the so-called ruling class -- the workers -- which left the country. This is really a political demonstration even if most of the refugees did not actually take part in a political battle but in the armed military struggle.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I want to underline that I want the witness to rectify my impression if I am wrong. Your last statement is indeed important, and I imagine that the Committee will wish to come back to certain points made by you in your declaration after I have asked my series of questions.



(Mr. Rodriguez-Fabregat)

In your statement I noticed, firstly, that the conditions of life are insufficient, and that the treatment received by refugees is not good enough in the camps. Secondly, sufficient attention is not given to the problem of the children in these refugee camps. Thirdly, it seems also to be exact that there are certain other elements -- which are referred to in this extract from the New York Times -- that have penetrated into Austria as refugees and who are instrumental in creating a situation by acting as agent provocateur, and by creating confusion in the refugee camps. Do you believe that certain measures could be taken which would allow better treatment to be given to the children? I am asking you as one professor to another between two men who know what it means to deal with children. Do you believe that our Committee could express their point of view on the methods to be used in dealing with the young age group amongst refugees? I would like you to answer that question and then we will pass on to another point.



WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Perhaps I could repeat very precisely the substance of my previous declaration which the delegate has really understood quite well. The conditions are not good enough in the camps. I do not say that the reason for this is the Austrian Government, or any authority; the tasks are tremendous. There are not enough competent people at the disposal of the authorities but it is my conviction that the situation could be improved and I think such an improvement is very slow.

Secondly, as to whether children have received enough attention: I can say quite conscientiously that not enough attention has been given to the children, children have been neglected and they are in a very bad situation. These months through which the children have lived in the camps may leave marks on them for their whole life. I must say that in the last month, while I was in Vienna, several people who were familiar with these problems tried to help the children, and in a certain measure they were successful, at least as far as ensuring better circumstances for a few hundred children. However, I must also say that there are very serious obstacles facing everyone who want to help the children. I can illustrate this with a practical example. At the beginning of February the Belgian delegate of the International Rescue Committee was accompanied by me to Vienna and we wanted to use the greatest possible amount of funds at our disposal to take many Hungarian children to Belgian boarding-schools. We thought that our only difficulty would be that 2,000 of these children who had no family (that is, 2,000 "individual" children) would be a group from which we could choose those most worthy of being helped. However, the difficulty was greater than that. The Austrian Government did not even want to know about our helping the children, they did not want to recognize them, the Kadar Government is exercising pressure on the Austrian Government and they have sent agents there. It is supposed that the parents in Hungary are demanding the return of the children -- at least that is what the Kadar Government says. For instance, we have seen a great many letters from parents saying that they are happy that their children are out of Hungary. We have even seen many photostats of letters in which parents say that they will have to write a letter telling the children to go home but that the children should take no notice of such a letter. We also saw cables of this sort in the Austrian camps. There was, for example, a cable calling a child home, another one forbidding him to go home and another one telling him again not to



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go home. It is quite clear that there is police interference in these things. I saw a Belgian letter written by a simple peasant woman in perfect style and perfectly typed on office-type paper; the signature was genuine but everything else was obviously false.

There was another difficulty which I must relate to you which was caused by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Vienna. He placed himself on a completely legal basis and had absolutely good intentions. He said that no parental responsibility was being exercised over them and that they were in Austria "individually", and who was going to be their guardian? We replied that if they wanted to go home they could go home from Belgium. He did not agree and said that the United Nations has a legal responsibility. The fact is that the Belgian people must accept legal responsibility for the childrens' guardianship, and once we have that we can let them go. We stole several children and now they are in Belgium and very happy, but the High Commissioner reported this to the Austrian Government and complained about the Belgian delegate of the International Rescue Committee. We had that opportunity of taking a hundred more children from Austria to Belgium but we cannot do that any more. We cannot put this plan into effect any more because the Austrian Foreign Minister will not give us further permission. There are certain difficulties even for those people who want to solve the problem of the children. However, on the other hand, there are attempts being made to remedy the situation of the under-aged children; a school near Innsbruck has been started, and the Swiss are helping near Salzburg. At least they are trying to get part of the children out of the camps and to put them in human surroundings, in schools, but, unfortunately the difficulty again is that the children got a shock and now it is very difficult to put them back on the right track in Austrian schools because they are still under Austrian authority. I would be very glad to give particulars of one camp to the Committee; it is only one hour away from Vienna and if you could run out there for an hour you could get some very thorough information from one of the leaders of the camp who is doing very good work there with the children. It is quite certain that there are suspicious elements among the refugees generally. The isolation of these people is impossible; it is impossible when a hundred people live in one room. There is every reason for being restless and dissatisfied, and the only solution is the



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speeding up of plans for getting them away, and the improvement of the standard of living of those who are there. These two things are really dependent one upon the other; if people are moved away more quickly the circumstances of these who are left will improve.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): I would like to know how many children of under 17 years of age there are in the camps in Austria because that is indeed a problem in which the Committee must interest itself, and I consider your statement of today in this very connexion has a very serious bearing on any further study we are to make of this question. I was familiar with the problem of the thirty million Jewish children in Hitler's concentration camps, and I would like you to give the names and addresses of people, as you think necessary, so that we could investigate the question better. It is a question which should be considered on an international basis and is an important one in the horrible drama which is being played today.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): First of all it was the number of unaccompanied children that interested us when we were in Austria. The Austrian Minister of the Interior was not able to give us the number. The explanation of this was found in the camps. The leaders of the camps told us that it was impossible to register the children, and that immediately somebody approached a child with a piece of paper he ran away. The children ran from one camp to another because they were continually afraid that they would be shipped back home. The Kadar committee did send representatives there and since that time there has been considerable fear, the propaganda has worked on them and they think that they are being registered in order to be taken away by force. We saw the situation in the camps as follows: It seemed to us that there were about 2,000 children without any parents or relatives—this was about the beginning of February to the end of March. Perhaps since then the situation has improved. It is, of course, an extremely difficult situation; the only authorities who can really help is the office of the High Commissioner because the Austrian authorities are not in their way and as they are neutral. We went several times to the High Commissioner; there is nobody there who understands



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the problem of children, there is nobody speaking Hungarian. The interpreters are very poor and the children do not like to deal with people through interpreters. It took me many minutes to establish a contact so that the children could explain what was really troubling them. Also, the organs of the United Nations seemed to be uninformed and powerless, especially in Vienna. It is difficult to understand that twelve-year old children were fighting, and this is the basis for starting any further action. A ten-year old system of education brought them to this point and it is very clear that we have to start to bring them into a healthy atmosphere.



(Witness X)

I cannot tell you how much it means to me to be able to explain this to you. I have been living for three months in the West, and I am powerless. I was only able to take those 80 children with me to Belgium, and I was unable to furnish them any kind of help, either humanitarian or political, but few people in the whole world know the problem as well as I do. There are walls everywhere, there are obstacles and barriers. A member of the High Commissioner's staff said they were going to deal with the situation but that they would have to spend four to six months in the camps. Those six months would mean, under present circumstances, that ten years would be necessary in order to eradicate their influence — if indeed it were possible to do so at all.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I just want you to know that you are not alone in the struggle to help these children. I want to reassure you of this fact. I reiterate that you are not going to be alone in trying to solve this problem of the children and that we will do all we can to save this part of humanity.

I should now like, however, to ask you a question about another matter that we have dealt with in this Committee. You have spoken about your own personal experience, which was indeed a sad but honourable one. You spoke of your experience of being isolated in the prisons and of the experiences of political prisoners in Hungary. I should like to ask you to be kind enough to tell us whether you know if torture is applied to political prisoners — whether a system of torture does assume large proportions, proportions of such a nature that there is moral degradation. I would like to ask you if you know of the existence of such a system and whether you can give any special instances.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I have no knowledge of what means are being used now to get confessions. My feeling is that at present they are not resorting to torture because from the material that comes to light in the confessions it would seem that the accused can give their opinions quite freely. This is because people want, of course, to speak and they are really indicating



(Witness X)

themselves, so today the regime does not need to use torture. Both the old and the young among the accused admit freely that they wanted a free Press, that they did not like the system, that they have risen in arms. They are proud of it, so there is no necessity for torture today.

The situation will, I believe, be different when they are trying to bring journalists and intellectuals before the tribunals, because they will try to prove that they were organizing the uprising as American or Western agents. There are already indications to that effect and Kadar, in one of his latest articles, stated that Imre Nagy, since 1953, had really been in the van of the counter-revolution. From this statement it is only one step to the next, which will surely be forthcoming, that he is an American agent. But with this type of person I believe it is likely that they will try the old system of getting confessions. It has been a month now since newspaper and other writers I have known were imprisoned and we have not yet heard what has happened to them. Of course, they are also more careful now because they are afraid of international public opinion, which today has not given much indication of its interest, but one can never know when international organizations of writers will protest against such methods.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): Do you know if the death penalty was decreed for those who participated in the revolution?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No, not in that form. However, there are martial laws that apply to all those who by force of arms try to overthrow the Government. To date there have been 15 to 20 death sentences carried out among these, some of whom were under age. I should like to say in parenthesis that the Kadar Government is using the argument that people who are under age are not in a position to decide whether they want to stay in Austria and that it is the duty of the Austrian Government to send them back to Hungary, as they are too young to have powers of judgment. At the same time, however, they are imposing the death penalty on children and have even hanged some of them.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): My delegation has called the attention of the Committee several times to the fact that General



(Mr. Rodriguez-Fabregat)

Maleter has certainly been condemned to death in view of the role he played in the political events. I have received such information, which I believe to be serious, and in my capacity as delegate of my country I will do all in my power to prevent the carrying out of this execution because it would add another chapter to the already bloody, though heroic, history of the revolution. If you know of any other cases similar to that of General Maleter, could you please tell us about them?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Together with Maleter they arrested the other members of the delegation who were not of ministerial rank but were high-ranking officials. Nothing is known of their fate. My feeling is that Maleter will be executed and then afterwards they will issue a communiqué about it. When the Hungarian Government asked for the withdrawal of the English Military Attaché, they stated that Maleter was an English spy. According to my information Kopacsi, the former Police Chief of Budapest, together with his wife, has been condemned to death. He is a man of about 45 or 50 years of age, a worker who in 1946 or 1947 became a policeman and later, in 1954, became the Chief of Police in Budapest — not the political police but those responsible for maintaining public order. He joined the Nagy group; that does not mean a formal group, but he did take every opportunity to prove that he was a thinking humanitarian. At the time of the revolutionary events he played an important role, proved by the fact that order was restored in the last three days without any bloodshed. In the preceeding two years he was, I think, opposed to any Stalinist restoration, and in spite of the fact that he was not a member of the negotiating committee with the Russian military, both he and his wife were arrested on the eve of the arrival of the Russians. They were taken from their apartment and condemned to death.

Beyond this, there are relatively important personalities in prison — writers and newspapermen whose only sin was that they opposed the Rakosi type of direction and did everything possible for the success of the revolutionary institutions.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay)(interpretation from Spanish): I should like to thank you for your statement and for the answers you have been good enough to give to my questions. It is with real horror that I heard your last declaration that the present Government of Hungary is prepared to carry out the death sentence



(Mr. Rodriguez-Fabregat)

on political prisoners. I am convinced that our Committee will examine this situation, since it was designated by the Assembly for this purpose. I am distressed by the nature of these statement but they have helped to show us the truth, and I should like to thank you in the name of my delegation for the answers you have given to my questions.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I have a number of questions to ask but before I ask them I would like to say that I personally regret very deeply what the witness has seen fit to say about the Austrian Government and also about the High Commissioner for Refugees. It seems to me that the Austrian Government did not ask for 200,000 refugees. The Austrian Government did not inspire the revolution, and I wonder what the witness would think if the Austrian Government had, as it had every right to do, closed the borders and not accepted refugees and put itself, as the witness must know, in a position of some difficulty with its neighbours to the east. So far as the High Commissioner for Refugees is concerned I think he is probably doing his best. I think that many governments, including my own, who have contributed large amounts of money to the High Commissioner for Refugees, are also doing their best, and I sincerely hope that the witness will not feel towards my Government, which is also taking a large number of refugees, what he appears to feel towards the Austrian Government.



(Mr. Shann)

Now perhaps I could ask some questions.

WITNESS X (spoke in English): May I reply?

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I was not asking a question on that occasion; I was making a statement.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): In reply, I should not like to be misunderstood in what I have said in connection with the refugees. As I said, it is unnecessary to mention the great difficulties the Austrian Government had to overcome, and succeeded in overcoming. Doubtless it was an immense burden on the Austrian Government to have an ever increasing stream of refugees. Indeed, the Austrian Government is worthy of all esteem for the effort it has made. However, this does not mean that we should close our eyes to the difficulties, which are not the fault of the Austrian Government, but a question of organization. I do not even say it could have been possible to solve the problem earlier and in an easier way, but I just wanted to let you know the difficulties. It is my conviction that at this stage a solution could have been found to make the lives of the refugees easier and without necessitating great material or monetary effort. No doubt the burden on the Austrian Government is immense; they have to ensure sufficient food, shelter and linen and to think of other human needs such as eating and sleeping and also, for example, reading. I should not like to find myself in the awkward position of attacking the Austrian Government which gave shelter even to me. I do not wish to accuse it; I wish only to let you know the difficulties which they have and everybody has, but it is my firm belief that there is a way of helping and a great need for speedy help.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): As the witness probably knows, we have other people to see this afternoon, and I am afraid I have quite a number of questions. I wonder if we could co-operate by being as brief as possible in the replies.

Could you tell me between what dates you served at the Foreign Ministry after the Second World War, and what was your position in the Foreign Ministry, and whether you had direct contact with Mr. Rajk?



WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I was appointed counsellor in the Foreign Office on 5 August 1945, and I was the Deputy Director of the Political Department. As from January 1947 I was de facto leading the political division as Acting Director, and in May I was officially named the Director of the Political Department until 1 November 1948.

I came into contact with Rajk, not in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but earlier in 1945 when he came back from a concentration camp. I believe he was then Secretary of the Communist Party of Budapest or had a similar high ranking position in the leadership of the Party and it was in that connection I met him. I saw him once or twice a month. In August 1948 he became Foreign Minister. At that time we did not have to work in liaison and I attributed that to the fact that I did not see eye to eye with the Minister. However strange it may sound today, Rajk was indeed at that time a very excellent communist who did not have any anti-Moscow or anti-Rakosi views or convictions.

I do not wish to embroider the fact about my own situation at the time, that I had anti-Moscow or anti-Rakosi convictions, but I would say I was still anxious to maintain the 1945 point of view, namely we were closer to the Soviet Union politically, but none the less we wished to keep our friendly connections with the Western Powers too. Even in 1948, at the time of the Tito problem, I had worked in the hope that this could be realized.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): You said Mr. Rajk's foreign policy was identical with Tito's?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): In its essence, the whole Hungarian foreign policy was similar. It was however doubtless true that the developments between Yugoslavia and Hungary did not appeal to Rajk himself in 1948. It was well known that our legations outside had more contact with the Yugoslav legations than other Western countries had with the Yugoslavs. We always had good relations with the Yugoslav diplomats in Hungary. This was also, of course, Rajk's opinion, and he himself appeared in these difficult times at the receptions of the Yugoslav Legation.

In October 1948 there appeared an article in a weekly entitled "Lasting Peace" which attacked the Hungarian foreign policy practice. Rakosi and his group blamed me for it, because Rajk had only been concerned in foreign affairs for one or



(Witness X)

two months. The blame did not take the form of police action against me; Rakosi simply called me into his room and said "This article is disagreeable to us" and they clearly blamed me for it.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Did you have anything to do with the negotiations which took place with regard to the conclusion of a Peace Treaty between the Allied Powers and Hungary, and do you know anything about the circumstances of the implementation of the provisions of the Peace Treaty in Hungary?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I was a member of the preparatory committee for the Peace Treaty in Budapest, and part of the material was prepared with my collaboration during negotiations for peace. I was in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but had considerable contact with our delegation, and in 1946, in order to help with the preparation of the Peace Treaty, I spent a few weeks in Paris with our delegate, Istvan Kertesz. We were discussing in particular at that time the best way of presenting the material points.

As to the implementation of this Treaty the Foreign Ministry had no influence whatsoever. The most significant problem for us was the reparations clause, determining the amount of the reparations and the counter-value to be given, which was unknown to us. Only a few people knew about this even in the leadership of the Party, namely as to what was the real meaning of the 100,000,000 dollars we had to pay as reparations. According to the newspapers, we have paid to the Soviet Union several times that amount. They had stated this on the authority of the 1938 world market prices.

As to the other question, that of course was before us, the matter of mixed enterprises. In 1952/53 these were returned to Hungary and I would like to tell you about it, as it relates to Soviet intervention in Hungary. These mines and factories were returned in 1952. They were then valued at about four times their real value. In 1953/54 I had a fellow political prisoner in the same cell who was a well-known mining director. He had been sent to determine the exact value of the mines of Pecs, which was one of the enterprises that became Russian property. This engineer said he was called to the Ministry and was told by a friend not to be too conscientious in valuing the mines. He was a man seventy-two years old. His valuation was approximate; he himself admitted that he estimated the mines at quite a bit higher than their real value, mines that were already in a neglected state.



(Witness X)

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(Witness X)

During the management under the Soviets there was only a citation and no replacement investment. When this man returned, the Ministry were dissatisfied and the value of the mines was raised to four times the amount he had said. He told me also that the valuation of iron works had been done in the same way by one of his friends.



It is a strange thing that shortly after his valuation work he was tried for something else and sentenced to prison for eight to ten years. Generally, the most tangible effects of the Soviet economic intervention are shown by the following examples. The iron works at Dunapentele-Stalinvaros - later called Stalin town - should have been built in a town called Mohacs, as we did not have raw materials and this smelting plant would have been dependent upon Yugoslav raw materials and Mohacs is close to Yugoslavia.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I hope the witness will forgive me if I suggest that he is going quite a long way from the question I asked. We will never finish if this continues. Do you know whether prior to the revolution there were any negotiations between the Hungarian Government and the Government of the Soviet Union regarding the withdrawal of Soviet troops in Hungary.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I had no knowledge of any such thing.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Do you know whether any other instruments are in existence regulating the presence of Soviet troops in Hungary, apart from Article 22 of the Peace Treaty, and the Warsaw Pact, governing the distribution of troops, their numbers, and so on? Do you know of any such instrument except those two documents?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I'm afraid I do not know of any such instrument.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Was the consent of the Hungarian Government ever sought to changes in the number or disposition of Soviet troops in Hungary?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I do not think so. Not as far as I know.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Have there ever been consultations between the Hungarian Government and the Soviet Government about the implementation of the Human Right provisions of the Peace Treaties? You will remember that from 1936 to 1948



Western Powers made representations to Hungary about the implementation of the Peace Treaties. Was that the subject of negotiations between the Hungarian Government and the Soviet Government, or was the Hungarian Government just told what its attitude should be towards the Western Powers?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I have no definite knowledge of whether there were any discussions about this, or not. The facts that I do know are these. We received notes in this sense on several occasions from Western Powers. These notes were usually given personally to Rakosi at the Foreign Ministry, and with a supercilious smile he would put them aside saying, "We need not answer them." I do not think Rakosi would have dared to put this question to the Soviet Government. He was independent in this and to that extent.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Were communications between the Soviet Union and the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out exclusively through the Soviet Embassy, or were there other channels of communication between the two governments?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): There was no other channel between the Governments, and generally governments, the Hungarian Government in particular, played a secondary role. It was really the connection between the Hungarian Party and the Soviet Party that played the primary and most important role. In the Ministry we were usually faced with faits accomplis; they told us that we must do so-and-so, "The question has already been decided." As an example I referred to the friendship treaties signed between the Russian Government and the Hungarian Government. As a matter of actual practice, what happened was that in I think February 1948 I received one day a telephone report from either Rakosi or Revai, who was occupying himself in the Party Headquarters with Foreign Ministry questions, that we must prepare a treaty on this matter because "the Moscow delegation is arriving, and its members are going to be so-and-so." We prepared a draft treaty in a few hours and took it to the Party Headquarters. There they told us, "It is not necessary because we already have a better text", and there was a Russian text. We translated the Russian text into Hungarian, and this with a few minor changes became later the treaty. The whole treaty had come to the knowledge



(Witness X)

of the Foreign Ministry only twenty-four hours before its departure.

Mr. SHANN (Australia) In those circumstances I take it the Hungarian Communist Party was dominated by the Russian Communist Party, and that it was the Russian Communist Party which controlled things of this kind. Did you, as a member of the Communist Party, receive instructions from the Party as to how you were to behave in the Foreign Ministry in your official actions?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Only from the Hungarian Communist Party; but every more important action and every more important decision came from the Party Headquarters. In a case where the Minister was not a Communist Party member - once he happened to be a smallholders' Party member - he was called into the Party Headquarters and informed, "This and this must be carried out. We have already decided this and taken care of it with the Parties. Inform the Minister of this.", or "We have already talked to the Minister about this, and it must be carried out."

Mr. SHANN (Australia): You referred earlier to certain differences of opinion between Mr. Suslov and Mr. Mikoyan in their policies about supporting various personalities in Hungary. I should be grateful if you would elaborate a little on that subject.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Naturally these are not facts, but assumptions, the practical effect of which we could see. Suslov supported Rakosi's policy. Either this role had been assigned to him in Moscow or there is some other explanation, but there is no doubt that Imre Nagy himself said that Suslov personally drafted the decision on several points brought against Nagy in 1955. Mikoyan, on the other hand, when he came to Budapest in, if I remember correctly, May 1956 - or September rather - talked to Imre Nagy, and he was surprised that the Hungarian Party had treated Imre Nagy in the way it had. He appeared to create the impression that it was not the Russians who had done this, that it was not with Russian agreement that he had been excluded from the Party, and he was very



(Witness X)

sorry that events had happened in that way. He bade him farewell, saying "We will have to see what we can do to improve this, to do something about this situation."

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I understand that you returned to the Foreign Ministry on 29 October. You gave us the impression that you had had something to do with the drafting of certain communications to the United Nations. Do you know who drafted the Declaration of 28 October - that is the day before you returned to the Foreign Ministry - according to which the Hungarian Government stated to the United Nations that what was happening in Hungary was entirely within the domestic jurisdiction of the Hungarian Government?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I have no definite knowledge about this. According to my assumption it was not the Hungarian Government, but probably the acting Deputy Foreign Minister who was informed by the Russian General.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Did you draft the cablegram of 1 November and that of 2 November to the United Nations relating to Hungarian neutrality?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, those were drafted by myself.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Were they considered by the Council of Ministers?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Naturally the Council of Ministers gave orders. Nagy himself was Foreign Minister, and it was upon his instructions that this was carried out. Not in the first instance, but in the second instance I suggested that we send a cable explaining that the previous cables actually expressed the intentions and wishes of the Hungarian Government, because it had come to our information that the Soviet delegate had questioned the credibility of the first cable. This was taken up by radio from the United Nations broadcast, and then I suggested that we should send another cable in detail on the United Nations radio wavelength, on our own New York wavelength, the wavelength of our own New York transmitter, and that we should tell one of the officials of the Washington Government to transmit it to the Hungarian Legation in Washington.



(Witness X)

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Your own New York wavelength?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): The Foreign Ministry had a radio station, and it found on the previous day the United Nations wavelength. Our first cable was sent to the United Nations on that wavelength and I believe received by the United Nations on that wavelength.



Mr. SHANN (Australia): You said "Our own New York wavelengths", is that the United Nations wavelengths, or did the Hungarian Government have its own wavelengths?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No. The Hungarian Government had its own radio connexion with its new York Consulate, or its Washington Legation, and that is what I was referring to.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Did you have control over cable channels from Budapest? Could you send telegrams from Budapest to, for instance, the United Nations?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No. We had no means of doing this. I was not even in the building of the Foreign Ministry at that time. We spoke by telephone with the technical experts and they told us that we could do it, that we could send it in this way.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Do you know how many communications were sent to the United Nations?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): As I recall, two on the 1st; one on the 2nd; one on the 3rd and one on the 4th — five altogether, I think.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): What steps were taken by Mr. Nagy in relation to the representation of Hungary in the United Nations? Did Mr. Nagy trust Mr. Kos, for instance, to carry out his instructions with the United Nations?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No. On the 29th, or perhaps the 30th, we relieved Kos. The problem immediately arose as to who should replace him until the delegation left, and a secretary of the Legation named Szabo seemed the most trustworthy, and he received the mission. Meanwhile, the Council of Ministers gave instructions for us to assemble a new delegation to the United Nations, and they gave us the task of drawing someone from every Party, so far as possible, for this delegation. The wish of the Council of Ministers was that I should lead



(Witness X)

the delegation in New York. For the Smallholders Party the members would have been either Koevago or Andros ; for the Peasants Party Ferenc Farkas; from the Social Democratic Party, which was not yet taking part in the coalition Government, I think, Jozsef Fischer. This was the first plan and, naturally, several experts. But time flew by rather quickly and at the last Council of Ministers meeting on Saturday morning when it could be seen that we were on our way out I went into the Cabinet meeting and suggested that Anna Kethly, who was already outside, in Vienna, should have the task of representing Hungary, and should be entrusted with the representation. This was received with approval generally, and then they started counting, and it turned out that even she could not reach most of the meeting, and then there were voices raised, and then she was already Minister and some people thought we would have more necessity for her at home, so this is the way it finally happened.

There was a period when there was some discussion of possibly even Imre Nagy himself leading the delegation, and that also there should be places given to the nominal heads of the Parties, but there was a lot of opposition to this. They were afraid to let Imre Nagy go as the country needed his presence, and then there were some people who thought that perhaps he would go out once, make a statement and come back the next day, but these all remained merely plans.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Could you tell me what part Mr. Mod played at this particular time? Was he in the Department of Foreign Affairs, or in the Parliament Building? Did he agree with the communications which were being sent to the United Nations?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): He worked in close co-operation among the higher functionaries of the Foreign Ministry. He was one of those who was of the greatest help to us. He led the technical department. He was not in parliament continually but he came over to me every hour, or every two hours, partly to inform me of what was going on and partly because he was giving me help -- stenographers, translators. The Declaration of Neutrality was something about which he brought me some information from the Foreign Ministry. This was even before the drafting of the Declaration of Neutrality so that I can say that Mod gave the most



(Witness X)

complete co-operation, and he really worked with conviction, I think.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Could you tell me whether you know a man called Mr. Szentadorjany?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes. Szentadorjany was in the Foreign Affairs Ministry from 1945 to 1948. He is a young man. I think he had some administrative job in one of the administrative departments. In the last days he asked to go back to the Foreign Affairs Ministry and asked us to give him some work there, and it was Mod himself who took care of the matter and he arranged that he should be taken back there immediately.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Do you know what his attitude was? Did you ever have discussions with him? Do you know what his attitude was towards the Declaration of Neutrality?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Do you mean of Szentadorjany?

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Yes.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No. On the 28th when we met on the street he then said that we should again take part in the affairs of the Foreign Ministry, and I approved this suggestion, and I said "I think this, perhaps, will happen". If I remember correctly, it was the 2nd when he reported again, and then Mod telephoned from the Foreign Ministry that Szentadorjany wants to work again. I said "There is no obstacle to that", but he had no real work. The whole Foreign Affairs apparatus had no real work except for translating and sending cables.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Can you tell me about Mr. Dobi at this particular point? Did Mr. Nagy inform Mr. Dobi at the Presidential Council about neutrality, the Warsaw Pact, and if he did not, should he have done so? Where was Mr. Dobi? Was he in Parliament House, or Budapest?



WITNESS X (interpretation): Dobi used to go to Parliament. He went to Parliament and listened to everything, and then returned home, and his role was, I believe, simply one of ceremonial — it was a formal role. Dobi was always giving his support to Nagy, to Rakosi, to whoever was in power.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Did you ever get to the stage of thinking through the implications of the policy of neutrality, that is, did you consider what would be the effect of a policy of neutrality in your relations with the Soviet Union, and with the West, and of the way you might behave in the United Nations?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Do you mean during those days?

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Yes

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): During those revolutionary days?

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Yes, or before?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Before, yes, but during those days there was no time to think. The most that one could do was to have wishes, namely, to say "If it succeeds then we shall be able to start something — a new direction not as yet quite crystallized", but to discuss what would happen if the Declaration was accepted there was no time and no means of doing it. The hope lived in everybody that in one or two weeks there would be peace and order, and then everything could be discussed in an orderly way.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Have you any idea of what Mr. Nagy himself felt about what might have been the results of free elections in Hungary on his own political future?



WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): This question -- I know him -- was not important for him. He was an expert agrarian economist, a professor at the university, and this is what he would have preferred to do. Therefore, he was not influenced by his own personal interest. We have, however, spoken of what would happen in the case of free elections. We spoke about it in 1955, before the revolution, namely, how many seats would be given to the Communist Party in the case of free elections, or the Party that would replace it, and he said "Approximately five per cent of the seats would only go to that Party". When I said that in my opinion it could not get more than one or two per cent of the seats then he said "Even that is possible".

Mr. SHANN (Australia): In your own view, do you think Mr. Nagy would have been likely to have become the Prime Minister after free elections in Hungary?



WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I believe that the other parties would have had the political insight and foresight to have elected him, either as President of Parliament or to have kept him in some position where he would have played a part in the public life of Hungary. I do not feel it is excluded that he would have become Prime Minister because the leaders of the other parties had great confidence in him.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): You have spoken about communication with Mr. Nagy when he was in the Yugoslav Embassy. Could you tell me something of the nature of the communications, and how communications of that kind were carried out?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I should prefer that some of the things that I have said and am going to say now should not be recorded in the verbatim record.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): I have only two more questions and after I have asked those questions you can proceed with what you were going to say and no verbatim record will be taken of it.

In the draft interview which we have and which has not yet been published, you say that the communist parties are capable of "softening-up" Mr. Nagy in some way and returning him a different person. Would that be done by the same process by which you were "softened-up" yourself, that is, by solitary confinement and so on?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I believe that was a question which was asked of me by a newspaper man and I said that they could not expect that achievement with Mr. Nagy.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Do you know Mr. Rakosi personally?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Yes.



Mr. SHANN (Australia): What sort of relations did you have with Mr. Rakosi?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I had official relations with him which means that about once a week I had to report to him (outside of the summer months of course) and there were months when he was replacing the Foreign Minister. Then I saw him daily sometimes because at a certain time he was deputy Foreign Minister and if the Minister was ill or away he replaced him. Furthermore, for about four or five days I was with him in the summer of 1946 in Paris when he returned from the United States with the Hungarian Delegation. This was the first contact which was not only of an official nature but where conversations of a personal nature took place.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Your official relations with him were entirely confined to questions relating to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes.

At the request of the Chairman the verbatim reporters withdrew for five minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: Do other members wish to put further questions to the Witness or can we proceed to the next Witness?

The delegate of Ceylon would like to speak.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): According to you the Communist Party worked out the programme for the country and the party gave directions to the Ministers. The Ministers themselves were dominated by the party and sometimes merely had to carry out the orders of the party.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): In most cases.



Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): The Ministers were formally approved by the President but the nominations were made by the party. Is the Council of Ministers elected?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Not officially. Officially it is the Chief of State, that is, the Praesidium, who names the Ministers. In practice this worked in the following way: The party entrusted a certain person with this portfolio and the Ministry prepared the document for it. The Council of Ministers themselves approved those questions which had already been discussed previously by the Politburo. Anyway, in the Council of Ministers there were ministers who were not members of the Politburo, and therefore the official part of the business was done by the ministries. There were times when the Politburo was not informed of everything as it had a number of members and then a small unit, called the secretariat, dealt with affairs. For example, in the matter of the Rajk affair, the Politburo itself was not informed.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Are you aware of any occasions when the Council of Ministers and the Party disagreed?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Of this there could be no question.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): The Council of Ministers are nominally elected by the Parliament?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No, they are nominated by the Praesidium.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Is the Praesidium elected by the Parliament?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): That means the last elections must have been in 1953.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): However the Praesidium could co-opt its members.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I suppose those nominated by the party could not.

Do you know how many were in the Praesidium just before 23 October?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): About twenty.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How many were in the Council of Ministers appointed by the Praesidium?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Twenty-six.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): There were more in the Council of Ministers? Therefore the Council of Ministers and the Praesidium were all nominated by the party. Once the Praesidium was elected they had a right to change the Council with any ministers they wanted?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Only party approval was required?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Party orders.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): In point of fact various changes took place?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Yes, nearly every month.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): When the changes took place they were reported to the President?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, as he had to under-sign the appointments, that so-and-so had resigned and he was now nominating such-and-such a person.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): The President had to sign it, so that all appointments were made formally by the President, but actually by the party?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): By the party.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): With regard to the Warsaw Pact; there were a number of signatories to the Warsaw Pact, not only Hungary and Russia, but other countries such as Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria. Therefore there were a number of parties to the Pact and it provided also that it should remain in force for twenty years, is that not so?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): So you foresaw the difficulty of getting out of the Warsaw Pact by a unilateral act because one cannot have an instrument signed by a number of people when one person is getting out of it.

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You know something of law.

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Yes.



Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): When you saw that difficulty you thought you might circumvent it in a different way by thinking of a declaration of neutrality?

WITNESS X (spoke in English): Yes.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): In other words this declaration of neutrality itself must be an act which the President had to promulgate before it had the force of law.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): However, even Parliament had agreed to it.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Parliament had to agree. In the first place the party had to agree then it would formally be put to the Parliament for agreement and then the party would promulgate it.



(Mr. Gunewardene)

So what you did was to prepare a draft of certain principles? The most you can say is that it was a draft of principles agreed to by the Praesidium; you had not time to give it the force of law.

I want to return to a question about refugees. During the Rakosi regime and before Imre Nagy came in for the second time, a lot of Jews were in very high posts in the party, I think? Is that so? There was a certain amount of feeling, was there not, that many high posts were held by Jews? But of course in time of distress these things are not considered, although there was always that underlying feeling.

You said about the camps that there were a certain number of Kadar agents in them. How did you know that?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): On 4 November, as the Russians entered Budapest, they re-established the secret police. At first the police functioned within the Russian military framework and a few days later the A.V.H. was again in full working order. According to my information all the old members of the A.V.H. who had been removed from their posts because of their behaviour were reinstated. From the middle of November there was mass emigration, which lasted until January. It was not difficult for the A.V.H. to put some of their own men among the masses of emigrés.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You know something about refugee camp conditions. Have you ever come across any Kadar agents in the camps?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No. I only stayed two days in the camps in the last week of November and this could not then be seen. Everything was still in a state of flux and the movement of people away from Austria was much faster. I therefore had no personal experience of this, but knowing the regime I find it absolutely impossible that this should not be the case.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): This is an assumption of yours from your own knowledge of conditions? You have no particular experience of it?



WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): No.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You know that when refugees come in all their credentials cannot be examined on the same day, but many months have now elapsed. Are you aware of any Kadar agents having been discovered in this screening process?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I did not believe so.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I see. Now, you referred to legislation by which the death penalty was imposed on those people who sought to overthrow the Government. That provision is not peculiar to any system of legislation — providing the government is a government. It is not unusual for the death penalty to be imposed on people who are found guilty of attempting to overthrow the government. I am not talking of this particular case but of any government.

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): The point in question in this instance, is, I believe, somewhat different. Maleter was the Minister of a lawful Hungarian Government. He did not carry out actions in order to overthrow the Government; it was in the name of the Hungarian Government that he was negotiating with the occupying power.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): That is exactly why I said "providing it is a government".

Are you aware of the fact that under the Kadar ordinances the death sentence is not to be carried out in the case of people under the age of twenty?

WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): I did not know that.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I think that is all, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we thank you for your very interesting and comprehensive answers to our questions.



WITNESS X (interpretation from Hungarian): It is I who thank the Committee for listening to me. It is of concern to me as well as to you.

Witness X withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: We will now call the next witness.

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

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I bid you welcome. I understand you wish to be anonymous so in the verbatim record you will be called Witness Y.

According to the letter you have sent us I understand that you took an active part in the freedom fighting and that you were present when the radio building was occupied on 23 October, at the mass murder of the A.V.H. at Parliament Square and at the occupation of the Party headquarters; and that you also know about events in the Balassa Hospital, where 16 freedom fighters were murdered.

On that basis, I ask you to give us your statement and of course we are only interested, or particularly interested, in what you have seen with your own eyes and personally experienced during those days. Please will you be kind enough to begin.



WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): On 24 October I went with my nephew to the Radio Building at 7.30 p.m. in the evening in order to hear the Twenty-one Points read over the radio. My nephew was a university youth, and when we found the door of the Radio Building closed, he demanded that it be opened. An employee of the Radio Building came out to the balcony and said only an eight member delegation of the university youths could be admitted and that the eight boys had been chosen, so they went in. At this time the tricolour was flying from every house, but the red white and green flag was being flown from the Radio Building with the Communist emblem. When the demonstration occurred in the afternoon at the Bem Statue, the Communist emblem was taken out of the national flag. The next thing that happened was that a 14 or 15 year old student climbed up the side of the building to the balcony in order to cut out the Communist emblem. From behind (I cannot say the name of the street where it goes into Sandor Street from Sandor Place) an A.V.H. car came along. The occupants saw the boy cutting out the Russian emblem, and they simply shot him down. This was the first killing we saw at that time. In the crowd of students there followed an immense tumult, they were shouting to have the eight students let out. No answer was received from the Radio Building.

I want to emphasize that at this time the children had no arms, and they took some bricks from a house that was being built next door, and starting throwing them. The A.V.H. was machine-gunning the students and at the same time the ordinary police, the so-called blue police, were asked for reinforcements, and were told to shoot amongst us. Two of the policemen refused. I was standing under a doorway, and the A.V.H. from behind me shot down the two protesting policemen. Then the children and the university youths went to the Kilyan Barracks to get arms. Meanwhile (and there were many workers with us) they gave the news to Csepel and Ripasch that the delegation of students could not come out of the radio building, and that there were killings.

In the meantime we went to the Kilyan Barracks, I myself did not go in, but the boys did. Arms were given to them, or they took the arms, I am not quite sure which, and after that we went back to the radio building. On the way back in Sandor Place we saw two Red Cross vans. The boys were stopping all cars and looking to see whether they contained A.V.H. people. Where there were A.V.H. people in them, these were disarmed. Up to then there was no shooting. We then stopped the two Red Cross cars to see whether they had arms; they had and these were meant for the A.V.H. people within the radio building. Those arms were also taken away by the boys. In this connection I should like to say that in Communist circles the



(Witness Y)

news spread that the Freedom Fighters and our sons shot at a Red Cross car. This was not so because the trick used by the A.V.H. was to use Red Cross cars wherever there was fighting in order to transport arms. It was because of this that doctors later on received other kinds of cars or trucks, not Red Cross cars, to enable them to get to the place where fighting was going on.

Then the workers arrived from Csepel in twelve trucks, and they were ordered to occupy the Jozsef Telephone Exchange. The A.V.H. the next day attacked the police headquarters in the Fiume Place and occupied it, as it was here that there were large stocks of police uniforms. The A.V.H. then donned the blue uniforms of the police and that is how they mingled with the students. The radio was on the side of the Freedom Fighters for two and a half days.

At noon I went again to the Radio Building where my nephew was; here there were two units dressed in military clothes whom it became known later were A.V.H. people and who started the fight against the Radio Building, which was at that time in the hands of the "Dozsa" Freedom Fighters. They were children mostly under nineteen, the eldest was a university student of about twenty-three. There was not one soldier from the West, not one fascist; they were mostly high school students, not even university students. The two A.V.H. units dressed as regular soldiers shot at the Radio Building for two days killing the children who were in it and re-occupying the building. After that -- this must have been the third day -- we went to the Technical University and thence to Parliament Place to demonstrate in order to ensure the downfall of Geroe.

The revolution broke out when we asked that the eight-member delegation should read our Twenty-one Points over the radio, and at the same time Geroe gave a speech over the radio in which he called us and the university students rabble. Geroe was still in power at that time but at this one sentence of his, the revolution broke out. There was a silent demonstration in front of Parliament Place. Here there were three to four thousand people -- women and children, students and old people and people from the neighbourhood. Opposite to the Parliament Place is the Ministry of Agriculture and in front of this there were four Russian tanks. We sang the national anthem and later the crowd demanded that Geroe should resign. When the shouts were heard, a salvo of firing came from the top of the Ministry of Agriculture. I was standing in Vecsey Street which gives on to Parliament Place. We thought the Russian tanks had started firing and what took place then is indescribable. Children, women, living and dead, were all on top of each other. There was a stampede -- people were walking over each other. The Russian tanks fired on the Ministry of Agriculture regardless of the people. Please do not misunderstand that; they were not shooting at the Ministry of



(Witness Y)

Agriculture to protect themselves. We retired under doorways; I stayed there for an hour and a half. When we came out onto Parliament Place I saw huge trucks, and there were corpses on top of each of the trucks. I asked a Red Cross nurse how many dead there were; she looked at me and said there were approximately four or five hundred but that still some more might be found among the wounded, and more of the wounded might die.

Later about two hundred and fifty of us were in front of the American Legation where there was a demonstration. We sang the National Anthem, and we asked for the help of the United Nations and the United States. At first no one came out from the Legation; later an interpreter came out, a man of medium size, who said a few words. The crowd still shouted "Please help, they are butchering us". Then there came on to the balcony a medium-sized white-haired man, who said in broken Hungarian (this is approximately verbatim) "I have been here eleven years; I see what is happening. We have reported it by telephone, and help is on the way. Please disperse". We thanked him, and left.

The next day the A.V.H. went into private houses; they forced the janitors to allow them up into the rooms where no people were living, and they went to the attics. From there they shot people walking in the street, and women and children, and people in queues. I saw myself what I am going to say now: in my house on Rakoczi Place the back of the building gives upon Dohany Street. There is a small street in front, Sip Street, and here there were about sixty women standing in line for bread. From the house opposite they were being fired upon. The crowd broke down the door where they found a woman of about sixty years, they went into the house and found an A.V.H. man, who was lynched by the crowd, not by the Freedom Fighters.

Coming into Aradi Street I saw an A.V.H. man hanging; this was mentioned afterwards in the foreign newspapers and was supposed to have been done by the Freedom Fighters. Please believe me that this was not the case. This A.V.H. man lived in Aradi Street; he shot his wife and two children because he was afraid the Freedom Fighters would get hold of them, but to this day the A.V.H. cannot show one case where that has happened, that the Freedom Fighters have killed the members of their families. This man killed his own family. The inhabitants of the house heard the shots, and when they came into the apartment and saw the dead wife and children they went after him and hung him up.



There is therefore a misunderstanding in the papers. For example, when the Party headquarters were taken over at Rakosi Place I will not say I was there because I was at so many places. My nephew was a leader of the brigade, and six of the boys of that brigade lived at my apartment. We went to the Rakosi Place Party Headquarters. We were without arms, and that was not done by our group, but from the Rakosi to the Tisza Kalhan Barracks you could not go because the road was barricaded, but it seems that from one of the houses of the Rakosi Place, in the middle of the heaviest firing, on the second floor, there was a little girl standing in the window. That side of Rakosi Place was on the side of the freedom fighters, the other side was in the hands of the Communists. The little girl was on our side, she was a girl of eight to nine, and there was shooting. At the same time, from the same house shots were fired and the boys discovered that they were coming from that apartment. They went into the house, the door not being closed, they rang the bell in the apartment and no one opening the door they forced it. It happened that there was living there an A.V.H. colonel who put his own deaf and dumb child in the window, and it was from her cover that he was shooting at the freedom fighters. This is an actual fact that I saw. About the taking over of the Party Headquarters, I want to say this. It started early in the morning. We went at approximately three o'clock. Before-hand, from the windows of the Party Headquarters, the whole time the place was under heavy fire, and it can be said that at about every second window there was firing. That was a building with about thirty windows on each floor, and there were three or four floors. The seventh district had only one cannon and we were shooting at the Party Headquarters with that. The time then was about 3.30. Then the firing started to become less and a white sheet was put out from the window. This is a huge place in Budapest. There was a huge crowd in spite of the fact that we had barricaded the Rakosi Place part. All the people came out when the white sheet appeared. Then the crowd and the inhabitants all went on to the place to see how the Communists would come out of that house. The freedom fighters were standing in two rows on left and right in order to let the Communists out. The first who came was a blond thick-set man of 35 years dressed in a blue police uniform, and I would like to emphasize that he was not wearing A.V.H. uniform. He had his left hand turned backwards, we looked at what he was doing and as he came out he took three steps and with his left hand threw a hand-grenade into the crowd. The hand-grenade killed three in the crowd, among them



children, and wounded several. Then the crowd broke through the barricade of the freedom fighters and hung him up by his feet. This picture appeared in foreign newspapers as an instance of our cruelty, but this was not the case. Afterwards another Communist came out. He came out with arms; he shot, and was arrested and strapped by his feet. Later he was searched. It is not true that the Hungarian freedom fighters filled his mouth with water. He had 12,000 florins as his pay for a month, which is a huge sum, and this was put next to him. Then we went to the Party Headquarters looking for the others. We did not find anybody else. The house was searched from top to bottom, but there was no trace of any other people. The first man, the blond man, I believe was called Mezei. He was the Party Secretary who received the huge sum of money and who had a police uniform on. Down in the Commissariat we found large stocks of food. We cannot understand this even today. We searched Karaman (?) Place, where the people disappeared. On the next day we were still there. People were saying that freedom fighters were disappearing in the Party Headquarters, and that is why we did not dare blow up the place. Then another small man came. He had a medical uniform. We did not where he could possibly have come from as we went through the house eight to ten times. We found him at the back of the house at a door. We did not let the people molest him; we gave him to the police and hoped they would be able to obtain from him information of what was under the building. However, since my departure on the 18th I have never discovered that.

Life started again and the peasants brought food into Budapest. It is therefore not true to say that the peasants were Communists, because Hungarian peasants until that time were most reluctant to give the food, and many of the peasants were in concentration camps and were being accused of being kulaks, and they were reluctant to give food to the Communists; but it was very touching as in this instance they gave their last pig and slaughtered their last animal and brought them by truck to Budapest, and on each truck there was written in large letters "For the Freedom Fighters." Naturally, this food was free and not in exchange for money. On 4 November, which is the blackest day in our history, when Kadar called the Russians back from Debrecen and created a Ministry, even grown people started fighting, because it can be said that in the beginning the fighting was waged by children of fourteen and eighteen. Behind the house where I lived is a street called Dohany Street. The Continental Hotel is behind us.



In that hotel there were two Hungarian revolutionary units, Hungarian soldiers on our side. In the meantime the soldiers came over to our side. Our house was fired at three times with phosphorous ammunition, the flames from which cannot be put out. The shooting caused the first fire. There were two inhabitants, one Dr. Roeszkei but I forget the name of the other, and the Russians shot them while they were trying to extinguish the fire. Other inhabitants left the house when the shooting was a little less in order to get bread for his wife and children; he was shot in the stomach and we brought him into the house. At the back entrance of our house stood the car of the Peterfystreet Hospital. There was a young doctor and a young nurse. They said, "This is the fifth car with which we are operating." Five cars were shot under them by the A.V.H. and the Russians. On the previous day a doctor was tending a freedom fighter when he was stopped by two A.V.H. people. When they saw the young child, they shot him in the stomach in the car. At the same time, on 7 November - I should think it might have been the 8th - the wife of a former Minister whose name is Mrs. Zoltan Vasvadas - Zsuzsa before she was married - had volunteered at the beginning of the revolution for service in a hospital. The wounded were lying in the hospital, and naturally we accepted her services. We are not quite clear as to the position of her husband, the Minister, but we did accept it. It was on 7 or 8 November when sixteen freedom fighters were brought wounded into the hospital by truck. It was she who took over these freedom fighters, and she said, "I have no place in the hospital, but I will give you the address of another first-aid place." The other she gave us was a Russian headquarters, and all sixteen were shot. She disappeared from the hospital and as far as I know the police were looking for her during the regime of Nagy. What I am saying is really proving that the name of Vasvadas does not appear in the list of the Government since then.



(Witness Y)

I should like to say that even now the Government is making all kinds of window dressing trials and not against the person that was mentioned.

It is also said that the Russians bombed Budapest. This is not quite the case. They were throwing certain projectiles from aeroplanes.

I only got to the Kilian Barracks on the last day because we were in the seventh district of Budapest. We took the food down there. I should like to say here that we had much greater confidence in Bela Kiraly than in Maleter because it is said that Maleter was in those barracks. My group was not there. He behaved quite humanly but, of course, I do not know whether you know but Maleter was a Russian partisan. He was really sent out against the Kilian Barracks by the Government, and when he reached the front of the barracks it is then he saw the resistance of the children inside, and it is then also that he saw the crowd who had organized an immense demonstration, and then he went over to our side. I do not know the exact circumstances. He may be a national hero but I do not know. I believe Kiraly is more reliable.

On the last day already one could not go to the barracks after the Russians had occupied it. I went in front of the barracks. There were corpses all over the street, and when I returned to the front of the barracks I saw the corpses of two children, fourteen to fifteen years old. There were three Russian soldiers standing next to them and the two children were still warm. One had its head bandaged, and there was a man standing there crying, who was the father, and saying that the child was at home, he was wounded but nonetheless he went out again to fight and the Russians killed him because the children were still moving. It is characteristic that at the same time appeared a truck full of food supplies that was stopped by the Russians, and the Russians asked for these two children's bodies to be taken on this truck.

In connexion with deportations I would like to say the following. I have not seen anything myself but I must say, on 14th November -- and I am definite about the date -- I went down to the section of Budapest called Szent Istvan. In front of the western railroad station it appeared to me -- I must add that at that time they did not speak of deportations in Budapest -- there stood a Russian tank. I was on the same side as the station and the barrel of the tank was pointing in the direction of the street and not the station. I went up the stairs, the windows were broken, and



(Witness Y)

then -- namely, on 14 November -- there had been no circulation of trains for the last two weeks. The whole station was completely empty but I had seen a very big train which consisted of passenger cars and also of merchandise transport cars. It was surrounded by armed Russian guards and the cars were sealed. I, at that time, did not think of deportations but now, in Switzerland, in Sion, I do. I lived there for a month and I spoke with a child of fifteen, and I spoke to him about this incident, and the child said it was just exactly that day that he was there. He told me a long story about the fact that the shipment was taken as far as the border and then they came back.

When the Russians occupied Budapest I went down to the street as I was interested afterwards to know whether there were still freedom fighters. There was a big hole which had been empty the previous day but which was now filled with eight corpses. Three of the men were in pyjamas and wearing shoes, therefore, they could only have been taken out of their beds during the night. How it happened, I do not know.

In the ninth district of Budapest, around the barracks of Prater Street, there is a school where children of 13 to 18 were being educated -- this is the Chicago section of Budapest. The children were holding the school as a fort and when the Russians arrived the school was emptied and we never knew what happened to those children. None of those children were found.

I cannot say any more, but if you allow me, I should like to say something that does not pertain directly here but pertains to the Communist propaganda, if I may.

The CHAIRMAN: That is part of the work of our Committee. We are not unacquainted with Communist propaganda. We know of that in all countries, so that if you have nothing particularly in relation to the events in Budapest then I think we should not embark on that question. We are well acquainted with Communist propaganda.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): This is a fact which I can substantiate if you care to look at some articles in some older Hungarian newspapers.



(Witness Y)

I was interned in 1952 and 1953. I was first at Kistarcsa, and then at Bernatkut. This latter one is between Stalinvaros and Szekesfehervar, and it is a secret place of 42 thousand acres, and Bernatkut was not recognized as being a camp by the Communists. This was a completely secret place. There we had to do forced labour and the soil was worked by the political prisoners. I had to do so-called inside work, namely, I had to clean the guards' rooms. We were in brigades, hundreds of us, the women and the men separately, and one morning as we were lining up to go out to work I stood alone, and I said to the commander "Today, I want to work also", and the commander said to me "You want to work outside too?" I said, of course, "Yes, I will go out and work". I went outside and during work the commander said to me that I should speak to the more intelligent ones. There were sixty-five nuns, and I told them "Do not go out to the road, stay inside". That is the command that was given to me that I passed on to the others. In the evening one of the nuns told us that as the group was going out all the people who remained in the barracks, including the sick, were taken out into the forest.

The next day when again I wanted to go out to work, then the commander said "No, stay inside today", and as an inside worker I had the opportunity to read the newspaper which was in the waste paper basket, because, as you know, political prisoners should not do such a thing. Would you please look at 7 September or 9 September 1952 issue? There was an article that Labour Party members of parliament of England were invited to Hungary, as well as the leftist French deputies, and these deputies and members of parliament were invited in order to refute the news on the English radio that the Hungarian political prisoners are on forced labour. These deputies were taken out to Stalinvaros and to Bernatkut where I was. Later on it became known there were ordinary prisoners and these ordinary prisoners were taken into the barracks so that should the foreign delegates want to speak to them they would see that these were criminals and ordinary prisoners, and not political prisoners.

I have nothing else to state.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you. In your statement you have given some new information but you have also confirmed many details on which witnesses have testified before. I will ask the members of the Committee whether they have any questions.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): When did you leave Hungary?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): On 18 November.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Were you in hiding just before the 18th?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I did not hide anywhere before the 18th but on the last day they told me at home that the police had been looking for me. It may not be very relevant here, but my mother told me this; My mother is 60 years old and that is why I wish to be anonymous, otherwise I should like to give you my name, but my mother is still at home and I am afraid for her. I started on the night of the 18th, and I can show you the letters my mother has written from Budapest saying that the police were looking for me.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): We have not got time for all that. Please just answer the questions. Did your nephew also go along with you?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, he came with me in the group with which I came across the border on 18th. I was about to cross the border and was in a village near the border with a group of about 140 or 150 people, the first part of which was the one in which my nephew was travelling and they succeeded in crossing the border. We were captured by the Russians and I was kept a prisoner for two days.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Where is your nephew? Please answer the questions.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): I would like to know very much myself. I have applied three times to the Red Cross for information about him.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You could answer that you are unaware of it — you do not have to go into all these details. You are to tell us about the days from 12 to 18 November. One can do it in five minutes. Your association with those events began on the 23rd itself did it not?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): It was on the night of the 23rd that I joined the revolution when the events at the Radio Building occurred — it was on the 23rd or 24th. It was the night when there was a demonstration at the Bem statue and the students wanted to read their points on the radio.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Were you yourself physically at the Radio Building?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, that was the first time. I was part of the demonstration but I did not go to the Bem statue.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): What was the size of the crowd at the Radio Building?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): It is hard to say. The side streets were full, there were perhaps 400 or 500 people, I do not think there were more. I cannot give you the exact number.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Nobody expects you to give you the exact number. Was tear gas used?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, I took a tear gas bomb home to my house. They were used. They were of Hungarian manufacture and not of Russian manufacture. I know because I looked to see.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): What happened after the tear gas bombs?



WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): After the tear gas bombs were thrown? They were thrown after the shooting of the boy who cut the Russian insignia out of the flag.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): The first thing you saw was the shooting of the boy?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, it was the first time I saw any shooting.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Who shot this boy?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): It was an A.V.H. man who came in from a side street.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Was it before the tear gas or after it?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): The shooting could have been at about 8 o'clock.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): About the time of the tear gas?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): That was later -- about 9 o'clock. By that time there was a lot of shooting and demonstration, but no one had any arms, none of us had any arms.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Immediately after the tear gas the crowd did not draw back? The tear gas did not frighten them?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, not in the least.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): In fact they were only infuriated?



WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): They were quite infuriated. The A.V.H. people were shooting on all sides. There was a 15-year old child lying in the street with half his face shot away, at about 9 o'clock.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How long did it take to get the bricks from adjoining building?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): About 5 minutes if that much.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I suppose they used the bricks.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes. At the same time there was a factory which was supposed to be a weapons factory, and from here came workers to join us. Among them there was a 19-year old worker and he and some others brought three cars full of weapons to the Radio Station.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): The weapons were quickly distributed?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, very quickly. Everybody grabbed them because they had gone there without weapons.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Before the weapons came were the bricks used?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, as the boys were just peacefully demonstrating, they were fired upon and were then forced to fire.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): So there was firing on both sides?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, the firing was only defence from our side. We asked them to let the eight representatives out of the Radio Building.



Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Did they use the weapons when they were brought?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Later, when they shot the police — after they shot the police.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Who shot the police?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): The A.V.H. told the police to join us and shoot into us. Two policemen refused. Then in the doorway where I was staying in Esterhaey Street, they shot two policemen. There have been others who have come here to testify before you and if you ask them, they must have seen that shooting.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): How many people were killed?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): I did not see any more people killed because it was too dark. There were about eight at the Radio Building, and the two policemen and two other children. That is about eight altogether.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): Did you follow your nephew right through the night?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): We were together, but we were apart for some of the time.

Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): What was the next point you went to after the Radio Building?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): We went to the Kilian Barracks because we wanted to get weapons. This shows that we had no weapons, or arms.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you get arms at the Kilian Barracks?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, of course, there was a workers' battalion in the street at that time.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How did you get your arms?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): The workers gave them to us voluntarily, the soldiers joined our side, and the police joined us afterwards.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Am I to assume that the workers' battalion, the soldiers and the youth all marched together from the Kilian Barracks?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, there was fighting right through the night.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): There was fighting right through the night. When did you get home?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): About 5 o'clock in the morning, I was there at the Sandor Place even at night and also the next morning again. I went down to tell people that the radio was in our hands, and I took them food. The radio was about three minutes from the house where I lived.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I cannot go on the details you have given. You have made such statements as, the Russians bombed Budapest. The Russians did not bomb Budapest. Why did you say so?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): They were mines. They mined the streets of Budapest.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I just wanted to know the significance of it. With regard to 14 November, you said something about a big train surrounded by Russian soldiers.



WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes. There was a train with passenger cars and freight cars, but everything I said is true, I did not see any children there. I do not want to make up any deportations, but it was a sealed train and there were armed guards on it.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): So you saw no children — that is all you know about it.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I did not see any children, but I did speak later with a child who said that he was in that train and that was how I knew about it.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Where was the train?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): I do not know.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You did not know anything about it. Later on, when there was news of deportations, you took your mind back to what you saw on 14 November.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, later on I did recall that incident again because I could see that there was nobody getting off the train, and there was an armed guard. I did not even think or hear of any deportations, but later on it occurred to me.



Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You just saw the train pass by you? How long were you there?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): About five minutes. There were a couple of soldiers gossiping together, and it was about five minutes.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You saw nothing else in that five minutes?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I saw nothing else. There was nothing else in the station. The tracks were all empty. This was the only train there. There is one other material thing which I forgot to mention in connection with the train, and that is that the engine was not pointing inwards but out of the station — it was headed away from the station.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You did not know where it was destined for?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, as I said, I did not know but it was headed out of Budapest.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You mentioned the wife of a Minister or somebody who wanted to look after the wounded.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): That was Dr. Zsuzsa Vadas.  
Yes.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You said that some wounded came but were directed to some other address.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): He disappeared. The Russians had already attacked and taken part of the city and there were Russian troops in the city. All the doctors who were in the hospitals in Budapest know about what I told you. It was very sad, but he disappeared.



Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon): I am only asking if they were deliberately directed to another address.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): He sent the wounded to the Russian Command. He gave the chauffeur orders to take them there, and the chauffeur later fled. First-aid stations were set up in private houses, not only in hospitals. There was one in our house for four days.

Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon): Were you there when the address was given?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No. I did not hear it but I talked to the chauffeur and I talked to the doctor. They were looking for the nurse.

Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon): You did not speak to the nurse then — that woman?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Of course I spoke to the nurse and I spoke to the chauffeur — to both of them.

Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon): You spoke to the woman who gave this address?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, I spoke to her, and I talked to the chauffeur who took the car. I lived right across from the hospital.

Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon): How do you know that same address was given by him?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): The chauffeur told me. He fled, he came away, and he told me.

Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon): Who is the chauffeur? Where is he now?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): In Budapest. Doctors and nurses in the Budapest hospitals can be asked about this. I would like to ask you



(Witness Y)

to hear doctors and nurses who may be available to you about this question. Zoltan Vas is someone I do not know. He has not taken any part in events since then and I would not want to besmirch his name.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): You made a statement that wounded soldiers were shot by the Russians.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Sixteen were murdered.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): How did you come to know this?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): This chauffeur took them to the High Command and they shot them from the cars — they shot the children from cars.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Did you see it?

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, I did not see it myself but a man who saw it himself told me. All the hospitals were full of them.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): I would like to hear what he has to say.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): Well, he cannot appear before you here, but I would like to ask you to hear doctors.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): All you say is that somebody told you that.

WITNESS Y (interpretation from Hungarian): No, it is not just that somebody told me. I would like you to listen to some doctors. I would like to ask the Committee to hear some doctors who were there, because they can testify to that.

Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon): Well, that is all then.



The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Madam.

Witness Y withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman Dr. Gabor Szarka took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Committee I bid you welcome. I understand that you have no objection to your name being mentioned and that you are Dr. Gabor Szarka.

Mr. SZARKA (interpretation from Hungarian): Yes, that is correct.

The CHAIRMAN: I want to introduce you to the Committee and I would like to read a few lines of your curriculum vitae.

You are a Doctor of Political Sciences. From 1941 you were an official in the Hungarian Foreign Trade Board, first in Bratislava and then in Copenhagen, and in October 1944 you sought political asylum in Sweden. After the war you returned to Hungary and became, in December 1946, Vice-President of the Hungarian Foreign Trade Board. You were also a member of the Ministerial Committee of the Hungarian National Peasant Party, but in October 1948 you were arrested and put on secret trial. You spent 61 months, that is to say five years, in several prisons and concentration camps, and after the recent events you fled to the West.

You would be able particularly to testify about the economic causes of the Hungarian revolution in 1956 and also your personal experiences in all respects in Hungary. I beg you to give us your statement as briefly as possible.

Mr. SZARKA (interpretation from Hungarian): The causes of the Hungarian revolution have already been heard about from other witnesses. I would like to speak briefly about only one reason -- the unpopularity of the Communist order among the Hungarian people. This order used inhuman methods and cruel behaviour against



(Mr. Szarka)

the people. I want to say that, although quite innocent, I was held for 61 months in various prisons and concentration camps. Briefly, my most terrible impressions were as follows.

On 10 March 1950 the A.V.H. took over the Vac Prison which up to that time had been under the direction of the Ministry of Justice. There they put the so-called prominent political prisoners of the country. The A.V.H. people beat us several times a day and among the older people several died of their wounds. They held me in solitary confinement and in darkness for 90 days together and they beat me with a rubber truncheon almost every day. In my cell I could hear the torturing of some of my fellow prisoners. They were being tortured and told to deny God by A.V.H. people.

On 4 January 1951 they took me to an annihilation camp. They made us work in a stone quarry for 11 or 12 hours a day completely cut off from the world with about 800 or 900 calories of food a day, and the daily beatings did not stop even there. I was an eye-witness several times to their simply striking people down. About 50 prisoners died of starvation in the first year. They kept us in an unheated cell in the middle of winter. I had one meal of about 400 calories a day and several of my extremities froze. After a period of this I could barely stand up. The people there who were still alive and could get out were seriously ill. Since there is hardly a family in Hungary from which they did not take a member as a political prisoner, large numbers of Hungarian people have knowledge of these things.

Since, during the revolution, I was at Balatonfuered most of the time, I will try to tell you briefly of my experiences there, with special reference to the role of the A.V.H. and the Russians.



(Mr. Szarka)

On 24 October in the morning I met Flight Lieutenant Orodan who was a leader at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Balatonfüred, the second in command there. He told me a Kadar revolution had broken out in Budapest and that fascists had murdered A.V.H. representatives. Actually, the A.V.H. personnel were not harmed during the revolution, they were only asked for their own safety not to leave their apartments. This same Lieutenant Orodan sought out the President of the Revolutionary Council and organized a civilian militia at this time. On 4 November he told me in a confidential talk that the revolution had opened his eyes, and that his only wish was to work, even as a labourer, in a free country. He told me further that he had been ordered to the Veszprem Russian Military Command, together with other people, and had been invited to join the Russian Army, where he could have a full lieutenant's rank, until the Militia could be reorganized. He rejected this invitation, and according to his statement, in the province of Veszprem there were only two A.V.H. members who accepted such invitations.

During the revolution Russian troops appeared early one morning at Balatonfüred and I had an opportunity of talking to their leaders. None of them had the opinion that the Hungarian revolution was a counter-revolution. They held that the Budapest Party command was at fault, it had got too far away from the people, and did not fulfil their wishes. At Balatonfüred was one of the trans-Danubian commercial centres where it was proved that the whole of the revolution was completely free of foreign influence. In so far as the Committee would think it useful, I could tell you about the events that happened there.

Mr. SHANN (Australia): Thank you.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ-FABREGAT (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): If you please, I heard your speech and your declaration. Your statement speaks of certain personal experiences; you went to prison as a political prisoner and spoke of the regime of torture to which you submitted. What reason or justification did they give? Why did they torture you? How do you explain it? Was it because you gave away secrets, or did you betray any names? Why were you in prison?

Mr. SZARKA (interpretation from Hungarian): On 11 October 1948 I was arrested; the accusation against me was that as Vice-President of the Foreign Trade Board I had given information to Western Powers. After a judicial trial which took



(Mr. Szarka)

twenty days and was completely secret, I proved that I did not give away any secrets, but that the only information I gave had already appeared in the public press. I asked at the trial to be allowed to bring witnesses; the judges simply refused to hear them, and decided that even though the public had knowledge of the information I was supposed to have betrayed, nevertheless I should have known that this information would get to Western knowledge. During the judicial trial, not only did they not allow me to bring witnesses, but they did not even let me speak. They sentenced me to five years in prison. Subsequently there was an intercession for me by the President of the Foreign Trade Board, and they brought it down to two years. After the two years, however, they simply did not let me go, but continued to transfer me from one concentration camp to another. The Communist regime called upon me in 1956 to work for my rehabilitation, but because of the revolution there was no further opportunity to do anything about rehabilitation.

The delegate of Uruguay asked why they tortured me and why we were beaten. We too would have liked to know this and up to the present day we have no explanation. I can tell you that the camp at Vac where I was, was inspected by a Russian military committee on one occasion, and they were quite satisfied with what they saw there. The A.V.H. people — some of the better intentioned ones — later told me that no one was to be allowed to get free from that concentration camp. The plan was that in five years we should all perish, and none of us should leave alive. If the Imre Nagy Government had not declared an amnesty I would have perished within six months. I was only 46 kgs in weight. My heart was no longer normal, and I was working in a stone quarry 11 or 12 hours a day at that time.

One night after another, a great number of trials were being carried on in 1948. In the same trial in which I was a defendant, the principal defendants were executed. The main defendant was Aurel Balazs, the best friend of Wallenberg, who was in a Swedish prison until 1945. Wallenberg had been inspected several times by the Russians, questioned and beaten, and asked to give incriminating statements. To my great surprise, a few weeks ago I read a Russian statement in a Swedish newspaper to the effect that Wallenberg had died in 1947 in a Russian prison, but the things I have stated happened in 1948, in the late fall. From this one can draw one's own conclusions. It is not likely that they got incriminating information out of him. I do not know if the Committee has any particular wish for details as to anything I have said, but I will be glad to answer questions.



The CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions from members of the Committee? Can you tell us anything about the secret police having been ordered to use Russian uniforms?

Mr. SZARKA (interpretation from Hungarian): Lieutenant Orodan in the A.V.H. at Balatonfuere was ordered, with several others, to the Russian Military Command at Veszprem some time after 4 November. There he was invited to join the Russian Army and put on a Russian uniform. He did not accept this invitation; according to his information there were only two A.V.H. people in the whole of Veszprem province to wear Russian uniforms and serve as Russian soldiers. These were transferred away from Veszprem province in order that no one should recognize them, and they were used in other parts of the country. To my knowledge this was the usual practice in the whole country. Since the A.V.H. was discontinued by the Kadar Government they were used as Russian soldiers, not only as advisers, but as active soldiers. Orodan told me this personally, with further details, adding that since the revolution he sees the situation differently, and he is no longer willing in any way to serve the Russians. According to my information Lieutenant Orodan is still in Hungary.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further questions, so we thank you for having appeared before the Committee.

Dr. Gabor Szarka withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: We have no more business to do at present in this city so the meeting stands adjourned until Monday in Rome, when probably we will meet at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but everybody concerned will be informed when we are in Rome.

The meeting rose at 7.00 p.m.