

NO. 501

"B-5" FACESHEET AND RATING

July 1957

London

1. I-1
- 2.
3. London
4. 25
5. Male
6. Hungarian
7. Reformed Church
8. Reformed Church
9. Single
- 10.
11. Architect
12. Student
- 13.
14. Middle (Intelligentsia)
15. No - few months only
16. Czechoslovakia - 1955
- 17.
- 18.
19. Budapest Műszaki Egyetem - 4 years - archit. degree (Polytechnic Institute)
20. Budapest
21. Budapest
22. Pest
23. "Liberal Socialist"
24. November 4, 1956
25. London
26. No
- 27.
- 28.
- 29.
31. "10"
32. "10"
33. "10"
34. none

OUTLINE OF INTERVIEW

1. Family background; outline of education.
2. Examples of political opposition in secondary school.
3. University Life: a. Instruction - character of, and political changes in.
b. Political pressure.
c. Fellow students - relations with, social origin, their thinking.
4. Friends, recreation.
5. Reading: Books, magazines.
6. Political conceptions.
7. Activities after finishing university.
8. Political changes in 1953; the intellectual ^{revert} and how this was ~~found~~ ^{felt} at the university
9. Anti-Semitism; some Communist types.
10. The Revolution; respondent's role in University Revolutionary council. Escape.

I graduated from the Budapest Józsefváros Gymnasium in 1951.

This was one of the three ^R reformed church schools which were not nationalized until 1952 by agreement with the

state. In 1949, I tried to leave the country illegally, but was caught. I was 16 years old at the time, ^{and} ~~and~~ I was

trying to get to London, where I had been admitted to a school. I had no passport, ^{and} ~~and~~ I received a one month prison sentence. I had no further trouble from this, ^{although} ~~although~~ it was

known in the gymnasium, but in a church school, this was more to my advantage, than ^{otherwise} ~~not~~. The school had no DISZ

organization by agreement with the state. In spite of this, quite a few students entered DISZ in the eighth gymnasium.

^{As a} ~~The~~ result, they were not accepted at the university because when the university admissions committee asked

^{opinion of the student} ~~DISZ for an opinion of the DISZ organization's~~ ^{opposed} ~~opposed~~

^{DISZ opposed} ~~their~~ admission on the ground that they had attended a ^{denominational} ~~church~~ school. I, who did not join DISZ, was admitted

to the university in 1951, ^{and} ~~to study architecture~~. I entered the Budapest Műszaki Egyetem (^{Polytechnic Institute} ~~technical university~~)

to study architecture. Later this was changed to Építőipari Műszaki Egyetem. I graduated in 1956 as an architect. I

have always wanted to be a politician and therefore wanted to study law and economics. I have not chosen a party,

however, I would join any party which ^{has} ~~have~~ liberal socialist ideas, similar to mine. I did not try to study economics

because the instruction at the university was strongly

Marxist in character and tinged by the regime's propaganda. Therefore I chose a profession, which was technical and not political. The attractive thing about architecture was that the School of Architecture did not adopt socialist realism until 1951, which was later than any other school, and it was freed of it sooner.

There was no college life in the Western sense of the word, or even in the Hungarian sense of the word. I made few new friends at the University. I trusted only those, whom I knew completely and therefore most of my friends were those, with whom I attended gymnasium. I didn't make new friends at the university until the very end. One of my closest friends today is someone I met at the University's admissions ^{test} desk. We were in one study group at the university but for three years we did not ^{exchange} tell a single joke, ~~to each other~~, because we did not trust each other. In 1953 after Stalin's death, we had a debate about the problem of progress and Marxism. Step by step we went further and further in expressing our opinions frankly. After that we were friends. It is significant that the two of us were alone during this debate. Otherwise it would not have taken place. By 2 AM ^{we} were discussing whether it was possible that the regime would fall from within. ^{At the time I} ~~It was all~~ believed, then, that it was impossible to revolt against the modern state, regardless of whether the Soviet Union helped or not.

My class at the university was divided into 20 or 30 study groups. Each study group had one state representative ^{from the state,} with administrative duties; one DISZ representative, ^{and} one ~~XXXXX~~ Party ^{cell} group representative. These were all fellow students. My class had four or five party members, ^{who comprised the} party cell. All of us belonged to DISZ. These three representatives mentioned above would give reports about us every few days. This way they could supervise us and also provide a control against each other. This organization functioned well at the university during the first 2 or 3 years. Later ~~down~~ on it broke down, partly because people got to know each other, and trusted each other more. My best friend at the university was also ^{of} ~~a~~ middleclass (intelligentsia) origin. The Party representative called me aside and said that my friend was ^{all right} ~~alright~~, ^{he} ~~He~~ was a decent chap, but he asked why I had to make friends with someone who came from the intelligentsia. "Why", he asked me, ^{couldn't} ~~didn't~~ I be friends with comrade X. Well, comrade X was ^{all right,} ~~alright~~, but he was a Technikum (Szakérttségis) graduate, who got to the university almost ^{accidentally} ~~accidentally~~, because he wanted to be a cabinet maker. He said, as long as he had to, he would study ^{architecture} ~~agriculture~~ and when the regime changed he would have a building and cabinet business where it ^{would} ~~will~~ be advantageous for him to be an architect. I couldn't be friends with him. The students of peasant ^{working class} and worker ~~origin~~ were amazingly diligent but they were not really good students. It was really amazing how very few really talented students there

were among them. It was amazing how little they produced ^{what} ^{quantities} with enormous ~~quantity~~ of work. They were unable to think independently and worked in a secondary school fashion and without humor. A very small percentage of them was talented and they would have been admitted to the university in the past too. However, most of the students will undoubtedly be perfectly adequate technicians. These students, of peasant and ^{working class} worker ^(hurt, and on the defensive) origin were somewhat vis-a-vis those of middleclass ^{origin} (intelligentsia), because they felt that we had it easier. ^{They} We felt that we had advantages, which they did not receive. There was no political hostility in this; it was simply envy because they did not belong ^{to us.} ~~there.~~ There was a good dose of snobism in it too. The students of middleclass origin behaved rather unfortunately towards those of the lower classes. ^{If} ^{all right} if everything was ~~all right~~, they shut themselves off from them and were arrogant. But if they were in trouble, ~~if~~ they demonstratively made friends with them.

I think the informers at the university were not paid. I believe, that this is the way they were recruited. Almost everyone was called ~~known~~ to the Party Secretary's office or to the personnel department for a talk and to answer questions. If the student said something useful, then he was called in again and told, ^{that} if he ever was in trouble, he would get help. Generally it was impossible to know who the informers were; sometimes even the informers didn't

know that they were used for this purpose. A few did know and they lived from it in the sense that they received high scholarships as a reward. One student, who was a genuine informer, was expelled from the university in his third year, because he was a sub-standard student. The really malicious informer was very rare and he was isolated by the rest of the students.

The instruction was extremely juvenile but there was a much greater amount of material to be studied than before. The quantity of work meant more than the quality. Taking notes at lectures was compulsory; we had to hand in our notes to ^{show} see how much we had written. The instruction ^{progressed} was ~~page~~ by page, and very few of the students took the initiative to do research on their own, or to solve problems on their own. This method of instruction was introduced to prevent the ^{lower} social strata from falling out because of incompetence.

The number of instructors increased also, because these people required separate instructions to pull them through. About 40 per cent of the students were Szakérttségia (Teknikum) graduates. All together about 60 per cent were ^{working class} of ~~worker~~ and peasant origin. Officially the percentage of worker and peasant students ^{was} ~~were~~ supposed to be 70, but many got in under this quota because their father was now a worker, although he had been a ~~lawyer~~ before.

The instructors ~~manged~~, when confronted with ideological problems, to give their own opinions, as well as the official point of view. This was done more carefully and cautiously

in 1950 and 1951, Although the more difficult it was to say, the more sensitive we became to it. By 1953 the professors had become quite frank in their criticism. One professor said to me: "This plan is very good, but I can't accept it, because they ^{would} throw me out of the university". He made this comment privately and not in public. However, at the lectures, the professors would also make fairly revealing comments, from the very beginning. The professor would comment on the socialist realist architecture's ^{pendant} love for classical columns by ^{looking} saying the following; he would look at the plan and ^{saying} say: "Well, what can one do to improve this plan? Well, try a few columns." This was not done in a ^{sarcasm} critical tone but the meaning was obvious.

In the spring of 1955, all the plans were taken out and ^{of the} criticized at the lectures. One professor said about the plan of Sztalinvaros: "This shows us how one should not build".

This was after the fall of Imre Nagy.

At the beginning of 1956, Miskolczy, a ^{prize} Kossuth prize winner, who was not a Party member, but was an opportunist socialist realist for money, said about some city plans "this is an example ^{of} how in Stalinist times they ^{we} tried to find a compromise between socialist realism and our convictions". ^{It was through} These critical comments ^{on} of socialist realism and ^{or} of the mistakes committed in the Stalinist past, ^{that} were the way a professor could become popular in the last few years.

This sort of criticism was done even by some of those professors who were not convinced about its correctness. This ^{fact} sort of

underlines the moral situation in which these people found themselves.

Professor Paul Csonka was one of the most popular of the old professors, especially among those of ^{working class} ~~worker~~ origin.

There was an element of snob^bism in this. He was erratic and arrogant and he failed 70 per cent of the students. To them, ^{working class} ~~worker~~ to the students of ~~worker~~ origin, this meant a real professor.

~~When~~

As a Communist professor was appointed, all the former assistants "tanarsegédék" were dismissed for new Communist assistants. This was done less often at the School of Architecture than at other places, because here technical knowledge was taken into consideration. The origin of an assistant was also important; about 70 per cent had to be workers.

We received printed notes for every subject, which were identical with the lectures. In spite of this, we were forced to take notes at the lectures and had to hand in our notes to be checked. We would get them back with such comments as "write more beautifully" or "write more!".

We had a tremendous ^{number} ~~amount~~ of examinations. At the end of every half year we had to take examinations in at least ~~six or seven~~ ^{six or seven} subjects. Most of them were oral examinations, but some were also written.

The Socialist Realist architecture, which was forced on us, was a sore point with me and those who had independent views on the subject. Now, that I am in England, I find

that much of the new architecture in London is very similar to the Socialist Realist Architecture, to which we were used at home. For instance the banks I see being built here in London are Socialist Realist in style; these are the sort of buildings which were expected of us at the university.

My close friends were mostly my ^{gymnasium} ~~highschool~~ friends, with whom I grew up. I only made one new friend at the university. We did not get together with our university colleagues; this was a general phenomenon. Of course, quite a few of the students lived in dormitories and in this case the situation was different. But even then they were usually only friendly with those, who lived in the same dormitory room with them. The study groups at the university occasionally held dances when there were enough girls in the group.

The reading standards of most of the students at the university were very low. They very rarely read books at all and they never read poetry. It is true however, that when the Irodalmi Ujság articles began to be popular, everyone read them. And everybody read The Thaw by Ilya Ehrenburg. There was a certain snobism about getting to know as much about the West as one could. This started in 1953 during the Imre Nagy regime. By 1954 the students in the dormitories listened to BBC.

In general as regards the political thinking of youth, most young people's interest was ^{aroused} ~~arose~~ by Communist

contradictions and as a result they looked out for them. What I mean is, that people were sensitive to social problems. In the West there are hidden social contradictions, but people usually don't seek any further to try to understand them. Youth knows only the Marxist jargon. It cannot express itself in other ways, even though it does not believe in Marxism. This Marxist jargon does not matter, ~~it means at any rate that~~ ^{since} with it one can express what one wants.

At the Marxist Leninist seminars there were sharp arguments even at the time of Stalin about ~~Talmudic~~ problems.

Here one could tell one's² opinion though not openly. It was here that one first discovered who stood where.

Later there was some progress with regard to this; one could make a statement and wink to show that one did not believe it, etc. Students usually went to the theater often because it was cheap or almost free. However, it was difficult to get in to see the classics. The Marxist plays were not liked by anyone although I am convinced that students of worker and peasant origin did like the black and white romanticism of the Socialist Realist style. But out of snobism³ even these would abuse the Socialist Realist plays.

I think it was typical that 30 or 40 per cent of the students at the university did not want to be architects but were forced to ~~XX~~ enter this particular school for administrative reasons.

The summer military camps, to which students were sent, contributed towards increasing the mutual trust of the students in each other.

All the students at the university were very much interested in politics. After the first 2 years, we had become so bold, that we discussed politics in the halls. By 1955 we talked only politics. The Marxist-Leninist seminars were awaited eagerly because at these, we could ask embarrassing questions about Tito and about the responsibility of the Party leaders, responsible and so on. Responsibility was the leading word up to the Revolution; it was a magic word.

But in spite of the great interest in the fate of the country and its politics, people did not really believe in a revolutionary change and hence the debates we had were destructive and not constructive. It was not creative construction but critical ~~destruction~~ destruction. In this connection one can overestimate the importance of the fact that people learn to think in Marxist categories. No other thinking was open to them. They often got to the extent of saying how far reality conflicted ^{with} these Marxist theories but they were unable to formulate in what regime this would not be so. However, at least they were conscious of social problems. In the West the same social stratum is empty-headed and does not think of anything at all. In Hungary people's thinking changed radically. The concept of "the good old days" had a real meaning in Hungary. This does not really

mean anything ~~bad~~
~~matter~~ because it lacked a structural basis, which would have made it a problem. In other words, people thought of "the good old days" rather vaguely and not in terms of bringing back any economic or political system of the past. The concept of "the good old days" was also connected with the period of democracy between 1945 and 47. But even this nostalgia for 1945/47 was a step backward, regarding the social structure of the country. The fact that youth talks in Marxist jargon and in terms of Marxist categories, is not very important; it is less important than their desires. Youth thought something, which was different and better and found that the period ~~is~~ from 1945 - '47 was relatively the best period, the period which they could regard as an ideal. Since they were unable to construct a new social or political system, they tried to go back to that which they knew. Their heads were full of foggy, cloudy notions. But they ^{were} ~~were~~ all against giving back the factories and the large estates.

Politically my fellow students, and people in general, lived in terms of *termini*; the stages of people's lives were determined by political events. By this I mean, that the smallest diplomatic gesture between the East and the West, even an impotent resolution by the United Nations, ^{or} ~~was~~ ^{Geneva} something like a ^{Geneva} Conference, would make people say "if we could only hold out until then". In other words, people attached exaggerated hopes to fairly unimportant events. Even an acquaintance ^{of mine} ~~whom I knew~~, a very cultivated leftist philosopher, would talk in this way.

When I got together with my friends, any serious discussion always involved politics. Even discussions of theater criticism involved politics, because in that ^{strained} overloaded atmosphere everything had a political protection. Almost anything that happened meant a step forward or backward. My friends and I would listen and talk about the BBC broadcasts. We liked these, because they were the most realistic. ^{Until the end of 1955} We were fairly cynical and pessimistic about the possibility of radical change in Hungary, ~~until the end of 1955~~. My friends were all interested in political conceptions, in problems of Weltanschauung. I don't know how typical this was. It certainly wasn't typical at my university.

Reading.

^{have} I read Szabad Nép every day, ever since 1949. I found this a necessity in a monolithic regime. Today I read Népszabadság. I read Irodalmi Ujság since 1953 chiefly because it was a literary periodical and I was interested in literature. Occasionally I read Csillag, especially when Irodalmi Ujság was forced to take a step backwards and its editors were dismissed. Csillag stayed acceptable even during this period. Of the technical magazines I read Építőművészet (the art of building). One could feel the political changes even in this magazine. I read every book by Aldous Huxley, that was available in Hungarian. I was 16 when I read a book by him: Science, Freedom and Peace. (Tudomány, Szabadság, Béké) which influenced

^{me}
A decisively because it saw an economic decentralization and assurance of political freedom. I also read Brave New World, The Blind Samson, Point Counter Point and various other things by Huxley. Until 1949/50 one could buy these books in the stores. At this point they were placed on the index. I remember that one could buy all the books placed on index at one quarter of ^{the usual} price until the evening of a certain day. I took a suitcase and bought hundreds of books at ~~their~~ ^{their} one quarter of price. Thomas Mann was very important ^{to} ~~for~~ me and my friends. I read everything by Mann, published in Hungarian except Dr. Faustus, simply because I am not particularly interested in music. I read Lotte in Weimar, the Magic Mountain, the Joseph trilogy, etc. We discussed Mann a great deal. He is complex and hence complete. He offers a solution and is full of wisdom. He does not philosophize but gives life in its entirety. He is very satisfactory stylistically too; one can savour every sentence separately.

Erasmus interested me; I read a number of his works. I liked him because he was a humanist and because this humanism was very timely for us in Hungary. There was a possibility of wrapping Erasmus up and ^{putting} ~~put~~ in his mouth things which ^{we} ~~would~~ ^{not} ~~have been impossible~~ ^{said} otherwise. We discussed him in 1950/51 in the gymnasium's debating society, (Önképzőkör.)

I read Freud's Moses in 1950, or later. It is, I think, the wisest book I ever read. It is, of course, on the index

I gave it to my friends and talked a great deal about it. What I admired most was its crystal clear logic. I didn't read the Populist writers, except Illyés, especially his plays. In my circle, Peter Veres was the most unpopular writer. As a writer he was confused, and as a person unpopular. As for Németh, I read his Szechenyi and Galilei. Actually among my friends there was no talk of Németh until 1955 or 1956. I don't quite know why. I did not know Bibó either. I had a copy of the Revolt of Quality (A Minőseg Forradalma), in 1954, but I did not read it, because I simply did not know who he was until later. Then one started to hear about him and a friend of mine ^{of the university} on the Philosophy Faculty began to praise him because of his periodical (Kanu) Witness. I did not read a great many political books. In 1955 we got Orwell's book Animal Farm which was sent from the West. I found it ~~frighteningly~~ ^{frighteningly} perfect! I also read 1984 which was just as depressing as the reality we lived through at home. His concept of the double-think and his other descriptions show that he knew what it was like.

After 1950 many people read Roosevelt's Apám Igy Láttam, ^{Young Roosevelt's book about his father.}
A This was one of our most important sources of World War II History seen from the other side. I read Thomas Mann's (Europa Vigyazz!) Europe Beware, which was on the index. This book had a great affect on me because of its political content and courage. It contained political speeches held by Mann in 1932/33. He said in this book that

Christian Socialists should cooperate with the Social Democrats against the Communists and the Fascists. In other words he saw the same things I did two decades later. I borrowed this book from a teacher; few Hungarians read it because it was a very dangerous book to have, it. Many young people, and ^{older} ~~all~~ the ones too, from the middle-class read Stefan Zweig's (Becsú a Tegnaptól,) Farewell to Yesterday. This was an autobiographical book in which Zweig travelled through Europe always in the best circles and always without care. It was like a window to Europe although it described a vanished world. In 1953 I read Bertrand Russell's History of a Century. All I know of English intellectual ~~History~~ is from this book.

Anatole France was liked by a great many of my friends because he was cynical, ^{satirical} ~~superficial~~ and full of sharp knowledge. They preferred ^{France} ~~false~~ to Romain Rolland's ^{pathos} ~~papers~~ and romanticism which they felt was false. I, myself, liked Jean Christophe which I read in 1954.

~~Ehrenburg's~~
~~Ellen-Brooks~~ Thaw was significant because through it we realized what was going on in the Soviet Union. It didn't encourage me personally, because I am not a writer, but at the university many people read it and discussed it. They liked it chiefly because it was the first criticism of the Soviet Union which came from inside.

My favorite poet and very popular generally was Attila József. I liked his style as well as the contents of his poems. I agree with many of his political concepts. There was no

~~Western~~ poetry available to us. My friends and I, often recited poetry. Ady was as popular as 20 years ago. We never recited Petöfi, but of the older ~~R~~ poets preferred Arany because of his ^{realism} ~~real-symbolism~~ and philosophy. It was closer in atmosphere to our world. I also found Vörösmarty close; isn't it strange? We also read Kosztolanyi, Benjamin, Konya, Jankovich, Illyes, and Lörinc Szabo.

In 1953 and 1954 a friend of mine and I worked out an imaginary liberal socialist^{ist} state. All our concepts were on a popular level and not at all scholarly. But we had some healthy ideas. For example, we ^{decided on} ~~conceived of~~ the collective ownership of the means of production. The various units of production should be allowed to compete freely with each other. This would be free competition on a higher level than in a capitalistic society. The factory collectives should join in ^a monopoly. This would not be like ^a capitalist monopoly, because the factory collectives would be run democratically from below by self-government. There would be a great deal of decentralization. Workers' ^a councils would elect the managers of the ~~f~~actories and every factory unit or higher unit would be responsible to lower levels. We worked out this synthetic Hungary on the political and social levels too.

Since 1955 we have developed this plan on a more mature level. I believe that the country's economy should be run by decentralized workers' ^a councils. There should be ~~a~~ collective private ownership of the means of production.

The factory belongs to the workers, who work in it; ~~the~~ ^{and} ~~workers~~ have a vote. The state has only a ~~XXXXXX~~ co-ordinating role in running the economy. This system of decentralization would have a very healthy effect on the economy. Organisationally the worker's parliament would run each factory and be the experts and technicians. I was not at all that I was not a devotee of this system because I realize now that to be a ~~state~~ ^{country} ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~an~~ ^{an} ~~economic~~ ^{economic} ~~isolation~~ ^{isolation} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~work~~ ^{work} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~control~~ ^{control} ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~state~~ ^{state} would be different, since I want a free ~~state~~ ^{country} ~~as~~ ^{as} Yugoslavia is a monolithic state.

Politically the state is to be a democracy, based on a multi-party system. It would not be a bourgeois' democracy because of the ~~economic~~ ^{economic} ~~democratic~~ set-up. I called it a "Liberal Socialist" society. Most of my friends were interested in this synthetic state, ~~set-up~~ and we often discussed it. Generally they all agreed with the spirit and Weltanschauung involved, since this agreement was a sine qua non of friendship with me.

In England a monarchy has some advantages but not in Hungary because there the people have no monarchic feeling and without this, a monarchy is senseless. In Hungary only some very old people have some nostalgia for the monarchy. As for foreign policy, I think Hungary's border problems are vital. I see a solution only in a confederation with the help of all the neighboring ~~XX~~ countries, each an independent member. Slovakia and Transylvania would

also

^ participate in this confederation as independent states with wide autonomy. Perhaps ^{there} ~~they~~ would be only a military and tariff union. Slovakia and Transylvania have independent historical pasts and therefore should not be divided because they are independent historical units. The member states of this confederation should be Hungary, Bohemia, Slovakia, Transylvania, Rumania, Croatia and Serbia.

Agriculture:

There should be no problem about this. There should, of course, be a land ^Ireform and if the individual peasants join in ~~a~~ cooperatives of their own free will, that's their own affair. This would be the best solution for Hungary, ^(to manage on his own) because the Hungarian peasant is too poor. ^{thus act harmonious} This solution would also be parallel to the industrial solution, since both would be collectivized, and ~~XXX~~ backed as ^{economic} units.

Some examples of resistance in secondary school.

¹⁹⁵¹
AT the ^{at} March 15th celebration ~~in 1951 in~~ the gymnasium
I ^{made} ~~held~~ a speech in which I quoted the following ^{lines} ~~rhymes~~
from Attila József:

"My skin is not so valuable
to tolerate being unfree
in my maturity."

"Nem oly becses az irhám
Hogy ezett fövel kibírnám,
Ha nem vagyok szabad."

In my speech I also quoted the following lines by Ady.

"Unhappy heaven, what has happened to us?
Beasts who get used to everything,
Helots of weakened Knaves
That's what we are, that's what we'll be."

"Bus egek hat mi lett velünk?
Barmok akik mindent meg szoknak,
Helotai puhult latroknak:
Ezek vagyunk, ezek leszünk."

This was the last good March 15th in this school. The speech had a phantastic affect. There was thundering applause. The dean cried and said it was the most beautiful March 15th ever. I was told that I probably wouldn't be accepted at the university because of this speech. However, there were no repercussions.

Some other forms of intellectual resistance:

Until 1952 my friends and I held liberal meetings and debates to which we invited trustworthy students. At these meetings we often ^{asked} ~~had~~ professors ^{to} give lectures on literature and other subjects, with a discussion afterwards. For instance, we discussed Huxley's Brave New World as a Counter-utopia and with this as a starting point we expressed our ~~own views on~~ ^{own view of} the regime.

In 1950 and '51 the gymnasium (önképzőkör) debating society was completely free. In 1950 we had a debate about a Soviet art exhibit at which we stated that it was petty bourgeois ~~thrash~~. There were three active Communists in school who were present at the debate. They said that our comments were provocation etc. but we simply threatened that if they ^{didn't} ~~didn't~~ keep quiet, they would be thrown out of the meetings.

One of the same Communists in 1950 reported the boy who drew a sinking ship, called Molotov. The Communist student took ^{the case} ~~it~~ to the DISZ and then to the Ministry of Culture which demanded that the boy be expelled. The boy was expelled but was subsequently admitted to the Workers' School (Dolgozók Iskolája) and thus became a Szakérttségis. As a result he improved his kader and was among the first ^{from} ~~of everyone in~~ our school to be admitted to the university. It also meant that he received a higher scholarship. I don't quite know how he got into the worker's school

since his father was of the intelligentsia, being an apothecary. The Communist informers, on the other hand, received a rebuke.

Around the middle of 1955, three friends and I bought a tape recorder together on which we played politics, that is, we held parliamentary debates; we would say "what sort of statement would you make about this or that if you were a democratic minister?". We also played scenes from Thomas Mann's *Lotte in Weimar* on the tape recorder.

The changes since 1953.

At the university ~~we~~ ^{we} first felt the impending changes in the professors' criticism of Socialist ~~Realism~~ ^{Realism}. Socialist Realism was ridiculed and as a result we realized that there were no Communists among us, since we all took a stand against it. There were some students who were very much confused; we called them people's democrats. They were typically petty bourgeois, or else (*Szakerettsegi*,) Technicum graduates, who were raised to petty bourgeois status. These people had no political conceptions, they merely felt that there was no other way out and therefore ~~it~~ it was best to cooperate with the regime. In 1954 the Stalinist Party Secretary was dismissed and almost expelled from the Party as a leftist deviationist. After that there was no convinced Communist student at the university. The same summer this Party secretary was punished when in the Army he criticized an officer for not being vigilant enough. After the resolution against Imre Nagy he became Party secretary again until we all graduated in 1956 and then he got a job in a Ministry.

In the fall of 1953 the student who was chosen ~~to be~~ ^{as} DISZ secretary didn't want to take the job. I convinced him to take it because this way he would be able to help us better. This was a very good idea since through him we found out everything that was going on. The study group secretary also contributed to the general disintegration because he told us what was reported about us to the personnel department and other authorities. We also received information from the class Party secretary, who was not a convinced Communist. He was a careerist, who denied his parents and met them only secretly because they were of bourgeois origin. There were many such careerists. There was only one convinced Stalinist. Morally we disapproved more of the careerists but we profited from them, because they reported things to us.

At the university the first conflict within the Party took place before Imre Nagy came to power. The student who provoked it was of working class origin, had been a Party member since 1945 and was a (Szakerettsegis) Technikum graduate. In other ~~words~~ words, he was the good kader. He was the only talented student in this bunch; he was also courageous and extremely independent. Someone suggested him for Party Secretary against the official candidate. This was after Stalin's death. He was asked by the Party not to accept the candidacy but he refused. He was not elected, of course; he received two or three votes. As a result of this courageous

stand, he became very popular. He was actually a Socialist and not a Communist. He had been in prison in the Soviet Union and was an orphan. In fact, he was such a good kader, that there was a great temptation for him to speak up in opposition. He could do and say a great deal that we could not. He spoke up at seminars later on; for instance he didn't leave the Tito business without comment.

At the university the changes were felt in many ways. For instance, one could tell jokes again. Also the peasant boys were full of complaints and talked about the fact that their parents were exploited by the regime. The Party members began to be ashamed of their membership, they started not wearing their Party button and told us in confidence what went on at the Party meetings in order to show that they were on our side. From 1954 on it was impossible to ^{get people to attend} DISZ meetings, although they were compulsory.

Khrushchev's visit to Tito was important because it allowed debates to take a different, freer form. In other words, it admitted "the filthy flood of revisionism". With Imre Nagys^{the} regime began a greater freedom of the writers. There was a very sensitively reacting public opinion which noted every half step taken towards greater freedom. If a writer didn't take this half step, then he would be called a Stalinist and a Conservative. But if he went two steps ahead, he would be arrested.

In 1954 there was an article by Pál Tardi about the intellectual ^{inertia} ~~in Russia~~ of Hungarian youth as compared to the young people of the Galilei Circle, ^{and} ~~of~~ the Nékosz era in 1945/46. A friend and I reacted to this article by writing a letter signed with a pseudonym. We found some reasons for this intellectual indifference of Hungarian youth. We pointed out that this was due to the lack of freedom of the press and also to the fact that young intellectuals had to fight for Marxism with stereotyped slogans and were not given the right to read the modern bourgeois criticism of Marxism. We demanded that the most ^{up-to-date critique} ~~modern criticism~~ of Marxism be published in Hungary. Our letter was not published, with good reason. It went two steps ahead, instead of the allowed half step.

Then came the fall of Imre Nagy (respondent was somewhat confused about the dates of the various Party resolutions etc. ^{during} ~~involving~~ Imre Nagy's regime). His fall was not a surprise or shock to us, because we had heard rumors about it already. We said "well, didn't I tell you, this would be the end".

But the writers couldn't go back. They fell into a ^{pose} ~~trance~~ and could not ^I get out of it. Writers who had been hated before, and were ~~not~~ read by no one, now didn't want to lose their newly won popularity. A writer of ~~Kulak~~ novels who was attacked over the French radio at the beginning of 1953 asked me, he was a friend of my family,

"are they going to hang me?" I said "Yes." He answered
"I wish they were doing it already." (In Hungarian
"Bar már Kötnének!")

There was an economic and political retrogression but
in literature staying in the same spot meant progress,
at this period/ and under the existing conditions.
The fact, that the writers stayed in ^{their pose was} ~~a pause~~ in itself
^{a sign of} ~~meant~~ progress.

It is difficult to remember the Irodalmi Ujság articles
because there was a very slow, step by step, shade by shade,
progress until finally the writers arrived at the point
where they demanded complete freedom of the press.

It began by sybolic poems, epigrams, and satyres about
the regime. Then an Irodalmi Ujság issue was confiscated
because of a poem by Benjamin; the next issue however,
praised Benjamin. Aczel's ^{Ode} ~~Oath~~ to Europe in 1955 meant
that even this rascal was ^{already} ~~writing~~ this way, ~~already~~.

I also remember Judith Mariassy's article about the
Party aristocracy.

I feel rather unhappy about Hay's Kucsera. When I first
read the articles I thought them a very good idea.
But then, on October 15th at the Academy of Music I
heard Hay talk. He said that non-Marxist teaching
should not be permitted in the schools. There was a
sharp debate about this. Someone asked Hay "Do you
feel responsible for the Rakosi regime since you served

it and helped create the personal cult?". Hay said "yes, we made mistakes, but who can say that he did not make any mistakes during the last ten years?" I shouted from the balcony "about 10 million Hungarians". Hay said "why didn't you say it then?" I was enraged and shouted "because those who said it just had their funeral". I meant Rajk's funeral. At this point everyone started shouting and the meeting was closed.

(s concerned)
As far the writer's revolt, I think the first article which was noted/Meray's A Pauli Maria Eszter, the case of Maria Pauli. Of the articles none was a turning point. I think the Petöfi Circle press debate was the turning point. I did not go to the Petöfi Circle until after the press debate. Urban's (Uborkafa) the cucumber-tree, was important because people talked much about it. All these however, were only elements but not turning points.

My friends and I did not believe in the possibility of a real change until the Petöfi ^{Circle} ^{to meet} was allowed ^{again} in the fall of 1956. When this was done, we realized that the functionaries and the state apparatus must be in complete chaos to allow such a thing.

As ^{for} ~~far~~ the Communist writers, I know that they were aware in the fall of 1955, of impending changes in the Soviet Union. They knew about the rehabilitations, about the stand on the separate ^{roads} ~~ways~~ of socialism and various other coming changes. That is why they went ahead.

^{Ulbricht}
In December 1955, ~~Ulbricht~~ made a Stalinist speech. We wondered, my friends and I, why it was that he did not know that there were changes coming and we did. We ~~concluded from this~~ decided ~~as a result~~ that there must be factions within the Soviet leadership. By the way, this information about the impending changes was the only correct information I ever received from so-called well informed circles.

This information came from the Writer's Association.

After December 1955 I read no books at all, because of the great many periodicals that one had to be familiar with. I looked up all my writer friends and relatives and went to see them to get information and to discuss things. And then, of course the Petöfi Circle took up a lot of time too.

At the university, ~~in the~~ Leninist Marxist seminar debates ~~before the ideological model started~~, one could tell with absolute certainty who was a Marxist and who was not, ~~at least until the ideological chaos started~~. Even the most innocent debate would reveal this. Then one brick was pulled out and the entire building collapsed. Finally everyone would ask questions and it was impossible to tell whether the person didn't know the answers to the questions or else asked them only as provocation. In the Marxist Leninist seminars the peasants and workers were the most outspoken ~~in the past~~. They were much more insolent than those of middleclass origin. They could ask questions like this; "Isn't the delivery quota too high?" The real turning point with regard to the

seminar debates was Khrushchev's visit to Tito. At this time the seminar leader did not know what the official stand was. At one meeting he said, that Yugoslavia was not a socialist state and at the next meeting he said that he did not know whether it was socialist or not because the policy was changing regarding this. He said it sarcastically. This meant that we could debate it until we got more definite instructions. It did not matter if we made mistakes because we could cite the example of Rakosi, who was himself guilty of mistakes. At the same time were published the articles by Dery and others ~~XXX~~ about the right to make mistakes. Hence one could represent any point of view and claim later that it was a mistake. This right to make mistakes was the beginning of the Revolution.

To show how free the atmosphere was by 1956; in the summer of 1956 we had a ^{recorder} ~~tape~~ party for our classmates which we recorded all the amusing political mistakes we heard at the university. For instance, one peasant boy, who was very much confused at the seminar was condemning Tito with the usual slogans but at the same time could not forget that Tito was a comrade, hence he said "comrade Tito, the chained dog is baying at our southern borders." This was one of the things on the tape. We also made a fictitious tape interview with Imre Nagy in which he expressed his opinion of Marx.

After the right ^{to make} ~~of~~ mistakes came the next question, ^{which} ~~this~~ was: What is our assurance that ^{now} ~~we~~ are doing it ^{correctly?} ~~well now?~~

If there is no certainty about the correctness of our economic policy, then Marxism is not a science, was the conclusion one could draw. The next question was the question of responsibility. For Rajk, for the trials, for the terror, etc. This led by a straight and logical path to the Petöfi circle meetings at which Farkas and Rakosi were called to ^{account} ~~responsibility~~. The logical next step was the problem of Gerö's responsibility.

The sharpness of the student's comments at these Marxist Leninist seminars was to some extent determined by their living standards. It was perhaps the peasant kids, who went home regularly and saw the misery in the village, who were most outspoken in their criticism. The petty bourgeois boys (not the intelligentsia) pulled in their tails to the very end. In the schoolyear of 1955/56 a friend of mine was warned that he would be expelled from the university because he was an American Jazz enthusiast. He was of petty bourgeois origin, that is, he belonged to the X category. The authorities were stricter with this category and therefore they were the ones who ~~parroted~~ the silliest Marxist statements the longest. The ~~ex~~ category was very cautious.

Until 1956 all the students paid their DISZ ~~FE~~ membership fees punctually. In 1956 three members were kicked out of DISZ because they refused to pay. They did not

care in the least. It is true that they were of good origin since two of them were workers and one intelligentsia. A petty bourgeois would not have dared to do such a thing.

The so-called progressive intelligentsia became a better kaders after Hay had made his comments about freedom of expression. These concepts were rather flexibly used by the regime. If a student was accepted as part of the 20 per cent intelligentsia quota at the university, he was labelled intelligentsia. But if the same student was expelled for some reason then he was relabelled class alien. I can cite an example of this. A friend of mine was caught shouting abusing comments at the Soviet team during the Soviet Hungarian basketball match in the summer of 1954. He was the son of an architect and his father had been a Social Democrat. He was expelled from the university as a class alien, however, because his father had an architectural firm. ^{Incidentally,} The committee which decided for his dismissal, incidentally, apologized to him for having to take this step. In other words, in order to avoid giving the impression that the regime was persecuting the intelligentsia at a time when it was trying to win the intelligentsia over to its own side, this boy was relabelled a class alien ~~by the~~ regime.

Antisemitism. Some Communist types.

Respondent commented rather unfavorably^{on} about a group of Hungarian students, ~~consisting of Communists,~~ Communist sympathizers or Ex-communists, studying at one of the British universities. He said that they had a certain atmosphere; ^{adding that} these were the people of whom one was afraid in Hungary; ^{and that} all Hungarian students feel the same way about this group. There is something soft and steamed about most of them. Not all these are informer types, but they are the sort of people one was afraid of they are monolythic personalities or spirits, ^{although} they may have been well intentioned. The spirit of dictatorship suits them well. Many of them, not necessarily the group studying in England, but similar types, are semi-educated Jewish intellectuals. As a result of this role of the ^{as a staunch supporter of Communism,} Jewish intellectual, the philosemitic mood of 1945/46 subsequently changed into vicious anti-semitism.

That the Revolution was not anti-semitic was the ^{design} conscious ^{insurgents,} ~~act on the part of the~~ Revolutionaries; It was done because they did not want to give the Communists such a strong propaganda weapon, hence the Revolution was disciplined with regard to this. In Hungary today everyone is anti-semitic including the non-Communist Jews.

At the same time anti-semitism was moderated somewhat because among the intelligentsia, Catholics mixed with

Jews more than before and therefore learned to tolerate each other.

Among my friends we agreed that ^{the} Hungarian Communist regime had Jewish intellectual leadership, that it was ~~XXXXX~~ run in a Jewish spirit. First of all only Jews made genuine intellectual contributions to the regime. ~~THEY~~ The less valuable among the Jewish intellectuals contributed the creative force of the regime. The Christians ^{parroted} ~~questions~~ merely parroted the prescribed slogans. The creative Christian intellectual made his contribution in the Catholic resistance. Of course there were many Jews who resisted Communism. Among the students (~~the~~ ^a Hungarian student now studying in England, see interview 508) is an example. the new Communist intellectual type. He is undoubtedly well intentioned. He behaves in a ^{self-assured} completely ~~selfish~~ manner, in fact like an arrogant little ~~XXXXXX~~ Marx. He has now independent thoughts however, and ^{can explain} ~~has an answer~~ to every aspect of the world, ~~to~~ every manifestation of life. He is witty, arrogant, and ^{annihilating} ~~denigrating~~ in argument. Those who argued with these new Communist intellectuals had to stop before they arrived at the logical conclusion of their arguments because if they had stated it, they would have been arrested, hence these little ~~XXXXXX~~ Marxes always had the advantage. They were used to a superior tone because they were always the ones who won any argument. They could always say that what their opponent was suggesting

was fascism. We always had to agree finally that they were right because not to do so would have been too dangerous. I had an acquaintance who belonged to this group. He was a Jewish intellectual, a Communist writer who became a positive hero of the Revolution. He approved of the Petöfi Circle press debate but when I said that I did not understand ^{why} ~~that~~ Marxists were afraid of a two-Party system, since this would not destroy the socialist economy of the country, he answered that what I was suggesting would lead to counter-revolution. This discussion took place in September 1956.

It was such people who made up Imre Nagy's Party. The country was not really behind them. The country wanted a socialist economy but not connected with any particular Party's program, and certainly not with the Communist Party's program. These people were in an ivory tower because nobody dared to tell them the truth in a debate. Yet, they are the people who know the mechanism of the whole regime. They were articulate, they knew what they wanted, they knew the leadership they wanted and used ^{their demands.} ~~their own terminology to express it.~~ The country wanted many of the same things they advocated but with different leadership and terminology. Although the country wanted the same to a great extent, it would not express or articulate its desires.

The creative sector of the Christian middleclass consisted

of the Populists and the Catholic intellectuals.

Miscellaneous Comments. Jobs after leaving University.

My father was a physician. In 1931 he lost his job at the hospital for prematurely born children, which he himself established, because his son had tried to defect and because he had two English friends who often visited him, because he was a Free Mason and because one of his articles appeared in an American medical journal.

After my father's death I worked evenings in an architectural planning office in addition to attending the university.

At the university we had 42 hours of lecture in addition to 17 hours of special instruction per week. *As a result I was always exhausted.* ~~In addition~~

^{also} I attended lectures on Shakespeare by Milan Füst at the Faculty of Philosophy as well as lectures by Benedek. Füst's lectures were wonderful and extremely popular. People went there as a recreation. He talked not only about Shakespeare but about everything or anything that came into his head. His lectures were a marvellous experience.

I am a bad architect. To me architecture was an emergency exit. I knew from the beginning that I would never become a good architect. But I had to choose some profession in order to live. In the fall of 1956, after I graduated from the School of Architecture I started to attend an evening Law course. Since international law and economics are my chief interests I decided to go to Law School

since this was the closest I could get to studying what I was really interested in.

Food and housing ^{were} generally cheap in Hungary and pre-
sented no problems. The food at factory and office ^{canteens} ~~canteens~~
was no worse than in London. The housing situation de-
teriorated however. The regime did not build enough new
apartments to keep up with the ~~the~~ increasing birthrate.
In the summer of 1956 I worked on a project renovating
worker's houses in Ujpest. The conditions here were
horrible. Five or six people slept in a room measuring
18 square meters. Three slept in one bed and the rest
on the floor. The room was unaired, the sand under the
flooring had become rotten. The whole building was in
danger of collapse. The stench of unwashed bodies filled
not only the room but the yard of the house. The room
where 6 people slept belonged to a gipsy family. In
the same yard there was a one room apartment without a
kitchen which belonged to a foreman of a leather factory
who lived there with his wife because he could not get
another apartment. This was very clean but the stench
from the yard reached even their ~~apartment~~ apartment.

After I finished the university I worked ^{briefly} for the
^{a government building agency} Kivitelező Vállalat, and afterwards for the building
^{Budapest} department of the town hall (Városháza) or in effect the
City Council. Here I worked out ^a the plan which would
have ^{scrapped} ~~scrapped~~ the old norms of the building workers for

a new payment system giving them more incentive. This plan was ~~almost accepted at the time~~ ^{on the verge of being accepted when} the Revolution broke out.

REVOLUTION.

From September to November most of my former class-mates were called in for compulsory military training and were all living in barracks in Budapest. Since most of the students, who received this training, became officers, they were carefully selected. As a result I was not chosen because of my kader sheet perhaps, or because they knew that I had tried to defect. I am not quite sure about this. As a result of this training period, my class-mates who graduated with me, last June, were forced to be inactive during the weeks preceding the Revolution. From the 15th to the 21st of October almost every day brought something interesting. the formation of the Vasvary Circle, various debates, etc. On October 18th was the Hay lecture, which I mentioned before. On the evening of October 29th we played Bridge; it was then that we heard about the demands of the Budapest ~~Technical University~~ ^{Polytechnic Institute} (Műszaki Egyetem) which consisted essentially of the same demands presented by the Szeged students but it also threatened a demonstration. The meeting of the students of (Építőipari Műszaki Egyetem), Architectural Technical University, was announced for October 22nd. (Pontos hangulat volt). In the morning I phoned my soldier class-mates, who were not allowed to leave the barracks, and they

dictated the points which they wanted incorporated in the school's set of demands. However, they were unable to sign this petition since they were not allowed to leave.

For Sunday night, I had an appointment with a ~~correspondent~~ ^{reporter} of Szabad Nep. The appointment promised to be interesting because Meray and Novobaczky had just been reinstated to the staff against the will of the Stalinist staff members. This correspondent said that the majority of his colleagues were against the Stalinists at the Szabad Nep Party conference, ^{but} ~~above~~ that the Central Committee supported the Stalinist minority. One of my friends came to visit me and brought with him a Stalinist Communist; we were very much surprised that such a person still existed at that time and openly expressed his opinion. At this time the atmosphere was such that a Stalinist did not dare to speak freely about his beliefs. We had a long debate with this person and as a result we ^{missed} ~~did not go to~~ the ^{Polytechnic Institute} ~~Technical University~~ (Műegyetem) MEFESZ meeting.

I talked to my class-mates on the phone and asked them to sign the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ petition. They ~~XXXXX~~ voted against signing because they were technically in the Army and were afraid to commit such a ~~of~~ discipline. I was very much surprised that they dared to call me at all. The meeting decided to form a temporary MEFESZ organization but did not ^{choose} ~~vote~~ any leaders. Some of the students volunteered to stay and prepare leaflets and help in ^{the} work of organization. ^A ~~The~~ writer, Kutzka, ^{I believe,} helped them

to prepare leaflets, stating their demands in 14 points and announcing the demonstration for the 23rd. These leaflets were mimeographed.

On the morning of the 23rd, I went to the ^{Polytechnic} ~~Technical Uni-~~
~~Institute~~ ^{versity} to see what was going on. I was given some leaflets, which I distributed. For the afternoon a quiet student demonstration was planned. Some of the students went to the factories to organize the workers. It was a conscious movement (tudatos); the whole country was ~~deliberately~~ ^{consciously} working for freedom, for free elections, and ~~it was~~ ^{not} merely demanding that the Russian troops leave Hungary. In memory of March 15th, the boys wanted to march to the ~~Museum~~ to force them to print the leaflets. However, the head of the military courses promised the use of a mimeograph machine to prevent this. (Katonai tanszekvezető).

Between 9⁰⁰ and 10⁰⁰ A.M. the first delegates returned from the factories and said that ^{the} workers had held emergency meetings at which the students were greeted with enthusiasm. The workers stated their willingness to stop work for the afternoon to demonstrate their solidarity with the students. Many of the workers said that they would march in the demonstration, meeting the students at the Bem statue. The student delegates, who had been sent to Csepel, were prevented by the factory guards to enter the factory. But a few hours later a Csepel worker's

delegation arrived and told us ~~with regret~~, that this occurrence was not their fault.

There was a conscious student-worker alliance ~~in~~ in the Revolution, and even before. Sometime in October, ~~the~~ a worker made a statement at one of the Petöfi Circle meetings. He greeted the Petöfi Circle in the name of the Csepel workers and asked that the Petöfi Circle reserve a certain number of seats for the workers in his factory. He was a sensible and intelligent worker and the students greeted his statement with thundering applause. With regard to the participation of various classes in the Revolution I believe that the intelligentsia (middle-class) prepared it; without the students there would have been no Revolution. However, it was the workers who continued it. Hence this was a necessary combination.

Meanwhile we informed the other faculties of the university about our plans. The ~~ad hoc~~ student leaders^{who} were not Communists, were extremely careful politically and merely demanded that Imre Nagy be made Prime Minister. Those of the leaders, whom I knew personally, were mostly of middle-class origin. Out of ~~real politics~~ ^{Realpolitik} they believed that a Gomulka type change would be the most beneficial for Hungary at the time. They said that the workers should not march in a demonstration, nor should they strike, in order ~~to~~ not to provoke the regime. But a mass movement like this could not be stopped. By

11 A.M. they had decided what form the ^{Polytechnic} ~~Technical Uni-~~
~~Institute~~ ~~versity~~ demonstration was to take. We were to walk in
close lines with our hands linked in order to prevent
~~any agents provocateurs~~ from penetrating our lines.
We were to remain silent and everyone who shouted was
to be expelled from the group of demonstrators. We decided
to wear tricolor armbands. We made a rule that no one
could enter the university without a student certificate.
After this meeting I went back to my office. I gave the
list of points to the architects in the office and asked
them to distribute leaflets among the workers.

At 3 in the afternoon I went to the ^{Polytechnic Institute} ~~Technical University~~
and joined the demonstration for a while. At the Bem
Statue the Law students were the loudest because they
were not forbidden to shout. As we were going towards
the Bem statue, we already saw some trucks coming from
there with the Kossuth coat of arms on the flag. ~~At the~~
~~Bem statue people were shouting like this; "Long live~~
~~Hungarian's freedom.~~

At the Bem statue I saw that many of the demonstrators
especially the Law students were shouting to the soldiers
in the Bem barracks, who waved back. The Law students
were shouting; "come down, come down, Down with Farkas!"
I left before Peter Veres' speech and went to the
Parliament between 5 and 6. On Bem square I saw some
Russian signs, saying "Ruski go home!" I did not think
this was very wise; I thought it was too early for this.

On Margaret bridge I heard some small groups shout "Down with Gerö", others hissed at the shouters. Before the Parliament there was a tremendous crowd of university students and others. I was there when they shouted "Turn out the lights of the Red Star!". The mood was such, that it was too late for Imre Nagy.

I went to the Stalin statue where I saw hysterical scenes, the statue was ^{in the process of being} just taken apart, it was beaten and hacked with fury. Then I went home and had dinner and changed my shoes, knowing that I would be up all night.

^{On}
~~When I went up to~~ the street again, I heard some loudspeaker trucks announce that people before the Radio Station were ^{shot at} being shuttered. The trucks offered to take everyone who wanted to go to the Radio Station. The police ~~was~~ were completely inactive. The Army did not shoot at first and defended the crowd from the AVO by placing their armored cars between the crowd and the secret police. Then the Army handed over its weapons to the crowd. After looking around for a while, I went to the Var ^{Polytechnic Institute's} dormitory, which was the ~~Technical University's~~ headquarters at the time. Around 1 AM I saw Russian tanks shoot at windows on ~~the~~ Karoly Kiraly Ave. After the tanks left, the streets filled up again. The crowd stopped all cars looking for arms. They did not harm anyone but they took the cars for their own use. At dawn I went home and slept for a few hours.

On the morning of the 24th I went to work. Some people in the office were very enthusiastic about the events of the night before. Others, cowards or pessimists, said "well, is this what you wanted when you started the peaceful demonstration?". They were afraid that even the gains, which have been made up ^{until} then, would be lost because of the demonstration. Some of the most hostile were the so-called "People's Democrats", the petty bourgeoisie who followed the regime in spite of the fact that they felt that there was something wrong. These were the people who thought that nothing existed between fascism and Communism. They were not active or dangerous; they merely were afraid that they would lose their little jobs. I was in the office for half an hour, then went out and stayed on the streets all day, doing nothing in particular just walking around. On the 26th and 27th I was unable to leave my house because the Russians were besieging the vicinity. On the 27th I got a phone call from the University Revolutionary Council asking me to come in. My friend Ankerl (now in Switzerland) was in Lukacs' room and was arguing and debating with people ^{at} in the Pest headquarters. It was he who had called me in. I went in on the 28th. Ankerl and I started arguing about the possibility of founding a new party, when, now, ^{or} later, about Imre Nagy's suitability for negotiating with the Russians, etc. . . Meanwhile people were coming and going. We argued with professor Merey, the advisor to the

(Revolutionary University) Council, with Pozsar, etc..

We thought that they had contact with armed resistance forces. On Monday, the 29th, it was decided to send a delegation to Györ. I was more or less one of the delegates of the ~~Technical University~~ ^{polytechnic Institute}, there were two or three more delegates. We were supposed to be delegates to the Transdanubian National Council, (Dunantuli Nemzeti Tanács,) In Györ ^{Ankerl} ~~Ankerl~~ made friends with Szabo, an old Social Democrat^{also} and we ^{also} made friends with a chief engineer of the Györ Wagon Factory. The Györ Council tried to sabotage the engineer's plan to arm workers in his factory. The members of the Györ Council were old Communists who ^{wanted to} ~~would~~ ration the arms very carefully, giving the workers only ^{50 guns, etc.} Anyway, we arrived on the 30th after the Szigetvari putch attempt. The Revolutionary Council was ^{in session} ~~meeting~~. They were extremely distrustful of us; one of us said some stupidities. Finally Ankerl addressed the Revolutionary Council and made a speech which met with great approval. He asked that at his proposal the Council should demand through Szigeti that Imre Nagy declared ^{the} ~~a~~ neutrality of Hungary. The Council voted to accept his proposal and he was asked to be a member of the Committee, which was to be sent to Nagy. Then it was decided that he could not be a member because he was not an inhabitant of Györ.

In general the meeting of the Revolutionary Council was extremely ^{provincial} ~~provincial~~ and petty. People talked about

responsibility and revenge and abused the Communist Party. They had no program. Szigeti was the chairman of the meeting. He was very friendly to us and kept order at the meeting. There was a great deal of disagreement about him. Some people said that he was very decent, otherwise he would not have gone so far in the Revolution. Some ^{he was} said Imre Nagy's Györ equivalent. Others abused him.

At the same meeting I made a statement about the strike. It was a ^{strike mood in the air} ~~great mood in favor of striking~~. ^{Although} But ^{we knew that} we felt that this would be harmful. However, if I had started to say so they would have found it suspicious and wouldn't have allowed me to finish. So, what I said was this: "Since the strike is the weapon of the ^{working} worker class, it must be used. It must be used in battle, but ^{we} one must know what ^{we are aiming at} ~~one aims at~~. One must not shoot into the air." I added that the ^{demands voiced by the} ~~Government's demand~~ today were acceptable but the government itself was unreliable and we must demand that it be changed and improved. I said that Imre Nagy should be the leader of the Government because he was suitable for negotiating with the Russians, that the Minister of Interior should not be Tldy but Bela Kovacs, that Justus ^{be} ~~should~~ the Minister of Foreign Affairs, that a Catholic should become Minister of Justice and that possibly a Transdanubian should be made Minister of War because Transdanubia was then ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ the liberated part of Hungary. I said that when such a Government was established, the strike should be discontinued since then

we would be striking against ourselves. I also suggested a Strike Committee, which was ^{capable of organizing} ~~suitable to organize~~ the ^{working} ~~worker~~ class and had the confidence of the workers. There was no resolution ^{concerning} ~~about~~ this proposal, ^{but} ~~except~~ that they ^{approved} ~~voted~~ a resolution in favor of a coalition government.

On the 31st we visited the Benedictine Monastery in Györ and talked to the priest there. I went to the meeting at which the Social Democratic Party was re-established and I met ^{Udvaros} ~~one~~ of the Social Democratic leaders, ~~these, however,~~ ^{who had been} ~~and also~~ a member of parliament. I felt he had very primitive political conceptions, such as more wages for less work, etc. It was quite childish. The interesting thing was that Udvaros had the same ideas as the Benedictines about the possibility of a Christian Socialist and Social Democratic coalition.

^{The people in Györ} ~~They~~ were rather vague about ^{the} ~~role~~ of Attila Szigeti. At the time we did not know where he was going, ~~to~~ ^{or} coming from. Szigeti was a member of the Peasant Party. Did he want the same thing that Imre Nagy wanted? ~~PERHAPS~~ Perhaps he would have liked a ~~coalition~~ coalition on the basis of 1945 which was a good thing. ^{Sádor} ~~Sador~~ said that he was moderate and shrewd. (Sádor was another member of the University Delegation). I didn't think him shrewd at all and Ankerl ~~th~~ought him stupid. Today I tend to favor his stand far more than I did at the time. In Györ we had long discussions with the chief engineer of the wagon factory, who was the advisor and friend

of Szigeti. It was his idea that a parliament (nemzetgyűlés) must be brought together by November 4th in the parliament building in Budapest. Every county was to send 10 representatives. Budapest was to send 70. These 240 delegates should go to Imre Nagy, call themselves a parliament, ~~nemzetgyűlés~~ and should ~~decide and~~ agree not to separate until Russian troops ^{left} leave Hungary. Thus they would be able to assure the constitutional rule of Imre Nagy and would also carry some weight with ^{before} regard to the UN. In other words, ^{this Parliament} it would have a constitutional right to call in the UN.

This was Sebök's idea with whom we talked until dawn before our return. He was a former Communist but what one could talk and argue with him. He was a courageous man and very popular in the Győr wagon factory, which had ^{concentration of} was the biggest worker center next to Budapest. We returned to Budapest on Thursday. On November 1st. Thursday evening between 8 and 12 we had terrible news. The Soviet troops, we heard, were streaming into Hungary. High officers from the Army's Revolutionary Council said that the Army would ^{had sufficient munitions for} had just one day artillery fire. As a result of the great confusion, there was still a strike in the munition factory. Someone in the Army tried to ^{destroy} integrate the Army's Revolutionary Council. I went home and called my best friends and relatives and asked them all to leave town because ^{they would not be able to do so} after the Russians arrived, ~~it would not be possible~~. As we had entered

on the side of
Budapest, we saw Soviet Tanks standing beside the roads
~~which were~~ leading to the city.

Meanwhile we discussed the idea of setting up this parliament with the University Revolutionary Council. Pozsar and the others agreed to organize ~~that~~ ^{it} in Budapest, and we went back to Györ and tried to organize it in Transdanubia.

We arrived in Györ on the ~~(second)~~ 2nd with a Government car. We went to the Town Hall where we found great ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ confusion. Sebök was there trying to put into operation his plan with regard to Transdanubia and the northern counties. The assembling of the Parliament was planned for the morning of November 4th. However, they were unable to get to Budapest because on the night of November 3rd ^{of} the roads were closed. On the same night ^{meeting with} November 2nd, the Russian tanks entered town, with no resistance because ^{so} orders were that no one should shoot ^{at} that the Russians should not be able to claim they were provoked. We saw at least 100 tanks. Early next morning we went to Sopron to get out of the Russian ring and if ~~they~~ ^{there} had not yet been Russian intervention, ~~then~~ to bring over 2 or 3 ~~truckloads~~ ^{trucks} full of university students from Sopron and thus to strengthen the armed resistance with politically conscious (Tudatos) elements. We arrived at ~~the~~ Sopron University on the 3rd with this plan.

The Revolution had no heroic wast in Györ. Some AVO agents were killed, others were allowed to go free. Both ^{actions} were wrong. In Eszperessos people sat selling Austrian

medicines. The Revolution in Györ ^{did not reach} ~~was not up to~~ the moral level of Budapest. Various suspicious elements had arms. Györ needed 20 or 30 people who knew what they wanted.

At Sopron University they greeted us with the suspicion, they were not very friendly. My feeling was, that in Sopron the Revolution was over organized and over ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ bureaucratized. On the 4th I was at the university when they declared that Sopron would not resist and that we ^{They} would all leave the country. As a result we decided to leave too. The University Revolutionary Council felt that in case of intervention we must turn to the ^{Asian} ~~Asiatic~~ countries because it was to the diplomatic advantage of the Russians to try to ^{appease} ~~apiece~~ the Asian block. As a result we addressed a letter to ^{Nehru} ~~Neru~~ and handed it ~~over~~ to the Indian delegation in Vienna since there was no Indian Embassy in Budapest.